THE NEWSTRIBUN



FLOATING YOUR BOAT? CHECK THIS LIST FIRST

Tips to prepare for hitting the water



LOOKS LIKE UW LANDS THOMAS

Star recruit expected to name his choice today

PLUS. EVERETT. M'S ERUPT FOR WIN

DEFINITELY FOOD LEFT

Seems a 'debt of thanks' costs \$13,200 in Tacoma

City officials spend \$13,200 to pay for a fancy private party at the Museum of Glass celebrating the \$100 million-plus cleanup of the Thea Foss Waterway

BY SUSAN GORDON The News Tribune

City officials who wanted to say "a quiet thank you" to honor folks who lent a hand in the Superfund cleanup of the Thea Foss Waterway spent \$13,200 on a private reception Monday.

The party in the Museum of Glass foyer featured a chocolate fountain, smoked salmon, fresh strawberries, cream puffs and other fancy finger foods.

Officials paid for the soire by tapping the city's \$94,5 million waterway cleanup fund, which is largely backed by the public.

The private party took place after local.

lic.
The private party took place after local dignitaries commended the city's Foss revitalization effort in a public ceremony along the Foss Waterway esplanade. After the speeches, 12 Japanese-style fishing

Please see PARTY, page A9

MONDAY'S PARTY COSTS

Rent space in Museum of Glas
Catering room decorations
Invitations, including mailing
112 glass floats and display stand
Engraving the floats
Party favors (clasy seeds in Tagro.
a byproduct of the city's wastewater
treatment plant)
Total
131,202

DO DATABASES DEHUMANIZE?

Killings expose sex offender lists' possible pitfalls

Vigilantes who use Internet-based registries to hunt convicted sex offenders raise questions about public safety versus fairness to an offender trying to rehabilitate.

BY DAVID CRARY

New YORK - The killings of two men listed on Maine's Internet sex offender registry might offer a grim lesson about the consequences of such registry laws, but defense lawyers and crime researchers question whether a thoughfull national debate on the subject is possible. In a climate in which politicians seek ever-tougher punishment and ostracism of sex offenders, they say, few are willing to examine the fairness and risks of registry requirements.

"We've basically dehumanized these people with words such as 'predator,'"

Please see LISTS, back page

Bridge discounts: How long?

Time frame unknown for break in tolls to cross Narrows

The state Transportation Commission begins to discuss the Tacoma Indicates bridge tolls, including more discounts. But drivers probably won't know the cost of crossing until fall.

BY JOSEPH TURNER

Tolls on the new Tacoma Narrows bridge could be discounted longer than just one year – perhaps two years or more – for drivers who

instain an electronic divice in their ears for automated foll collection.

John drivers would pay \$1.50 round-trip—instead of \$3 – to cross the new bridge for the first 11 months of operation, and between \$2 and \$2.50 in the following ears.

Such a discount is considered an incentive for people to sign up for the electronic toll collection instead of stopping at a folloodh and paying the full \$3 toll.

No decisions have been made. The discount was just one of several scenarios precount was just one of several scenarios pre-

sented Wednesday to the Washington Irans-portation Commission, which is just begin-ning to tackle the issue of tolls for the new bridge.

The toll is are scheduled to be collected Commission of the tollowing the commission of the decept for 1900 to traffic.

But drivers probably will have a clearer idea of what they'll be paying by September.

That's when a nine-member citizen advi-

Please see BRIDGE, page A9

of the new Tacoma Narrows bridge get a toll discount for buy-ing an electronic pass? To vote and post a

PROGRAM HELPS WOMEN OFF THE STREETS



Moments after a woman is arrested in a Tacoma police sting operation, Divina Baham, left, talks to her about PROMISE, a diversion program intended to help women quit the business of prostitution. Baham knows the difficulties of life on the streets – she worked as a prostitute as a young woman.

Prostitutes make another go at life

around guides others to do the same. Their stories show what it's like to sell sex on the street – and how hard it is to leave the busin

BY ANGIE LEVENTIS

The News fibuse
The teenager in ripped jeans and a torn sleeveless shirt sits on a curb in South Tacoma, waiting while police check her record.
She was arrested for getting into the wrong car with the wrong guy and offering to do the wrong things for payment, says the cop posing as a client.
The 18-year-old woman doesn't seem too fazed and,

when asked, politely tells police she's been prostituting for about two months.

The cops are also low-key. Tacoma police and neighboring departments have been doing stings like this for decades.

cades.

The only part of this scene that's different is a social orker, who gives the woman a message before the jouryot o iall:

ney to fall:
You can get out of this life. I did.
'You can get out of this life. I did.
'This is all about help,' Divina Baham says to the teen.
'Everybody needs help once in a while.'
The woman on the curb is courteous but not too interested. Baham gives her a pamphlet anyway.

Please see PROSTITUTES, back page

"You can't say it don't bother you. Every

time vou get in a car. it takes away a little bit of yourself."

A WOMAN WHO IS TRYING TO GET OUT OF THE PROSTITUTION BUSINESS



This Stryker model, which Fort Lewis soldiers are

PRETTY EASY TO LEARN.' SERGEANT SAYS

Fort Lewis soldiers get some new wheels

The Army rolls out its \$2.1 million nuclear, biological and chemical reconnaissance Strykers at Fort Lewis. Each has a 'miniature laboratory' onboard to analyze threats.

BY MICHAEL GILBERT

The News Tribune
Soldiers at Fort Lewis are learning to use the
Army's newest version of the Stryker armored vehicle, one that might be called on to protect troops

m the nastiest of weapons

from the nastiest of weapons.
The new Stykers are equipped with an array of sensors, collection tools and computers to detect and identify radiation and chemical and biological agents. Each vehicle's crew of four soldiers, protected inside their pressurized truck, would go into potentially contaminated areas and warn others to

potentially contaminated areas and warn orderstay clear.
The \$2.1 million nuclear, biological and chemical reconnaissance vehicles are the ninth of 10 versions of the Stryker to be delivered by General Dynamics

WARS GROW COSTLIER FOR U.S.
Fixing, replacing equipment adds to price tag. A10

Land Systems.
The Strykers is the 21-ton medium-weight troop carrier first taken into combat less than three years ago. Two Fort Lewis infantry brigades have gone to war in them, with one of those brigades due to return to Iraq this summer.

Please see STRYKERS, back page

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TIME YOUR WALK CAREFULLY: Loo for a few showers on an otherwise pleas-ant day. High; 62. Low: 46. Details, **C8**



STRYKER MODELS

The Army is buying about 2,400 Stryker armored vehicles, which come in 10 variants. Each of the nine versions delivered so far costs between \$1.3 million and \$2.1 million. They are: Infantry carrier: Most common version. Hauls a squad of 11 infan

connaissance vehicle: Offers long-range visual surveillance. Mortar-carrier: Supports mobile teams that fire 60 mm, 81 mm

and 120 mm mortars.

Fire support vehicle: Coordinates artillery and air support.

Engineer squad vehicle: Breach-

nications gear for company, bat-talion and brigade commanders. Medical evacuation: Functions as a high-tech ambulance. Anti-tank guided missile plat-form: Has anti-armor rockets. Nuclear, biological and chemi-

Mobile gun system: Yet to be each, remain in development. Michael Gilhert: The News Tribune

STRYKERS

The Army has bought I7 of the new NBC models, and there's funding for another 13 in the 2006 defense budget – a total of three for each of the service's seven Stryker brigades, with nine to be assigned to other units. About 20 soldiers from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment and the 555th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at Fort Lewis are the first to be trained to use them. The post is home to three Stryker-brigades.

Lewis are the first to be trained to use them. The post is home to three Stryker brigades.

The soldiers have been training on the trucks since they arrived at Fort Lewis in February. Manuals for some sensors are as thick as Tacoma phone books.

Nonetheless, "it's pretty easy to learn," said Sgt. Channing Dingle, a surveyor who operates the vehicle's sensors and collection equipment.

Periscope-like sensors on top scan the air for hazardous vapors and radiation. There's a porthole in the readour that allows surveyors like Dingle to reach out with a special scaled glove to collect and store soil, water and control and store soil, when the same trained in some basic biology and chemistry and about the risks posed by different types of chemical and biological agents, said Bruce Baldwin from the U.S. Army Chemical School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., who is leading the Fort Lewis sessions.

But the "miniature laboratory" of

School at Fort Leonatu Troop, may hot is leading the Fort Lewis sessions.

But the "miniature laboratory" of computers onboard the Stryker do almost all of the analysis, he said.

"Alot of the systems are more useriendly and take out some of the potential for user error," agreed Sgt. Troy Hayman, another surveyor who spent a year with the 2nd Cavalry in Baghdad.

The NBC Strykers replace the Army's Fox reconnaissance vehicle, a six-wheeled rig originally developed in Germany.

When the training is complete, the 2nd Cav's NBC unit will head to the Army's Dugway Proving Ground Iulain is Spetember for testig.

Had they been available, the new played a part in the fruitless hunt for chemical and biological weapons in Iraq.
Their primary role would be to go

projected and the fruites shuft for themical and biological weapons in The remaining them of themical and biological weapons in Their primary role would be to go into an area where commanders had reason to suspect that such weapons had been used, Baldwin said. Hayman said during his year in Traq working as a chemical operations soldier, troops sometimes were called on to deal with toxic industrial material, some of it lototed from work sites and other locations.

Other Fort Lewis soldiers from the Army's first Stryker brigade - the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, which returns to Iraq this summer - were called out on at least one radiological hazard in northern Iraq in 2004, It turned out to be a truckload of lightning rods.

"There are radiological hazards other than just nuclear weapons," Haymans said.

He demonstrated the glove-and-collection tool operation Wednesday for visiting reporters.

Did it give him pause to think that in combat, he might be called upon to thrust his left arm out of the ammored cocoon of the Stryker, protected only a thick black rubber glove?

"Every job in the Army has its risks," Hayman said. "That's ours."

Michael Gilbert: 253-597-8921 mike.gilbert@thenewstribune

LISTS

continues from A1
said psychiatrist Fred Berlin, founder of
the Johns Hopkins Sexual Disorders
Clinic in Baltimore.
"Every decent human being wants to
protect children," he said, but even suggesting that criminals who have done
their time are entitled to rebuild their lives
can tarnish a politician.
"It's close to heresy," Berlin said.
Every state has an online registry with
photographs and personal information
about convicted sex offenders, often to be
posted for at least 20 years and sometimes
for life. Many states, including Maine,
provide offenders' exact street address;
that information apparently was used by
a Nova Scotia man to locate and fatally
shoot two registered sex offenders Sunday.

There have been many cases of vioilan-

shoot two registered sex onemace—day.

There have been many cases of vigilantism in the past, ranging from harassment and arson to murder.

■ In March, Michael Anthony Mullen was sentenced to more than 44 years in prison for shooting Victor Vazquez and Hank Eisses to death in their Bellingham home. Vazquez and Eisses were both child rapists.

home. Vazquez and Eisses were both child rapists. On the evening of Aug. 26, 2005, he went to a home shared by three Level 3 offenders, those deemed most likely to reoflend. After a couple of hours at the house, Mullen shot two of the men. The

third man left before the killings.
In letters sent to media outlets shortly after the killings, Mullen said he had a list of registered sex offenders that he would kill if police didn't arrest them.

— A man mistaken for his sex-offender brother was nearly beaten to death with a baseabll bat in New Jersey—the state where the 1994 killing of 7-year-old Megan Kanka by a neighbor gave rise to the nationwide trend of "Megan's Law" registries.

nationwide trend of "Megan's Law" reg-sistries.

Though they decry vigilantism, police, prosecutors and politicians overwhelm-ingly support the laws. Maine is maintain-ing its online registry despite the shoot-ings, the governors of nearby Vermont and New Hampshir rejected appeals by the control of the control of the control to the control of the control of the control catalogs.

Union branches to climinate the online databases.

James Backstrom, a board member of the National District Attorneys Association and chief prosecutor in Minnesota's Dakota County, said the registries 'are appropriate and needed!

"The victims of crime and the public in general have a right to know where sex offenders are living,' he said.

Backstrom acknowledged, however, that the registries contribute to a serion problem facing Minnesota and other states: Because virtually no one wants sex offenders in their meighborhood, they have difficulty finding an appropriate place to live.

That problem has become particularly

LOCAL LISTINGS

In Pierce County, the Sheriff's Department lists sex offenders' residences down to city blocks. Other counties provide exact addresses. The Washingston State Patrol and he Washingston Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs work together to maintain a statewide database. They emphasize that the accuracy of the data cannot be guaranteed and warn on state and some local Web sites that the information should not be used to intrindate, injure or haras people named in the registry.

To look up offenders in Pierce

"Sheriff")
To look up offenders in other

nter T. George, The News Tribune

severe in states where many towns forbid registered offenders from living near schools, parks and other facilities, said New Jersey defense attorney William Buckman.

"We're essentially seeing people forced into refugee status," said Buckman, a board member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. "The

perts say the major thing in preventing vidivism is to allow offenders to rebuild

experts say the major thing in preventing recidivism is to allow offenders to rebuild their lives, put down roots. But because of feel-good, poorly thought-out, knee-jerk reactions by politicians, the effect is to increase recidivism."

Those advocating reconsideration of sex offender laws aren't suggesting that authorities back away from vigilant monitoring. They note that some states have developed sophisticated risk-assessment systems for deciding which offenders are listed in publicly available registries, so the whereabouts of high-risk offenders are known while lesser risks are granted more anonymity. "I'm the first to say, 'Lock up the harmful sexual offenders,' said Nancy Sabin, who heads a Minnesota-based victims advocacy group called the Jacob Wetter-ling Foundation.

But not all offenders fall into that category, she said: "We need to step back, adout the most effective ways to deal with the issue."

about the most eliceture ways to ocau wu.

In Missouri, the state Supreme Court
is expected to rule soon on one of the few
major legal challenges to a registry system. A class-action suit contends the state
law is applied too broadly and unfairly
punishes those who pose little risk –
such as a woman who had consensual sex
with a 15-year-old boy when she
was 20, and a man classified as a child
abuser because he spanked his son with
a belt.

PETER HALEY/The News Tribur

PETERHALEY/In-News ithin a Baham, right, leads a group of 11 women enrolled in PROMISE. The program's name stands for Prostitution Recovery Opportunity Mentoring, Intervention, rices and Education. Sponsored by the Metropolitan Development Council, it includes counseling, health care and assistance with education and job skills.

PROSTITUTES

It tells about a new program called PROMISE, which provides women in the sex trade with services designed to build them up and maybe get telm out of the business altogether. The tab is picked up by their patrons, a kind of inadvertent retirement package. Since last year, men caught soliciting prostitutes have had the option of attenting john School. It lets them avoid harsher punishment by taking a class and paying a few of several hundred dollars. The money helps make the maximum and the search properly the properly the service of the properly the service of the servic

state.

The sex trade touches all parts of Pierce
County, from South Tacoma Way in
Lakewood to downtown Tacoma to the
noted so File. Local merchants say prostitutes and their customers bring drug use
and violence that harms their businesses.
Residents say the crime and its subculture
ruin communities.

ruin communities.

Chris Travis, a Tacoma police officer who specializes in prostitution, is glad to give streetwalkers somewhere to go. He also enjoys the irony of this new system.

"The johns are forced to help," he says.
"It's the total opposite of what they were doing in the first place."

CLEANING UP FOR A BETTER LIFE

CLEANING UP FOR A BETTER LIFE

Baham rides in the passenger seat next to Travis. About 20 years ago she would have been in the back seat, wrists cuffed like that teenager.

The former teen prostitute was hired in December by the Metropolitan Development Council to lead PROMISE. She recruits women at common pickup corners, needle exchanges and shelters.

On another weekday, she meets at MDC's homeless shelter with a 54-year-old woman who would like to be called Cheryl; she did not want her name used in order to protect her new life.

Cheryl sounds tired as she tells her story. She took care of seven brothers and sisters at 14 and started drinking and doing drugs around the same age. She says she's been raped while tricking and jailed four times for prostitution.

She says she cleaned up once before and shared an apartment with her boy-friend in Seattle. But people around her

She says she cleaned up once before and shared an apartment with her boy-friend in Seattle. But people around her

FIVE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is PROMISE? A new Metropolitan Development Council program to get services to help women in the sex trade. The acronym stands for Prostitution Recovery Opportunity Mentoring, Intervention, Services and Education. It includes counseling, mental and physical health care, and HIV and STD testing. Participants also get help with housing, education and job skills. How many women are participating? Eleven so far, though MDC is still recruiting. Who pays for it? Clients of the sex trade. Men caught soliciting prostitutes in Lakewood, Tacoma and fife have the option of avoiding the courts by going to a daylong class and paying a 5600 or 5700 fee, depending on the city in which he was caught.

was caught.

How many men have gone to this John School? Forty-nine from Tacoma and
Lakewood have been to three sessions. It's provided about \$25,000 to the PROM

Lakewood nave been to under the lake th

not impact court decisions. **How can I get help?** Call Divina Baham at MDC at 253-284-9035. **Angie Leventis. The News Tribune**

were still living that life. The temptation was too strong and she slipped back. A new low came in December: She blacked out on the street and awakened in a gutter, dirty water pouring over her face.

She moved to Tacoma on New Year's Day, with a resolution to stay away from drugs and prostitution. She isn't making money. Her days are spent at social service centers, and they're tedious.

tedious.
But it's worth it. She says she wants to become a chef.
"When I look back on my life, it's not good," she said. "I've wasted my life."

RISING FROM A NEW LOW

Cheryl sits in a group with 10 other women. Their ages range from early 20st to mid-50s, from all races and back

to mid-50s, from all races and back-grounds.
At their first group session, Cheryl reads the first of 14 pledges the women are making to themselves:
"I have the right to feel better through my own efforts, rather than expect the passage of time or anyone else to do it for me."

me."

They talk about survival, how good it feels to get high and make the pain go away, and how bad it feels when the pain returns and the drugs are gone.

They talk about rage, the kind so deep inside it comes out unexpectedly, turning them violent.

them violent.

They also talk about the power in making your own money and not punching a time clock or giving it to a pimp. And how

w it feels to sleep on the streets without

town treats useep on the steels window, a dime for tomorrow.

"You can't say it do there you," one "You can't say it do they you get in a car, it a can't to the you get in a car, it a can't to the you can't a can't to the can'

Maddie says she hit her low about eight months ago while speeding on Highway 7, high and drunk, her son and daughter in the back seat. She passed out and drove

In the back seat. She passed out and drove into a ravine. Her kids, age 5 and 4, were fine but now live with a family member. She says she's been suicidal on and off for 10 years. The last attempt was about six weeks ago, with pills. But she thinks things are changing to be an apartment manager. She's been drug-free for three weeks and studying to be an apartment manager. She wants to get her kids back when she has a home with an extra bedroom. Maddie reads the final pledge: "I have the right to change the way feel about things, even though I have al-ways felt that way." One woman asks why she's smilling. Maddie looks down. "Because I'm trying not to cry," she says.

Angie Leventis: 253-597-8692 angie.leventis@thenewstribu

Counselor understands

the street life

Divina Baham, 39, grew up in Tacoma's North End.
She was in and out of foster homes as a kid. Her teens were a whirl of depression, anger and drug abuse. She was living on the streets by T7, a dropout of her Catholic high school.
Baham was staying in Seattle with a male friend a few years older. She didn't know he was selling his body to pay the rent until he suggested she start contributing the same way.
She was shocked. But she did it. It didn't take long for the first forty-something man to roll down his car window to ask the T-year-old for a "date."

"date."

She made \$100. She felt nasty.

The next three months were a vicious cycle of getting high to do the job without feeling it, and doing the job to finance more cocaine and meth for later.

same to the construction of the construction o

ages 4 to 17.

Baham doesn't call the women she works with prostitutes. Just because you do something, it doesn't define your entire being, she said.

"People don't realize that prostitutes are people, that they're human," she said.

she said. Angie Leventis, The News Tribune

COMING FRIDAY

YEAH X 3

Find out the latest about the art-punk pop trio the Yeah Yeah S, just in time for their Seattle show.





SPECIAL EARTH DAY ISSUE

From the ocelot to the grizzly bear, a look at the Endangered Species Act over the past 33 years, plus an examination of 12 animals.

IN LIFE MAGAZINE



COMING SATURDAY

GET DOWN AND DIRTY

Even if you lack a green thumb, our tips for beginners can help you learn to garden.

IN SOUNDLIFE