

Landon Woolf gives son Brigham Woolf, 5, a pull up the bunny hill Wednesday after riding the magic carpet lift, a conveyor belt, to the top of the bunny hill at Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park.

JESSE TINSLEY/
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

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TIME TO SKI



Several inches of snow blanket five nearby ski mountains

By Emily White
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Blankets of crisp, white snow have largely been missing from Spokane and the region's slopes - but all that changed this week. Silver Mountain, Mt. Spokane, 49 Degrees North Mountain Resort, Lookout Pass and Schweitzer all reported several inches of new snow Wednesday and decent skiing or snowboarding conditions. This is what snow fanatics have been waiting for: The mountains are coming alive with locals armed with puffer jackets, skis, boards and mittens.

"We got a great dump last night," Silver Mountain General Manager Jeff Colburn

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Spokane, Washington



I was shocked. Disgusted. Patient safety, to me, is extremely important. If anyone had those allegations against them, they should have opened an investigation."

Robert Kinnune, former chaplain at Eastern State Hospital

State pays \$1.8M to Spokane chaplain

Robert Kinnune says he was smeared and demoted after extended military deployment

By Cannon Barnett
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

When he left for the last deployment of his 30-year military career in 2018, Robert Kinnune remembers staff being grateful

for his work as the chaplain for Eastern State Hospital.

His record was "stellar," court documents backing up that he had no disciplinary actions, complaints or documented performance issues. His boss even

noted that Kinnune's "presence, dedication, knowledge and world experience is the reason that ESH Spiritual Care Services is highly regarded and well respected by patients, employees and community members."

So when he returned from his post in Colorado in 2020, he wasn't expecting to be called in to a "cold" meeting with his superiors, pressuring him to sign rehiring paperwork for what he believed to be a different - and

lower status - position.

After a five-year legal battle, Kinnune received a \$1.8 million settlement from Washington state for lawsuits alleging

See **SETTLEMENT, 11**

Scam artists use trust, fear and AI to target victims

Young people becoming targets

By Thomas Clouse
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The calls come in with voices that soothe or instill fear. They include information as if it is coming from either a banking institution or government entity with the authority that gives the message gravity.

But both are types of contacts intended to trigger a response: Give us money. And they work.

The North American Securities Administrators Association reported that state financial regulators conducted more than 8,800 investigations in 2024 that led to more than \$259 million in fines and restitution.

But that pales to the number of reported cases of fraud.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, residents in Washington state alone reported 15,600 instances of fraud during the first nine months of 2025 for a total reported loss of about \$86 million.

"There are lots of scams out there," said

See **SCAMS, 9**

50 BLOOMSDAY PERENNIALS

There are 70 people who have run every Bloomsday. In the months leading up to the 50th running of the race, The Spokesman-Review will publish stories about these athletes, known as Perennials.

MACPHEE MAKES RACE SHARED EXPERIENCE



Perennials Richard Cadwallader, left, Glen MacPhee, Sally Rennebohm-Lutz and Brian Kenna at Bloomsday 2025. Both Sally and Brian were on the cross country team MacPhee coached in 1977.

RUNNING COACH SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT BLOOMSDAY, BRINGING OTHERS WITH HIM TO 50TH

By Nina Culver
FOR THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Glen MacPhee is not only proud that he has completed all 49 Bloomsday races, but he's proud that two of the cross country runners he recruited to run in the first race are themselves Bloomsday Perennials.

MacPhee took a job as a biology teacher and cross country coach at University High School

in 1972. When the first Bloomsday race in 1977 was announced, he saw it as a fun team-building activity for his runners.

"Two of them have continued on and they're Bloomies too," he said. "So that's kind of special."

What he remembers most from that first race, which began at 1:30 p.m., was the heat.

See **MACPHEE, 11**

'DATA ENTRY ERROR' WAS REASON FOR OVERSTATED EMISSIONS, OFFICIALS SAY

Report was corrected to say programs reduced 78,000 tons, not 7.5 million. **NW, 1**

FORMER LAKE CITY STAR KATIE FAULKNER LEADING PEPPERDINE'S TURNAROUND

Waves are 10-5 this season despite having a complete roster turnover. **SPORTS, 1**



The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette is shutting down after nearly 100 years

By Emily Bloch

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette will fold after nearly a century. The paper will cease operations entirely – both its digital and physical versions – on May 3.

The announcement comes on the heels of years of declining ad revenue and internal strife within the newsroom, including a yearslong labor strike.

With the paper's closure, there are concerns that Pittsburgh could become a news desert, leaving locals without a range of diverse and credible outlets.

The Post-Gazette was led by former Philadelphia Inquirer senior vice president and executive editor Stan Wischnowski. He resigned from the Inquirer in 2020 after a controversy following a headline after the murder of George Floyd.

Block Communications, the paper's owners, released a statement Wednesday about the shutdown, citing "continued cash losses" that were "no longer sustainable."

The owners added that the paper has lost more than \$350 million in operational funds over the last 20 years.

The paper's union, meanwhile, says the closure is a result of "losing a nearly decadelong attempt to bust unions at the paper."

Andrew Goldstein, current president of the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh, said in a statement that "instead of simply following the law, the owners chose to punish local journalists and the city of Pittsburgh."

Post-Gazette staff said they found out about the paper's closure via a companywide pre-recorded Zoom announcement just moments before the news went public. Multiple reporters told the Inquirer that no company representatives spoke live during the video and that there was no opportunity provided for follow-up questions or discussion.

In a leaked recording of the Zoom announcement obtained by Pittsburgh's KDKA Radio, a spokesperson asked staff to continue to publish under "business-as-usual conditions" for the paper's remaining months. The spokesperson also added that Block Communications would "of course" give the Post-Gazette the opportunity to break the news.

Block Communications, the family-owned multimedia company based in Toledo, Ohio, currently owns several broadcast news stations, the Post-Gazette, and the Toledo Blade, the Post-Gazette's sister newspaper. The Blade is unaffected by the shutdown, owners said.

Earlier this week, the

company also announced the closure of City Paper, the Pittsburgh alt-weekly that first published in 1991, "effective immediately."

The closure will leave the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review as the region's last major newspaper. Other specialized publications, including the New Pittsburgh Courier and Pittsburgh Business Times, also remain.

Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato said in a statement that she was troubled by the Post-Gazette's closure, calling it "devastating."

"This is a major loss to the people of Pittsburgh when it comes to transparency in government, accountability from our institutions, and learning about what is happening in our communities," she said.

Innamorato added in her statement that she wasn't sure if Block Communications pursued other pathways for buyers or alternatives to shutting down both the Post-Gazette and City Paper entirely.

"But destroying two legacy papers in a week leaves a gaping hole in our local news environment," she said.

Block Communications could not be reached for comment as of publication time.

On social media, readers expressed contempt toward ownership for the decision and concern re-

garding who to turn to for local news.

"This is a huge loss," one user commented on a Reddit thread about the closure. "Who will do the work of journalism? ... Will we all be going off rumors on Reddit and Nextdoor?"

The Pittsburgh Gazette Times, a weekly publication, was founded in 1786. It is regarded as the oldest newspaper published west of the Allegheny Mountains. The paper took on its current form as the Post-Gazette in 1927 as part of a merger between the Gazette Times and the Pittsburgh Post.

The newspaper's shutdown comes on the heels of several internal challenges for the paper over recent years.

In 2019, tension grew between the newsroom staff and Post-Gazette publisher and co-owner John Robinson Block regarding his "bizarre" and "violent" behavior toward employees.

At the time, according to multiple accounts, Block entered the newsroom in an agitated state with his 12-year-old daughter on a weekend night and appeared out of control as he ranted about the newspaper's union and its employees.

The same year, the paper cut its print edition from daily to three days a week, citing declining ad revenue.

Snow squall ushers in big flakes and phone alerts

From staff reports

A snow squall raced into Spokane on Wednesday evening, delivering big snowflakes, slippery roads and loud phone alerts.

The National Weather Service issued the emergency alerts as the expected storm system brought with it a winter twist that led to heavy snowfall, wind gusts reaching up to 20 mph in some areas and streets that turned from wet to icy in just minutes.

The squall was part

of a brief moisture pattern that began as a mist around 5 p.m. before turning to heavy snow within two hours.

The weather service said the snow storm could drop 2 inches throughout the Spokane region and perhaps 4 inches in Pend Oreille County. It was forecast to last until about 10 p.m.

Various reports suggested that some areas on the outskirts of Spokane already had 2 inches on the ground by 8 p.m. with the snow still coming down.

SNOW

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said. "We're all excited to finally see a lot of snow."

Silver Mountain reported 16 inches of new snow on Wednesday morning. In December, Colburn said the mountain had another good storm that brought snow in for skiing, but rain washed it all away. Silver Mountain was down for six days in December. But Colburn has an optimistic outlook on the rest of the season and says the best snow is likely yet to come.

"We've had lots of powder hounds up here today," Colburn said on Wednesday.

That day, 56 out of the mountain's 73 runs were open.

Colburn said the mountain will likely get 6 more inches by Thursday morning, just in time for Jackass Day, when ski lift tickets are \$20 each.

On Wednesday morning, Schweitzer reported 6 new inches of snow blanketing the slopes. Around 49 of Schweitzer's 92 trails were open for use on Wednesday, and six out of the 10 lifts operated throughout the day.

Mt. Spokane reported getting 12 inches of snow on Wednesday morning and is anticipating 3 more inches of fresh snow on Thursday morning.

On Wednesday afternoon, Lookout Pass had 15 inches of snowpack, and 73% of its trails were open.

"It's normally not where we'd be at this time of year, but it's not bad," said Rick Brown, the director of skiing and snowboarding at 49 Degrees North Mountain Resort. "There's a good winter ahead of us, it just had a late start."

49 Degrees North Mountain Resort also had a good snowfall on Tuesday, getting 4 inches of coverage on the summit and 2 inches near the lodge, Brown said. According to Brown, 54 of the 90 runs were open at

"It's normally not where we'd be at this time of year, but it's not bad. There's a good winter ahead of us, it just had a late start."

Rick Brown

Director of Skiing and Snowboarding at 49 Degrees North Mountain Resort

the mountain resort on Wednesday. A few of the lifts are not operating right now, which limits the number of runs that are open, Brown said. And even so, the trails that are lower elevation have less snow on them, Brown said, making some of them off-limits.

In the past 72 hours, Brown said the resort has seen 17 inches of snow fall on the summit. On Wednesday, snow depth was 22 inches at the summit and 13 inches near the lodge, Brown said.

For the average skier or snowboarder, though, the recent snowfall will make overall conditions good enough for decent runs. Now, the mountain has about 2 feet of snow coverage over most of the terrain, so the skiing conditions are pretty good, Brown said. Brown does recommend that folks check weather conditions before making the drive out to the slopes.

"People don't need to be afraid to come," Brown said. "We don't have a lot of rocky, rough terrain to cover. We also do the most extensive summer maintenance program in the region, mowing, brush cutting and vegetation management."

Emily White can be reached at (509) 459-5444 or by email at emilyw@spokesman.com.

MACPHEE

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"It was a very hot day," he said. "Coming into the finish line, there were medical people on my left, medical people on my right tending people. I made it to the finish line and went to the shade and laid down. I stayed there for a while."

He might have stayed there a little too long.

"By the time I got up and went over to get my T-shirt, all the extra larges were gone," he said. "I don't wear it very often because it's too tight on me."

MacPhee had been a runner since his own time on a high school cross country team in Moscow, Idaho, and found himself hooked on Bloomsday.

"It's always fun to be a part of something," he said. "Everybody has the same goal. It was special, and I obviously enjoy running."

His recruitment for Bloomsday didn't stop after the first year. For the first 20 years, MacPhee gave himself the goal of finding someone who had

not done Bloomsday before and running the race with them. He never worried about his finishing time.

"I would always have somebody to run with," he said.

When Bloomsday launched a "Fit for Bloomsday" program that encouraged elementary school students to sign up for several weeks of training before each Bloomsday, MacPhee was one of the coaches. At the time, he worked at Greenacres Elementary and could be counted on to talk about Bloomsday with his students.

"I would always wear my T-shirt to school," he said. "Of course, I was excited. I would talk about it."

As a result, more and more kids in his school signed up for the race.

"It just bloomed," he said. "A fun part about Bloomsday was talking about it the next day."

He remembers the one year when he and other runners woke up to find snow on the ground.

MacPhee briefly considered staying home, even though he thought running in the snow might be fun.

"That thought didn't last very long," he said. "Regrettably, the snow was pretty much melted off by the time the race started."

His three children, who all did cross country, also joined his annual treks to downtown Spokane on the first Sunday in May. MacPhee long ago decided he was in it for the long haul.

"I've always been able to see myself doing it later in life," he said.

In addition to the experience, MacPhee enjoys seeing his fellow Perennials each year. Some of them are his former students. One of the younger perennials, Brian Kenna, was a middle school student in 1977 but practiced with MacPhee's cross country team. Another, Bob Barbero, was his assistant cross country coach at University High School until MacPhee left.

"It's fun seeing him," he said. "We have a lot of his-

tory together."

MacPhee, who will turn 77 in January, had his fastest race time of 56 minutes years ago. In 2025, he finished the race in 2 hours and 27 minutes, which he counts as a victory because it was two minutes faster than his 2024 time.

"I felt pretty good about that," he said. "I have some runners' pride left in me." But it has been a while since MacPhee ran Bloomsday.

"I've had enough running," he said. "The body can only do so much."

He got a new left hip two years ago and has arthritis in his right knee, which hurts him every Bloomsday.

"I just put it aside," he said. "I just don't think about the pain."

He lives in Rathdrum most of the year but spends his winters in Yuma, Arizona. No matter where he is, he makes sure he keeps walking.

"I try to keep in shape," he said. "I plan on being out there on the Bloomsday course for years to come."

SETTLEMENT

Continued from 1

discrimination and intentionally withheld public records following his two-year military deployment.

The lawsuits allege that when Kinnune was deployed for his military duty, hospital management staff and the interim chaplain conspired to create a "hostile work environment" on his return, mishandled an investigation into his complaint and proceeded to conceal evidence of the conspiracy in a public records request.

Department of Social and Health Services' spokeswoman Norah West said in an email that the recently reached settlement "resolves the cases, and does not confirm or suggest any liability, wrongdoing or unlawful action" by the state.

Kinnune, who now serves as the lead Spokane County Sheriff's Office chaplain, worked as chaplain at the Eastern State Hospital beginning in 2016. At the time, he was also a chaplain in the U.S. Army

and a volunteer chaplain for the sheriff's office.

In 2018, Kinnune was sent on a military deployment to Colorado that, after multiple extensions, concluded in 2020. An intern of his at the hospital, April Ross, was assigned interim chaplain in his absence, and per federal law, Kinnune was to return to the position he had left behind when he returned.

Months into his deployment, though, court documents state that Ross wrote and presented a six-page letter accusing Kinnune of "potentially" raping and sexually assaulting patients, bullying, misogyny and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals. There are no records that suggest Ross or managing staff at Eastern State Hospital reported this alleged conduct to law enforcement, despite their statuses as mandatory reporters.

Following Ross's letter, she, Kinnune's supervisor Barbara "Joey" Frost, former Eastern State Hospital CEO Mark Kettner and other management staff emailed one another about

a "plan" for Kinnune's return to the company, court documents said. Part of this plan involved Frost soliciting information from colleagues to paint Kinnune in a negative light.

When he returned to Eastern State Hospital, Kinnune alleged in court documents that while his pay and benefits remained the same, his job description underwent a substantial change. Under new guidelines, he was kept in a subordinate position to his once-intern Ross, received increased supervision and lost his leadership roles in two work groups. Ross maintained her position.

Kinnune said that he had no idea about the misconduct allegations or meetings that occurred while he was gone. He did not find out about them until later, when his lawyer, James Beck with Beck Chase Gillman, requested public records concerning his employment. Beck warned him that certain pages "were pretty ugly."

"I was shocked. Disgusted," Kinnune said of seeing the records. "Patient safety to me, is extremely import-

ant. If anyone had those allegations against them, they should have opened an investigation."

Before having seen the records, though, Kinnune requested leave to serve as chaplain for the Spokane County Sheriff's Office in 2020. He told Eastern State Hospital's investigation manager Matthew McCord that he believed Ross and Frost had spread "disparaging remarks" about him during his leave and that he had experienced a hostile work environment at the hospital since his return, per court documents.

McCord looked into Kinnune's claim and reported in court documents that multiple staff members – including Ross, Frost and CEO Kettner – withheld pertinent information during their conversations. Among the withheld information was Ross's six-page accusation letter and the email chain discussing the "plan" for Kinnune's return to the company, McCord said. Had he known about those items, he would have opened an official investigation into the workplace treatment of Kinnune, he

wrote.

Kettner has since resigned as CEO following the 2021 stabbing of an Eastern State Hospital staffer and her 5-year-old daughter by another staffer. An investigation following the incident, which resulted in the death of the mother, Kassie Dewey, showed that Eastern State Hospital mishandled domestic violence allegations against Joshua Phillips.

In 2021, Kinnune declined to return to Eastern State Hospital from his position at the sheriff's office, citing a belief that his rights had been violated, in court documents.

It was then that Beck requested Department of Social and Health Services records containing mentions of Kinnune. Years later, Kinnune alleged that the returned records deliberately left out the same management correspondences withheld from McCord's initial inquiry, prompting a second lawsuit.

While Beck said that the settlement amount for the discrimination case and the public records case was "some matter of justice,"

he ultimately believes "no amount of money can adequately restore somebody's good name after being treated like this."

State department spokeswoman West said that Ross is no longer an employee at the hospital. Frost remains on staff.

Kinnune said he is hopeful that his work at Eastern State will continue to have a positive impact on the ministry, and that his story might remind younger military members of their employment rights.

"Our military members should never have to fight a second battle at home simply for answering the call to serve," he said in a written statement. "My hope is that this outcome strengthens compliance, fosters respect for the law, and sends a clear message that Washington State will stand behind those who defend our freedoms."

Reporter Amanda Sul-lender contributed to this article.

Cannon Barnett can be reached at (509) 459-5167 or by email at cannonb@spokesman.com.