



PHOTOS BY TODD COOPER

The Trailblazer

**TAKING YOU DOWN
TO EMERALD CITY
WHERE THE GRASS IS
GREEN AND LEGAL**

by Vanessa Salvia

When David Evans checked his mail on March 22, what he found made him want to shout from the rooftops. “We have it! We have it finally!” Evans recalls thinking, adding, “When it finally arrived in the mail I had this really unusual sensation of having this wonderful secret that only I knew.”

Well, the secret is out. The Oregon Health Authority approved his application for Emerald City Medicinal (ECM), making Evans the first proud owner to legally operate a medicinal marijuana dispensary in Eugene.

This year, Eugene will mark its first 4/20 with legally operating medical marijuana dispensaries. On April 4, the Oregon Medical Marijuana Dispensary Program approved 10 dispensary applications, bringing the total number of approved applications to 32 statewide, with five approved in Eugene and one in Springfield. This is thanks in part to House Bill 3460, which Gov. Kitzhaber signed into law in August 2013. HB 3460 created the legal basis for medical marijuana facilities to be able to transfer marijuana from growers to patients. In other words, it allowed for Evans to make his business legit. To become legitimate in this business, however, can be a long, winding and expensive road, and dispensaries aren’t legally allowed to make a

profit. But if you get to the end, as Evans has, it pays off.

“The feedback I’ve gotten is a lot of gratitude that we’ve gone through all the state hurdles and kind of been willing to be trailblazers if you will,” he says. His background in law helped him navigate the process, Evans says. He was a partner in the Vincent, Victor & Evans law firm until 2004, when pain from migraines, trigeminal neuralgia and arthritis forced him to step down. After years of trying pharmaceutical drugs with no improvement, he became a medical cannabis patient himself. Evans also lost two brothers-in-law to cerebral cancer. “I would have liked to have been able to offer [cannabis] as another weapon in their arsenal to fight cancer at the time,” he says.

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