

THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

COLD SNAP BRINGS WINTER TO SPOKANE

Brief snow blast allows Mt. Spokane to open amid historically ‘mellow winter’

By Thomas Clouse
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

A brief blast of cold and some scrappy new snow-moving techniques allowed Mt. Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park to open this past weekend. And the news gets better. A weather pattern will move in later this week that could dump up to 6 inches of snow on the ski hill,

while warmer temperatures will mean folks living in lower elevations could see a mix of snow, rain and possibly freezing rain, according to the forecast by the National Weather Service. But the last front, which also brought a large dip in temperatures, gave Mount Spokane just enough to open on Saturday, said general manager Jim van Loben Sels.

“We are going to open seven days a week,” van Loben Sels said. “We will probably only have a third of the runs open, but the snow is awesome.” The key, at least for Mount Spokane, is planning for thin times, he said. “Two years ago, we saw a low-snow event. We learned that we

See **WEATHER, 5**

Kids, out of school for the holiday break, race onto the ice at the Numerica Skate Ribbon on Monday at Riverfront Park in downtown Spokane. **JESSE TINSLEY/THE S-R**

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Congress to return to packed agenda

Lawmakers face looming funding deadlines after months of stalled work on Capitol Hill

By Orion Donovan Smith
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

WASHINGTON – The Capitol is quiet this week, with Congress out of town for its end-of-year recess, but lawmakers are gearing up for what promises to be a hectic

few weeks of work when the Senate returns on Monday and the House a day later. Federal legislators had a relatively quiet first half of December, but that’s only because they had already punted key items on their to-do list into 2026. At the half-

way point, the 119th Congress has already distinguished itself as the least productive in modern history by several measures, including the number of bills signed into law, and the 43-day government shutdown that began in October and was the longest in history.

Here are five questions lawmakers will have to answer when they return to the Capitol next week. **Will the government shut down again at the end of January?** Federal funding lapsed for over

six weeks in October and November, disrupting travel, forcing some federal employees to work without pay and costing the U.S. economy an estimated \$90 billion, according to Kevin Hassett, director

See **CONGRESS, 5**



DOWNTOWN STATUE VANDALIZED

The Abraham Lincoln sculpture at the corner of Monroe Street and Main Avenue has again been targeted with red paint. **NW, 1**

SICKNESS FORCES SHELTER TO CLOSE

SpokAnimal is contending with an unidentified respiratory illness that has infected more than a dozen dogs. **NW, 1**

BULLDOGS FACE HOT TOREROS

After their 50th straight win over Pepperdine, coach Few says Gonzaga won’t take San Diego lightly after just one day of rest. **SPORTS, 1**

DIFFERENCE MAKERS Brought to you by NUMERICA

The Spokesman-Review honors those who made extraordinary effort in the past year to improve life in the Inland Northwest. They are people who have dedicated time and energy to improving people’s lives, to building a better economy, to providing much-needed services and to advancing human knowledge. They saw a need and turned it into action. They are the people whose spirit of generosity is deeply woven into the greater Spokane area.

LEADING WITH PURPOSE

EWU football captain Nolan Ulm channels influence into community service

By Dan Thompson
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Nolan Ulm is all about lighting fires in the hearts of other people. Some of that work is done in Kelowna, British Columbia, where Ulm grew up. But he’s also done a lot of it in the Cheney and Spokane area, where Ulm has spoken at various schools and invested his time into a variety of organizations. “I just love leadership,” Ulm said last week. “Hopefully I can ignite a spark within a couple kids.” Leading by example and by words is a fitting bent for a football player like Ulm, who just finished his sixth year as an Eastern Washington football team player, two of which he served as a captain – and a vocal one, too. “He wants to be as impactful as he can,” EWU head coach Aaron Best said of Ulm



COURTESY OF EWU ATHLETICS

Receiver Nolan Ulm caught 117 passes for 1,330 yards and 11 touchdowns during his six seasons at Eastern Washington.

earlier this season. “He’s about as salt-of-the-earth as they come. Football is what he does; it’s not who he is.” Football-wise, Ulm has now turned his focus to making a professional career out of the sport after suiting up in 57 games for

the Eagles, three shy of the program’s all-time career record. But off the field, his focus continues to be on community. See **ULM, 5**



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