

Debate

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Holmes said. "The point is if it's still at the level of 5 nanograms per liter of whole blood, active THC, then the best available data says you are probably impaired."

Sarich disagreed, stating that studies show drug impairment cannot be judged by blood content. He also argued that as a medical marijuana patient he is almost never under

now," Sarich said. "That will be every medical marijuana patient."

Pete Slack, commander of the Snohomish County Drug Task Force, also opposes legalization. He doesn't think legalizing marijuana will eliminate the black market. He said sellers will likely offer lower prices than what the state-regulated marijuana is sold for. He is also concerned that I-502's taxes, which could earn the state an estimated \$560 million a year, would be so high they would make the black market stronger.

Holmes said he supports legalization because he wants to confront the federal ban on marijuana.

Braxton's support for legalization is solely based on stopping the war on drugs,

which he said is actually a war on black and brown people.

Sarich supports legalization but argued that I-502, which would legalize and tax sales of up to 1 ounce of marijuana, isn't really legalization because marijuana will still be classified as a schedule one drug

the per se limit.

"I've had my blood tested and I'm probably four to five times the legal limit right

Dead

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for respect," Hawkins said standing beside the stacked urns in the cooler.

Two people, Loretta Whetstone and Ila Faye Dooley, have been waiting since 1994 for burial. They died the year after the Legislature stopped paying to bury unclaimed remains. Most, though, died since 2005. Hawkins is holding onto remains from the last two years in hopes that they'll be claimed. He plans to open the grave up each year to add remains and take out any that have been claimed.

Indigent deaths make up only a tiny fraction of deaths in Yakima County each year -- fewer than 10 out of about 1,700 -- but people find them unsettling, he said.

In Washington, a dead person's relatives are responsible for disposing of the corpse, regardless of income. But if a body is not claimed in 90 days and the deceased doesn't have money, it falls to the county to take care of it.

Until 1993, the state Department of Social and Health Services paid for handling the corpse, a casket, a cemetery plot, burial and

even a small service when the deceased had no money. But the \$3.3 million program was lost in a round of budget cuts, according to news reports at the time.


Counties tended to provide only enough money to cover the bare minimum -- cre-

Legally, counties can simply scatter a person's ashes after cremation and be done with it. But Smock said he doesn't know of any county that does that

mation, said Cameron Smock, past president of the Washington State Funeral Directors Association and CEO of Bonney-Watson Funeral Home in Seattle.

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Register to Vote



Seattle King County Branch of the NAACP President Emeritus Lacy Steele sells tickets Oct. 13 to a performance by Roy Horn and his band at the Scarlet Tree Restaurant to help raise funds for the NAACP Get Out the Vote Campaign. Seattle voters can still register to vote in person until Oct. 29. For more info go to the King County Election website: www.kingcounty.gov/elections/registration or call 206-296-8683.

Suicide

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deployed. She had been hospitalized after telling doctors she wanted to crash a car and injure herself.

They also didn't know she had weaned herself off her prescribed anti-anxiety medication to satisfy requirements to deploy. That was six months before she shot and killed herself while stationed alone in a guard tower on Dec. 21 at Forward Operat-

She had weaned herself off her prescribed anti-anxiety medication to satisfy requirements to deploy

ing Base Salerno.

"It is my opinion that (Bragg) 'fell through the cracks' created by the lack of information sharing that had been repeatedly requested and denied," a brigade behavioral health officer stationed at Camp

Salerno wrote to investigators.

Bragg's father, Steve Bragg of Longview, declined to comment on the findings.

The report highlights a persistent problem for the military: Suicides have risen alarmingly even as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are winding down. Veterans groups and others have urged the military to do more to help soldiers who are struggling with long deployments, the stress of being away from home and pre-existing psychological trauma.

But it also portrays a young soldier determined to serve. Bragg, 20, enlisted in 2008 after graduating from Mark Morris High School. She volunteered at battalion fundraising events, referred herself to Fort Knox counselors when necessary, and, once she deployed, fit in immediately with a new group of soldiers.

The 135-page report, known as a 15-6 investigation, included written statements from Bragg's colleagues and commanders, mental-health counselors and Army officials at Fort Knox. All names except for

Funeral homes pick up much of the costs not covered by counties. Benevolent groups, religious organizations and other entities also help.

Sometimes, funeral homes have to absorb all the costs. Some counties won't pay if

any relatives can be located or if the annual budget for indigent burials is exhausted, he said.

That is not the case in Yakima County, according to Hawkins.

Even when cremation is paid for by a county, charity or family, the ashes can end up in storage at a funeral home, Smock said.

Bonney-Watson, which started in 1868, has "thousands of cremated remains."

Some of the unclaimed remains go back to the 1800s, but they won't be thrown out.

"Some family member may come forward some day and claim them," Smock said. "And we wouldn't want to tell them that we've disposed of their uncle's remains and can't retrieve them."

Funeral homes go to great lengths to track down even distant relatives, said Kathy Birdwell, general manager at Shaw and Sons Funeral Directors in Yakima.

"What we see in these unclaimed remains, it's more than just a financial issue. It's the missing human connections," she said.

There are many reasons a body goes unclaimed: A person has no relatives or is estranged from them, or the relatives cannot pay to bury the body.

Sometimes, the relatives simply don't care, said Michael Kearl, a sociology professor at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas.

Bragg's were blacked out in the report. Capt. Brett C. Shepard, an attorney with of the U.S. Army's Judge Advocate General Corps, signed it.

Bragg showed no indications she was having trouble in Afghanistan, according to Army interviews with nearly two dozen of her fellow soldiers. All said she was a good soldier, and she had been promoted twice to specialist while in Afghanistan. She completed the Army's suicide prevention training in November 2011 -- mandatory for all soldiers -- and attended additional classes designed to help intervene in other soldiers' suicide attempts, according to the report.

The report does not say if anyone would face discipline in relation to Bragg's death. The investigators made three recommendations:

— Mental-health providers stateside should share more information about high-risk soldiers with mental-health providers in war zones. Camp Salerno's behavioral

health officer said she had been unable to get mental-health records for Bragg because of privacy laws.

— Commanders should develop better

Suicides have risen alarmingly even as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are winding down

procedures to ensure personnel data is not lost while transferring soldiers between units.

— No soldier, regardless of gender, should be stationed in a guard tower alone.

In the report, Army investigators said commanders at Fort Knox failed to properly track Bragg as a "high-risk" soldier who could potentially hurt herself or others before she was cleared to deploy to Afghanistan.