

Local / Politics

Huntington Chamber sits on Boise panel

BY EILEEN DRIVER
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The Huntington Chamber of Commerce was asked to provide a panelist for the Boise City Club Forum entitled "The Business of Cannabis."

The topic was raised to start discussions on the subject as four states bordering Idaho now have legal marijuana businesses, they include Oregon, Washington, Montana and Nevada.

As Huntington is the closest town to have legal marijuana businesses the Chamber was asked to send a representative to add to the discussion on Cannabis—medical miracle or gateway drug? Will it create crime or promote prosperity? Or something in between?

The discussion was held Wednesday, May 17th from 11:45 - 1:15 p.m. in the Second floor Ballroom of the Grove Hotel in Boise and was broadcast live on Boise State Public Radio.

The forum was moderated by Kevin Richert, Boise City Club member and each panelist was asked to give a three to five minute introduction before taking questions from the audience.

The three panelists were:

- Shellie Nash, Huntington Chamber of Commerce, who was asked to speak about how after the legalization of cannabis in Oregon, the small town of Huntington with a population of fewer than 500 residents went through their decision making process. About how the sale of cannabis has brought a change to her community. She was asked to walk them through Huntington's decision making process and the benefits and concerns that her town is facing.

- Captain Bill Gardiner of the Idaho State Police provided a law enforcement perspective. He was asked to talk about the impacts on the ISP and other law enforcement agencies — as a state surrounded by various forms of cannabis legalization, from recreational to medicinal.

- Wayne Hoffman of the Idaho Freedom Foundation was asked to speak about the need for Idaho citizens to have a public conversation on the issues surrounding cannabis. What are the benefits and what are the drawbacks? How can there be civil discourse when we refuse to even talk about these important

issues?

The first audience question that was asked was, "Why isn't there more science on medical marijuana?"

Shellie Nash: The FDA has blocked research, even though marijuana has no side effects, they don't want to lose the prescription drug money.

Wayne Hoffman: Prescription anti depressant have a side effects that can suicidal thought, the last thing you want them to have. Miss Nash is correct the FDA is an agency that is lobbied and the drug companies do not want it to be legalized across the board and hinder their profits.

Captain Gardiner: I don't believe there has been enough research on the subject to make a determination on whether it is a gateway drug or not. We need much more research.

Question 2, What part of this gives you pause?

Shellie Nash: Huntington is leading the way in Eastern Oregon and showing other towns how it works. My suggestion would be to make sure you are prepared for what's to come. Especially when confronting Land Use Laws and what you want to happen in each different zone.

Wayne Hoffman: I'm afraid Idaho will not decriminalize it. It's not moral to charge people for a crime when they are just trying to alleviate their pain.

Captain Gardiner: Very concerned by the marijuana getting into the hands of the children. Sees marijuana as being involved in nearly every crime in Idaho.

Question 3 Do the positives outweigh the negatives?

Shellie Nash: Alcohol has been proven to be worse than marijuana yet people still drink. People should be informed and have the right to chose what they put in their bodies.

Wayne Hoffman: There are dangers everywhere in daily life, especially in the current medical prescription drugs with there side effects which marijuana doesn't have.

Captain Gardiner: A study in Colorado shows an increase in marijuana use in 13-21 year olds. These are the ones we need to protect. Also afraid there will be a black market increase.

Question 4 How does this affect the workplace?

Shellie Nash: Respon-

sible people know you don't go to work intoxicated, whatever form that takes. They should not be penalized for what they do in their off time.

Wayne Hoffman: More than half the marijuana products out there do not get you high, yet still test positive for consumption. People going to work with a hangover are more dangerous than marijuana users.

Captain Gardiner: We need more time and testing to see how it will work out. There are just no reliable tests yet that will tell us whether or not people are under the influence.

Question 5 Is it a cultural change or just a law change?

Shellie Nash: It's been around since George Washington's time at least, but now people are much more open about it and don't have to hide.

Wayne Hoffman: Everyone now knows someone who has been affected by marijuana in a positive way and the current laws in Idaho only affect people negatively. People in their seventies and eighties are using it now.

Captain Gardiner: I get asked by people all the time, "It's legal now isn't it?" and I have to tell them not in Idaho, which really seems to surprise them.

Question 6 Do you see Idaho changing in the next 5 years?

Wayne Hoffman: I hope so at least the Legislators seem to be starting to get it.

Captain Gardiner: I hope not we need much more research before we can make an informed decision.

Shellie Nash: I hope they will at least change their minds on medical marijuana, however if they don't Huntington will be happy to continue to enjoy their company and their spending their money here.

City Club thanked their annual sponsors, including Northwest Nazarene University, Red Sky, and Idaho Humanities Council.

This Forum Series as sponsored by the contributions made by Micron, Perkins Coie, and Echelon Group.

They were pleased to welcome university students to attend our events thanks to their University partners Boise State University and University of Idaho.

Their media partners include Idaho Public Television, Peppershock Media and Boise State Public Radio.

that remain at the Hanford site, as well as the importance of ensuring the site has the resources necessary to expeditiously achieve its cleanup mission."

The underground tunnel, located adjacent to the now-closed PUREX processing plant, was used to store railroad cars loaded with radioactively contaminated equipment removed from the plant during its operation to produce plutonium for the U.S. nuclear weapons program. The collapse was first reported by workers at the site on May 9.

Ferrioli criticizes Gov. Brown

Oregon taxpayers were forced, likely without their knowledge or consent, to shell out \$278 million dollars for the Democrat-controlled administration to lavish upon politically well-connected firms and vendors big-ticket PR contracts.

To put this level of spending in perspective, the cost of the Brown administration's PR apparatus could almost entirely fund Measure 98 Career Technical Education. That amount could fund Measure 99 Outdoor School and keep the Junction City mental health facility open, as well as one ward at the Salem mental health facility and maintain dental and addiction services under the Oregon health plan, and there would still be \$56 million left over. The cost of Brown administration propaganda also exceeds by \$13 million the amount of money needed to fully-fund the Obamacare Medicaid expansion.

Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli was disturbed when he read a Forbes piece penned by Adam Andrzejewski, founder of OpenTheBooks, a database of 3.5 billion government salaries, pensions and expenditures from the federal, state and local levels across America.

Ferrioli applauded Andrzejewski for his investigative work. "Oregonians ought to question what is going on here. Wouldn't it be interesting to figure out how much money these firms donated to politicians and power-brokers," said Ferrioli. "Is Oregon's government using state agency spending to influence the electorate? We need a deep state investigation to connect these dots that OpenTheBooks founder Adam Andrzejewski has thankfully revealed."

One of these taxpayer-funded projects was orchestrated by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), which is on blast for holding hostage our veterans and their families and collecting ransom payments from providers, and the increasingly unpopular Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

OHA and DEQ targeted a private manufacturer for "special attention" even though the company is in full compliance with all state and federal regulations. These two agencies employed 18 public affairs officers and squandered another \$10.9 million with communications and public relations vendors to supplement their internal efforts.

In another area of state government, Andrzejewski revealed the Oregon Tourism Commission "Travel Oregon" is funded by a \$35.6 million lodging tax, but is one of the least transparent government entities. There is no transparency of employee salaries, vendor spending or even agency contracts. Andrzejewski began audit-

ing the travel commission and found 43 staffers at an operational cost exceeding \$5 million per year. Despite the staff, Travel Oregon spent most of the \$17.21 million in "Global Marketing" with outside firms, he says.

What's more is that Travel Oregon's principal advertising agency is Wieden+Kennedy - a firm reaping up to \$22.87 million in scheduled payout, which is a dramatic inflation from an original \$7.15 million contract. That original contract contained a provision allowing for a single two-year contract extension. Today, the contract value is \$22.87 million and runs through 2019 - a three-fold \$15.62 million increase, according to Andrzejewski. Records provided by Travel Oregon show two contract extensions, rather than one.

Andrzejewski said Travel Oregon "is acting like they have a lot to hide." He explained when providing the Wieden+Kennedy contracts, the agency stunningly redacted critical information: the monthly and annual retainer fees, total amount of 'retainer service hours,' hourly fees in excess of retainer services, 'media and production' costs, and 'other media campaign' costs from the contract.

For even more alarming details you can read Andrzejewski's Forbes piece and visit OpenTheBooks.

Private First Class Marvin L. Brown. The new marker also honors Brown's sacrifice.

Keynote speakers at the dedication include the Secretary of the Oregon Black Pioneers Gwen Carr, Professor Robert Bartlett of Eastern Washington University, Joe Murchison of the 555th Association, Ed Washington of the Oregon Travel Information Council, and Roger Brandt of the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization.

Marker will honor black paratrooper unit

On Saturday, June 3, 2017, at 11:00 a.m., the Oregon Historical Marker Program will commemorate the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion (also known as the Triple Nickles), an elite all-Black paratrooper unit deployed to Oregon near the end of WWII. A new historical marker honoring the Triple Nickles will be unveiled at the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base Museum located at the Illinois Valley Valley Airport in Cave Junction.

The Triple Nickles jumped their way into Oregon history in 1945 during a secret mission known as "Operation Firefly." Their charge was to parachute near forest fires in the Pacific Northwest caused by Japanese Balloon bombs, and disarm and destroy any remaining explosive devices.

The men of the 555th withstood many obstacles in their service to the US, including racism, lack of smoke jumping equipment, and a fatality in their unit during an Oregon jump---

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Published weekly every Friday.
Subscription rates per year are \$29.95 all areas, e-mail delivery. \$39.95 print issue, home delivery, Baker City city limits only. \$49.95 print issue, mail delivery, outside Baker City city limits only.
Payment in advance.

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Lawmakers call for review of Hanford

Following this month's tunnel collapse at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington State, a bipartisan group of Pacific Northwest lawmakers today called for a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) review of the nuclear waste cleanup and environmental remediation work at Hanford.

In their letter, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore., along with Sens. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., Patty Murray, D-Wash., and Reps. Frank Pallone, D-N.J., Dan Newhouse,

R-Wash., and Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash., asked the GAO to investigate the work Department of Energy still needs to complete to ensure the safety of workers at Hanford and the public.

"We were alarmed by the recent tunnel collapse at the Hanford site, and are concerned that future events could put the safety of workers, the public, and environment at risk," the members wrote in their request to GAO.

"This event was another harsh reminder of the radioactive and toxic hazards