

## Tech alliance to focus on STEM ed in Gorge

The Goldendale Sentinel reports the Gorge Technology Alliance (GTA) is about to launch another initiative to impact STEM education in the Gorge. STEM is the hot acronym of the moment, standing for science, technology, engineering and math. The GTA, a nonprofit trade association focused on supporting the tech industry of the region, is creating a new college scholarship fund for Gorge students pursuing post-secondary STEM degrees.

"College is expensive and just getting worse," says Jessica Metta, Executive Director of the GTA. "For a few years now, the GTA has wanted to develop a scholarship fund and since 2015 is our 10th anniversary, it seemed the perfect time to make it happen."

Ten years ago, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District brought together the tech businesses in the five-county region to work on a plan to help them grow. Those at the table identified the need for their own support organiza-

tion and committed financial support as members and sponsors to sustaining the organization. The GTA was formed and has grown along with the tech industry to now over 100 members representing more than 2,700 employees.

Over the years, the GTA has become more involved in supporting STEM education in the region to support the businesses and encourage the next generation of entrepreneurs and employees. With 60 robotics kits and laptops on loan to students and hosting of robotics tournaments and events, any parent with a student in robotics has been touched by the GTA. For the last two years, the GTA has also hosted a STEM Career Day for all seventh graders in the five-county region.

"We are excited to extend our STEM support to older students with the launch of this scholarship fund," says Metta.

Students from Klickitat, Skamania, Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties would be eligible. The

scholarship is being hosted with the Gorge Community Foundation and named the Corwin Hardham Memorial Scholarship.

Fundraising for the scholarship is kicking off on July 31, at 6 p.m. at the Columbia Gorge Hotel with a dinner and auction event sponsored by Insitu — Robot Rendezvous. Guests will be entertained with hands-on demos from high school students and businesses, music from Ben Bonham and Friends, plus delicious food and fun action items like quadcopters and sailing trips. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are on sale now for \$55 each through the event's website [crgta.org/robot-rendezvous](http://crgta.org/robot-rendezvous) or by calling 541-296-2266.

"With the fundraiser, we plan to have scholarship applications open in spring 2016 to start giving back to the students," says Metta. Those interested in contributing to the fund directly can do so by contacting the Gorge Community Foundation at [www.gorgecf.org](http://www.gorgecf.org) or 541-354-2009.

## Search for missing TD woman suspended

### Police continue investigation

The search for a missing 63-year-old woman in the Reservoir Road area west of The Dalles has been called off, but police are still investigating her disappearance.

Lucia Flores left on a walk last Monday morning and didn't return, her granddaughter reported to the Wasco County Sheriff's Office that evening.

During the evening of July 13, Anayeli Alvarez contacted the Sheriff's Office, reporting that her grandmother, Lucia, was missing. Alvarez said she last saw Lucia around 6 a.m. that morning and hadn't seen her since. Alvarez said Lucia sometimes goes on long walks but always returns home. Alvarez also indicated she had tried to contact friends and relatives in an attempt to locate Flores but was unsuccessful.

The Sheriff's Office heard numerous tips that Lucia Flores was seen in



Lucia Flores

The Dalles, and the surrounding area, but she has not yet been found.

Wasco County Road Department employees reported that they saw Flores at the 5800 block of Mill Creek Road around 4 p.m. on July 14. They indicated they saw her after conducting road maintenance nearby.

Police also heard reports that Flores was walking southbound on Reservoir Road that day. The Wasco County Search and Rescue Division searched the area but found no signs of Flores. The search spanned several miles along Mill

Creek but yielded no results.

The search "was discontinued due to darkness" on the evening of July 14, the Sheriff's Office said.

Lucia Flores was last seen wearing a pink shirt, dark pants, and neon pink and black tennis shoes. She was also carrying a purse and a grocery bag with her at the time. Anyone with information on the location or possible sightings of Flores is encouraged to contact the Wasco County Sheriff's Office at 541-296-5454.

### GOT NEWS?

Submitting a news item to Hood River News is easy: send it via e-mail to: [hrnews@hoodrivernews.com](mailto:hrnews@hoodrivernews.com).

Information can also be sent by mail to P.O. Box 390, Hood River, OR 97031. News tips are also welcome by calling the newsroom at 386-1234, or by fax at 386-6796.

## Medical pot store to open in downtown TD

BY NEITA CECIL  
The Dalles Chronicle

As a medical marijuana dispensary readies to open its doors potentially by mid-August in downtown The Dalles, the city council will consider later this month whether to block it from being able to sell recreational pot starting Oct. 1.

Norm Brock, a 1976 Wah-tonka High School grad and Eugene resident, is planning a low-key, high-security dispensary to meet local needs, he said. It will be located at 609 E. 2nd St., a storefront that has been vacant for two-plus years and once housed a stove store.

Called Columbia River Herbs, Brock's business will employ three to four people and sell medicinal marijuana and herbal supplies, plus some clothing and functional glassware, such as pipes, he said.

"We really don't want to upset people thinking we're gonna be doing something nefarious," Brock said. "We don't want people to think we're a head shop. Even if we sell recreational, we're not going to be a place where a bunch of stoners hang out."

No consumption of marijuana will be allowed in or around the store, he said. "Our desire is to have a business that people can be comfortable with. We want to be good neighbors."

"I'm more than happy to meet with anyone who has concerns about what we're doing," he said.

"I'm not, nor is my wife, a user, recreationally or medically. It's something I believe people have the right to do," Brock said.

He said, "I believe medical marijuana outweighs conventional medicine in so many ways it's unbelievable."

He said his store would sell "vapors and medibles," or edible pot, but he would not be selling things like pot gummy bears, "because I feel they kind of have an attraction to younger kids if they see them."

He said he sees it as a business opportunity, and Eugene, where he has a realty business, Cobalt Realty Group, already has plenty of dispensaries. He also owns Oregonhomesbyowner.com.

He looked at Oregon's database of medical marijuana cards, and saw that Wasco



Photo by Neita Cecil

**NORM BROCK** stands by the 800-pound gun safe he just installed at his medical marijuana store in downtown The Dalles. The safe will hold marijuana products at night when the store is closed. He hopes to open in mid-August.

County had a decent amount of users. Recent statistics from the state show 430 registered medical marijuana users in Wasco County.

Because the state anticipates recreational marijuana stores will not be opened until mid-2016, the legislature agreed to allow pot dispensaries to sell limited amounts of marijuana until then.

But local jurisdictions also have the option to prevent that by passing an ordinance banning it.

The Dalles City Attorney Gene Parker told the city council Monday, July 13, that it could pass an ordinance to temporarily block a dispensary from recreational sales, but the ordinance would have to go into effect before Oct. 1, when state law will allow dispensaries to make limited sales to the general public.

Parker will bring the matter before the council at its July 27 meeting for consideration. If the council moves ahead with an ordinance, a hearing will have to take place by the Sept. 14 meeting, and an emergency clause enacted, to beat the Oct. 1 deadline.

Parker doesn't know whether the council will want to pursue the ordinance, and said the matter has been a low-key one to date, with little council or citizen input.

Parker said other marijuana-related decisions are also on the horizon for the city. The council could refer to voters a 3 percent tax on marijuana sales, [on top of the 17 percent state tax] or refer a measure to fully or partially ban pot sales.

If the city does vote to ban pot sales, it would forego any

tax revenues.

On Oct. 1, recreational buyers can go to dispensaries and purchase one-quarter ounce of dried marijuana buds and leaves per day. They can also buy seeds and plant starts. They could not buy edibles or pot extracts.

Brock has told the city that if he is eligible to sell recreational pot, he plans to do so.

The storefront is being readied now for the anticipated mid-August opening. All he needed from the city was approval for the change of use of the store. He sought and gained that approval in May, shortly after the city's moratorium on accepting such businesses expired.

Next he has to complete a readiness checklist for the Oregon Health Authority, which he expects to have done before his July 28 deadline. Then he must pass a state inspection before he can open. He expects all that to happen by mid-August.

After paying a \$4,000 application fee and passing a background check, applicants must complete a checklist that proves the dispensary has adequate physical security, including an alarm and video camera system; an adequate vault to hold the products; policies and procedures for employees including training; a compliant electronic data system; and an approved laboratory to test products.

Brock said his staff will be trained to assist people with filling out applications for the marijuana card.

A doctor must approve the application before it is approved by the state. Most pa-

tients smoke pot for severe pain, according to state records, while other conditions it is used for include spasms, nausea, cancer, seizures, glaucoma and PTSD.

Brock commended the city employees he has worked with as he sought a suitable location and then "change of use" approval from the city in order to open the store.

With required setbacks from schools and other public facilities, only four areas in The Dalles were eligible for a marijuana outlet.

The other areas, out by Lone Pine, west by the proposed Walmart location, and along West Sixth Street, either had no storefronts available, unwilling potential landlords, or buildings that were in too much disrepair, Brock said.

Within his 3,400-square-foot building he's renting from Sam Woolsey, just a 12x25 section will serve as the dispensary itself.

People will come in and check in at a front desk, where they will present their marijuana card issued by the Oregon Health Authority, then sit in a waiting area as they wait their turn to go into the dispensary. Just one patient at a time will be allowed in the dispensary, where staff will ring up the sale.

"One of the reasons why we built this room is for privacy," Brock said. "Nobody needs to know what you're buying."

All products will be behind a glass display case. He will also sell marijuana buds and leaves, and is willing to work with local growers who are approved by the state.

At the close of business each day, all products containing marijuana will go into an 800-pound, \$1,800 gun safe that is bolted to the ground. The facility has multiple points of video surveillance, plus an alarm system.

"Basically if anybody breaks in here to steal marijuana or marijuana products they're going to be disappointed," he said.

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**JESUS PROMISES THE GOSPEL GOOD NEWS:**

"Before Abraham was born I am."  
**John 8:58**

"Be not afraid for I am with you always."  
**Luke 17:12**

"I come not to condemn the world but to save it." **John 3:17**

"I come not to call the righteous but sinners." **Matthew 9:13**

"Love God and your neighbor as you love yourself." **Luke 10:27-28**

"What you do for my least ones, (The poor, lonely, suffering), you do for me."  
**Matthew 25:40**

"Each of us will give an account to God."  
**Romans 14:12**

"Heaven and earth will pass away, my words will never pass away. **Matt. 24:35**

*I believe God loves us more than we can imagine.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

"When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies know that its desolation is near. For a terrible calamity will come upon the earth and a wrathful judgment will come Upon this people."

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth Nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

And then, they will see the Son of Man, (Jesus), coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

**Luke 21:20-28**

Share-Faith Prayers by Tom Lexow

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