

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025

THE PEOPLE'S PAPER

COWLES FAMILY TRANSFERS OWNERSHIP OF NEWSPAPER TO YOU, THE COMMUNITY

Cowles to give S-R assets, \$2 million donation after community match. • Nonprofit Comma has been on Gonzaga's campus for past year, where Northwest Passages, Black Lens also reside

By Elena Perry
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The Cowles family intends to donate The Spokesman-Review to a recently formed Spokane-based community nonprofit organization that plans to continue publishing the newspaper amid the changes and challenges roiling legacy media.

The plan calls for Publisher Stacey Cowles and his family's Cowles Co. to transfer ownership of the newspaper and award a \$2 million matching grant to the nonprofit, called the Comma Community Journalism Lab, which was founded by current Spokesman-Review Executive Editor Rob Curley.

"It's been a great venture for 132 years, but if you had the chance to extend its viability, as people know and love it, why would you not do that?" Cowles said. He is among the fourth generation of the Cowles family to publish the city's daily paper.

Cowles will stay involved with the newspaper as a member of Comma's board of directors. Curley also will serve on the board

See **COMMA, 7**

HISTORIC TIMES

The Spokesman-Review will enter a new era following Comma's expected acquisition of the nearly 142-year-old paper, which got its start in the 19th century with the Spokane Falls Review on May 19, 1883, and has been keeping the public informed ever since.



Publishers react to S-R's nonprofit course, with side of beer, at conference

By Elena Perry
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

ORLANDO, Fla. – Newspaper executives took some of the first sips of an exclusive beer brewed by No-Li Brewhouse in partnership with The Spokesman-Review, an early case served at the News Industry Mega-Conference on Tuesday.

Attendees drank the hazy IPA, named 1AB after the First Amendment, as they listened to a behind-the-curtain look at Northwest Passages book club events from Spokesman-Review Executive Editor Rob Curley. For the past six years, the live interviews have served as a vehicle to bring Spokaneites together in consideration and conversation while also giving them a tangible relationship with their local

See **CONFERENCE, 8**



After a presentation announcing the launch of nonprofit Comma, Rob Curley, editor of The Spokesman-Review, left, has a conversation with Dean Ridings, CEO of America's Newspapers, center, and Stacey Cowles, publisher of The Spokesman-Review, on Tuesday at the News Industry Mega-Conference in Orlando, Fla.

COLIN MULVANY/
THE S-R

comma

What is Comma?
Comma is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit journalism lab based in Spokane.

Why was it started?
Comma has a stated mission to improve the health of American independent media and democratic institutions.

What is Comma's mission?
To foster community-centered journalism and storytelling to educate, enrich and inspire. Comma aspires to give voice to the voiceless by amplifying the underrepresented people in our region.

Sharing:
Comma intends to share its insights and experiences with other newsrooms to promote sustainable, community-centered journalism.

Who is behind Comma?
Comma was founded by Rob Curley, the executive editor of The Spokesman Review. Curley will work as president of Comma and serve on the nonprofit's board of directors.

When was Comma founded?
2023.

MORE INSIDE

HERE ARE FIVE OTHER NEWSPAPERS THAT SHIFTED BUSINESS MODELS

The Spokesman-Review isn't the first paper to make the nonprofit move. **NEWS, 6**

CELEBRATE THE FIRST AMENDMENT WITH A COLD ONE FROM NO-LI

Brewery and The S-R collaborate on limited-edition beer. **SERENDIPITY, 1**



CITY TO FUND RV REMOVAL

Following a pause in reimbursements from the state, Spokane will continue contract for disposal of abandoned RVs. **NW, 1**

UW IN COWARD'S TOP FIVE CHOICES

Former Cougars wing draws interest from rival Huskies among others in transfer portal. **SPORTS, 1**

Parents won't know who will be armed at St. Maries

By James Hanlon
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

ST. MARIES – Parents won't be notified if their child's teacher is carrying a gun in the classroom next year in eastern Benewah County.

"They can assume that everybody is armed," Seth Stoke, chairman of the St. Maries School Board said in an interview Monday night after the board voted

4-0 to finalize a policy that will allow permitted staff to carry concealed firearms inside the district's public schools.

The board developed the policy during the last school year in response to decades of school shootings across the nation, Stoke said.

Parents also won't be allowed to appeal if they have specific

See **ST. MARIES, 8**

PERMIT-TO-PURCHASE BILL CLEARS STATE SENATE

By Mitchell Roland
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

OLYMPIA – Legislation requiring residents to obtain a permit before purchasing a firearm has cleared another hurdle after the Washington Senate backed the proposal Monday in a party-line vote.

A version of the bill previously cleared the House of Representatives, but the proposal will return to the House after the Senate adopted amendments. The updated bill must clear the House chamber before heading to Gov. Bob Ferguson's desk.

"This is not about us versus them, this is about safety," Sen. Manka Dhingra, D-Redmond, said Monday. "It's about ensuring that our children are not accidentally shot, which has been

See **PERMIT, 8**

Windy 57 34

Classifieds **NW 7**

Comics **Serendipity 5**

Bridge..... **NW 8**

Lotteries **New 4**

Obituaries..... **NW 5**

Opinion..... **NW 3**

6 98961 23456 7 **\$2**

A+ Rating

MasterCard

VISA

BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS

BEST BLINDS & AWNINGS

SPOKANE | COEUR D'ALENE | LC VALLEY

SPOKANE (509) 892-5463

COEUR D'ALENE (208) 664-5858

BEST OF 2025

Window Coverings

THE BUSINESS JOURNAL of the Inland Northwest