

## Cannabis dispensaries win round at Cal Supreme Court

*Colvin affirms collectives have rights and protections*

By Kris Hermes, [AmericansforSafeAccess.org](http://AmericansforSafeAccess.org)

In a landmark victory for medical marijuana patients, the California State Supreme Court denied review May 23, 2012 of an important dispensary case out of Los Angeles. Rejecting calls from State Attorney General Kamala Harris and law enforcement to review the Court of Appeal ruling in *People v Colvin*, the High Court upheld certain protections for medical marijuana patients and providers. The AG had argued that some undefined percentage of patients were legally required to participate in the operation of the medical marijuana dispensaries in order to obtain medication from them.

The ruling in Colvin held that the AG's claim that member-patients must engage in unspecified "united action or participation" to qualify for protection under the state's medical marijuana law would likely "limit drastically the size of medical marijuana establishments" and provide "little direction or guidance to, among others, qualified patients, primary caregivers, law enforcement, and trial courts." Furthermore, the Court held that the AG's requirement would "contravene the intent of [state law] by limiting patients' access to medical marijuana."

The Court held that "collectives and

cooperatives may cultivate and transport marijuana in aggregate amounts tied to its membership numbers." In addition, the decision affirmed that possession of extracted or concentrated forms of medical marijuana was legal under state law.

"That should put to rest this unfounded notion that [California] patients must 'till the soil' or somehow participate in the production of the medicine they purchase at a dispensary," said Joe Elford, Chief Counsel with Americans for Safe Access (ASA), the country's leading medical marijuana advocacy organization.

"This landmark case also affirms the right of patients to purchase extracted or concentrated forms of medical marijuana and the right to transport medication from an off-site cultivation site."

A number of cannabis dispensary cases were granted review by the state Supreme Court earlier this year, including *Pack v. City of Long Beach*, *Riverside v. Inland Empire Patients' Health and Wellness Center*, and *City of Lake Forest v. Evergreen Holistic Collective*. The Pack case addresses issues of federal preemption which have already come *Please turn to page 4*

## Connecticut is 17th medical use state

By Paul Armentano, [NORML.org](http://NORML.org)

Connecticut lawmakers passed legislation May 5 to allow for the limited use and distribution of cannabis as medicine. After approval by the General Assembly, the state Senate voted 21 to 13 in favor of the Palliative Use of Marijuana Act (PUMA), HB 5389, which cleared the way for Gov. Dannel Malloy (D) to sign the bill into law June 1, 2012.

Connecticut is the 17th state since 1996 to allow limited legalization for medical use and the fourth New England state to do so, joining Maine, Rhode Island and Vermont. "I thank all of the legislators who worked hard on this legislation and voted to pass this bill," said Executive Director Erik Williams of Connecticut NORML, who helped draft the bill and generate over 36,000 phone calls and e-mails to lawmakers in support of it. PUMA mandates that patients obtain cannabis via licensed pharmacists with permits from the Dept. of Consumer Protection to dispense cannabis.

Connecticut NORML took a lead role in the passage of separate statewide legisla-



Mexican-American artist Ana Luisa Rincon, Sacramento CA, created the celebratory "Colorful Bud" (above). See [rinconart.com](http://rinconart.com). © Ana Luisa Rincon. All rights reserved.

## Cal legislature seeks resolution to impasse

*Ammiano, Leno bills moving*

By Dale Gieringer, [CaNORML.org](http://CaNORML.org)

The California Assembly approved Assem. Tom Ammiano's (D-SF) bill, AB 2312, on May 31, 2012 to recognize dispensaries and create a state Board of Medical Marijuana Enforcement to oversee the medical cannabis industry. The Senate is considering Sen. Mark Leno's (D-SF) bill, SB 1182, to adopt the current AG guidelines in committee.

Advocates lobbied for AB 2312 to create a state regulation system under the Dept. of Consumer Affairs, based on a drafted ballot initiative, the Medical Marijuana Regulation Control and Taxation Act, proposed earlier this year by Californians to Regulate Marijuana, a coalition including ASA, the United Food and Commercial Workers Local #5, the Coalition for Cannabis Policy Reform, California NORML, the Emerald Growers Assn. and others. The initiative effort got off to a late start, lacked funding, and was called off on March 8, 2012. Its proponents decided to pursue a legislative strategy instead.

Advocates say that better state regulation is badly needed to fulfill Prop 215's mandate for a "safe and affordable" system of access for all patients in medical need. The legislature passed Senate Bill 420 in 2003, the Medical Marijuana Program Act, which authorized the establishment of patient collectives and coops. However, its terms have been disputed, precipitating hundreds of court cases with conflicting decisions and leaving collectives vulnerable to raids by federal authorities, who demand "clear and unambiguous" compliance. *Please turn to page 17*



FACE DOWN AGAINST CRACKDOWN — Protesters gave a hostile reception to agents from numerous federal agencies who swarmed into the Oaksterdam District of Oakland CA on April 2, 2012, to raid the OU campus, Oaksterdam Cannabis Museum, Blue Sky dispensary, a patient garden nursery and other locations. Photo by Mikki Norris

## Protesters chase DEA through the streets as Feds raid Oaksterdam, OU, Museum

*Oaksterdam U adds classes*

By Dale Sky Jones,  
[ExecutiveChancellor, OaksterdamUniversity.com](http://ExecutiveChancellor.OaksterdamUniversity.com)

Nearly 100 federal and local law enforcement officers were on hand as federal marshals, DEA and IRS agents raided the world-famous Oaksterdam University (OU) April 2, 2012, along with the

Oaksterdam Cannabis Museum and the Blue Sky Coffeeshop, a legal dispensary that is city-regulated and taxed.

Oakland Police were dispatched for riot and crowd control as the Feds simultaneously hit six local businesses and homes in three neighborhoods. As news of the raid spread, an angry protest erupted. Three were arrested, including a radio reporter tackled by federal agents.

April 20, a traditional day of celebration, saw another large protest at the Federal Building in Oakland. Supporters marched to the Obama re-election headquarters, where a letter was delivered on behalf of the Coalition for Cannabis Policy Reform, demanding that the president use his executive authority to end the failed *Please turn to page 7*

## Highest-ever voter support for legal marijuana

*National poll of voters: 56% support adult legalization*

By Phil Smith, [stopthedrugwar.org](http://stopthedrugwar.org)

A Rasmussen poll of likely voters released May 22, 2012 found support for legalizing and regulating marijuana at 56% nationwide, a significant increase over a March Rasmussen poll and in line with other recent polls that show legalization gaining majority support and trending upward.

Legalization garnered majority support among both sexes and across age groups, with significant differences. While 61% of men supported "legalizing marijuana and treating it like alcohol or cigarettes," only 52% of women did, as seen in other polls. And while even seniors came in with 50% support, only 49% of respondents with minor children supported legalization.

Support in that demographic jumped when pollsters asked if they would favor legalization "if no one under 18 could buy it, it was banned in public, and there were strict penalties for driving under the influence." Support among parents jumped to 58% and support among Republicans increased to 52%, bumping up overall support for legalization by one point, to 57%.

The poll also asked whether or not it should be a crime "for someone to smoke marijuana" in private. Only 32% held that private pot-smoking should remain a crime, while 68% disagreed.

The same poll asked whether US drug consumption is a major cause of drug vio-

lence in Mexico and Central America, with 62% agreeing that it is. More surprisingly, 47% said they agreed with legalizing marijuana and cocaine if it would reduce the violence along the Mexican border. But in another question in the poll, only 11% agreed with legalizing and regulating cocaine. The poll sampled 1,000 likely voters, with a margin of error of +/- 3%.

## Pelosi joins Democrats in backlash against crackdown

By Rob Happamon, [Axis of Love SF](http://AxisofLoveSF)

US House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi joined the chorus of Democrats criticizing the White House crackdown on medical marijuana May 2, 2012, expressing her "strong concerns about the recent actions by the federal government that threaten the safe access of medicinal marijuana to alleviate the suffering of patients in California, and undermine a policy that has been in place under which the federal government did not pursue individuals whose actions complied with state laws providing for medicinal marijuana."

Thousands of constituents had signed a petition demanding that Pelosi take a stand, as did resolutions passed by the San Francisco Democratic Party and Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club.

"Representative Pelosi's statement empowers the local patients' social justice movement," said Shona Gochenaur, of the *Please turn to page 6*



WEST COAST LEAF

West Coasterdam Report

Student busted, forgotten 5 days in DEA custody, nearly dies

The DEA and US Dept. of Justice have come under criticism over the case of a UC-San Diego engineering student who was swept up in an April 20 (4/20) drug raid, placed in a holding cell and forgotten. When Daniel Chong, 23, was finally discovered five days later, his health was so poor he was hospitalized for three days in intensive care plus two more days in the hospital. The DEA has apologized for the incident, but US representatives and senators from California are demanding answers.

Chong has filed a \$20 million lawsuit against the agency. — Phil Smith, stopthedrugwar.org

Medical marijuana unity conference, lobby day in Sacramento

Californians to Regulate Medical Marijuana (CRMM), a political action coalition of patients, advocates, organized labor and other shareholders, held a unity conference and lobby day in Sacramento May 19-21, 2012 to promote sensible statewide regulations for medical cannabis. Hosted by Americans for Safe Access, the California Unity Conference focused on helping 200 attendees develop strategies and skills to persuade state lawmakers to codify protections and regulations for medical distribution this year.

The first two days of the conference included state and local strategy sessions, skills trainings for advocates and community-building exercises. Americans for Safe Access hosted a gala celebration of its 10-year anniversary of activism on behalf of patients, providers and researchers. On May 21, 300 advocates set out visiting legislative offices in the state capitol, urging lawmakers to take action on behalf of California’s cannabis patients. They lobbied for Assembly Bill 2312, sponsored by Tom Ammiano and, in the Senate, Mark Leno’s SB 1182, to turn the 2008 state AG guidelines on retail collectives into law. June 1 is the deadline for both bills. — William Dolphin, AmericansforSafeAccess.com

In Sacramento, education is activism

With help from groups like Sac Patients Alliance, CSPARC, Safe Access Sac and Crusaders for Patients Rights, Sacramento patients are organizing to bring better public awareness, through education, bringing the first lecture on cannabis to a local public college and holding an educational forum on the economic impact of collective closures in the Sacramento area. “The Chemistry of Cannabis” was the first class of its kind in the local public education setting. Approved by the Dean of Sacramento City College and presented by chemistry professor Dr. Dianne Bennet, the one-hour lecture was given by Dr. David Allen, representatives from Sequoia Analytical Labs, Epsilon Apothecaries and Mickey Martin from CSPARC. The lecture hall was packed with over 100 eager students. The class was such a success that another is being organized for next semester. Any patient or advocate can organize an event like these to educate and activate the community for cannabis reform. — Kimberly Cargile, Safe Access Sac. Contact hurrayforhemp@gmail.com for help organizing a local event.

Packaging is certified to preserve and protect medical cannabis

Two problems plaguing patients and providers alike are the release of odor during storage and transportation and the deterioration of medicine over time. A new packaging system solves both. Certified Packaging Services’ Nitrogen Flush Packaging system uses a triple-layer polyester and foil bag material that is completely vapor proof and has been tested on narco-dogs. It has a moisture barrier 1000 times less permeable than standard polyester turkey and FoodSaver bags, and its nitrogen-flush process eliminates oxygen to stop the growth of damaging microbes. To ensure that everything is up to standard, Certified also certifies the contents by description, packaging date, weight, moisture content and lab analysis at its drive-in packaging facility and a mobile service that packages products right on site, if needed. — Granddaddy Mike 415-967-1266, certpackservices.com

Two Orange County cities eye voter initiatives

By Kandice Hawes

Executive Director, Orange County NORML

Orange County cannabis patients and advocates are attempting to run voter initiatives in local cities to replace existing bans on safe access. Successfully passing one of these could provide for a permanent place for patients to get their medicine.

The Committee to Support Medical Marijuana Ballot Initiative PAC in Santa Ana is working on a re-draft of an initiative that will limit and restrict the location of collectives in the city but not prohibit them. The 2012 measure will allow no less than 22 collectives, one for every 15,000 residents, and impose a 2% business tax on dispensary transactions. The language is in the hands of an experienced attorney and will be re-submitted to the City to receive its official title and summary.

The Orange County Cannabis Alliance PAC is collecting signatures and walking precincts for a Costa Mesa voter initiative titled “An Initiative to Ban Medical Marijuana Dispensaries and Regulate Medical Marijuana Collectives and

Cooperatives.” It would allow 10 collectives to operate in good standing with the City. Some 6,000 valid signatures are needed for it to be on the November 2012 ballot.

For info or to volunteer, SantaAnaMMJ.com or email NewportMesaPA@gmail.com, KandiceOCNORML@aol.com.



FIRST YEAR BEHIND BARS — Sharon Letts (right) checked in with Dr. Mollie Fry, now one year into her five-year federal sentence for medical marijuana, to find out how she is doing. Fry has turned to her faith and God to see her through, she said, and has started a “Dance for God” workshop with inmates.

For the full report and to read longer versions of most other articles, visit westcoastleaf.com.

Dispensary offers first in-house legal clinic

By Emily Hobelmann

The San Francisco Patients Resource Center (SPARC) is breaking new ground by offering the first legal clinic to operate in a collective to help patient members address some of their pressing non-medical needs.

Longtime cannabis activist and attorney Lauren Vazquez teamed up with SPARC to establish the clinic, which helps members with all legal issues — not just cannabis related concerns — and members are asked to pay only for the services they can afford. Twice a month an attorney is available at the collective to answer member questions, provide referrals and help patients get dependable representation in legal matters. Volunteer attorneys may represent members in more complicated cases.

Patients are getting the legal help they need but could otherwise not afford. The clinic has assisted members with landlord-tenant issues and restraining orders, and shortly after its inception, it helped a SPARC member get a marijuana posses-

sion ticket dismissed.

“Even though I have personally not used the legal clinic at SPARC, two of my friends have, and with positive results,” said Michael Barbitta, a marijuana commissioner in San Francisco. “This is something that all the other cannabis clubs should offer, but don’t.”

Many California medical cannabis collectives offer holistic health support services for patient members, such as acupuncture, massage and yoga, but patients often need more technical support to help establish their overall well-being and security.

The medical cannabis industry is constantly changing, maturing and expanding. Collectives must focus on developing more creative and effective ways to help meet members’ needs. The legal clinic at SPARC is a model for the industry, with the goal of improving the quality and diversity of services available to patients.

For more info and the clinic schedule, visit sparcf.org or call (415) 252-SPARC.

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\* Proposition 215 & Senate Bill 420 \* AG Guidelines Published August 2008.



## Cannabis issue helped turn the AG race in OR

By Doug McVay, Common Sense for Drug Policy

Ellen Rosenblum won Oregon's May 15 Democratic primary to become the party's candidate for state Attorney General. Although the GOP mounted a last minute write-in campaign to have a candidate for the general election, a Democratic victory is still considered secure.

Her opponent, Dwight Holton, son of a former Virginia governor, was supposed to be a shoo-in. His brother-in-law, Tim Kaine, chairs the Democratic National Com. (DNC) and is also a former governor of Virginia. Holton worked on the Dukakis campaign and in the Clinton administration, and his campaign donors included Mike McCurry, John Podesta, and other nationally known Democrats.

Rosenblum is a retired judge with a long, distinguished career and a longtime Oregonian — whereas Holton has only lived in Oregon since 2004, and during the campaign was labeled as a carpetbagger. Yet, Rosenblum was seen as an underdog, and trailed in fundraising throughout the campaign in spite of the roughly \$200,000 she received from legalization advocates and groups toward the end of the race.

The policy debate in the race was dominated by the cannabis issue, largely because it was the only serious issue on which there was any significant difference between the two. Rosenblum said that she considered marijuana possession to be a low law-enforcement priority. Holton described the state's medical marijuana program as a "train wreck," asserting that the program had grown too large because of too many malingers.

Holton angered legalizers and cannabis patients by his record as acting US Attorney for Oregon in 2010 and 2011. He is responsible for a series of DEA raids on legal patient gardens in southern Oregon in the fall of 2011. He joined with other US Attorneys in sending out a round of letters to the landlords of Oregon dispensaries and other cannabis businesses, threatening forfeiture and other legal actions if the businesses did not close.

Holton also came up with a new use for the federal 'crack house' law, threatening the president of Reed College with civil

and criminal charges if the school didn't clamp down on student drug use. In response to his candidacy, an *ad hoc* coalition led by Voter Power and Citizens for Sensible Law Enforcement organized and led a "Dwight's Not Right" effort.

Cannabis may not have been the deciding factor in Rosenblum's win, but protests against Holton by medical and other cannabis reformers raised the profile of the contest and helped her cross the finish line in grand style. If elected, she will become Oregon's first female Attorney General.



**WILLIE NELSON APPROVES OF OCTA 2012** — Oregon Cannabis Tax Act (OCTA) Chief Petitioner Paul Stanford (left) went onto the "Willie Bus" to get the singer / songwriter's endorsement for the measure that is on track for the fall ballot. Photo by Annie Nelson

## DA who stood up to Fed prosecutors retiring

By Doug McVay, Common Sense for Drug Policy

To pressure cannabis dispensaries into closing, US attorneys in some medical-use states have sent letters to landlords threatening legal action if the businesses are allowed to continue operating.

Oregon's medical cannabis law specifically forbids dispensaries, and voters have twice rejected measures that would have established legal distribution systems. The state hardly seems a candidate for landlord letters — except that patient demand for adequate supplies of safe medicine has prompted the growth of dispensary-like operations around the state. Media estimates set the number of such businesses at around 100 in Oregon.

US Attorney S. Amanda Marshall sent out a round of letters to Oregon landlords of medical cannabis-related businesses in December 2011 and again in February 2012. Her letter was modeled after one sent in June 2011 by her predecessor, acting US Attorney Dwight Holton.

In Colorado and California, initial landlord letters were often followed by formal notifications of 45-day deadlines before enforcement against businesses operating within 1,000 feet of property belonging to an educational institution or public housing, as defined within the federal statute enhancing penalties for certain drug-related crimes (21 USC § 860). Oregon's federal attorney has not taken that step, but at least two nonprofit cannabis-related businesses in Portland were forced to close by their landlords due to federal pressure.

The Oregon letters were unusual in that they included a statement co-signed by Holton, the state's county sheriffs, and 35 of the state's 36 elected district attorneys that reiterates the illegality of dispensaries and marijuana in general, pledges support to the federal effort, and threatens legal action against these businesses.

The only DA who did not sign was Michael Schrunk of Multnomah County, the state's most populous county, comprised largely of Portland. Schrunk, age 70, an early and strong proponent of drug courts, is known nationally as an innovative, reform-minded prosecutor. DA Schrunk not only refused to sign on, he wrote Holton to say he wasn't going to sign; his office had higher priorities and it would be a waste of resources to go after cannabis patients and providers.

Schrunk toured a Portland dispensary in April 2012 with senior drug prosecutor Mike McDonnell and reportedly described it as seeming "like a frat house, only cleaner." McDonnell was quoted in *The Oregonian* about such businesses, saying, "It's quasi-legal. The problem is the law is so vague, there are so many loopholes. It's hard to determine."

Schrunk is retiring at the end of this elected term, having served as county DA for more than 30 years. His chief deputy, Rod Underhill, won the election May 8, 2012 to replace him. Legalization activists and policy reformers are hopeful that Underhill will continue the intelligent, progressive tradition of his predecessor.

## Two OR ballot efforts turn in voter signatures

By Russ Belville, radicalruss.com

Oregonians may have the opportunity to vote on two initiatives to legalize cannabis in the fall election. Oregon would join Washington and Colorado in qualifying such a measure for the ballot, making 2012 the first time in US history that three states will place the issue before voters.

The Oregon Cannabis Tax Act (OCTA) is a statutory initiative declaring that the "cultivation and possession of cannabis for personal, noncommercial use by an adult shall not require a license nor registration," without setting arbitrary limits on cannabis quantities. However, it empowers the state to regulate the commercial production and distribution of cannabis through a new Oregon Cannabis Commission.

The campaign had turned in well over 100,000 signatures to the Secretary of State by May 25, 2012. The statutory initiative needs 87,213 signatures to qualify.

Citizens for Sensible Law Enforcement (CSLE) has turned in more than 120,000 signatures to qualify another legalization initiative for the ballot. This is a constitutional amendment that simply states: "Except for actions that endanger minors or public safety, neither the criminal offenses and sanctions nor the laws of civil seizure and forfeiture of this state shall apply to the private personal use, possession or production of marijuana by adults 21 years of age and older."

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## CPS pulls infant son from mother's arms

By Jennifer Reeder, Attorney

Butte County Deputy District Attorney Jeff Greeson re-filed child abuse charges in April 2012 against medical cannabis patient Daisy Bram — for breast feeding.

Bram, mother of two now expecting her third, and husband Jayme Walsh were arrested in September 2011 for medical marijuana. At the time of their arrest, their youngest son, Zeus, was just three weeks old. Butte County deputies raided the home, and Child Protective Services (CPS) literally ripped the baby out of his weeping mother's arms. The couple, both qualified patients, were taken into custody, the children (Zeus and his 18-month-old brother, Thor) were taken from the home, and their parents charged with child abuse and endangerment, criminal cultivation, manufacturing a controlled substance (concentrated cannabis) and possession for sale.

"Deputies surmised that, due to the presence of some loose marijuana on the floor, the couple should be booked for child abuse and endangerment. As shown at a hearing, there was no evidence that the children, then respectively 1-1/2 years and two months old, had ever touched marijuana. The children were healthy, happy, well-adjusted, and apparently completely unaffected by any exposure to cannabis," said Michael Levinsohn, Bram's attorney.

At the preliminary hearing, Levinsohn got the allegations of child abuse and endangerment dismissed.

The court, however, maintained that the couple may have been cultivating marijuana illegally, and the case is now in the trial stage. Despite all criminal charges of child abuse being dropped, the children remained in the custody of CPS as the DA simply re-filed the charges.

The second preliminary hearing date considering the same child abuse charge is set for June 11. Dr. William Courtney, a well respected supporter of medical cannabis, will testify on Bram's behalf.

Bram took an unprecedented stance against CPS, flooding the Internet with images of her and her children, and releasing the police recording of her gut-wrenching screams as the children were taken away. After almost five months, her chil-



Bram with Zeus and Thor. See freemybabies.org

dren were finally returned, and the couple allowed to use medical cannabis.

Attracting attention through Facebook and their website, freemybabies.org, the family has received enormous support from the community. Not one court appearance has gone by without numerous patients sitting in the courtroom. Walsh is representing himself, and Levinsohn is representing Bram *pro bono*, but costs for the family from this type of persecution are high, both emotionally and financially. Many people have donated time and money to ensure the family stays together.

"I think Daisy Bram is the Mother Jones of medical cannabis patients. She is a wonderful parent, who deserved to get her children back, and is still able to use medical cannabis," Levinsohn said.

"Her case has become an inspiration for many others, and rightly so."

### Colvin decision stands as law

*Continued from page 1*

before the High Court, whereas the Riverside and Lake Forest cases address whether localities can ban dispensaries.

"The Colvin decision has far-reaching, positive implications for medical marijuana patients and providers," said Elford. ASA is currently appealing the conviction of Jovan Jackson, a San Diego dispensary operator tried in 2010 and denied a medical defense. "The Colvin decision is bad news for the Attorney General, who was relying on the same argument in the Jackson case." Other cases will inevitably be affected by the Supreme Court's decision to not review the Colvin case.

## Convictions overturned in LB dispensary case

By William Dolphin, Americans for Safe Access

Two Long Beach, Calif. dispensary operators didn't have to wait for appeal to see their controversial convictions on state charges overturned in April 2012.

The trial judge recused himself before sentencing, and the new judge promptly tossed out the convictions of Joe Grumbine and Joe Byron, calling it "a 'terrible, terrible, terrible trial.'" The original case drew considerable attention for both the apparent bias of the judge and the prosecutor's contention that medical cannabis cannot be legally sold under state law. Judge Charles Sheldon recused himself from the case in January after admitting he sent a letter praising the prosecutor to her boss in the LA district attorney's office.

In vacating the felony convictions of the two men, Judge Joan Comparet-Cassani cited a number of improprieties that began with the preliminary hearings and continued throughout the trial. These included Sheldon complimenting the prosecutor in the presence of the jury while being rude to the defense team, allowing prosecution evidence without reviewing it, and forcing the defense to go to trial the day after an appellate court reversed his decision to bar all mention of medical use. Comparet-Cassani also noted that Sheldon routinely upheld prosecution objections but did not sustain a single defense objection until very late in the trial.

Sheldon imposed a gag order on defense attorneys Christopher Glew and Allison Margolin and allowed the prosecution to erect a screen to block jurors from seeing the many elderly and disabled patients who attended the trial to support the men who had provided their medicine.

Grumbine and Byron were convicted Dec. 21, 2011 of selling marijuana, tax evasion and electricity theft after being charged in late 2010 with 18 felonies related to their two cannabis collectives in Long Beach and one in Garden Grove. Those facilities were raided by local police in December 2009, and Grumbine and Byron were arrested along with all 17 of their employees. Neither man had any criminal record and are longtime LB residents and small business operators.

The dismissal of their convictions sets the stage for a new court trial with a different judge, should the DA's office decide to pursue it. All three of their former locations now house medical cannabis businesses run by other people.

## Fresno ban goes to court

By J. Settle

Attorney and patient Bill McPike sued Fresno County over its ban on all marijuana cultivation and dispensaries. On Mar. 22, 2012, Judge Mark Snauffer consolidated all three actions under McPike's suit and set a hearing for Apr. 27, then continued the case. The sheriff refuses to honor state medical use laws, working with the DEA to eradicate gardens and arrest patient-gardeners for federal prosecution.

McPike contends that the ordinance bars him from accessing medicine in his own garden, which is pre-empted by state law as enacted by Prop 215. Also, the county is sanctioning cultivation (while unconstitutionally making it impermissible), thus violating federal law.

A site plan check, a sheriff background check, and a business license are required before cultivation in a building is permitted. Total costs to cultivate just one plant are estimated at over \$30,000. Mandatory 24/7 reporting and inspection by the sheriff are required, violating the Fourth Amendment's search protections. A notarized statement from the patient and building owner certifying they understand they can be prosecuted under federal law is required. This publicly signed confession guarantees conviction if used by the Feds. An indemnity and defense agreement is also required, wherein the patient must agree to release, indemnify, and pay all defense costs to the sheriff and county regarding any dispute or aspect arising from the ordinance. This is an illegal contract of adhesion, as there is no negotiation.

The ordinance is so poorly written that it mistakenly cites SB 420 as H&S 113562.7. Although McPike pointed this out to the Fresno Board of Supervisors, the error has never been corrected. The county attorney on the case is Michael Linden.




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## Sac dispensary initiative

*Measure likely to make ballot, still needs funds, volunteers*

By Mickey Martin, CSPARC.org

An initiative effort to regulate the medical cannabis industry in Sacramento County is halfway to its goal of collecting more than 80,000 signatures, and supporters feel confident that it is on track to qualify for the November 2012 ballot.

The Patients Access to Regulated Medical Cannabis Act of 2012 (PARMCA) is a voter initiative that will allow for a limited and tightly regulated medical use market, bringing in an estimated \$2,000,000 in revenue for the county. The Act will allow one dispensary for every 25,000 residents in the unincorporated areas, to be divided among the supervisorial districts to avoid clustering. It will tax the businesses at a rate of 4% of gross sales, on top of normal sales taxes.

The campaign has over 100 volunteers, mostly local patients and supporters who are busy gathering signatures, and has raised the initial funding for paid signature gatherers, as well. Hundreds of small and large donors have come forward, and more help is needed.

The campaign has until mid-July to collect the required signatures, but hopes to be finished with signature gathering shortly after the June primary. Media and local politicians have begun to take more notice of local campaigns now that the state signature-gathering season has ended.

The Committee for Safe Patient Access to Regulated Cannabis (CSPARC) is coordinating the campaign, and reports a huge increase of interest as the federal crackdown on dispensaries has grown more intense.

The PARMCA protects the rights of county residents by implementing a well regulated program of compliance and professionalism, ensuring that the program conforms with state guidelines. Its tax revenues will fund public safety, education and healthcare for residents.

## Cal legislature rejects *per se* marijuana DUI bill

By Dale Gieringer, CaNORML.org

Efforts to impose a 'zero tolerance' DUI standard for marijuana have been beaten back in California thanks to strong opposition from reform proponents.

A bill introduced Feb. 24, 2012 by Assemblywoman Norma Torres (D-Pomona), AB 2552, would have made the presence in blood or urine of any non-zero amount of cannabinoids presumptive evidence of driving under the influence. It would have included non-psychoactive metabolites of THC, which reside in the system for days and weeks after use, long after any impairment has passed.

The bill was strongly opposed by reformers, who argued that it would criminalize every cannabis user who drives. "AB 2552 is woefully unscientific and will lead to the wrongful conviction of non-impaired drivers," testified NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano, citing extensive scientific evidence that driving impairment can't be determined from cannabinoid levels in the body.

Torres withdrew her proposal in the face of stiff resistance led by Assembly Public Safety Committee chairman Tom Ammiano, and amended the bill May 2 to divide the existing DUI statute, lumping alcohol and drugs together, into separate sections for alcohol, drugs, and alcohol plus drugs, so researchers can collect separate statistics for each offense.

A second bill to outlaw driving with any non-zero amount of THC or other controlled substances in the blood has been introduced by Sen. Lou Correa (D-Santa Ana), but chances of passage seem slim given the fate of Torres' proposal, especially since Correa's bill would make it a crime to drive after taking any number of common legal, prescription painkillers, tranquilizers and stimulants.

California's current DUI law is already sound, as it mandates the court to weigh all the evidence, including drug tests, in determining guilt. *Please turn to page 7*

## State, local officials stand up for safe access

By Stephanie Tucker, SF United Coalition

Patients, dispensary owners and advocates formed the San Francisco United Coalition and held a press conference and rally April 3, 2012, drawing hundreds of demonstrators and widespread media coverage of federal attacks on state patients' access.

Americans for Safe Access Executive Director Steph Sherer said the event on the steps of City Hall delivered a strong message to the Obama regime about recent Dept. of Justice (DOJ) actions by US Attorney Melinda Haag. Assemblyman Tom Ammiano, State Senator Mark Leno, Board of Equalization member Betty Yee and City Attorney Dennis Herrera all sent representatives to speak on their behalf.

The press conference was an overwhelming show of support by city officials just a day after the Feds flaunted their power by raiding Oaksterdam. More than half the 11-member SF Board of Supervisors spoke out against federal interference in the city's medical use program.

District Attorney George Gascón sent a statement of support to the rally, "I unequivocally support medical marijuana. As the District Attorney, my office works within the confines of Prop 215 to support and uphold laws and protect those providing sanctioned medical marijuana services. I will continue to support safe legal access to medical marijuana."

Other landmark quotes from speakers include Supervisor David Campos, "This is a social justice issue. San Francisco stands clear that we want the Federal government to spend its resources elsewhere. We are asking the Dept of Public Health to expe-



San Francisco officials joined the April 3 rally against federal medical marijuana raids. Photo by Chris Conrad

dite the repermitting process for clubs that have been shut down."

Supervisor Christina Olague proclaimed, "We will fight this to the end. We have to stand up to the level of ignorance coming out of Washington."

Matt Dorsey said on behalf of City Attorney Dennis Herrera, "The City Attorney's office is opposed to the heavy-handed federal attack." A representative for Betty Yee of the State Board of Equalization added, "The federal government needs to back off."


Sherer noted that, "By opposing federal interference, our officials are taking a stand for patients and for sensible public health policy. The federal government must not be allowed to push patients into the illicit market without consequence."

Media swarmed the event with five local news crews, three wire services, news-talk radio, and all three of California's major daily newspapers.

A crowd of 400, carrying signs with 'hag-head' images and mocking captions of her saying such things as "I love drug cartels" and "Is that wheelchair real?" marched to the Federal Building to make their message heard by prosecutor Haag.

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Former Calif. Senator John Vasconcellos, (center) sponsor of the SB 420 law authorizing collectives, decried the federal crackdown on medical access and told a press conference that the law was never intended to not allow people to profit. Behind him are, (l-r) Richard Lee, target of the raid; Bob Swanson, Sup. Nate Miley's office; Jason Overman, Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan's office; and Ethan Sommer, Medical Cannabis Assn. Photo Mikki Norris

## Study: Dispensaries benefit patients, community

By Amanda Reiman, PhD

Imagine that one day, out of the blue, a vital medical service is ripped away from your home town at the whim of a federal bureaucrat: a clinic or hospital arbitrarily shut down, for example. Patients are traumatized, treated like criminals, left with no place to turn. For the disabled or desperate, it can be devastating.

That is the reality for cannabis patients throughout the US, even in its haven of cannabis tolerance, the San Francisco Bay Area: Oaksterdam raided, Divinity Tree and other dispensaries shut down.

The reality for communities is that dispensaries can be good, and losing them is bad for the neighborhood.

Demographic characteristics shared by many cannabis patients, such as chronic illness and economic hardship, suggest that patients might benefit from the integration of social services and health care. For patients diagnosed with a chronic or terminal physical or psychological illness, beyond the direct support patients receive from cannabis dispensaries, is the support from fellow patients experiencing similar physical and psychological symptoms.

Dispensaries have served as a conduit to other services, such as health services,

counseling and substance abuse treatment, and some provide for patients with little or no income. In a recent survey of 303 patients, 62% shared a desire to participate in free clinical services at their dispensary.

Some 20% indicated that they “would” or “likely would” participate in psycho-educational forums, harm reduction information-sharing sessions, online support groups, and coping, life and social skills groups (Janichek and Reiman, 2012). As a result of the crackdown on dispensaries, thousands of patients are experiencing a disruption in care akin to the closing of a public health clinic — a public health clinic that also supports local non-profits, vital services and education, while providing much needed jobs and tax revenues.

So, what's next? Many shuttered dispensaries are providing delivery service until new storefronts can be found. Others are lost, as obtaining safe medicine becomes another stressful hurdle in the lives of their patients.

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## Feds target farmland in property forfeiture scheme

### Operation Mercury launched

By Bill McPike, Attorney at Law

Central California became Ground Zero in the US War on Drugs as Sierra Mountain cannabis grows proliferate on Central Valley farmland, according to US Attorney Benjamin Wagner.

Homeland Security, Wagner, the DEA, IRS, and sheriffs from six counties (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, and Tulare) have teamed up under Operation Mercury (OM). Sheriffs are required to renounce state medical use laws and pledge to enforce only federal laws.

The apparent goal is to take all marijuana prosecutions to federal court and seek forfeitures of farmland, kicking back 80% of monetary proceeds to the local sheriffs.

Operation Mercury is named for the quick results possible with little or no work by law enforcement. The OM letter is served where a garden is located or suspected. Cops don't look for any physician documents, and if posted they are ignored. The letter states that if the garden isn't destroyed when the cops come back in 14 days, the person will be arrested by the Feds and the land seized. “Violations can result in imprisonment and a fine up to \$10,000,000.” Yes, that's \$10 million.

“It is not a defense to claim the property is providing so-called ‘medical marijuana.’ The US Dept of Justice remains fully committed to enforcing the Controlled Substances Act in all states. Accordingly, we will vigorously enforce the prohibitions against cultivation and distribution of marijuana, even if such activity is permitted by state law. Those who allow their property to be used for such activities do so at their peril. If you do not halt the criminal activity [on] your property within 14 days, the

Sheriff's Office will work with the DoJ to commence criminal and forfeiture proceedings against you and your property.”

When Wagner came to Fresno, speaking to the Farm Bureau, he claimed small grows would not be targeted, that he was looking for acres of plants. However, the Fresno sheriff has targeted indoor grows, and 99- to 300-plant collective grows. It is expected that a suit will be brought in state court against the sheriffs who conspire against and refuse to enforce state laws.


### Pelosi supports state law

Continued from page 1

SF Medical Cannabis Task Force Patient Advocacy Committee that spearheaded the petition. Patients' rights leaders Elise Cleveland, Gregory Leddbetter and Andrea Allen presented the stacks of voter signatures to Pelosi's office. Nearly 73% of Democratic congressional reps voted for a May 9 bill to cut funding for the raids.

“Access to medicinal marijuana for individuals who are ill or enduring difficult and painful therapies is both a medical and a states' rights issue. Sixteen states, including our home state of California, and the District of Columbia have adopted medicinal marijuana laws — most by a vote of the people,” said Pelosi.

“I have long supported efforts in Congress to advocate federal policies that recognize the scientific evidence and clinical research demonstrating the medical benefits of medicinal marijuana, that respects the wishes of the states in providing relief to ill individuals, and that prevents the federal government from acting to harm the safe access of medicinal marijuana provided under state law. I will continue to strongly support those efforts.”



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**PUSHBACK TO CRACK-DOWN —** Reporter and activist Jose Gutierrez was among those arrested April 2, as protesters gave a hostile reception to agents from numerous federal agencies who swarmed into Oaksterdam. Photo by Mikki Norris

## Tackled reporter facing 8 years in O'dam raid

By Sabrina Campos

Jose Alacran Gutierrez was among the throng of protesters and journalists that covered the federal raid on Oaksterdam University and elsewhere in Oakland, CA. For that, he now faces up to eight years in prison. A veteran Bay Area beat reporter for Pacifica Radio, KPFA's *La Onda Bajita* and the nationally syndicated Flashpoints, and longtime medical cannabis activist, Gutierrez was caught up in the raid as it unfolded outside Coffee Shop Blue Sky, brutally arrested by federal agents and charged with one federal felony count of forcible assault on a federal officer.

While hundreds of raids have been conducted using local law enforcement for crowd control, the heavy-handed use of Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and US Marshals on April 2, 2012 was an unusual show of force by the federal government.

As part of their aggressive crowd control tactics, the Feds broke a window in the shop, scattering glass and pushing activists away from the main door. Live audio- and video-stream feeds reveal clearly the jostling of cameras, phones, and equipment as federal agents enter Coffeeshop Blue Sky. In a matter of seconds, Gutierrez is accosted and pinned to the ground by at least five federal agents. He is seen being led to a patrol car that activists have blocked with their bodies. Spectators are heard and seen pointing out which officers started the encounter. Others pounded the car windows after police shove Gutierrez in, with the crowd chanting and screaming, "Let him go! Let him go!"

This continued relentlessly as federal agents escorted the unmarked car down the street. Gutierrez's defense team asked the public to post video or still images on YouTube to show the facts and hopefully cause the charges to be dropped. From the recordings, it is obvious that Gutierrez suffered injuries which sent him to the hospital when the agents rushed him.

Of three arrests made that day, only Gutierrez was taken into federal custody. Two others arrested by Oakland Police during the raid were released and no charges were filed.

Gutierrez will be back in Federal Court July 10, 2012 at 9:30am, 1301 Clay Street, Oakland and needs court support. His case will be heard by Judge Donna Ryu.

## Cal near-collision with DUID

Continued from page 5

mining whether a driver was impaired. Accident statistics show that driving fatalities have actually declined to record lows in CA, and DUI arrests are also down.

The DUI issue has sharply divided the reform community in Washington state, where a 5 ng/ml *per se* limit is incorporated into a partial legalization initiative on the November state ballot, I-502. Opponents say it makes the measure unacceptable. If I-502 passes, the state legislature would be able to amend it and address the DUI issue.

Drug testing proponents claim that this level, 5 ng, is evidence of some exposure within the last few hours, but opponents point out that it may not be correct and certainly does not prove impairment.

## Effort to win Presidential clemencies for cannabis

By Beth Curtis, lifeforpot.com

The *pro bono* legal project Life for Pot has taken a unique approach to the Drug War and criminal justice by making a group petition for Presidential clemency.

To call attention to the plight of many non-violent, marijuana-only inmates serving sentences of life without parole in the federal prison system, Life for Pot has identified seven such federal inmates who share several common and distinct characteristics: The inmates are all over the age of 60, have served over 16 years of their respective life sentences, are non-violent and have exemplary prison records. None were sentenced under a plea agreement, and six of them went to trial. Six of the seven were charged with conspiracy. Their indictments and convictions were based solely on the testimony of cooperating witnesses testifying for a reduced sentence or for a share of the forfeiture.

This clemency petition to Obama is not without precedent. President George Washington granted group clemency for participants in the Whiskey Rebellion. Lincoln granted group clemency to 264 Dakota Indians who attacked settlers in 1862. Harrison granted clemency to all Mormons for plural marriage. Harding granted it to persons jailed under WWI sedition and espionage laws. George H.W. Bush gave it to Iran-Contra participants and Clinton granted clemency to FLAN members.

The Life for Pot clemency petition for the first seven inmates is posted online at lifeforpot.com. The organization would like to have support letters from individuals and organizations to accompany the clemency petition. Some issues to address are: (1) incarceration of aging prisoners; (2) early release for non-violent drug offenders; (3) sentence enhancement for going to trial; (4) mandatory minimums; (5) charging and sentencing disparity among different federal court circuits; and (6) ease of conviction for conspiracy.

The men featured on the lifeforpot.com website were all sentenced under mandatory minimums. They cannot get relief from court opinions or non-retroactive leg-

islation. Under the federal system of mandatory minimums, these non-violent marijuana offenders will be confined in prison cells until death.

## Oaksterdam raided

Continued from page 1

policy of marijuana prohibition.

As a direct result of the raid, medical cannabis pioneer and founder of Oaksterdam University Richard Lee officially retired from the University presidency to pursue national drug policy reform. Lee, now a professor emeritus, will still teach at OU, but said he feels that continuing as president could draw further federal harassment to the school. He is formally stepping away to allow OU to fully separate from other previously affiliated cannabis businesses, considered illegal under federal law.

Neither Lee nor any employee was arrested that day, however, federal agents seized everything on the campus but the furniture, and 45 people lost their jobs and health benefits, including many families with small children. Over 100 individuals and businesses who worked for or depended on Oaksterdam businesses have been put out of work.

On 4-20, Cal NORML and the OU Student Union hosted the first Oaksterdam Film Festival, featuring *Green Goddess*, *A NORML Life*, and *California 90420*, a documentary featuring OU students and staff, released at theaters with info at 90420.com. The Gift Shop and dispensary are independently open. The museum is currently seeking a new location.

The University remains open and has added a new classes to the curriculum. Dale Sky Jones, OU's chancellor, said the campus will keep its auditorium at 1600 Broadway, Oakland for classes and events. Student Services has moved to 1734 Telegraph Ave, across the street from the Fox Theater.

The University needs new student enrollments and donations. With every donation, the school will provide a credit toward their scholarship program for students and patients.

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## Reducing the garden's carbon footprint

### From the Field...

By Chris Van Hook, cleangreencert.com

As the 2012 growing season develops, recent federal actions continue to weigh heavily on the medical marijuana community. One big change in Northern Cal is that the Mendocino County 9.31 program, which allowed registered growers to cultivate 99 outdoor plants per parcel with reasonable restrictions, has been canceled. Those who registered with the program are concerned that they will be easily identified and targeted. The new Mendo limit of 25 plants per parcel has had a major impact on crop projections. Growers were encouraged to grow larger crops to meet the legal state demand, leading to large investments in farm infrastructure, time and effort...

For small to mid-sized growers who are tired of trimming but concerned that electric trimmers damage product, some get great results from hand-operated trimming machines. They are less expensive, high quality and perfect for a small- to mid-sized operation. Best results are seen when the buds are trimmed wet. Search online for "hand-crank leaf trimmer" to see a number of manufacturers, and monstergardens.com posted videos ...

The industry has made great advances in reducing the carbon footprint of indoor growing. More efficient lights with a broader light spectrum are a big part of that reduction. Leading the way in this regard is a company called Inda-Gro at [inda-gro.com](http://inda-gro.com). Their lights can be used during the vegetative and budding stages, operate at reduced temperatures (eliminating the need for additional fans or air conditioners), and consume up to 70% less energy than standard HIDs. The bulbs are warranted for ten years with minimal loss of lumens or efficiency. Think of the money saved in bulb replacement alone! And, they are made right here in the USA...

What are some pathways forward for those in the industry during these trying times? Work more closely with dispensaries that have community support and operate professionally. Raids are often neighborhood-complaint driven. There are opportunities for small grower groups and patients to join together into smaller collectives, avoiding the high-profile dispensary model. Each grower should look to their own contacts and peer groups to develop their own patient base. More small to mid-sized growers are opting out of the dispensary-vendor model to start their own smaller patient/grower collectives. Review your 2012 compliance program. Cannabis compliance efforts will be money well spent should a court defense be needed. Everyone can improve their compliance

picture with a little creativity and good planning. Work closely with a competent cannabis compliance attorney to develop a plan for your particular situation...

Despite the recent crackdown and instability, there are still bright lights in the cannabis field. Hand-crank trimmers reduce worker injuries and use no electric power, lamps can reduce electric use while benefitting the plants and pest controls made from safe natural ingredients are available. The medical cannabis industry is meeting its challenges with innovation and reducing its carbon footprint.

### AACM Competency training

By David Ostrow, MD, PhD and David Bearman, MD, AACMSite.org.

The American Academy of Cannabinoid Medicine (AACM) at the Patients Out of Time (POT) Conference in Tuscon, AZ, held its first Cannabinoid Medicine (CM) specialist training program and competency exam. On April 26, 2012, a five-hour educational program was put on by faculty including Drs. David Bearman (Course Director), Paul Bregman, Chris Fichtner, Jahan Marcu, and Dustin Sulak.

Presentations were made on the history of medicinal cannabis use, the biology and neurochemistry of the endocannabinoid system, a summary of current cannabinoid research, co-morbid mental health issues, such as schizophrenia and PTSD, and practical clinical tips for CM specialists examining and recommending CM for their patients. The importance to the acceptance and credibility of CM of practicing according to high standards and ethics was emphasized. The program ended with a brief Q&A session. The course was attended by over 20 physicians and other healthcare professionals wishing to become AACM recognized CM specialists.

On April 29, the AACM held its first Exam, composed of 100 multiple-choice questions, and a 15 minute individual case-oriented oral examination.

To be AACM recognized, a provider must have two years experience practicing CM, 20 hours of approved category I CM-related continuing education, pass the AACM competency exam, and agree to practice in accord with AACM standards and ethics. These requirements and the AACM CM practice standards are available on the AACMSite.org web-site.



**QUALITY CONTROL —** The medical cannabis industry is meeting its challenges with creative thinking. Chris Van Hook inspects a local medical cannabis provider for Clean Green certification.

## Summer's challenge

### Inside Out

By Samuel Janovici

Warm weather and longer days have their benefits but also drawbacks like pests, mold, fungus and diseases. Heat and humidity conspire to create the perfect environment for those kinds of problems to multiply. Chemicals are not the answer although some must be used to clean the area between rotating crops or before the gardener begins any process. Just make sure to keep those that are poisonous away from the medicine you are trying to produce. Few if any can be used directly on the plants themselves.

In my last column I suggested the use of Eagle 20 for the treatment of powdery mildew and received a quick reminder from Dr. Ken Miller that poisons have NO place in cannabis gardens. That's true and I thank the doctor for the reminder. Eagle 20 can only be used on clones in their first days of life in a propagation tray — any later in the cycle is a recipe for disaster. So don't tempt fate, and don't use Eagle 20 at all. Instead, try pH-up mixed in water and use a meter to adjust to an 8. Simply spray the plant and make sure the spray does not change the pH of your nutrient mixture.

The best way to beat molds and fungus is to start with a clean and healthy environment. Use cleansers that promise to remove pathogens. Rinse with clear water at a high pH level. If you use bleach make sure to rinse and clean completely. Chlorine is a poison to us and it is a stronger poison for the plants themselves. The same goes for any pesticides. If you are compelled to use them, use them before you introduce any organic matter. If you want to treat the growth medium use organic solutions only or buy products that guarantee safe clinical conditions.

Bugs hate terpenes, which are a class of organic compounds found in many essential oils. They also act as a barrier to invasive insects. Sadly many of them have a strong scent or flavor that can harm the smell and taste of your finished product. Pick them wisely and use them on the leaves and not the buds.

There are microbial pesticides that can be used indoors or out, and some argue that using parasites and predators on pests is the safest way to combat infestations. They are right but these are for those who have a working understanding of how to create a working homeostasis.

Gardening is a practice in patience. Be safe out there ...



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## Cannabinoids available in Cal in pill form

By Joanie Bell, C3PatientsAssociation.com

The C3 Patients Assn., an Orange County, Calif. nutraceutical firm, has filed for several pending US patents on a dietary supplement comprised of whole-extracted cannabis in pill form.

Manufactured in a laboratory with balanced 1:1:1 ratios of all-natural CBD, CBN and THC, Idrasil is a discreet, odorless pill that allows a non-smoking option for qualified patients treating a variety of ailments. Common Idrasil usages include pain management, sleep disorders, symptoms of cancer, Parkinson’s, anxiety and depression, MS, hospice and palliative care and as an aid in easing drug dependency and withdrawal symptoms.

It provides all of the medicinal benefits of cannabis without smoking or facing the unpredictable dosages of edibles, and is available within the state with a valid doctor’s recommendation.

For pain patients who are not yet using opiates, Idrasil is an excellent ‘first step’ to pain abatement, because alternative cannabinoid use diminishes the possibility of opioid overdose, which is important to all caregivers and their liable parties. To address the constant risk of opioid overdose, caregivers can add oral cannabinoids to the patients’ daily regimen and gradually reduce their opioid use by up to 50%. Patients who are not already opioid-dependent now have the choice to live addiction-free and enjoy effective cannabinoid-based pain management without depression, lack of appetite, incoherence or constipation.

With an estimated 2,000,000 qualified cannabis patients in California, potentially twice as many patients would like to try a cannabinoid therapy if it were available in

a sterile form that is easy to use in a consistent, standardized dose. Idrasil improves the patients’ and their families’ quality of life and reduces negative social stigma with an all-natural nutraceutical that looks just like any other pill.

Because Marinol and Dronabinol are the only cannabinoid drugs available to the pharmaceutical community, patients who find them lacking are forced into the cannabis-dispensary marketplace. The trans-mucosal spray Sativex is not yet available in the US.

Now there is another option for California patients who want to bill insurance coverage for their medication, do not want the calories or smoke or just can’t get to a dispensary. Idrasil costs less than Marinol, yet it still commands a premium because it is laboratory-produced and is in an incongruous legal climate.

For more info on Idrasil, visit C3PatientsAssociation.com, or call 714-371-3567 and ask for patient services.

## Brownie Mary Dem Club forms in Riverside

By Lanny Swerdlow, RN, LNC

Some 73% of Democrats in Congress voted in May to cut funding for federal raids on medical marijuana providers, but only 11% of Republicans did.

In light of this support, 28 medical marijuana patients formed a new club within the Riverside County Democratic Central Committee to support medical use and cannabis law reform. Named after the legendary San Francisco nurse who was arrested for delivering cannabis-infused brownies to AIDS patients, the Brownie Mary Democratic Club will be the first political club of its kind in California and perhaps the nation.

Many constituent groups form clubs in party county central committees. Once chartered, the clubs can form networks of partisans to support the programs and agenda of the club, and members can lobby for their agenda at political party functions

such as county, state and national conventions.

Problems faced by cannabis patients, such as police pushing cities for bans or elected officials calling in the feds to close down collectives, can be submitted to elected officials through the central committees.

Democratic clubs formed under the auspices of a central committee are expected to support party candidates, actively work to get out the Democratic vote and provide a core base of volunteers to promote the Democratic Party. In return the central committee helps club members connect with officials to bring up their concerns and proposals.

Forming a Democratic club is a viable method for California’s reform advocates to develop the political clout needed to advance their agendas. Notably, implementing medical marijuana laws and ending cannabis prohibition are supported by the majority of Democrats.

Central committee work is the first rung of the political ladder. The gay community has organized Democratic clubs and over time, through diligent work, fundraising and ‘get out the vote’ (GOTV) efforts, has achieved top-rung status, with President Obama acting to end ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ and more recently supporting same-sex marriage.

The Brownie Mary Democratic Club of Riverside County is the first of what its organizers hope will become a statewide phenomenon of chartering Brownie Mary Democratic clubs in every county. Since the central committee structure is similar for Republicans, Brownie Mary Clubs can also be formed by them as well.

For information on forming a political party cannabis club, call 760-799-2055.

## Oregon on track to have two cannabis initiatives on ballot

Continued from page 3

As a constitutional amendment, CSLE requires more signatures, 116,283, to make the ballot. The amendment does not address commercial production and distribution, but empowers the state to regulate such activities through legislation.

OCTA Chief Petitioner Paul Stanford sees the possibility of an amendment and a statutory framework both making the ballot as perfect complements. “The constitutional amendment would make OCTA ‘bullet-proof’ in the inevitable federal court challenge it will face after passage.”

CSLE Chief Petitioner Robert Wolfe noted that the primary-election defeat of

Dwight Holton for state AG, but opposed by activists for his harsh views on medical marijuana, showed that, “The voters of this state are ready to welcome an end to marijuana prohibition provided it is done in a safe and sensible manner.”

Wolfe was fined \$65,000 for collection violations but this does not invalidate the signatures gathered for the amendment. Both initiatives will be checked for signature validity, giving the campaigns a better idea how many more signatures they must submit before the July 6 deadline for the 2012 ballot. Each campaign plans to gather two-thirds more signatures than required, to replace rejected signatures.

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## National conference on cannabis therapeutics

### The Lab Bench

By Jahan Marcu

The Seventh National Clinical Conference on Cannabis Therapeutics was held April 26-28, 2012 in Tucson, AZ to educate health care professionals and the public about medical cannabis and the clinical implications of the endocannabinoid system (ECS) for health care. It featured an international body of scientists presenting research, implications and ideas. Each talk was video-recorded and posted online

The ECS is a body system of receptors, enzymes and endogenous cannabinoids such as anandamide. Vincenzo DiMarzo, PhD, provided a simple way to understand this before going into great detail about the mechanisms. The ECS helps to “relax, eat, rest, forget, and protect (neurons),” said Di Marzo. John McPartland, PhD, discussed the importance of the ECS in feeding and health. Mathew Hill, PhD, presented research on how it protects from the damaging effects of chronic stress. Greg Gerdeman, PhD, discussed its role in addiction and Amanda Reiman, PhD, offered data supporting the use of cannabis to assist addicts in quitting ‘harder drugs.’

One of the most exciting and promising aspects of phyto-cannabinoid “marijuana” research is its potential to help cancer patients. Dr. Donald Abrams presented research on clinical trials using smoked cannabis to treat pain and discussed his views and experiences with cancer patients and their choices regarding cannabis as an adjunct to chemotherapy. It can be a wonderful medicine to increase the quality of life for a patient, and plant cannabinoids, such as THC, can kill cancer cells — but not all cancers or tumors respond to THC, as many studies show. Christina Sanchez, PhD, however, discussed work at Manuel Guzman’s laboratory showing that cancer cells which are resistant to THC-induced cell death respond to the anti-cancer effect of cannabinoids when co-administered with a conventional chemotherapeutic agent. Scientists seem to agree that for certain aggressive cancers neither chemotherapy nor cannabis work well alone; the best option is a synergistic combination of conventional and alternative medicines.

The effect of cannabis on short term memory can be an unwanted side effect for many people, but a little bit of forgetting might be exactly what is needed for

patients with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Dr. Christopher Fichtner discussed the rationale for using cannabis to treat PTSD. Bryan Krumm, RN, expanded on this by discussing practical applications to treat PTSD and sharing some personal experiences working with PTSD patients. Dr. Sue Sisley announced the start of clinical trials examining the potential of whole-plant cannabis to treat PTSD in veterans.

The conference ended with a superstar discussion panel featuring Clint Warner (*Marijuana: Gateway to Health*), Julie Holland, MD, Melanie Dreher, RN, PhD, and Andrew Weil, MD. Dr. Dreher is best known for her work on the role of cannabis in health among pregnant women in Jamaica. Dr. Weil discussed an array of promising scientific ventures that remain to be explored. Regarding the potential of cannabis to treat a wide variety of illnesses, Weil said that there is “something there” for certain diseases and it is worth the time and energy to explore the possibilities.

The ECS may be the one of the most important biological discoveries of the decade, and Patients Out of Time did a great job organizing a place for a legitimate discussion of current science.

Cortical Systematics videos posted at [medicalcannabis.com](http://medicalcannabis.com)



Dr. Andrew Weil with Dr. Julie Holland.



Jahan Marcu interviews ALS patient Cathy Jordan, at the April 27-28 clinical conference AZ. Photos by Mikki Norris

## Online cannabis patient-use study needs participants

By Samantha Campos

A pioneering new survey investigating the efficacy of medical cannabis is currently seeking patient input.

Oakland’s Harborside Health Center, in collaboration with the Beckley Foundation and the University College London, is participating in the research, which will provide invaluable data for patients and the entire medical cannabis industry. Results will point to which forms (like buds or edible products), which cannabis species (sativa or indica), which strains (like Soma A+ or Harlequin) and what cannabinoid contents (like THC and CBD ratios) patients find to be best for treating specific conditions and symptoms.

The UK-based Beckley Foundation works with academic partners such as Johns Hopkins University, UC Berkeley, the Institute of Psychiatry, University

College London — and now, Harborside Health Center, considered the world’s largest medical cannabis dispensary and model holistic health services center — in an effort to create cost-effective drug policies which recognize human rights.

The confidential online survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and asks patients about the batch of medical cannabis they are currently using, then moves on to general questions about the patient’s medical cannabis use, and how medical cannabis compares to other treatments such as pharmaceuticals.

Although the study requires an email address, answers are completely anonymous and no identifying information will be collected or linked to the email or passed on to third parties.

To participate in the study, visit [cannabisstudy.com](http://cannabisstudy.com). For info on Beckley, [beckleyfoundation.org](http://beckleyfoundation.org); for Harborside Health Center, [harborsidehealthcenter.com](http://harborsidehealthcenter.com).

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## National and International Reports

### Support grows in Congress to cut funds for MMJ raids

A bipartisan Congressional effort gained support this year on both sides of the aisle to stop federal medical cannabis raids by cutting off funding, although it fell short of the votes needed on May 9, 2012. The Rohrabacher-Hinchey-Farr-McClintock amendment to the 2013 combined appropriations bill for the Commerce, State and Justice Depts. would have prevented spending by the DEA and other federal agencies to thwart implementation of state-authorized medical cannabis programs.

The 163-264 showed nearly doubled support among Republican lawmakers since 2007, and Democratic support also increased. Nearly 73% of Democratic representatives voted in favor of stopping the raids, up from 65%, and almost 12% of Republicans, as compared to 7%. Representatives on both sides of the aisle made impassioned pleas for a more compassionate, science-based approach to the issue. Speaking in favor during the floor debate were several members of the California delegation, including amendment sponsor Dana Rohrabacher (R), Sam Farr (D), Adam Schiff (D) and Barbara Lee (D), along with Maurice Hinchey (D, NY), Barney Frank (D, MA), Jarrold Nadler (D, NY), Jared Polis (D, CO) and Steve Cohen (D, TN). — *William Dolphin*, Americans for Safe Access

### Montana initiative aims to end marijuana prohibition

Signature gatherers are on the streets across Montana in an effort to end marijuana prohibition in the Big Sky State. The effort, led by ballot-issue committee Montana First, must submit over 48,000 valid signatures before June 22, 2012. Constitutional Initiative #110 would add two sentences to the state's constitution: "Adults have the right to responsibly purchase, consume, produce, and possess marijuana, subject to reasonable limitations, regulations, and taxation. Except for actions that endanger minors, children, or public safety, no criminal offense or penalty of this state shall apply to such activities."

Barb Trego, a former deputy reserve sheriff and the lead proponent of the measure, said, "This measure is as simple as it can be. The basic principle is clear as day. After voters pass it, there will be work to do to define limits and regulations. This is an appropriate task for elected leaders." — *John Masterson* - see montanafirst2012.org

### Ohio medical initiative would make patients protected class

The Ohio Medical Cannabis Amendment is gathering signatures for a proposed constitutional amendment to establish a medical marijuana patients' bill of rights in Ohio. It would grant patients the right to use, purchase and cultivate their own cannabis for medical use. It also would grant the right to confidentiality and privacy with respect to its medical use, establish rights for the industry to exist in the state, protect patients against discrimination and charge the state with upholding and defending the rights of cannabis patients.

By granting qualified patients status as a protected class of individuals, the OMCA would open the door for new constitutional challenges if the Feds intervene. Some of these could put the burden on the federal government to justify its ban on medical use despite available research proving medical value. Since Ohio petitions don't expire, the campaign won't stop until they have the opportunity to vote. — *Mark Ramach, Esq.* www.omca2012.org

### Televangelist Robertson: time to treat marijuana like alcohol

Television evangelist and media mogul Pat Robertson, considered one of the most conservative voices of the extreme Christian right, told the *New York Times* March 8, 2012 that he "absolutely" supports Colorado's initiative to legalize marijuana and treat it like alcohol.

"I really believe we should treat marijuana the way we treat beverage alcohol," he told millions of loyal followers on his '700 Club' program Dec. 22, 2011. "I've never used marijuana and I don't intend to, but it's just one of those things that I think: This war on drugs just hasn't succeeded." Robertson reiterated in March, "It's shocking how many of these young people wind up in prison and they get turned into hardcore criminals because they had a possession of a very small amount of a controlled substance. ... The whole thing is crazy. We've said, 'Well, we're conservatives, we're tough on crime.' That's baloney."

— *Mickey Martin*, T-Comp Consulting

### Costco poll backs legalization

The *Costco Connection* magazine for Costco members presented the "Informed Debate" question, "Should Marijuana Be Legal?" in its March edition. Drug Policy Alliance Executive Dir. Ethan Nadelmann argued in favor and founding director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse Robert Dupont argued against legalization. Readers taking an online poll on Costco's website voted 88.5% in support of legalization.

See costcoconnection.com. — *Mikki Norris*



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Colorado campaign billboard. Photo by Kim Sidwell, kimsidwell.com/mmj

## Colo will vote on regulating cannabis like alcohol

By *Mason Tvert*, TalkItUpColorado.org

Colorado voters will decide on a statewide initiative to make cannabis legal for adults and regulate it like alcohol. The measure, which will appear on the November ballot as Amendment 64 (A-64), would also allow cultivation of industrial hemp.

Since qualifying for the ballot in March, the Campaign to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol has secured several large endorsements. In April, the state Democratic Party gave its official support for the initiative, following endorsements from party committees in more than a dozen counties.

"Polls show that more than 60% of Democrats and a solid majority of Independents believe marijuana should be treated like alcohol," said Cindy Lowery-Graber, chair of the Denver Democratic Party. "A broad coalition is forming in support of A-64 and I'm proud to say that it now includes the Colorado Democratic Party."

Other endorsements include the presidents of the state's branches of the ACLU, NAACP, UFCW, Libertarian Party, Criminal Defense Bar and elected officials from localities throughout the state. Libertarian presidential nominee and former New Mexico governor Gary Johnson also has thrown his support behind the measure.

The campaign is generating a buzz in the Colorado and national media, thanks in part to an aggressive earned and paid media campaign. In April, it made waves with a billboard featuring an image of a 40-

to 50-year-old woman asking if she is a bad person just because she prefers marijuana to alcohol. And in May, just before Mother's Day, the campaign aired a television ad during NBC's *The Today Show* and *Ellen*, in which a young woman types an email to her mother explaining her preference of marijuana over alcohol and asking if she wants to talk about it.

"Our goal is to start a conversation — and encourage others to start their own conversations — about marijuana," said Betty Aldworth, advocacy director of the initiative campaign.

"We will win this election if more older folks come to appreciate the fact that marijuana is safer than alcohol, and that most adults use it responsibly and for many of the same reasons others drink. In order for that to happen, they need to hear from those closest to them."

To that end, its backers have launched TalkItUpColorado.org, a grassroots project and centerpiece of the A-64 campaign. The web-based effort is an activism clearing house that provides a variety of tools fostering interpersonal communication, both online and in person.

The Talk It Up campaign's central theme is encouraging supporters to reach out to friends and relatives to initiate a discussion about marijuana. In particular, it urges younger supporters to talk to their parents, grandparents, and other older voters to make sure they understand that marijuana is not as harmful as they have been led to believe for so many years.

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## Feds meddling with Colo dispensary regulations

By Brian Vicente\* and Paul Campbell

Colorado's medical marijuana businesses were surprised when US Attorney John Walsh issued two rounds of letters directing a targeted group of businesses to close or face federal criminal and civil sanctions.

The criterion for receiving a letter — being within 1,000 feet of universities or schools — imposed a federal standard on businesses already operating under state and local rules. Despite the rigorous and expensive process of obtaining state and local licenses, all 50 shops who received these letters closed or moved.

Colorado patients, business owners and advocates published an open letter on the positive benefits these businesses bring to communities — first and foremost by providing vital medicine to over 164,000 sick and disabled citizens whose doctors recommend cannabis. Unlike sales of prescription drugs, sales of medical marijuana have produced tens of millions of dollars in tax revenue — the first \$2 million annually being earmarked for programs to fight addiction and treat mental health issues.

These businesses, through associations and alliances, work with city councils and the legislature to establish regulations pro-

moting community safety and corporate responsibility. For instance, a group of industry advocates recently introduced a bill in the Colorado legislature to institute a 'responsible vendor program,' similar to what many jurisdictions require for alcohol sales. Business leaders also worked with local newspapers to ensure advertising is community-conscious, and encouraged limits on advertising near schools.

Since Colorado voters recognized the medicinal value of marijuana in 2000, close collaboration between interested parties and state and local governments has produced a thorough and safe regulatory structure. The industry directly employs over 10,000 people in the state and spends millions in capital improvement dollars to operate in locations approved by state and local regulators. Because of its sensible regulations, Colorado is widely considered a model for states that have legal regulations regarding the sale of medical marijuana.

No matter how responsible, ethical, and collaborative the industry is, it has an invasive federal bureaucracy to face. No one wants teens to have access to marijuana, so medical use businesses hope that a proactive, community-minded approach to federal ban will help determine how the current system can be improved.

\* Vicente is Executive Director of Sensible Colorado

## Dutch protest scheme to ban canna-tourism



Joep Ooman, founder of the VOC, lit up at Weedpass protest April 20, in front of the government offices in Amsterdam.

Photo by Derrick Bergman, GONZO Media

### 'Weedpass' splits Netherlands

By Derrick Bergman, GONZO Media, VOC

The so-called weedpass, aimed at excluding foreigners from cannabis coffeeshops to make them "smaller and easier to control" has been enforced in the South of the Netherlands since May 1, 2012. The new rules are to be enforced in the rest of the country, including Amsterdam, on Jan. 1, 2013. This scheme has split the country in two: the free North and the unfree South.

The move to turn coffeeshops into private clubs that are out-of-bounds for tourists has been controversial from the start. Most people expect the only winners will be illegal dealers, who, of course, will sell to anyone. This prediction has turned to reality in the southern provinces of the

Netherlands. In the first week of May, happy street dealers showed bundles of cash and bags of cannabis and other drugs on national television, thanking the government for their extra income. They also thanked the mayor of Maastricht, the country's most southern city, who is one of the few proponents of the weedpass.

The biggest anti-weedpass demonstration yet was staged in Amsterdam on April 20. About 1,000 people participated in the first-ever 420 Smoke-Out, in front of the Stopera, the townhall. Three days later, Prime Minister Mark Rutte tendered his government's resignation to the Queen.

Possibly weedpass and private-club laws will be abolished before Jan. 1. Right now, lots of tourists and Dutch smokers who don't want to register as 'club members' have turned to coffeeshops in the free North to party. Weedpass will be the central theme of this year's Cannabis Liberation Day in Amsterdam, June 17, organized by the VOC (Society for the Abolition of Cannabis Prohibition).

More information: [www.voc-nederland.org](http://www.voc-nederland.org)

## 'Per se' DUI bill dies in Colo

By Phil Smith, [stopthedrugwar.org](http://stopthedrugwar.org)

The third time wasn't the charm for Colorado legislators trying to pass a *per se* drugged driving bill aimed at marijuana users. The bill died last year in the Senate, this year in the House, and again May 12, 2012, after Gov. John Hickenlooper (D) brought it up during a special session.

The bill, HB12S-1005, would have mandated that anyone driving with blood THC levels higher than five nanograms per milliliter (5ng/ml) is guilty of impaired driving, even with no evidence of actual impairment. It lost by a single vote in the Senate, which split 17-17 on a bill that had been passed earlier that day in the House.

*Per se* laws apply to drunk driving, where a blood alcohol content of 0.08% is all that is needed to convict someone.

Last year news columnist William Breathes underwent drug and driving tests a day after smoking marijuana. While his blood THC was three times that which would have gotten him convicted of DUID, his ability to drive was unimpaired.

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# Montanans take brunt of federal prosecutions

By John Masterson

The federal government's unrelenting crackdown has targeted several leaders of Montana's medical marijuana movement who had sought as providers to model an approach above and beyond regulatory requirements. They actively involved state and local law enforcement leaders in their efforts to document a "clear and unambiguous compliance" with state law, in keeping with the letter of the 2009 DOJ 'Ogden memo.'

Tom Daubert, a political consultant of more than 30 years who helped manage the medical marijuana initiative campaign in 2004 and founded Patients & Families United to lobby for improvements to the law, has pled guilty to a federal drug charge and faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine.

The government's focus on Daubert wasn't lessened by the fact that he gave regular tours of his business to state legislators and top law enforcement officials or that he was a leading advocate in the effort to strictly regulate and control providers in order to preserve and protect legitimate patients' rights. In order to focus exclusively on his lobbying work, Daubert had legally dissociated from the provider group he had helped create, Montana Cannabis, four months before the raids.

In a new legal twist, the federal government recently indicted Chris Lindsey, a former public defender who had been a partner in Montana Cannabis for a mere nine months before he left to serve as a consulting attorney to Montana Cannabis and many other of the state's providers some 14 months before the raids. Despite his complete lack of involvement in and awareness of what was ongoing at the time of the raids, Lindsey now faces charges of conspiracy, trafficking and weapons that carry a maximum sentence of life in prison and a \$5 million fine.

Whereas Daubert's attorneys convinced him that federal court rules would never allow a fair trial, and that no mention

of state law and compliance with it would be tolerated in his defense, Lindsey has vowed to fight in court nonetheless.

Daubert will be sentenced in early September. Lindsey's trial is expected to begin by early June. So far, most of the many former providers who have been sentenced received one to two years in prison with years of supervised probation. But Richard Flor, 68, a former partner in Montana Cannabis who suffers from advanced diabetes, heart conditions and the effects of Agent Orange that he encountered as a soldier in Vietnam, was recently sentenced to five years in prison, the most severe sentence to date.

A new documentary film, *Code of the West*, offers a good overview of the Montana story [codeofthewestfilm.com](http://codeofthewestfilm.com).

## Study: Fewer suicides seen in medical marijuana states

By Paul Armentano, NORML

The enactment of statewide laws allowing for the therapeutic use of cannabis is associated with reduced instances of suicide, according to a discussion paper published in January by the Institute for the Study of Labor in Bonn, Germany.

Researchers at Montana State University, U of Colorado, and San Diego State U assessed rates of suicide in the years before and after the passage of statewide medical use laws.

"The total suicide rate falls smoothly during the pre-legalization period in both MML (medical marijuana law) and non-MML states. However, beginning in year zero, the trends diverge: the suicide rate in MML states continues to fall, while the suicide rate in states that never legalized medical marijuana begins to climb gradually," wrote the authors.

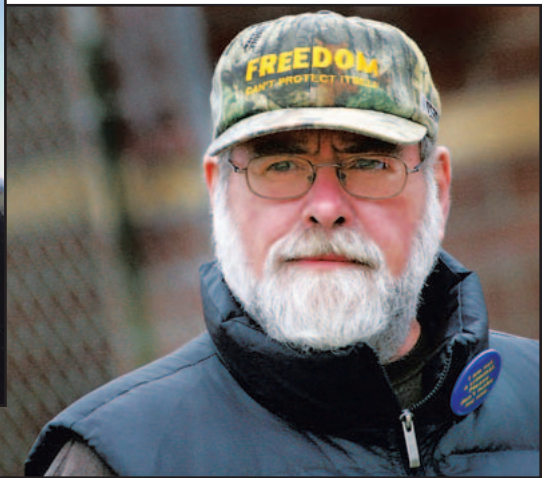
They determined that this downward trend in suicides in states post-legalization was especially pronounced in males. "Our results suggest that the passage of a medical marijuana law is associated with an

*Please turn to page 19*



Chris Lindsey (above) also faces charges

Montana patient-activist Tom Daubert (below right, seen in March 2011) gave regular tours of his business to state legislators and top law enforcement officials before his raid and arrest.



## 'Clarification' bills, ballot efforts keep MI busy

By Michael Whitty

Michigan activists are learning to lobby and be politically effective as they work to get sufficient petition signatures for a ballot initiative amending the state constitution to repeal marijuana prohibition for adults 21 and over. Some 300,000 signatures are needed by July 9, 2012. Over 2,000 volunteers have registered at [repealtoday.org](http://repealtoday.org).

In May, the Michigan House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate four bills to clarify the medical use law passed by voters in 2008. The bills were approved by at least the three-quarters vote necessary to amend the voter-enacted law and followed nearly a year of negotiations. They will take immediate effect if they pass the Senate and are approved by the governor. This legislative package was not as bad as a series of bills proposed earlier in the session, and most patients and caregivers could live with it.

Under the new provisions, patients

seeking medical marijuana registry cards must undergo in-person doctor evaluations, with a review of medical history. Physicians can no longer issue permits without meeting patients in person. Another bill requires photographs on patient ID cards, which would be valid for two years (currently only one year). The charge for selling without a proper registry ID card could be a two-year felony.

Another bill creates a 15-member panel of physicians and others to review petitions seeking to add more medical conditions for which cannabis is allowed. Police would gain access to Michigan's marijuana grower registry — they're currently prohibited from seeing it. Defendants would be allowed to raise a medical defense in a court prosecution.

After those bills passed, another House bill was introduced to regulate dispensaries, allow caregivers to sell excess to dispensaries and ban on-site consumption.



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## DC moves ahead with dispensary plan

By Paul Armentano, NORML

Health officials in the nation's capital on March 30, 2012 selected six companies to provide cannabis in compliance with the District's nascent medical marijuana law.

The companies had business licenses and building permits from the Washington DC Dept. of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs by mid-April. All six of the successful firms will cultivate in the northeast quadrant of DC, in Wards 5 and 7.

The *Washington Times* newspaper reported that the companies in Ward 5 are Abatin Wellness Center, a firm affiliated with Montel Williams, on Queens Chapel Rd.; Venture Forth on Channing St.; Alternative Solutions on 24th Place;

District Growers on Evarts St.; and Holistic Remedies on Fenwick St. Phyto Management LLC was selected to open up across the Anacostia River on Benning Road, NE, but is expected to change its location.

City Council members authorized the establishment of the facilities in May 2010 when they amended the Legalization of Marijuana for Medical Treatment Initiative, a 1998 municipal ballot measure which garnered 69% of the vote yet was never implemented.

All the selected applicants signed a waiver releasing the City from criminal liability if federal officials decide to take action against them.

## Rhode Island will see first dispensaries this year

By Jesse Stout

The Rhode Island legislature passed a bill May 16, 2012 allowing compassion centers to provide medical cannabis to the state's nearly 5,000 qualified patients.

Legislation allowing and regulating three compassion centers was passed in 2009, but Governor Lincoln Chafee refused to issue licenses because US Attorney Peter Neronha threatened to prosecute the operators. The new legislation is a compromise reached among Governor Chafee and leaders of the House and Senate after they met with Neronha in April. Compassion centers will be allowed to cultivate up to 150 plants, up to 99 of them mature, and possess up to 1500 ounces of dried cannabis.

Compassion centers must submit to state police inspections. They will be allowed to purchase cannabis from individual caregivers, who are already allowed

to cultivate up to 12 mature and 12 immature plants per patient they serve.

The Senate passed the bill, sponsored by Senator Rhoda Perry of Providence, on May 9 by a vote of 35 to 3. The House passed its companion bill, H7888, sponsored by Rep. Scott Slater, son of the late Rep. Thomas Slater, who had championed the original 2006 Medical Marijuana Act, by 64 to 7 on May 16.

Operators of the Thomas Slater Compassion Center and Greenleaf Compassion Center anticipate receiving licenses and opening in late 2012.

Meanwhile, Rhode Island's cannabis decriminalization bills have been re-introduced in the 2012 session by Rep. John Edwards and Sen. Josh Miller. They have already undergone committee hearings, and could become law this year if a leadership compromise is reached.

## Summit of Americas drew Obama out

By Morgan Fox, Marijuana Policy Project

A Mason-Dixon poll sponsored by the Marijuana Policy Project in May 2012 found that 74% of voters nationwide support ending federal interference with medical marijuana laws — a rate higher than the popularity of any political candidate.

Throughout nearly a year of federal crackdowns on medical marijuana providers throughout the nation, and in spite of campaign promises, President Obama has maintained relative silence on the issue. He has simply noted that marijuana is still against federal law, and allowed federal prosecutors in medical-use states to set their own policies. Actions against providers were rationalized by proximity to schools, local zoning ordinance violations, or apparent business success. The inconsistency with which cannabis businesses have been targeted for closure has had local officials, patients and providers begging for some kind of clear policy statement from the top.

At the April 2012 Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Colombia, Obama finally had to make a statement on drug policy. Leading up to the event, Latin American leaders from several countries demanded discussion of new strategies, pointing out that the Drug War has failed and that US demand for illegal drugs fuels much of the violence ravaging nearly every country south of the US. President Otto Perez Molina of Guatemala wrote that, "We cannot eradicate global drug markets, but we can certainly regulate them as we have done with alcohol and tobacco markets. Drug abuse, alcoholism and tobacco should be treated as public health problems, not criminal justice issues."

Despite a number of distractions, from Cuba's absence to the infamous Secret Service scandal, the summit participants forced Obama to address the issue. Yet his response was not particularly clear:

"I, personally, and my administration's position is that legalization is not the

answer," was the crux of his statement.

Some saw even this as a step forward, marking the first time the issue of global drug policy was so pressing that even the US president had to address it.

However, his comments did not satisfy the medical marijuana community in the US. Capitalizing on the willingness of the White House to at least talk about drug policy, activists and news media began peppering the administration with questions on federal interference in medical marijuana states.

Just over a week after the summit, Obama made his clearest statement so far in an interview with *Rolling Stone*, saying that he "never made a commitment that somehow we were going to give *carte blanche* to large-scale producers and operators of marijuana — and the reason is, because it's against federal law. I can't nullify Congressional law. I can't ask the Justice Dept. to say, 'Ignore completely a federal law that's on the books.' What I can say is, 'Use your prosecutorial discretion and properly prioritize your resources to go after things that are really doing folks damage.' As a consequence, there haven't been prosecutions of users of marijuana for medical purposes."

This answer certainly does not specify what criteria the Dept. of Justice uses to determine what things "are really doing folks damage" when the community embraces and regulates their services. It is, however, a sign that the issue is not going away. He was not truthful about the power a president wields over the legal status of cannabis — Congress has already provided him wide leeway.

It took great international (and national) pressure for Obama to finally address the issue of marijuana policy, and now that he has, the discussion will surely continue. No doubt patients and activists will keep pressing him on the topic, and this could have serious implications for his re-election campaign.



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# It's Time to Tell Michelle

Michelle Obama is a loving mother, a concerned parent and an intelligent woman, and we wonder how she would answer these three questions:

- 1) How would you and your husband, family and country have benefited if Barack as a young man had gotten a marijuana arrest, destroying his chance to go to college, his job prospects and, if charged with sales, maybe spent a few years behind bars?
- 2) How will anyone be better off if that happens to one of your daughters?
- 3) Can you know this happens to 800,000 Americans a year — even seriously ill patients with a physician's approval who live in states where doctors, families, voters and legislators have recognized the medical use of cannabis — and not do anything?

All pretense to the contrary notwithstanding, your husband is the one person on Earth who can order the DEA to deschedule marijuana, desist in its raids against dispensaries and patients and end the NIDA research monopoly roadblock. Congress gave him that power. He won't listen to us. You are the one person on Earth who might reach him.

We urge our readers and especially mothers to join the West Coast Leaf and the NORML Women's Alliance to "Tell Michelle." Write or call to let her know that marijuana prohibition is harmful and how it has affected your family. Michelle needs to hear from you so Barack will hear from her. Information online at TellMichelleO.com.

## Federal Policy on Cannabis is New Jim Crow

Look back 50 years to the Civil Rights struggle. Southern states twisted States Rights into a legal device to craft the *Jim Crow* laws used to deny Americans of color their fundamental rights through segregation, prohibiting mixed-race marriage, denial of education and voting rights, etc. The US Fifth Circuit Court June 25, 1962 ordered that a man named James Meredith be admitted to integrate the University of Mississippi. A courageous young President John F. Kennedy dispatched the Mississippi national guard to hold back a mob of more than 2,000 segregationists who repeatedly attacked federal marshals, allowing Meredith to register for college and ultimately paving the way for US voters to elect a mixed-race African-American president.

Five decades later, 17 states have asserted States Rights to restore their citizens' right to use cannabis therapeutics as allowed by international treaty. Congress refused to cut off funding to DEA raids, even after heavily armed federal agents were dispatched to California April 2, 2012 to raid Oaksterdam University, Oaksterdam Cannabis Museum, and a licensed medical marijuana dispensary operating under state law by a man named Richard Lee. Hundreds took to the street to bear witness, curse and shame the federal agents. Lee had funded and guided Prop 19, California's 2010 voter initiative that came within 4% to legalizing adult marijuana use and regulating sales in the state.

The 2011 NAACP convention issued a resolution that begins, "A Call to End the War on Drugs." It is sad how fully former marijuana smoker President Barack Obama, Congress, and the US Courts have put themselves on the wrong side of one of the most important Civil Rights issues of our era. How long until they realize this mistake?

## Save Oaksterdam Museum

One unusual victim of the federal raids is the world famous Oaksterdam Cannabis Museum, which had been sponsored by Richard Lee. The museum needs to find new sponsors and a new location as soon as possible, to reopen its doors. Can you help?

To help or donate, visit [OaksterdamCannabisMuseum.com](http://OaksterdamCannabisMuseum.com) or email [museum@oaksterdamuniversity.com](mailto:museum@oaksterdamuniversity.com)

## Setting the record straight

The photo of Joe Grumbine on page 3 in the Spring 2012 issue was taken by Catrina Coleman on Nov. 2, 2010.

Longer editions of many of our articles are posted online at [westcoastleaf.com](http://westcoastleaf.com).

WEST COAST LEAF

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## Who is to blame for US Attorneys' war on access?

By Eric E. Sterling

Who is to blame for the attacks on the state's medical marijuana program and patients by the four US Attorneys in California? Since they work for the Dept. of Justice (DoJ), some blame Attorney General Eric Holder. Others say that since they were nominated by President Obama, he is to blame. These are the formal lines of authority, but they miss the political reality.

According to tradition, it is the US senators of the President's party who pick their state's prosecutors. The President nominates their candidates unless there are serious problems with the pick.

The AG is the boss on paper, but the US Attorneys weren't picked by the AG — they don't 'owe' him anything. The result is that prosecutors have a great deal of independence from 'Main Justice.' Politically (often the only way that counts), their allegiance is to the Senator who nominated them. Operationally, they are not in DC, they are in the field. Rarely do they need approval from the AG before they act.

A check of press releases archived on the websites of Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein reveals that Boxer's press releases announce the nominations of Attorneys Melinda Haag (Northern) and Laura Duffy (Southern). She recommended each to the president. Feinstein's archive says she recommended and helped secure the confirmations of Andre Birotte, Jr.

(Central) and Benjamin Wagner (Eastern).

Further strengthening the independence of the prosecutors in this administration is the fact that AG Holder has limited influence or respect at DoJ. Career prosecutors remember that on or about Jan. 20, 2001, he told the Clinton White House counsel that it would be okay to pardon billionaire Marc Rich, who had been indicted for felony tax evasion and was a fugitive from justice in Europe. Rich's heiress wife was a big Democratic donor. DoJ loyalists have never forgotten or forgiven Holder for giving the sign-off on this dirty deal.

Holder is also being investigated by Republican members of Congress for his role in overseeing or covering up the "Fast and Furious" scandal involving thousands of firearms leaking out of a DoJ investigation and ending up in the hands of Mexican criminals. Over 40 House members have called for Holder's resignation.

As for the US Attorneys' war on medical marijuana in CA, don't blame Eric Holder and don't blame Barack Obama — US Attorneys don't owe them their jobs.

The powers to blame for the federal war on medical marijuana are none other than Senators Boxer and Feinstein. They are the ones who should be targets of pressure, protest and outrage. They could call off the crackdown.

Call Senators Boxer at 202-224-3553 and Feinstein at 202-224-3841 to stop the crackdown.

## The American Way: Punishment without limits or end

By Mary Jane Borden, DrugSense.org

No one is incarcerated for marijuana, right? Only violent criminals, correct? Those on probation or parole are incidental to the US corrections system, aren't they? The Pew Center on the States reported that, "Between 1925 (the first year national prison statistics were collected) and 1972, the number of state prisoners increased from 85,239 to 174,379." By 2009, state prisons housed 1,319,391 inmates, an increase of 1448% since 1925 and 657% since 1972.

According the Center, "This change was fueled by stiffer sentencing and release laws and decisions by courts and parole boards, which sent more offenders to prison and kept them there for longer terms." In short, it was the Drug War.

To illustrate using data from Bureau of Justice statistics, about 25% of federal inmates had a drug conviction as their most serious offense in 1980 — a total of 4,900 prisoners. Just 10 years later in 1990, 30,470 federal inmates counted "drugs" as their most serious offense. Almost 30 years after 1980, in 2009, federal inmates with drug offenses numbered 95,205 — 20 times more US 'drug' prisoners while the US population increased by only about a third.

Similar trends apply to those with drug convictions and on probation or parole: both numbers have doubled in the last 20 years. Together, these groups comprised almost 1.4 million individuals in 2009.

Anyone unlucky enough to be prosecuted for marijuana knows that people go to prison for pot. Almost 45,000 state and federal prison inmates listed marijuana as their most serious offense in 2004. Since marijuana arrests have increased by over 10% since then, no doubt 'marijuana prisoners' now exceed 50,000.

Some 65 million Americans with criminal records. The National Employment Law Project reports, "A person's interaction with the criminal justice system extends beyond what may be a minor arrest or conviction to a lifetime of social and economic disadvantage."

The 'American way' of incarcerating its citizens over the past 30 years, even for marijuana, has entrapped ever-increasing numbers in a prison, parole and probation vortex that negatively impacts people's lives long after their sentences are served. Since the Drug War is fueling US prison growth, one must ask: How do we extinguish this destructive fire?

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## Drug czar blows off farmers on hemp question

By Eric Steenstra, [VoteHemp.com](http://VoteHemp.com)

White House officials responded April 24, 2012 to a popular petition on the 'We the People' website filed last September in support of allowing US farmers to once again grow non-drug industrial hemp.

Rather than address the farming of non-drug hemp, the White House issued the same pat response it used to swat down petitions for legalizing marijuana, trotted out the old Drug War lies and conflated industrial hemp (non-drug oilseed and fiber cannabis) with marijuana.

Cultivated around the world, including in the EU, Canada and even China, for its strong fiber and nutritious seed, most countries recognize the obvious fact that industrial hemp is not marijuana but a farm crop. Its fiber is used in everything from clothing to construction to composite car parts, while the seed contains a complete protein, second only to soy in its food value, with high amounts of Omega-3 essential fatty acids (EFA), in which the American diet is chronically deficient.

VoteHemp works on behalf of hundreds of businesses which produce hemp products from imported Canadian, European and Chinese hemp seed and fiber. Hemp food, body care and fiber products accounted for over \$419 million in US retail sales in 2010. The US hemp industry is in the unique position of having to advocate for a change in federal law to allow its members to source their raw materials from domestic rather than foreign farmers. Despite growing consumer demand for these healthy, eco-friendly products, the US remains the only industrialized nation in the world to allow the importation and sale of hemp raw materials and finished goods while banning its own farmers from growing the crop.

Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Director Gil Kerlikowske cobbled together the White House response, ignoring both the petition and his own agency's published quality guidelines. VoteHemp has met with senior ONDCP officials who made it clear they understand that industrial hemp is not marijuana. The administration should know that one cannot use hemp for drug purposes any more than one can use a poppy seed bagel, even though they contain trace opiates. The response removes any doubt that ideological interests and hemp prohibition trump science and reason in this White House.

European, Canadian and Chinese farmers are laughing all the way to the bank as their largest market, that of the US, maintains a regressive policy that provides them a captive market in which American farmers cannot compete or even participate.

Canadian farmers profit from this versatile, soil-replenishing crop, and the majority of their harvest is exported to the US. In a struggling economy, where politicians constantly speak of the need for creating green jobs, the misguided federal ban on hemp farming perpetuates a massive lost opportunity while increasing the US trade deficit.

To date 17 states have passed legislation encouraging hemp farming, and nine have actually removed barriers to its production or research. The National Farmers Union (NFU) and National Grange both have passed resolutions urging the resumption of domestic hemp farming. In North Dakota, farmers and state officials, including then-Gov. Hoeven, have made significant efforts to work with the Justice Dept. to implement their hemp farming laws, but to no avail. Obama's pattern of spouting false claims and refusing to work with states on this issue needs to end. His administration could fix the problem tomorrow with the simple stroke of a regulatory pen, as US Attorney General Holder recently acknowledged to the *Huffington Post* — no Congressional role needed.

Obama took office promising an "unprecedented level of openness in government," with policy based on science, not politics. Sadly, this response and the administration's refusal to meet with state officials show that he is again on the wrong side of history. The legions of hemp proponents who supported and donated to Obama in 2008 may very well be holding thousands of angry protest signs and sitting out the election this time around.

If so, Obama has no one to blame but himself for betraying the voters' trust.



Libertarian candidate for Vice President of the US James Gray spoke with Oaksterdam U Chancellor Dale Jones in May to convey his support for legalization and that of the party Presidential Candidate Gary Johnson.



## MAMA: 30 years, 3 generations, 1 message

### A rational approach to drugs

By Sandee Burbank, [www.mamas.org](http://www.mamas.org)

Thirty years ago, a handful of Oregon women traveled to a cabin in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, the home of Sandee Burbank, drawn by their concern about the effects of drug use on their families and communities.

They wanted a way to teach themselves and their families how to avoid harm from any drug use amid an incessant campaign exaggerating the dangers of marijuana use. On the other hand, there was little public information about how to avoid the damage and deaths caused by legal drugs like alcohol, tobacco, prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs.

After much discussion, they outlined their goals: to provide unbiased, scientific drug education to people of all ages; to offer individual and family-oriented alternatives to drug use; to enhance communications between law enforcement, educators, service providers, seniors, parents and youth; and to question the media techniques of advertising over-the-counter drugs, alcohol and tobacco and their effects on our entire population.

They registered with the IRS as a non-profit in 1982, calling their group Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse (MAMA).

Working with Mark Miller, former director of the U of Oregon Drug Info Center, MAMA developed an educational approach to drugs based on personal responsibility and informed decision making, with respect for human dignity. It encouraged people to learn how to weigh the benefits and risks of any drug use.

MAMA has since produced many publications and presentations, attended public hearings and meetings, and has received awards on both the state and national levels. Because MAMA judges all drugs by the same standards, in its discussion about the dangers of drugs an obvious truth is revealed: The perceived danger from cannabis use is dwarfed when compared with statistics for the real harms and deaths caused by highly advertised and readily available legal drugs. Another unfortunate truth also becomes apparent. The marijuana laws are costly to enforce and very harmful to families.

MAMA found that marijuana laws are inequitable, ineffective, unenforceable and counter-productive. In 1992, it took the position that cannabis should be available to patients through their doctors.

At its Oregon clinics, MAMA works to educate patients who are registered in the state medical marijuana program and provide access to doctors so patients can make

informed decisions about medical use.

After 30 years, MAMA feels it has accomplished many of its goals. Most people make decisions in their own best interests about if, and how, to use any drug. Using MAMA's guidelines, people now have a way to evaluate the benefits and risks of any drug. MAMA continues to advocate for drug policy based on science, compassion and reason.

### California legislation

*Continued from page 1*  
ance with state law.

AB 2312 would eliminate ambiguities perceived in SB 420 by clearly legalizing sales, distribution, processing and cultivation under a state registration system. Registrees would be protected from criminal penalties but could face civil fines for failing to abide by regulations. These would be promulgated by a new state board in the Dept. of Consumer Affairs, funded by registration fees. Individual patients and caregivers growing at home would be exempt. Local laws and prohibitions against dispensaries would be preempted, except for reasonable zoning requirements, and every county and city would be required to permit at least one dispensary per 50,000 residents unless local voters specifically opted out. The bill also authorizes local governments to levy a supplementary sales tax of up to 2.5% on medical marijuana.

A second, less ambitious medical use bill, SB 1182, is sponsored by Sen. Leno. It would re-write SB 420 to make it clear that any collective, cooperative or other business entity could legally operate provided it complies with the Attorney General's guidelines, issued in August, 2008.

Both bills have been approved in committee but face further debate before coming to a vote. Both face serious opposition from law enforcement as well as the California League of Cities, which is hostile to legalizing dispensaries.

Yet another source of opposition to AB 2312 comes from skeptics within the reform community, who worry that it will create a regulatory straitjacket for the industry.

Proponents cite a poll by EMC Research showing that 77% of Californians support regulating, controlling and taxing medical marijuana. Unlike Colorado, the only state to have completely implemented a statewide regulation system, California faces substantial political divisions over the issue, as well as conflicting appeals court decisions which are waiting to be settled by the state Supreme Court.

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WEST COAST LEAF

Calendar and Community Directory

**June 15-17, HempCon, San Jose, CA.** San Jose Convention Center, 150 West San Carlos St. Medical marijuana show, exhibits, seminars. See hempcon.com

**June 17, Peoples Movement Assembly to End the War on Drugs, Oakland CA.** Humanist Hall, 390 27th St. 9 AM to 5 PM. Film screening, plenaries, working groups, organizing. Free. For info or to register, see newdrugpolicy.com

**June 23, Marijuana Policy Project's Summer Solstice Party, West Los Angeles, CA.** The Marrakesh House, a Moroccan-themed, sustainably-designed hillside home. Help MPP raise critical funds for its 2012 campaigns, like Amendment 64 in Colorado. For more info, see mpp.org/summersolstice

**June 23, High Times 2012 Medical Cannabis Cup - San Francisco, Richmond, CA.** Craneway Pavilion, 1414 Harbour Way. 12 PM to midnight. Music, parties, expo, activism, seminars. Must be 18+years old to enter. See medcancup.com

**July 1, Black Kush Expo, Los Angeles, CA.** Ukrainian Culture Center, 4315 Melrose Ave., LA. Free event geared to promote cannabis wellness through education and entertainment to the urban community. See blackkushexpo.com

**July 4, 43rd Annual Smoke-In and the US Marijuana Party Political Convention, Washington, DC.** Rally, march, concert, speakers. For info, see smoke-in.org/mj

**Aug.3-5, Second Annual Sacramento Hempfest, Sacramento, CA.** Rio Ramaza Marine, 10000 Garden Hwy. Vendors, speakers, performers, djs, Hippie Village, 215 area, Sac Canna Cup. For tickets and info, see sacramento hempfest.com

**Aug. 17-19, 21st Annual Seattle Hempfest,**

**Seattle, WA.** Myrtle Edwards Park. World's largest "protestival" with music, speakers, vendors, food. See hempfest.org

**Sept. 8-9, Hempstalk 2012, Portland, OR.** Kelley Point Park. Festival with vendors, speakers, music, fashion show, and more. Call 503-235-4606, or see hempstalk.org

**Sept. 15, 23rd Annual Boston Freedom Rally, MA.** For info, masscann.org

**Oct. 3-6, 41st Annual National NORML Conference, Los Angeles, CA.** Omni Los Angeles Hotel. For info, see norml.org

### Sac Patients founder



**Joy Cole**  
Born 1963 -  
Died April 29, 2012  
Joy Cole, founder of Sacramento Patients Alliance, passed away April 29, 2012 due to health complications.

Cole, 49, a stage-four lung cancer survivor with an unwavering commitment to medical marijuana, was named "Best Cannabis Activist" in the *Sacramento News & Review's* 2011 Best of Sac issue.

Born in Southern Cal, Cole became a reform activist soon after graduating from Ventura High School. She moved to Sacramento, where her understanding of the fractuous medical cannabis community was unmatched, enabling her to transcend every situation and find the good in every person. She dedicated immense time and energy in the last few years to organizing patients for rallies, City Council and Board of Supervisor meetings, to fight for the rights of patients and providers, and against discriminatory proposals.

Her devotion to medical cannabis is inspiring. — *Mickey Martin*

## World's largest cannabis museum opens in Barcelona, Spain

By Derrick Bergman, (G0NZ0 Media, VOC)

Four festive and magical days marked the opening of the world's largest cannabis museum in Barcelona, Spain. The Hemp Museum Gallery is a branch of the orignal Hash Marihuana & Hemp Museum in Amsterdam.

The new museum is located in the famous gothic quarter of Barcelona, within walking distance of the beach and the Ramblas Boulevard. Ben Dronkers (Sensi Seeds, Hempflax, Hash Museum) purchased the wonderful 16th-century Palau or Palace Mornau in 2001 and spared no expense or trouble to turn it into a world-class museum. His vast cannabis collection of over 6500 pieces has finally been professionally catalogued and the original Hash Museum in Amsterdam has been thoroughly renovated and upgraded. Hats off to the extended Dronkers family: the results in both cities are spectacular.

The reopening of the Amsterdam museum and the grand opening in Barcelona coincided with the 2012 Cannabis Culture Awards. In Amsterdam, the awards were presented by former Dutch prime minister Dries van Agt, who received the award in 2009. Winners included Norwegian elder statesman Thorvald Stoltenberg, father of the current prime minister and member of the Global Commission on Drug Policy, and Dutch psychiatrist and drug policy activist Fredrick Polak. Finally, an award was presented to Dr. Lester Grinspoon of Harvard University. Because of his inability to travel, a Skype interview with Dronkers was shown at both ceremonies.

The Barcelona ceremony took place on May 9, 2012 two days before the official opening of the museum. The event was dominated by Virgin founder Richard Branson, who accepted an award on behalf of the Global Commission on Drug Policy.



Museum interior (above).  
Recipients of the Cannabis Culture awards (below), Fredrick Polak, museum owner Ben Dronkers, Fernanda de la Figuera, Richard Branson, and Todd McCormick.  
Photo by Derrick Bergman, G0NZ0 Media



The two hours the British entrepreneur spent in the museum were one big media blitz, notably dfferent from the Amsterdam ceremony, attended by only a handful of journalists. Branson promised to urge the Global Commission to issue a strong statement denouncing the repressive course Dutch cannabis policy has taken and stated that legal cannabis could solve Spain's economic crisis.

The two other winners in Barcelona were author/photographer/activist Todd McCormick and Fernanda de la Figuera, Spanish grower and cannabis activist since 1973. After the awards ceremony, the party went on for four straight days, with special openings for the press, locals, members of Spanish cannabis social clubs and the general public. The museum is a magical place where even the most knowledgeable cannabis aficionado can learn something.

The best places might be the small balconies at the front of the building, where you can sit and smoke cannabis while looking at passers-by gazing up and taking pictures. Certainly one of those things you have to do at least once in your life,

Hemp Museum Gallery, Carrer Ample 35, Barcelona, Spain  
hempmuseumgallery.com

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## NORML Women's Alliance holds kickoff event

By Alexis Wilson Briggs

The NORML Women's Alliance - San Francisco Bay Area held its first event May 4, 2012 at Oaksterdam Student Union, hosting Moms United to End the War on Drugs. NORML Board Member and NORML Women's Alliance West Coast representative Kyndra Miller moderated the event.

Dale Sky Jones, executive chancellor of Oaksterdam University, opened the evening with remarks on how being a mother has impacted her perspective. She opined that the 'Just-Say-No' attempts to play on a mother's fear for her child must fail, as they did during alcohol prohibition, which women brought to an end after learning that the harms of prohibition were worse than the violence caused by alcohol.

Laurence Lichter, attorney from Pier 5 Law Offices, recalled his disbelief when Richard Lee first approached him to help start Oaksterdam. Despite the recent DEA raid of Oaksterdam, Mr. Lichter expressed optimism that the economics of cannabis will ultimately control politics and lead to the end of cannabis prohibition.

David Long, member of LEAP and program director at Brandman University, discussed how his pre-9/11 investigations of labor corruption led him to realize that decriminalizing drugs would lessen more serious crimes that are funded with the proceeds of drug sales. He now believes the Drug War is a morally bankrupt war against the least powerful people in society and is ultimately an unforgivable loss of human capital.

Karen Shain, policy director for Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, spoke about prison conditions facing mothers. Two-thirds of the women in prison are mothers incarcerated for drug offenses. She focused on pending legislation: Senator Mark Leno's SB 1506 reducing drug possession to a misdemeanor, the November ballot initiative reforming the Three Strikes law, and the third attempt to end shackling of pregnant women in prison.

Ellen Komp, deputy director of Cal NORML, said she is looking for someone to spearhead a Child Protective Services conference to address the treatment by county agencies of parent-patients.

Dr. David Levitt, Democratic candidate for US Senate, closed out the evening. If he places second in the June primary, due to changes in voting laws, he would run

against fellow Democrat Diane Feinstein in the November election. He shared a comment from his neighbor, a veteran, who said, "I don't know any vets that don't use marijuana, because we better not dream."

SF Bay Area NORML Women's Alliance monthly meetings and other events at Facebook.com/NormlWomenSF.

### Book review:

## Get that bug before the bug gets the garden

*Marijuana Pest & Disease Control*  
By Ed Rosenthal with Kathy Imbriani  
Quick American Pub.

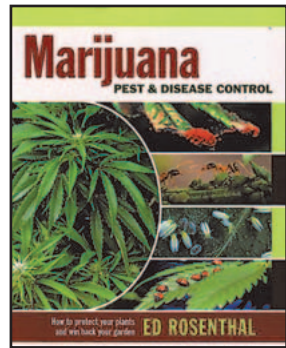
By John Thomas Ellis

Ed Rosenthal's *Marijuana Pest & Disease Control* is one of the few books every gardener on the planet must own.

He and Kathy Imbriani have produced a tome of great importance for those who work with any kind of plant. It deftly concentrates decades of experience and hands-on practice into an easy-to-understand reference for all things that threaten the modern-day grower.

Whether you are growing orchids, tomatoes or cannabis, Rosenthal's insights will help both amateur and pro through those most vexing times — when pests and disease threaten to destroy the fruits of the gardener's work. The authors remind us to keep it simple and use an organic approach whenever possible. One example is a simple cure for mold and fungus: use pH-down as a spray, set at level 8. Elegant and simple, yet it works perfectly and safely.

The book takes us through the botany and horticulture of cannabis nightmares. It



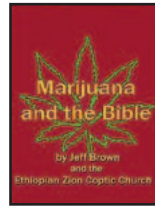
introduces the reader to the science and treatments from veteran grower Rosenthal, and this book serves as his reference guide for all

that threatens to harm the garden. He writes of barriers, preventive measures and natural pesticides with a kind, loving thoroughness that puts mites, thrips, mold and fungus on notice — he's onto them, and *Marijuana Pest & Disease Control* provides the solutions.

## Summer reading: New books to browse

### *Marijuana and the Bible*

By Jeff Brown and the Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church  
Jeff Brown / CreateSpace publishing



This update on the classic work by Jeff Brown traces the hidden story of cannabis found in the Bible in a Rasta interpretation of ancient texts, from the Lord's gift of all plants, to the healing of the nations.

Brown presents great reference material regarding cannabis use around the world, in various religions, and in the Drug War via a selection of documents in which the author communicated with the DEA.

### *Cannabis Sativa and Cannabis Indica*

*The Essential Guide* series  
Two volumes, By S.T. Oner  
Green Candy Press, \$20 each



Green Candy Press lives up to its name with these two yummy volumes of top-of-the-line photos and alphabetized descriptions that take the reader through the two cannabis subspecies from A to Z.



Either book is a great stand-alone encyclopedia, and the combined reference set is even more fun to thumb through.

## Deep Green Fest links cannabis with ecology

By Sharon Letts

Deep Green Fest II, held April 23, 2012 in the historic Craneway Pavilion in Richmond, CA, joined 4/20 with Earth Day celebrations to educate and enlighten on all things green — including hemp, cannabis, holistic healing and politics. Events were ongoing on four stages featuring music, lectures and panels on everything from bee-keeping to canna-economics.

The hall held a combination of commercial exhibitors, vendors, chill zones and art and educational displays. Organizations provided free literature and information. Outside in the medicating area the LovEvolution Solution Bus hosted a party of its own with a message of acceptance for all in a global awakening.

The event was a mix of celebration and frustration, as it came just two weeks after Oakland was raided. Supporters of Oaksterdam's driving force held signs sporting, "Richard Lee for President."

One star of Deep Green Fest was Stephen DeAngelo of Oakland's Harborside Health Center, with his brother Andrew close by. Both were featured in the Discovery Channel's "Weed Wars," but the rumors of a second season of the controversial mini-series were squelched by the day of the event. DeAngelo had a busy day, with three forum presentations expounding on plant politics and the future. "Wellness Not Intoxication" sought to clarify the editing in "Weed Wars" regarding his comments on recreation *v* medication.

While cannabis collectives hold their breath, others are moving forward, provid-

ing ancillary services to the industry. Joining the conversation and expanding the topic for the sake of Earth Day were bee tenders, spice and tea makers and others, demonstrating that there is more to holistic healing and alternative therapy than cannabis alone.

Perhaps a global awakening is needed to break the chains of ignorance surrounding hemp and cannabis. Events such as Deep Green help spark the conversation that eventually leads to change.

## Suicides down in MMJ states

*Continued from page 14*

almost 5% reduction in the total suicide rate, an 11 percent reduction in the suicide rate of 20- through 29-year-old males, and a 9% reduction in the suicide rate of 30-through 39-year-old males."

The authors theorize that limited legalization of cannabis may "lead to an improvement in the psychological well-being of young adult males, an improvement that is reflected in fewer suicides," suggesting that, "The strong association between alcohol consumption and suicide-related outcomes found by previous researchers raises the possibility that medical marijuana laws reduce the risk of suicide by decreasing alcohol consumption."

Researchers concluded, "Policymakers weighing the pros and cons of legalization should consider the possibility that medical marijuana laws may lead to fewer suicides among young adult males."

"High on Life: Medical Marijuana Laws and Suicide," is available online at: [ftp. iza. org/ dp6280. pdf](http://ftp.iza.org/dp6280.pdf).

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