

Activist challenges police seizure

A Harrisburg man seeks the return of computers taken in drug raids

ALBANY - An embattled marijuana activist has gone to court to try to get back computers police took during a drug raid two weeks ago, seizures his lawyer said violate privacy rights and constitu-tional freedoms of speech and association.

Bill Conde, 55, was charged with a felony count of marijuana possession when Linn County sheriff's deputies found slightly more than an ounce of marijuana at his property near Harrisburg on

Searching for drug records, authorities took computers that Conde said he uses to run his redwood lumber business, as well as to store political action committee information. One computer was used to operate a reader board visible from Interstate 5 that displayed messages about marijuana initiatives on the Nov. 3 general election ballot.

Conde's attorney, Brian Michaels, argued Tuesday that authorities are going after Conde because of his outspoken political

"There's no scintilla of probable

cause to hold these records,' Michaels told Linn County Circuit Judge Rick McCormick. "There was no scintilla of probable cause to have even obtained these records."

But sheriff's deputies say the computers are relevant to their probe of drug use and drug sales at the marijuana-themed events, most recently the three-day 'Cannabis Carnival' over Labor Day weekend.

'He profits by selling tickets to events where people know they can get drugs," sheriff's Lt. Dar Holm said Tuesday about Conde.

Holm testified that drug sales were "rampant, widespread" at the Cannabis Carnival and said he believes Conde knew it and profited from it. He noted that Conde advertised the \$10-per-person festival on the Internet with ads that boasted that there would be no cops" there.

Michaels said the computers' records include names of people who support marijuana legalization and lists of people who registered to vote during events held on Conde's property.

Now, he said, political contributions are drying up and people who are named in the computer records fear authorities are going to harass them

66 There's no scintilla of probable cause to bold these records. There was no scintilla of probable cause to bave even obtained these records. "

> **Brian Michaels** Attorney for Bill Conde

The computers are believed to hold lists of vendors, and possibly lists of security guards.

"This investigation is hindering the political process in the state of Oregon," Michaels said."What you have is a situation where a lot of people are going to be investigated who are not identified as criminals.

Undercover narcotics officers bought drugs, primarily marijuana, 26 times during the Cannabis Carnival and witnessed numerous other drug transactions, according to the affidavit filed in support of the search warrant.

'It was a valid seizure for reasons of a criminal investigation,' Linn County deputy district attorney George Eder said in court.



· Classes last 50 minutes.



RIM Fitness Program has a format to provide better service. We have developed a PUNCH CARD system! This will allow you more flexibility in planning your fitness workouts. It also allows greater variety.

A REGISTRATION - 102 Esslinger Registration begins Monday, Oct. 5th, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. CLASSES RUN FROM Oct. 12th to Dec. 4th, 1998. For more information call 6-4113 or drop by 102 Esslinger.

CHECK US OUT! http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~pars

COST: 10 punch card \$15 20 punch card \$25

30 punch card \$30 Unlimited card \$35