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FRUSTRATED POLICE SCOUR THE REGION

Suspect leaves trail but eludes capture; questions about legal system grow

THE SUSPECT



Maurice Clemmons

DESCRIPTION

Age: 37

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches

Weight: 235 pounds

Features: Black hair; brown eyes; mole on left cheek

\$125,000 REWARD

A reward has been offered for information that leads to the arrest of Clemmons. Tipline: 866-977-2362.

FIVE PAGES INSIDE



HUCKABEE LINK

How Clemmons won clemency from former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee in 2000 and the political fallout for the former Republican presidential candidate
> Close-up A3



THE REACTION

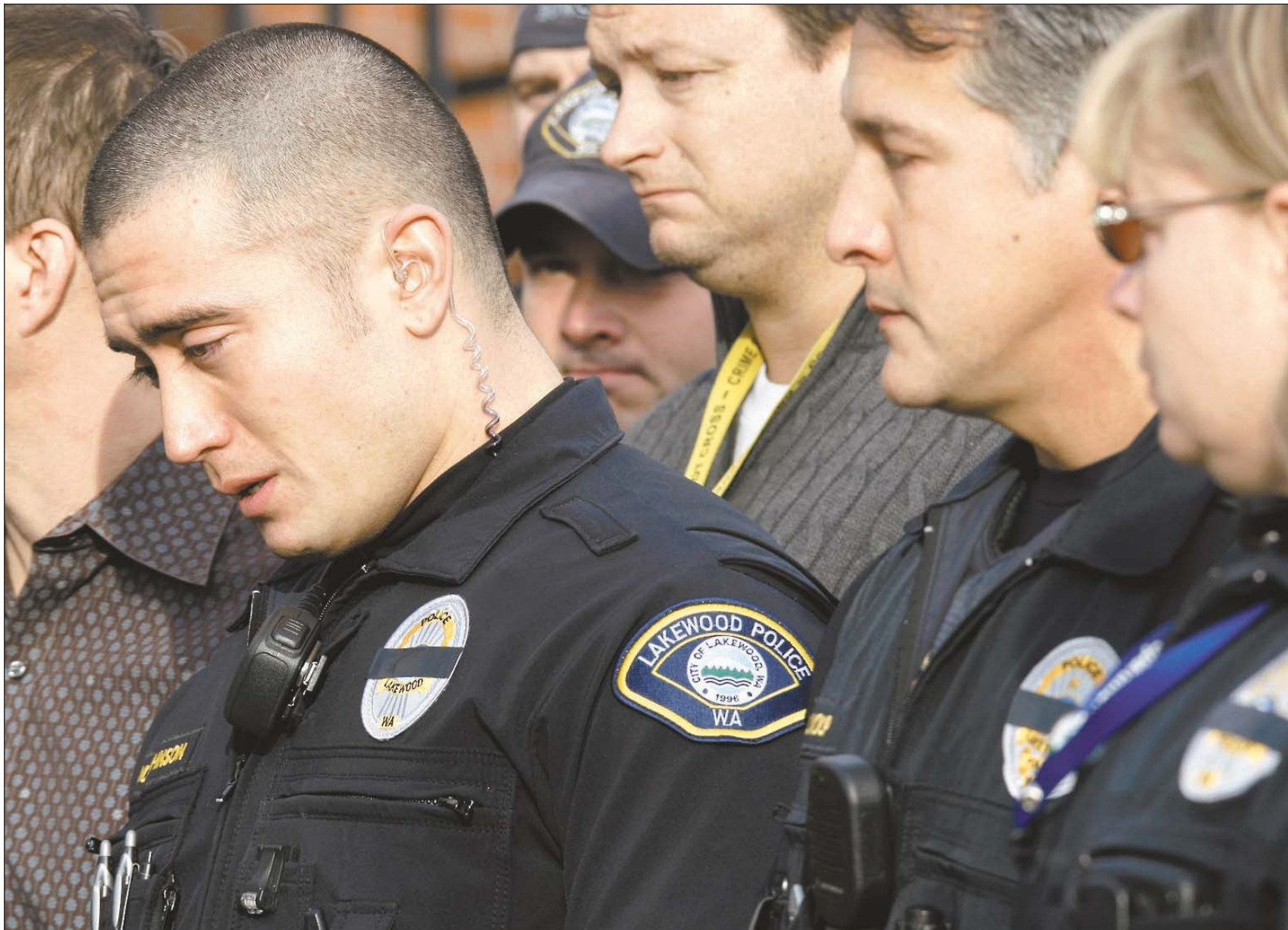
Tens of thousands of Facebook users worldwide express words of support after the slayings of the officers; a candlelight vigil is planned Wednesday night **> A6**

THE CONCERNS

African-American leaders worry that the furious manhunt for Clemmons could increase the potential for racial profiling **> A6**

NICOLE BRODEUR

Halloween ambush of Seattle officers, all-night police stakeout of Clemmons relative's home exact a heavy toll on Seattle's Leschi neighborhood **> A9**



TED S. WARREN / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lakewood police officers become emotional at a press conference Monday. Four fellow officers were shot to death Sunday as they sat in a coffee shop.

POLICE BELIEVE CLEMMONS HAS RECEIVED HELP FROM HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS

BY SARA JEAN GREEN
AND CHRISTINE CLARRIDGE
Seattle Times staff reporters

PARKLAND, Pierce County — Maurice Clemmons is likely desperate: He is believed to be armed, but he's running out of friends to help him stay ahead of police. And the gunshot wound to his gut probably hasn't stopped bleeding.

"It's unfortunate he's been a step or two ahead of us," Pierce County sheriff's Detective Ed Troyer said Monday, nearly 36 hours after Clemmons is accused of executing four Lakewood police officers in a Parkland coffee shop. But, Troyer said, the number of people willing to help him is dwindling fast.

Detectives have detained several of Clemmons' friends, family members and acquaintances — and could arrest and book many of them into jail for helping Clemmons elude capture, Troyer said. On Monday night, the Sheriff's Office launched a series of tactical operations targeting the homes of relatives and friends believed to be helping Clemmons, Troyer said.

He said police are going after
See **> MANHUNT, A7**



KEVIN P. CASEY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seattle police SWAT members leave a house in the Leschi neighborhood Monday after finding no sign of suspect Maurice Clemmons.



ERIKA SCHULTZ / THE SEATTLE TIMES

An officer wearing a gas mask exits the East Superior Street home in Seattle's Leschi neighborhood. Police staked out the home all night.

Four days in May set stage for tragedy

BY NICK PERRY, MAUREEN O'HAGAN, JONATHAN MARTIN
AND KEN ARMSTRONG
Seattle Times staff reporters

Over four days in May, Maurice Clemmons' behavior and mental state deteriorated. Family members worried he had gone crazy, that he was verging on collapse. His conduct became so erratic — punching a sheriff's deputy, forcing relatives to strip naked, according to police reports — that authorities eventually charged him with eight felonies, including one count of child rape.

Still, at the end of those four days, Clemmons wound up on the loose — a delusional man with a propensity for violence, who had managed to escape the grip of authorities.

What happened in those four days — and in the months that followed — reflects a system governed by formula and misguided incentives.

That legal system, both in Arkansas and Washington, failed to account for the entirety of Clemmons' violence and his disdain for the law. Individual crimes,

See **> RAGE, A8**

Obama's Afghanistan message

The president today will unveil his plan for the war in a 5 p.m. address to air on the networks and cable news channels **> A5**



Index

ASK AMY	NWTUESDAY B7
NICOLE BRODEUR	A9
BUSINESS, STOCKS	A10-12
CLOSE-UP	A3
COMICS, PUZZLES	NWTUESDAY B5-7
CROSSWORDS	NWTUESDAY B6

DEATHS, FUNERALS

EDITORIALS	A13
LOCAL NEWS	NWTUESDAY B1
LOTTERY, CORRECTIONS	A2
SPORTS ON TV, RADIO	SPORTS C2
WEATHER	NWTUESDAY B8
YOUR TUESDAY	NWTUESDAY B3

Classified ads

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PUBLIC NOTICES C3

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CloseUp

Persuasive appeal helped Clemmons win clemency

A CHANGED MAN |
The repeat felon convinced Gov. Mike Huckabee and the Arkansas Parole Board he had learned from his mistakes.

BY JIM BRUNNER
AND SUSAN KELLEHER
Seattle Times staff reporters

Maurice Clemmons likely would still be sitting in an Arkansas prison cell if he hadn't convinced former Gov. Mike Huckabee and the state's parole board that he'd reformed while behind bars for a teenage crime spree.

Clemmons, a suspect in Sunday's slaying of four Lakewood police officers, had been sentenced to about 100 years in prison for several felonies, including bringing a gun to school and a robbery in which he punched a woman in the face.

He would not have been eligible for parole until 2015 or later, according to Arkansas court documents and prosecutors.

But Clemmons was set free in 2000 — over the objections of prosecutors — after Huckabee commuted the long prison sentence, making him immediately eligible for parole.

In his appeal to Huckabee, Clemmons apologized for his actions but complained he'd received overly harsh sentences.

Clemmons said he started his crime spree at 16, after he had moved from Seattle to a high-crime neighborhood in Arkansas.

"I succumbed to the peer pressure and the need I had to be accepted by other youth in my new environment and fell in with the wrong crowd and thus began a seven month crime spree which led me to prison," Clemmons wrote in his clemency application to Huckabee.

"Good Christian family"

Clemmons wrote he came from "a very good Christian family" and "was raised much better than my actions speak"

In a 1989 aggravated robbery, Clemmons, 17 at the time, and two accomplices accosted a woman at midnight in the parking lot of a Little Rock hotel bar and robbed her of \$16 and a credit card.

The woman, Karen Hodge, testified at trial that Clemmons threatened her by pretending to have a gun in his pocket. "Give me your purse or I'm going to shoot you," he told her.

Hodge, who'd had a glass of scotch, responded, "Well ... why don't you just shoot?" Clemmons punched her in the head and tore



WEB EXTRA
Huckabee's order
View the entire commutation document and Maurice Clemmons' request for clemency at seattletimes.com

the purse off her shoulder, according to court records.

He was sentenced to 35 years in prison for that incident.

In his appeal for clemency, Clemmons said he had changed.

"Where once stood a young ... misguided fool, who's (sic) own life he was unable to rule. Now stands a 27 year old man, who has learned through 'the school of hard knocks' to appreciate and respect the rights of others. And who has in the midst of the harsh reality of prison life developed the necessary skills to stand along (sic) and not follow a multitude to do evil, as I did as a 16 year old child."

Clemmons added that his mother had recently died without seeing him turn his life around and that he prayed Huckabee would show compassion by releasing him.

His clemency application was supported by Pulaski County Circuit Court Judge Marion Humphrey, who cited Clemmons' youth at the

time of his crimes and called his cumulative sentence excessive. Clemmons' release was unanimously approved by the parole board.

The Pulaski County prosecutor's office twice objected to parole recommendations for Clemmons.

"For us to prosecute a 17-year-old, and for him to get a 95-year sentence without a homicide — you've got to be a bad little dude to draw that kind of a sentence," said Mark Fraiser, who prosecuted the early cases against Clemmons in Pulaski County.

Clemmons had insisted on separate trials for each charge, Fraiser said, and the judge who presided over the cases had a strong tendency to issue consecutive sentences that reflected the judgment of jurors in each case.

Clemmons "had an obvious propensity for future violence," Fraiser said Monday. "To wake up this morning and turn on the news and hear his name, I can't even imagine

the suffering of those families and the suffering of people in those communities."

Humphrey said Monday he remembers Clemmons and believed he was genuinely remorseful and wanted to change.

"I figure young people make some mistakes," he said. Also a Presbyterian minister, Humphrey said he believes in giving people a second chance.

Humphrey in 2004 also officiated Clemmons' wedding, according to a copy of the marriage certificate.

"It would be the furthest thing from my mind that he would go out and kill four police officers, if in fact he did," Humphrey said.

Huckabee also cited Clemmons' young age at the time of his crimes in an official proclamation commuting his sentence. The proclamation said Clemmons faced a 95-year sentence but corrections officials in that state said he likely would have served far less than that.

The proclamation was one of 1,033 commutations and pardons Huckabee issued during his more than 10 years as governor. That's about twice the number issued by his three predecessors combined.

Back in prison

Clemmons was released from prison in August 2000 but was sent back on a parole violation — a robbery charge — in July 2001, according to Dina Tyler, spokeswoman for the Arkansas Department of Corrections.

He received a 10-year sentence, Tyler said, but records show he was paroled again in March 2004.

Pulaski County Prosecutor Larry Jegley said that by his count, Clemmons should have been in jail until 2021.

"Mr. Huckabee made him parole-eligible 21 years before he would have been," Jegley said.

Clemmons' volatile behavior in court gave officials little reason to show leniency.

"He was one you always kept an eye on," said W.A. McCormick, chief deputy for Jegley in the years Clemmons was prosecuted. "You just wanted to keep your distance with him in the courtroom."

Fraiser recalled how Clemmons dismantled a pneumatic metal door stop and hid it in his sock, possibly to use as a weapon. A bailiff discovered it and took it away.

A judge also accused Clemmons of threatening him, and, in yet another case, Clemmons took a lock from his holding cell and threw it at a bailiff, missing him and hitting Clemmons' mother instead.

Clemmons moved to Washington state in 2004 while still on parole, a move approved by Arkansas authorities. He spent the past several months in jail on a child-rape charge but was released last week

Criminal history

Highlights from Maurice Clemmons' criminal history in Arkansas.

November 1989: At age 17, sentenced to 35 years for aggravated robbery and theft in Little Rock after he stole a purse from a woman, claiming he had a gun and punching her.

January 1990: Sentenced to 60 years for burglary and theft for stealing about \$6,700 worth of items, including a gun, from an Arkansas state trooper's home.

February 1990: Sentenced to six years for possessing a .25-caliber pistol at Hall High School, where he was a junior. Clemmons told police he brought the gun to protect himself against "dopers" who had chased and beaten him.

August 2000: Released from prison after then-Gov. Mike Huckabee commutes his sentence.

July 2001: Sentenced to 10 years in prison on a robbery charge.

March 2004: Paroled again from prison. Later moves to Washington state.

Sources: Clemmons petition for clemency; Arkansas Democrat-Gazette archives

after arranging for a bail-bond company to post his \$150,000 bond. His release here came despite seven other pending felony charges, according to court records.

Huckabee, a Republican presidential contender in 2008, issued a statement Sunday night mourning the deaths of the Lakewood police officers and saying that if Clemmons is responsible "it will be the result of a series of failures in the criminal justice system in both Arkansas and Washington state."

Huckabee noted that Clemmons' release was approved by the parole board and that prosecutors in Arkansas failed to file additional charges against Clemmons after his parole violation in 2001, which could have extended his time in prison.

"If I could have known nine years ago and could have looked into the future, would I have acted favorably upon the parole board's recommendation? Of course not," Huckabee told Fox News Radio on Monday.

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette contributed to this story.

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Political death blow for Huckabee?

CLEMMONS COULD BE HIS WILLIE HORTON
Commuted sentence suddenly a big liability

BY ANDREW DEMILLO
The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — As governor of Arkansas, Mike Huckabee had a hand in pardoning or commuting many more prisoners than his three immediate predecessors combined. Maurice Clemmons, the suspect in Sunday's slayings of four Seattle-area police officers, was among them.

As Huckabee considers another run for the White House, Clemmons could become his Willie Horton.

"In a primary between a law-and-order Republican and him, I think it could definitely be a vulnerability," said Art English, a political scientist at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. "It is very damaging when you have someone like that whose sentence was commuted. That's pretty high profile and very devastating and very tragic."

English said it's hard to avoid comparing the case to Horton, a convicted killer who raped a woman and assaulted her fiancé while on release as part of a prison furlough program supported by Michael Dukakis when he

was governor of Massachusetts.

Allies of former President George H.W. Bush ran ads criticizing Dukakis for his support of the program, undermining the Democrat's presidential campaign.

As recently as Sunday, hours before the shooting suspect was linked to him, Huckabee said he was leaning against running again for president, telling "Fox News Sunday" he was "less likely rather than more likely" to run.

Huckabee is one of the Republican Party's most popular figures, but he has been dogged by questions over the more than 1,000 commutations and pardons he issued — more than his three predecessors combined — during his 10-year tenure.

During his 2008 presidential campaign, he faced similar questions over the release from prison of a convicted rapist named Wayne DuMond, who was later convicted of another rape and murder.

Huckabee tried then to distance himself from any role in the DuMond parole, and on Sunday he similarly pointed at "a series of failures in the criminal-justice system" regarding Maurice Clemmons.

"If I could have known nine years ago that this guy was capable of something of this



SPENCER TIREY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, 2001
Mike Huckabee, one of the Republican Party's most popular figures, is seen as Arkansas governor. Nine years ago he commuted the prison sentence of Maurice Clemmons.

magnitude, obviously I would have never granted a commutation. It's sickening," Huckabee said Monday during an interview with Fox News Channel's Bill O'Reilly.

Huckabee joined O'Reilly in criticizing two judges who freed Clemmons, 37, after he posted a \$15,000 bond just a few days before the shooting. He had been jailed on charges of second-degree rape in a case involving a young female relative.

Michelle Malkin, a popular conservative blogger, dubbed the situation "Huckabee's Willie Horton."

"This story is political

the 2012 campaign.

Two members of the state parole board said Huckabee pressured them to show DuMond mercy, while Huckabee publicly questioned whether DuMond was guilty of the rape of a teenage girl. During the presidential primaries, a conservative group aired television commercials in South Carolina featuring the mother of Carol Sue Shields, whom DuMond killed in 2000 after his release.

Clemmons' case packs more potency: The facts of Huckabee's involvement in the clemency decision are less in dispute, and the crime has played over and over on national television.

"It's the same issue yet again," said Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster. "The difference this time is that Gov. Huckabee would start with greater visibility and higher in the polls, which always enhances and exacerbates any possible criticisms."

"People might be able to understand one instance," said Don Sipple, a GOP strategist who stayed neutral in the presidential primaries. "But now you have two difference episodes where he's shown poor judgment."

"That's somebody he probably shouldn't have" let go free, said Dick Dresner, who helped steer Huckabee's



Willie Horton, whose case undermined candidate Michael Dukakis

2008 presidential bid, noting that Clemmons was not the first convict to "go off the deep end" after being released during Huckabee's 10-year term.

Prosecutors have said Huckabee, a Southern Baptist preacher, was more inclined to release or reduce the sentences of prisoners if he had direct contact with them or was lobbied by those close to him. Joe Carter, a staffer on Huckabee's 2008 presidential campaign, suggested the former governor may simply be too forgiving.

"Ironically, what makes Huckabee such an appealing presidential candidate — his empathy for all people and genuine belief in the individual — is also the trait that will prevent him from ever reaching the White House," Carter wrote in a blog post Monday. "... The unfortunate reality is that for politicians, unlike pastors, there are limits to compassion."

Additional material from The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times and The New York Times

4 POLICE OFFICERS SLAIN



Officer Tina Griswold Officer Ronald Owens Sgt. Mark Renninger Officer Gregory Richards

Grief, gratitude for slain officers

MEMORIALS | Condolences continue to pour in from around the nation and world to the Lakewood Police Department. A candlelight vigil planned for Wednesday night is expected to draw thousands to Pierce County.



Three women embrace Monday at a memorial for the slain officers at the Lakewood Police Department.



PHOTOS BY ELLEN M. BANNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Officers and the public bring flowers, cards, candles and teddy bears in honor of the officers. The blank binders are for mourners to write comments about each officer.

BY LYNN THOMPSON
Seattle Times staff reporter

More than 90,000 people posted messages of condolence on a Facebook page honoring four slain Lakewood police officers in the day after their deaths. Several thousand people are expected to line the streets Wednesday night near the Lakewood Police Department as part of a candlelight vigil.

Flags throughout the region are flying at half-staff, and public officials from across the state have issued expressions of sympathy.

The unprecedented assassination of the officers — just a month after a Seattle police officer was gunned down as he sat in his squad car — has prompted an outpouring of shock, grief and outrage from people throughout the region and around the world.

“Those officers represent

us,” said Dean Curry, pastor of the Life Center Assembly of God Church in Tacoma, which is partnering with the Lakewood YMCA for Wednesday’s vigil. “When we see them we know they are standing between us and harm. When they are attacked, we feel it’s an attack upon ourselves.”

The circumstances of the shootings, four officers quietly starting their Sunday in a coffee shop, seemed to touch many of those sharing their reactions online.

“You put your lives on the line for us every single day. You wear those uniforms for our safety and no other reason,” wrote Darla Langdon.

Jean Madden of Wisconsin expressed outrage that the suspected gunman had been released from prison in one state and jail in another despite a long criminal record, including several felonies.

“Why in thunder was he let

out of prison?” Madden wrote.

The Facebook page was created by an Edmonds high-school student who is part of the close-knit family of law enforcement. Jacob Kimerer, 17, is himself a Police Explorer who volunteers with the Edmonds Police Department and plans a career as an officer.

His uncle, Clark Kimerer, is deputy chief of the Seattle Police Department. His father, Scott Kimerer, is chief of the Burien Police Department.

Jacob’s father said his son understands the dangers of being a police officer: “He’s already been to four officer funerals, and he’s just 17 years old.”

Jacob Kimerer said he was moved to create the Facebook page after seeing a similar page honoring Timothy Brenton, the Seattle police officer who was slain Hal-

loween night.

Still, he said, he was unprepared for the outpouring of sympathy. As many as 15 posts per minute were being logged on the site Monday.

People from as far away as France and Mexico left comments. In the United States, posts came from Wisconsin, Michigan, Utah and California amid thousands from Washington state.

A constant stream of calls and visitors came into the city of Lakewood and its Police Department Monday. Mourners left cards and flowers outside the Police Department.

Jeff Brewster, Lakewood’s communications director, said he’d received calls from a New York police officer and a Long Island officer who both want to fly out to attend the memorial service on their own time.

The Lakewood Police Department was formed in

2004, and the four slain officers had been recruited from across the region, Brewster said. The department grew over the past five years from 87 to more than 100.

“Before the shooting, we had 103 officers,” he said. “Now it’s 99.”

On Monday, Lisa Brenton, widow of Officer Timothy Brenton, expressed her condolences to the surviving families.

Calling the aftermath of a shooting death a “time of unbearable grief,” Brenton issued a statement that said in part, “Our hearts ache for the families of Sergeant Mark Renninger, Officer Tina Griswold, Officer Ronald Owens and Officer Gregory Richards. ... Their families are painfully aware of the risks that are inherent in their loved ones’ chosen profession.”

Lynn Thompson: 206-464-8305 or lthompson@seattletimes.com

How you can help

THE LAKEWOOD POLICE INDEPENDENT GUILD is taking donations for the families of the four slain police officers. Checks can be made to the LPIG Benevolent Fund and sent to P.O. Box 99579, Lakewood, WA 98499. Donations also can be made online at www.lpig.us.

The Forza Coffee Company has set up donation boxes at its stores. Donations also can be made at the Forza Web site, www.forzacoffeecompany.com.

Candlelight prayer vigil
A prayer service and candlelight walk will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Lakewood YMCA, 9715 Lakewood Drive S.W.

Manhunt creates unease for black men

BY MARC RAMIREZ / Seattle Times staff reporter

As a manhunt for the suspect in the slayings of four Lakewood police officers spilled into Seattle’s streets late Sunday night, Oscar Eason Jr. talked with a friend about possible consequences for African Americans.

Eason, chairman of Washington’s African American Affairs Commission, came to one painful conclusion: For African-American males between ages 20 and 50, he said, “I would caution them to be very careful and only travel when necessary.”

While expressing condolences to those affected by the slayings, African-American leaders nonetheless are concerned that the furious manhunt for Maurice Clemmons, 37, the man believed responsible for the crime, could raise the potential for racial profiling.

Few community leaders have heard direct complaints. James Kelly, president of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle, said one person had complained to his agency about excessive police monitoring. “I am surprised,” he said of that call, but added that he understands the position police are in.

“Our hearts go out to the department, the community and the family, especially the children that have lost their fathers and mother,” said James Bible, president of the Seattle / King County chapter of the NAACP.

At the same time, he said, “as a civil-rights organization, we do want to make sure peo-



MIKE SIEGEL / THE SEATTLE TIMES

As the hunt for a suspected cop killer intensified, Seattle police question and search a man on Maynard Avenue South Monday afternoon. “I feel sorry for every husky black male with a mole on his face,” a state trooper said, regarding the suspect’s appearance.

ple’s constitutional rights aren’t being violated.”

By Monday morning, Clemmons’ photo — the broad shoulders, arching eyebrows and distinctive mole — was everywhere, on the Internet, on TV, on the dashboards of Washington state troopers. “I feel sorry for every husky black male with a mole on his face,” trooper Cliff Pratt said.

Such concerns are exactly what community leaders worry about, especially in the wake of the Oct. 31 murder of Seattle police Officer Timothy Brenton. Officers are predictably worried for their safety, while tensions are heightened in the community.

And in the days after Brenton’s murder, before Tukwila’s Christopher Monfort — who has a mixed white-and-black racial background — was charged, the local NAACP chapter did receive racial-profiling complaints. “The whole community did feel targeted,” Bible said.

“God knows what goes on in an officer’s mind,” Eason said. “... With these incidents in Seattle, there is some cause to be cautious for your own protection.”

But even as racial-profiling concerns are voiced, he added, “we know these officers are out there protecting our community. That’s a message we try to get across.”

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4 POLICE OFFICERS SLAIN



CLIFF DESPEAUX / THE SEATTLE TIMES

The flash from the muzzle of a device used to flush out a suspect is employed in a search for Clemmons after an hourslong standoff late Sunday and early Monday in the Leschi neighborhood. No one was found inside the home, and the hunt continues for the suspect in the slayings of four officers.

“It was unlucky for us, lucky for him. But his luck is about to run out.”

ED TROYER
Pierce County sheriff's detective

only to learn the vehicle had been sold two months ago. A Metro bus driver thought he had spotted Clemmons on a route in the University District, prompting officers to swarm the University of Washington campus.

Late Monday afternoon, Renton police, members of the Pierce County sheriff's SWAT unit and other officers surrounded a house in the 13000 block of Renton Avenue South. Though Clemmons wasn't in the house, officers questioned some of his relatives, according to a law-enforcement source. That relative also is suspected of helping Clemmons dodge arrest, the source said.

The search of the Renton house was the fourth tactical operation conducted by police Monday, Troyer said. Authorities were executing several search warrants, he said. He did not elaborate on the other operations.

Close to Clemmons

Seattle police seemingly were close to capturing Clemmons on Sunday night as they surrounded his aunt's house in Leschi. Police have confirmed he showed up at the house on a dead-end street on a hill above Lake Washington — but Troyer said he suspects Clemmons saw officers rounding up people who had helped him get roughly 40 miles north of the crime scene and slipped away before the area could be contained.

“It was unlucky for us, lucky for him. But his luck is about to run out,” Troyer said.

Clemmons has a lengthy criminal history, including at least five felony convictions in Arkansas and at least eight felony charges in Washington. He was granted clemency by former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee nine years ago over the protests of prosecutors. More recently, the ex-con was released from the Pierce County Jail last week, even though he faced eight felony charges, including a child-rape charge that carries a possible life sentence.

By 6 p.m. Monday, sheriff's officials had reopened Steele Street South and moved the flowers, balloons and stuffed animals that had been left at a nearby gas station and re-assembled the memorial outside the Forza Coffee Company store where the four officers had been fatally shot.

Killed were Sgt. Mark Renninger, 39; and officers Ronald “Ronnie” Owens, 37; Tina Griswold, 40; and Gregory Richards, 42.

How crime unfolded

According to police and witnesses, the three officers and their sergeant — members of the same Lakewood patrol unit — were seated inside the coffee shop Sunday morning, their marked patrol cars parked outside.

Around 8:15 a.m., a man who has been identified as Clemmons walked into the cafe, passing the officers and a handful of customers to stand at the counter. A barista asked for his order, but he just stared at her. He opened his coat, and the barista, a woman in her early 20s, spotted a gun in his waistband. She grabbed her co-worker and ran out the back door as the man opened fire.

Two of the four officers didn't have time to react and were “flat-out executed,” Troyer said Sunday. One officer was able to stand before being shot and falling to the ground. The fourth officer fought with the shooter, struggling with him and squeezing off a few rounds from his service weapon before that officer also was shot and killed.

Clemmons apparently dropped one handgun during the fight with the officer. The handgun was found by investigators on the floor inside the coffee shop, leading investigators to conclude that Clemmons was armed with more than one weapon, according to McDonald of the Puyallup department.

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Information from Seattle Times staff reporter Charles E. Brown and Times archives is included in this report



KEVIN P. CASEY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Schoolchildren peer out of a school bus as a police officer explains that their grade school is closed.

< Manhunt | FROM A1

LOTS OF LEADS, BUT SUSPECT STILL FREE

Law-enforcement officials believe Clemmons has been sheltered by family, friends

anybody and everybody suspected of aiding and abetting Clemmons. He said they are conducting operations in several cities.

“We think his network is running out,” Troyer said.

Not only that, but eyewitnesses have confirmed that Clemmons was wounded in the shootings and that his wound was bleeding, Troyer said. Blood was found in Clemmons' white Chevrolet pickup, found abandoned in the parking lot of a Parkland grocery Sunday.

Medics and doctors who have consulted with police say an untreated gunshot wound can change dramatically in a day or two — either through blood loss or infection, Troyer said.

Troyer said Clemmons' sister was detained Sunday night after she was “less than forthcoming” about the aid she offered her brother after the shootings. He said she drove Clemmons to Seattle's Leschi neighborhood that night and bandaged his wounds, but didn't admit to it immediately.

Police believe Clemmons took off after seeing police talking to his sister outside a Leschi home where she dropped him off, Troyer said.

In an interview Sunday night with The Seattle Times, she said she had driven up from Tacoma to see if she could help police persuade her brother to come out of the Leschi home.

Clemmons, 37, remains a dangerous threat to police: Detectives have learned he has access to any number of weapons, including long guns, rifles, shotguns and handguns, Troyer said. He declined to elaborate.

“He's armed, he's wounded and he knows there are warrants for four counts of murder” that have been issued for his arrest, Troyer said of Clemmons.

Hundreds of tips

Since the ambush slayings of the four officers as they sat doing paperwork at a Forza Coffee Company store before starting their shifts Sunday morning, hundreds of tips have poured in from the public. After weeding out the crackpots and hoaxes, detectives actively are filtering

through more than 350 tips, Troyer said.

Acquaintances of Clemmons also have told police that he told them Saturday night that “he was going to take out a group of cops,” telling them to “watch the news,” but they “wrote it off as crazy talk,” Troyer said.

Investigators have faced plenty of frustration, disappointment and delay in their hunt for the gunman. One man called 911 Sunday and said he was the shooter — a bogus claim. Another man called his girlfriend and relatives, also claiming responsibility and asking for help to get out of the woods where he said he was hiding.

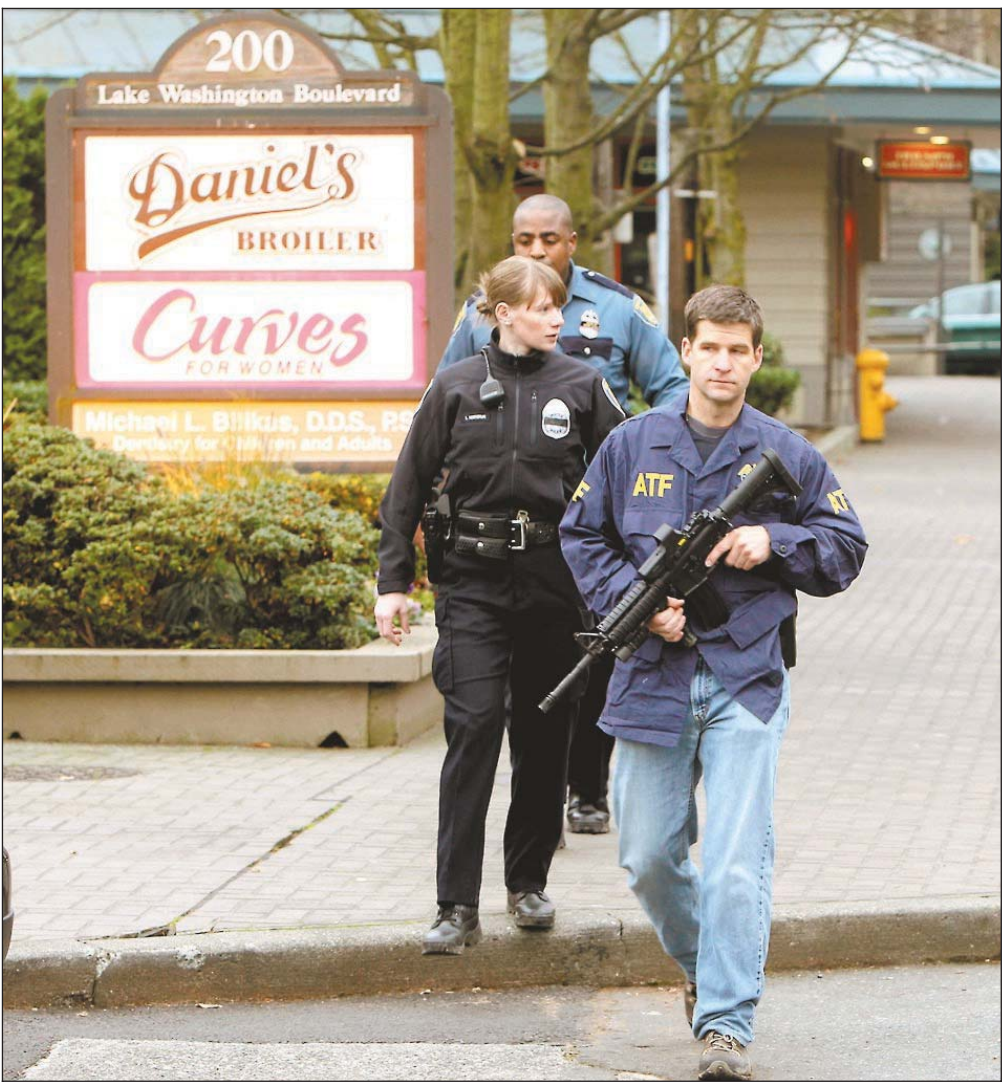
That man was booked into the Pierce County Jail early Monday on investigation of obstructing police. Lt. Dave McDonald of the Puyallup Police Department, acting as a law-enforcement spokesman, said that hoax cost investigators precious time and resources.

There was more frustration Monday as various tips and sightings in and around Seattle turned into dead ends: blood in a phone booth in Ravenna. Bloody gauze found in the middle of the street in the Chinatown International District. Police also searched Monday for a possible getaway car that reportedly belonged to Clemmons' wife,



MIKE SIEGEL / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Members of the Seattle Police Department search Rizal Park, between 12th Avenue South and Interstate 5. Several operations to locate Clemmons on Monday came up empty.



MIKE SIEGEL / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Seattle police officers and an agent from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) search the Leschi neighborhood along Lake Washington Boulevard.



ALAN BERNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

University of Washington and Seattle police officers cross 15th Avenue Northeast after a futile search for Clemmons in Cowen Park. The park and some neighborhood streets were closed temporarily.

4 POLICE OFFICERS SLAIN



ELLEN M. BANNER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Maurice Clemmons took his rage out on his Parkland neighborhood, throwing rocks at houses, cars and people, according to police records. He was charged with child rape after molesting a young female relative in his house in May.

< Rage FROM A1

4 DAYS IN MAY SET STAGE FOR TRAGEDY

Clemmons' wife says he was acting 'crazy'

viewed in isolation, trumped a long and disturbing pattern of warning signs. As a result, Clemmons walked out of jail Nov. 23. A week later, he was on the run again — this time accused of shooting and killing four Lakewood police officers in a Parkland coffee shop, in one of the most horrific crimes in Puget Sound history.

May 9

It may have been an argument — precipitated by his wife's discovery that he had a child with another woman — that set Clemmons off.

Whatever it was, Clemmons took his rage out on his Parkland neighborhood, throwing rocks at houses, cars and people, according to police records.

A woman who was visiting family that day says she was leaving the neighborhood when a man hurled a land-scaping brick through the driver-side window of her SUV.

"I was just in shock," said the woman, who asked not to be identified because Clemmons remains at large. "The look in his eyes is something I will not forget."

The woman called 911 only after rounding a corner a safe distance away.

A Pierce County sheriff's deputy responded to the disturbance at 12:45 p.m. Outside Clemmons' home, the deputy encountered two of Clemmons' cousins.

When the deputy tried going into the house in search of Clemmons, one cousin grabbed the deputy's wrist. A struggle followed, during which Clemmons emerged from the house and punched the deputy in the face. Clemmons also assaulted a second deputy who arrived to help, according to court records.

Ultimately, all three men were arrested and taken to jail. When being booked, Clemmons refused to cooperate and said, "I'll kill all you bitches," according to a psychological evaluation obtained by The News Tribune.

The two cousins pleaded guilty to felony assault and were sentenced to several months in jail.

But the charges against Clemmons would defy such easy resolution.

May 10

After spending one night in jail, Clemmons caught a break.

May 10 was a Sunday, Mother's Day. Judges rarely work Sundays — but bail-bond agents do.

Pierce County has devised a system that allows people to post bond without ever facing a judge, if it happens to be a holiday or a weekend.

Called "booking bail," this system works according to a hard-and-fast formula. Clemmons was booked on four felony charges — two for assault, two for malicious mischief — and, by schedule, his booking bail was set at \$10,000 per charge, for a total of \$40,000.

"If you post booking bail, you can walk out without seeing a judge. And that appears to be exactly what he did," said Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney Mark Lindquist. "When it's booking bail, it doesn't take into account particular details like somebody's history. And that's problematic ... it's one of the dangers of booking bail."

If his history had been taken into account, Clemmons would have fared poorly. He had a criminal record dating to his teen years, with at least five prior felony convictions in Arkansas.

Aladdin Bail Bonds posted Clemmons' bond on Mother's Day, and Clemmons walked free. Defendants typically pay 10 percent of the bond, with the bonding company on the hook for the rest.

Stephen Kreimer, executive director of the Professional Bail Agents of the United States, said he doesn't think "booking bail" is common nationwide. In most states, he said, defendants must wait until they've seen a magistrate or court representative before being released on bail.

May 11

After his release on May 10, Clemmons' mental state degenerated, with his wife saying he was acting "crazy," according to a Pierce County sheriff's report.

At about 1 a.m. May 11, Clemmons appeared naked in his living room and demanded that two young female relatives — ages 11 and 12 — sit on an ottoman and fondle him, one of the girls later told police. They obeyed, the girl said, because they were "scared." The 11-year-old soon fled, and wasn't seen for days.



Forza Coffee Company
Gunman kills four Lakewood police officers. Suspect identified as Maurice Clemmons.

Clemmons' home
Last known residence, where he was accused of creating a disturbance, punching an officer, and a day later, raping a 12-year-old relative

THE SEATTLE TIMES

But Clemmons continued to assault the 12-year-old until she cried herself to sleep, police records say. Clemmons, still naked, soon woke her and demanded she join him and his wife, Nicole Smith, in their bedroom. Clemmons referred to himself as Jesus and Smith, naked and wrapped in a bed-sheet, as Eve. Smith begged her husband to let the girl go, and Clemmons complied, the girl later told police.

But Clemmons wasn't finished. At about 4 a.m., he assembled his family back in the living room and demanded they strip naked. He talked about how "beautiful it was that they were sharing the moment."

Pierce County sheriff's deputies arrived at about 5:30 a.m. after a family member called 911. With Clemmons now gone from the house, the family described his recent erratic behavior, including his statements that the world was coming to an end and he was "going to fly to heaven."

Acting on a tip from Smith, deputies saw Clemmons nearby, at a second house he

was building. But Clemmons ran away before deputies could stop him, and a K-9 unit could not pick up his trail.

Child Protective Services (CPS), alerted by deputies, also investigated the incident and substantiated the sexual-abuse complaint. A CPS spokeswoman said the agency closed the case in October because Smith and the young relative went to counseling and Clemmons was in jail.

May 12

Clemmons was supposed to show up in Pierce County Superior Court May 12, to be arraigned on charges stemming from the rocks and punches he was accused of throwing three days before.

By now, prosecutors had filed a formal set of charges accusing Clemmons with two counts of assault and five for felony malicious mischief.

But at 1:30 p.m., when a court official polled the courtroom gallery to see who was there, Clemmons was a

no show. Three hours later, at the close of the court's day, he still was nowhere to be found.

A judge later issued a bench warrant, calling for Clemmons' arrest for failure to appear.

Clemmons was on the run — with seven felony charges already filed against him and another on the way, given what had happened in his house just one day before.

July 1

Clemmons wound up being arrested seven weeks later, on July 1, when he showed up in court, in apparent hopes of having the bench warrant thrown out.

The next day, prosecutors charged him with second-degree rape of a child, accusing him of molesting his 12-year-old relative in May.

Prosecutors also filed a separate charge on July 2 — this one accusing Clemmons of being a fugitive from Arkansas. They cited the chain of events involving the alleged assault on the deputies as evidence that Clemmons had violated his parole in Arkansas. If sent back, he faced the prospect of being returned to prison for years.

But July 22, the Arkansas Department of Community Correction notified Pierce County, by letter, that Arkansas had no interest in taking Clemmons back.

"Arkansas is releasing its hold on the offender and will not extradite at this time," the letter said. "The subject has pending charges in the state of Washington and appropriate action will be taken once the charges have been adjudicated."

Arkansas rescinded its warrant. Had Arkansas not done so, Clemmons would have been held without bail on the alleged parole violation.

Stephen Penner, a deputy prosecuting attorney in Pierce County, said he sees Arkansas' decision to leave Clemmons to Washington this way: "There's a built-in incentive to not following through. In a way, the more violent they are, the less you want them in your community."

Lindquist, Pierce County's chief prosecutor, was asked Monday if he believes Arkansas dumped Clemmons on Washington.

Only Arkansas can answer that question, Lindquist said, but he added: "You could draw that inference."

A spokeswoman for the Arkansas prison system told the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette that the state issued a second warrant in October that would have allowed Clemmons to be held without bail.

Penner said if a second warrant was issued, no one told him.

Nov. 23

In Washington, the courts had to determine bail for the two sets of charges Clemmons faced.

Phil Sorensen, a deputy prosecutor in Pierce County, said his office asked for \$100,000 bail in the assault case — an amount higher than normal for such charges — based on Clemmons' history. The judge, John McCarthy, set the bail at \$40,000, Sorensen said.

In the child-rape case, prosecutors wanted \$200,000 bail, Lindquist said. The judge, Thomas Felnagle, set bail at \$150,000.

Lindquist said he thought both judges set bail too low.

"As prosecutors, we face an uphill battle walking into court," he said. "We have to show that the defendant is a danger to the community and a flight risk."

Neither judge could be reached for comment Monday.

In the end, Clemmons needed to come up with \$190,000 bail.

Penner, the deputy prosecuting attorney, said Clemmons was turned away by two bail-bond agencies, based on his history of failing to appear in court. But then Clemmons found a taker: Jail Sucks Bail Bonds, based in Chehalis.

At 8:20 p.m. Nov. 23, bond was posted for Clemmons. That same night he walked out of the Pierce County Jail.

Nick Perry: 206-515-5639 or nperry@seattletimes.com; Jonathan Martin: 206-464-2605 or jmartin@seattletimes.com.



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4 POLICE OFFICERS SLAIN

BREATHLESS IN LESCHI – AND IT’S NOT THE VIEW



Nicole Brodeur
Seattle Times staff columnist

It feels anxious up here. Everyone’s on edge.

A woman pulls up beside me as I walk down East Yesler Way.

“Did they get him?” she asks. It’s clear she wants to know now.

Before I can answer, another woman headed in the other direction yells out her own window.

“You’re blocking my view of the street!” she barks, then guns the engine and pulls away.

You can forgive the residents of Seattle’s Leschi neighborhood for being a little short-fused.

The views across Lake Washington may take your breath away, but recent events have made it hard to breathe easily. To sleep soundly. And to remember what this place used to be.

Just weeks ago, on Oct. 31, two Seattle police officers were ambushed while sitting at the intersection of East Yesler Way and 29th Avenue South. Officer Timothy Bren-ton was killed, and his partner, Britt Sweeney, was injured. Christopher Monfort, 41, has been charged in the shootings.

On Sunday, police descended on a house several blocks east, where they believed Maurice Clemmons sought refuge with a relative after allegedly ambushing and killing four Lakewood police officers in a strip-mall coffee shop that morning.

Although the house turned out to be empty, it made for a tense night of locked doors, blocked streets and helicopters clattering overhead.

On Monday morning, classes were canceled at Leschi Elementary. SWAT team members used the school parking lot as a staging area. TV trucks lined the street while clusters of cameras stood on a few corners.

And Ethel Nichols, 66, wondered what happened to the place where her family has lived since 1959.

“It has always been so wonderful,” she said. “But lately, it’s more than I can think about. Like being in a Third World country.”

We stood in front of the picture window of her house, watching SWAT officers remove their bulletproof vests.

“Four weeks ago we were up the hill, crying about that officer being killed,” Nichols said. “And no sooner do they get the flowers cleaned up, then here we are again. Up all night long, the phone ringing.”

“I just put a pillow over my head.”

The family runs a child-care center in the basement. Only four parents brought their children by Monday. Nichols’ sister, Fannie, let them in and locked the door.

“They’re on the computer; they don’t know what’s going on,” Nichols said. “They’re happy.”

All morning, cars crawled up and down the street to take in the scene.

“This whole place has changed, and why?” Nichols asked. “Why is this happening?”

She remembered a family named Clemmons. The parents were friends with her parents.

She wondered aloud if Maurice Clemmons had sat near her in church, or if he had driven past her house the previous night.

Did he race past the bus stop where the driver used to

stop and honk for her mother, Aridell Mitchell?

Did he glance into the room where her father, Norman Mitchell, used to write sermons for his services at Goodwill Baptist Church?

“He was right there,” she said, nodding toward East Superior Street, where police stood in front of a house, waiting for Clemmons all night. “But I think it’s God watching over us.”

Someone has to be watching, for there is so much pain just beyond this place.

I left to join the crowd outside. As I did, I heard Nichols

Tense times for Leschi area



Source: ESRI, TeleAtlas THE SEATTLE TIMES

lock the door behind me.

Nicole Brodeur’s column appears Tuesday and Friday. Reach her at 206-464-2334 or nbrodeur@seattletimes.com. She’s looking up Psalm 91.

Clemmons’ diagnosis: stress

BY MAUREEN O’HAGAN AND NICK PERRY
Seattle Times staff reporters

When Maurice Clemmons was accused of molesting a child and assaulting a sheriff’s deputy in May, he was acting bizarrely enough that many suspected he had a mental illness.

But when psychologists evaluated him in October to determine if he was competent to stand trial, they saw no evidence that he wasn’t, according to the evaluation obtained by The News Tribune.

Clemmons answered the evaluators’ questions calmly and rationally, with “no evi-

dence of disturbance.” He told them he was married, that he ran a landscaping business and that he owned five rental properties. He said he didn’t use drugs or alcohol, and that until shortly after the incidents in May, he’d never had mental-health treatment. He also was able to explain court procedures.

But in May, Clemmons told evaluators, he’d been hallucinating about “people drinking blood and people eating babies,” the report said. This went on for about three weeks, during which time he wasn’t sleeping or eating well. But, he told the

psychologists, “I went to a counselor and then things died down.” That counselor gave him a diagnosis of “Brief Psychotic Disorder.”

Asked if he had thoughts of harming others, he said: “Sometimes I think about it. ... Everybody thinks the police can’t lie.” But when pressed, he had no specific targets in mind.

In the end, evaluators couldn’t come up with a diagnosis for Clemmons, other than stress. However, they did say his violence at an early age, including robbery convictions, suggested he had an “increased risk for future dangerous behavior.”

HOT DEALS ON ICE



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