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Local doctor supports puffing for pain

MAGGIE JIRASEK
Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Phillip Leveque, a 78 year-old Molalla osteopath who signed about 40 percent of the approved marijuana cards in Oregon, spoke at Clackamas last Friday, Jan. 18. He encouraged students and faculty to favor the use of marijuana for medical purposes.

"I am in total favor of smoking marijuana for medical purposes," Leveque announced at the meeting.

Currently, Leveque is under investigation by the Board of Medical Examiners for allegedly authorizing patients to receive medical marijuana without examining them. Under the new rules proposed by the state last summer, a physician is required to review the patient's medical record, examine the patient and keep a written file.

According to The Oregonian, 2,351 Oregonians have received cards allowing them to grow and use marijuana for medical purposes since Oregon voters approved the Medical Mari-

juana Act in 1998. Leveque himself signed over 1,000 of these cards.

"I do not use marijuana myself, although I would qualify easily. I don't want people to think that this is just a way for me to get marijuana for my own purposes," he explained.

Leveque presented several reasons why the U.S. government should legalize marijuana and make it available in pharmacies and liquor stores as well as pointed out some of the disadvantages.

"Marijuana is a great medicine for people who have AIDS, any kind of cancer, epilepsy, migraines, Alzheimer and suffer under severe pain," Leveque said. "It works very well to eliminate the pain. Marijuana has not killed anybody, ever."

Wilkerson Beeks, an AIDS patient from Mollala,

agrees that smoking marijuana helps a lot when it comes to dealing with his disease.

"It helps to ease the pain. If I don't smoke, I lose a lot of weight because I lose my appetite," he said. "If I don't smoke, I just can't eat. It's hard for me to keep my food down. Before I started smoking, I was losing a lot of weight. I was only 99

pounds. Then I started smoking and I gained a lot of my weight back. I have been smoking marijuana for 18 years now."

According to Leveque, the U.S. government would benefit from legalizing the drug.

"If the government legalized it, it would bring in about \$20 million, just like tobacco."

After stressing the positive side of using marijuana for medical purposes,

Leveque admitted that there are disadvantages. A great concern in the audience was that people could abuse the drug and not only use it for medical purposes but also for their own pleasure. Another concern was that it takes away the ability to concentrate and a short-term memory develops.

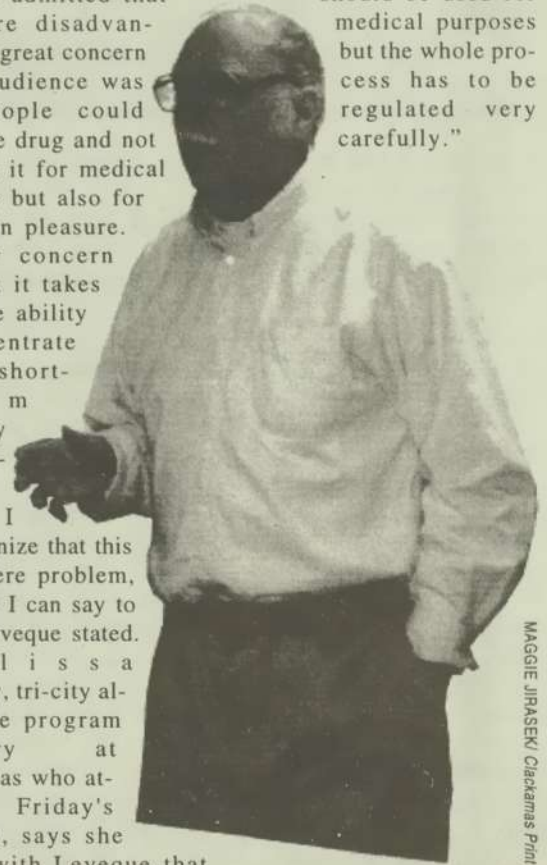
"I do recognize that this is a severe problem, that's all I can say to that," Leveque stated.

Elissa McGarry, tri-city alternative program secretary at Clackamas who attended Friday's meeting, says she

agrees with Leveque that using marijuana under the right circumstances can be a good thing.

"Leveque brought up a lot of good points," McGarry said. "I think it

should be used for medical purposes but the whole process has to be regulated very carefully."



MAGGIE JIRASEK/Clackamas Print

Dr. Phillip Leveque spoke to students and faculty about the issue of using marijuana for medical purposes last Friday.

Clackamas prepares for budget ax

FRANK JORDAN
News Editor

The second of two informational budget forums for the staff of Clackamas Community College was held last week in the Community Center.

Dr. Earl P. "Joe" Johnson, president of the college, and Associate Dean Roxie Hobart, college controller, stood before a group of about 50 people and outlined what they believed the Oregon

State Legislature would do as far as community college funding and how Clackamas would deal with the projected shortfall.

The proposed state budget for community colleges calls for an eight-percent reduction in funding for the 2002-03 school year. Clackamas has taken these figures and is attempting to come up with a budget plan to help, as President Johnson said it, "soften the blow that will come down upon us."

Clackamas Community College is looking at a \$700,000 deficit for the next school year. Other community colleges in the state are looking at anything from salary rollbacks in their staffing to tuition increases. For example, Chemeketa Community College in Salem is looking at increasing tuition immediately by \$4 a credit hour.

Clackamas is also planning a tuition increase,

but right now it would be only \$1 per credit hour. A suggestion on the table does call for a \$2 increase per credit hour, but right now that is only a suggestion.

For the 2001-03 budget biennium, Clackamas was budgeted by the state to receive close to \$32.8 million. The college at the time was anticipating a budget reduction and chose to receive only \$32.1 million from the state, a two-percent reduction. The college is anticipating having its money reduced by a total of five to six percent when the legislature meets in special session next month in Salem.

Clackamas is much better off than other community colleges in the region. The college has foreseen some of what lies ahead and has tried to make budget reductions over the past several years to help save money and build up its contingency fund. This,



MIKE POLLOCK/Clackamas Print

Associate Dean Roxie Hobart discusses the possibilities of budget cuts for Clackamas at the budget forum held Jan. 16, 17.

and a significant increase in enrollment over the past year plus some increases in property tax revenue, has helped to cushion the blow that the college could receive from the

state. President Johnson explained some of what has been taking place on the state level over the last several months, and he anticipates.

What's Inside?

- Opinion...Page 2
- News...Pages 3-4
- Feature...Pages 5-6
- A & E...Pages 7-9
- Sports...Pages 10-11
- The End...Page 12