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THE HAWK



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

World famous skate boarder Tony Hawk entertained a crowd of enthusiastic skate board fans at Jefferson Park Skate Park. Tony Hawk's skate board team, the Birdhouse Crew, stopped in Seattle on Thursday, July 26, as part of the Birdhouse Left Coast Tour.

Police Reform Signed

Seattle, federal officials agree to federal changes

By Chris Grygiel
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Seattle officials have agreed to an independent monitor and court oversight of the city's police department as part of a deal with the U.S. Justice Department following a report that found officers routinely used excessive force.

City and federal negotiators were involved in tense talks over the scope of a deal for months, and Justice Department lawyers had threatened to sue the city if a deal was not reached by July 31.

"It's no secret there were a few bumps in the road to get here," Mayor Mike McGinn said of the agreement, which was announced Friday. "We do have a lot of work in front of us."

The Justice Department launched its civil rights investigation early last year after the fatal shooting of a homeless, Native American woodcarver and other incidents involving force used against minority suspects. In December, a DOJ report found officers were too quick to reach for weapons, such as flashlights and batons, even when arresting people for minor offenses.

The agreement was announced at City Hall by McGinn; Jenny Durkan, U.S. attorney for Seattle, and Thomas Perez, the Justice Department's chief civil rights enforcer.

The deal also calls for a special commission, appointed by the mayor, to concentrate on use of force issues.

Talks between Seattle officials and the Justice Department had been hung up after city officials initially balked at some federal proposals for reform.

The settlement, which must be approved by a federal judge, requires the Seattle Police Department to revise use of force policies and enhance training, reporting, investigation and supervision for situations involving use force. Police also would have to change policies and training concerning "bias-free" policing and stops, and create a

See GIRLS on page 3

See REFORM on page 6

Teenaged Girls Sue Website

Backpage.com accused of 'enabling exploitation' for sex ads

TACOMA, Wash. (AP) — Three Washington teenagers who say they were sold online for sex have sued the website Backpage.com, accusing the website's owners of enabling their exploitation.

Two 13-year-old girls from Pierce County and one 15-year-old from King County, which encompasses Seattle, filed the lawsuit Friday in Pierce County Superior Court, The News Tribune of Tacoma reported Sunday. Seattle attorney Liz McDougall, who represents

Backpage's corporate owners, said the lawsuit will not pass legal muster and is barred by federal law. The site is owned by Village Voice Media in New York.

Backpage is a popular online destination for escort services. The company has been under heavy pressure to change the way it operates.

In May, the mayors of nearly 50 cities across the U.S. — including New York, Los Angeles, Phoenix and Philadelphia — signed a letter urging Village

Voice Media to require identification for people posting escort ads on Backpage.com.

"Is it proper for some outfit, for some entity, to make millions of dollars not only in trafficking women, but even more importantly trafficking children?" asked Seattle attorney Mike Pfau, who with Erik Bauer represents the teens. "No. It is absolutely unacceptable."

The lawsuit alleges that photos of the underage girls in skimpy garb appeared in numerous ads on the site, paid for by

their pimps. It accuses the owners of doing nothing to prevent it. The actions described in the complaint date to 2010.

The website require ad buyers to click an on-screen button to verify that the users are 18 or older, but the lawsuit alleges it's not much of a deterrent, the News Tribune reported.

"Other than requiring the poster of the ad to agree to this term by 'clicking' on the posting rules page, Backpage.com does nothing to verify the age of the

Police Training in Reasonable Force

Olympia incidents prompt closer look at when violence is right

By Jeremy Pawloski
The Olympian

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — The Washington State Patrol's use-of-force policy can be boiled down to a single sentence: "Only reasonable force to lawfully perform an officer's duties shall be used."

But choosing the appropriate level of force can be complicated, said Cpl. Ryan

Spurling, who has taught control tactics to incoming State Patrol cadets for 14 years.

Officers are trained to "reasonably" intrude upon a person's constitutional right against unreasonable search and seizure if the individual is breaking, or suspected of, breaking the law, Spurling said.

The U.S. Supreme Court said in a 1989 opinion that "reasonableness" is determined by a "careful balancing of 'the

nature and quality of the intrusion on the individual's Fourth Amendment interests' against the countervailing governmental interest at stake."

Last month, a jury heard a case in which two Olympia police officers punched, tased and used a technique similar to a chokehold on a 27-year-old man who lost conscious-

See FORCE on page 3

INDEX

- News2,3,6
- Calendar2
- Opinion4
- A&E5
- Bids/Classifieds7