

Illinois Valley News

Wednesday, October 18, 2017, 1 Section, Volume LXXX No. 30

Published weekly for the residents of the Illinois Valley

Friend or foe?



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Marijuana like this “Marionberry” strain being grown on RR 5 properties in rural Josephine County has been the cause of much debate.

Driving high brings new challenges

Anita R. Savio
IVN Contributing Writer

“Cheech and Chong” humor aside - that laid-back high you can get from smoking or ingesting marijuana - makes for dangerous driving.

While it is still too soon to tell if there’s been a spike in intoxicated driving cases since recreational marijuana was legalized in Oregon, an October 2017 Colorado report suggests what the future may hold for Oregon. Marijuana-related traffic deaths in Colorado more than doubled from 55 deaths in 2013 to 123 deaths in 2016, according to *The Legalization of Marijuana in Colorado: The Impact*, Volume 5, published by the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area. That figure represented a 66 percent increase from a similar period before legalization. And while, in 2009, Colorado marijuana-related traffic deaths represented 9 percent of all traffic deaths, by 2016 that number had more than doubled to 20 percent.

Recreational marijuana became legal in Colorado in 2013.

But Oregon local and state law enforcement is prepared for the challenge of getting marijuana-intoxicated drivers off the road. According to Lt. Tyler Lee of the Oregon State Police Central Area Command, identification of an intoxicated driver starts when a patrol officer pulls someone over for erratic or unsafe driving. The officer will administer a standard battery of field tests, for instance for balance and uncontrollable jerking of the eyes, and including a Breathalyzer test for alcohol.

If the Breathalyzer comes in under the state allowed minimum, or per se blood alcohol limit of .08, yet the driver still seems impaired, then the patrol officer calls for a trained drug recognition expert (DRE). The DRE will do an hourlong session to assess for seven different drug categories. Cannabis is its own category. Depending upon the determination of the DRE, the next step is to send a urine sample to the state police crime lab.

“All that evidence will ultimately be sent to the district attorney, who will make the determination on whether to charge and what to charge,” said Lee.

SEE HIGH ON A-10

County code complaints called into question

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

Chris Hall, a community activist and president of the Cave Junction Farmers’ Market, recently investigated the county government’s often cited 1,000 cannabis related complaints and concluded that, from the two documents that he was provided, they’re grossly unsubstantiated. “The county officials decided they would ban cannabis gardening off Rural Residential lands by any

means necessary, even if it meant misleading the voters and fabricating the claim of 1,000 ‘marijuana related’ complaints,” Hall said.

The first document, entitled Reported MJ Grows, was, according to community development director Julie Schmelzer, an inventory of grow sites that people have informally, and anonymously, complained about. The list doesn’t include the reason for the complaint nor does it, in many cases, include a specific address for the offender. Because the county can’t get exact locations of medical operations like they can with

recreational, or OLCC (Oregon Liquor Control Commission) grow sites, the list was compiled primarily to have addresses on hand to inform medical growers of future rule changes.

Peter Gendron, president of the Oregon Sun Grower’s Guild and member of the county’s Cannabis Advisory Panel, accused the commissioners of “inflating the definition of complaint.” Further explaining himself, he said that for something to be legally defined as a complaint, as far as governmental processes go, it must be properly filed with all necessary information. Everything short of that, Gendron

held, is nothing more than a comment.

Schmelzer said that the Reported MJ Grows document was discontinued because of the high volume of calls and the lack of manpower to compile all the data. She also added that 99 percent of the informal complaints weren’t investigated and could not say whether or not any of the complaints were enforceable under the current code.

SEE CODE ON A-8

Commissioners plan for ‘Bud Bucks’

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

According to Commissioner Simon Hare, Josephine County expects to receive close to \$300,000 from the state in cannabis tax revenue.

A press release written by public information officer Joy Krawczyk, said that distributions were to be complete by Oct. 11. But future quarterly distributions, which will be based entirely on a new formula that favors cities and counties that participate in the cannabis industry, has yet to be investigated.

The old formula for the county’s share, which is 10 percent of the state’s total, was based entirely on population but is now based, in equal parts, on the total available grow canopy and the sum of wholesaler, processor and retailer licenses. Counties who don’t allow the growth of commercial cannabis are ineligible for part of the calculation involving total available grow canopy while counties that opt out of wholesaler, processor or retailer licenses are ineligible for the second half of the calculation. If a county has opted out of both, it receives nothing. All of the tax dollars doled out to counties go directly into their general fund and, as such, can be used for any purpose.

In total, 16 out of Oregon’s 36 counties currently have banned the sale of recreational cannabis and its production.

SEE BUCKS ON A-10

Sparetime has very little of it

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

Sparetime Supply, the wholesale nursery supply company that bought Rough & Ready back in the early days of July, has been hard at work transforming the property into a distribution center that will help them keep up with demand in the Pacific Northwest.

“Our goal is to have an ample stock by the end of the winter so that way we’re ready to go come springtime,” said Andrew Hosford, Sparetime Supply’s executive vice president. He further added that they’ll do everything they can to stay on schedule because missing their spring deadline would have costly ramifications since it’s their busiest season of the year.

At first, the distribution center will bring anywhere between 10-20 jobs to the Illinois Valley but, in the future and depending on how lucrative their new location is, more employment opportunities could arise. So far, three local people have been hired to take care of the company’s daily affairs and are under the command of Southern Oregon sales manager Tim Hosford. Tim, Andrew’s brother, moved to the area in order to drum up a clientele and to oversee the property’s modifications. Early next spring, the company will hold a job fair to locate new employees.

Andrew Hosford said that Sparetime Supply is currently in the process of determining what kind of condition the remaining buildings on the property are in after

having successfully demolished the lumber mills. From there they’ll start stocking up the yard with bulk material then work toward developing a warehouse.

Although Andrew admitted that there’s still a lot of work to be done, he added that they haven’t had any trouble finding knowledgeable contractors to assist them and that he’s recently put in an order for a loading dock and two forklifts which will allow them to start business operations as soon as the remodeling is complete.

Andrew ended by saying that Sparetime Supply is thus far very satisfied with their purchase and has been thoroughly impressed by how well the former owners of Rough & Ready cleaned up the property before signing it over to them.

Local DJ Mij Notae spins vinyl at KXCJ

Read about it on A-10