

Pot legal, selling it's not

Oregon law allows recreational growth, possession; Hood River dispensaries, police prep for changes

By **PATRICK MULVIHILL**
News staff writer

A historic Oregon pot law that passed last November bloomed today — Oregon joins Washington, Colorado and Alaska as the fourth U.S. state that allows recreational marijuana.

Oregonians 21 or over can now possess or grow cannabis for recreational use. However, the mechanics of how legal marijuana will be sold and taxed is still being hammered out in Salem. As of now, recreational sales are illegal.

The marijuana law, Measure 91, cleared Hood River County by a fairly wide margin — 57.3 percent said yes and 42.7 percent said no, compared to the narrower statewide vote of 56 percent versus 44 percent.

The following is now legal under Oregon law:

- Possession of recreational marijuana for users who are 21 and older.

- Possession of up to 8 ounces of marijuana, or 1 ounce away from home.

- Growing up to four plants of marijuana at home, as long as they remain out of public view.

However, public use remains illegal, as does driving under the influence of marijuana.

Most notable on the list of what's illegal is commercial marijuana sales. The Oregon Liquor Control Commission, which has been tasked with regulating the burgeoning industry, hasn't established a way for stores to sell their product — so it remains against the law to buy or sell marijuana.

Recreational pot shops likely won't open their doors until next year. The Oregon Legislature is planning to roll out a system with a 20 percent tax on recreational sales, starting in late 2016.

Though roughly 324 medical dispensaries are sprinkled across Oregon, none of them currently have a commercial recreational license.

There are two medical marijuana dispensaries in Hood River: The Gorge Green Cross, which opened last March, and Mt. View Naturals, which came in August. Both are located downtown: Mt. View Naturals on Wasco

Street and Green Cross on State Street.

Mike Rachford, co-owner and operator of The Gorge Green Cross, said both dispensaries are considering adding a commercial component if it becomes possible.

"It'll be interesting to see," said Rachford. "At this point in time the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), the state, is trying to allow (dispensaries) to

ational (sales), your flow could potentially double," said Rachford. "On the business side, it does make sense, but we don't want to be overrun.

"We have established a really nice medical base. That was our primary goal ... to help people," said Rachford.

He suggested an "express lane" system which would allow medical patients to take top priority

marijuana across the Washington border into Oregon.

"That'll be harder to enforce. Will people get it across state lines? They probably will," Cheli said.

"Now that it's legal in both states, we're not going to know exactly where it came from — it's just marijuana."

Hood River Police officers have pulled over Washington drivers and



MARIJUANA SAMPLES displayed for sale at Gorge Green Cross.

Submitted photo

sell to the general public."

State lawmakers are considering an early-sales program that would allow existing medical marijuana dispensaries to sell a small range of products to recreational users starting Oct. 1 — near the start of the annual marijuana harvest. The bill would allow customers to buy one-quarter ounce of dried marijuana buds and leaves per day.

Currently, dispensaries like Green Cross suffer from a federal tax code amendment passed in 1982, Section 280E, which bans all tax deductions and credit to businesses "trafficking in controlled substances." Because marijuana is still a Schedule I controlled substance in the eyes of federal law, dispensaries fall under that heading.

"It's basically a 70 percent tax rate," said Rachford.

Moving to recreational marijuana could be more lucrative for small medical dispensaries, but the change is also fraught with complications. According to Rachford, applying for the license is expensive and risky because the OHA hasn't finalized its standards yet.

Also at issue would be juggling the needs of medical patients with the demand of increased recreational business.

"If you added the recre-

when making purchases. This could be vital, considering there are about 300 medical card holders in Hood River County and 400 in Wasco. Gorge Green Cross gets some patients from The Dalles, as well as from tourists who have a medical card.

Rachford said more dispensaries have expressed an interest in moving into Hood River, but much remains unclear legally as to how they'll operate, and how they would balance medical and recreational aspects of cannabis sales.

Police brace for marijuana legalization

On the law enforcement side of recreational marijuana, police departments are also waiting for clearer guidelines from the state.

"We are just as interested as the public to see where this goes," said Hood River Police Sgt. Don Cheli.

Police will still be enforcing public marijuana use and citing high drivers.

Also illegal is transporting marijuana between states — that violates federal law, which classifies marijuana as a Class I controlled substance.

However, Cheli indicated that it would be problematic for local police to stop people from bringing

issued violations for carrying marijuana, but the stops usually end in "educating" the visitors, citing them and sending them on their way.

"My biggest worry about this is the DUI side of it," Cheli said. "I do think that the number for DUIs for marijuana are going to go up."

Cheli said many people are unaware that drivers can be cited for something other than alcohol — namely marijuana or prescription drugs. Traffic stops for marijuana play out in the same way as those for alcohol, with officers conducting attention, sight and balance tests. The only difference is that local officers will call in a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) from the Oregon State Police to verify the driver is high, and to provide the District Attorney with more conclusive evidence of drug use.

Last year, the Hood River Police Department counted 120 cases of Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants, some of which included marijuana or a combination of drugs.

"We do get a lot of marijuana citations and arrests. But I'd say meth, heroin, and (prescription drugs) are just as much, if not more of an issue. We're getting those on a weekly basis," said Cheli.



ART ON OAK

The owners of Hood River's newest gallery, are surrounded by works in Art on Oak, 201 Oak St., which holds its grand opening on July 3, during 5-8 p.m. First Friday. The gallery is open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. More than 20 artists are represented at the gallery, operated by Michael Scrivens, left, Jill Warilla and Noelle Newton.

The Ale List

Solog Fest returns

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**
News editor

The second annual Solog Festival will return to Parkdale on an August date to be announced, said brewer Jason Kahler of one of two breweries involved in the collaboration-fest, Solera Brewery of Parkdale and Logsdon Farmhouse Ales of Hood River. Watch The Ale List for details.

Meanwhile, the folks at Logsdon are gradually equipping their new downtown taproom, at Third and Cascade streets. New furniture is in, the old surfboards from the Idlewild Market days are gone, but the regional beer signs are still in the window and Idlewild name on the front. No word on opening date. Logsdon, which will continue to brew at Dave Logsdon's family farmhouse near Odell, has been planning its downtown expansion since late 2014.

'Portland' likes Hood River beers

Hood River breweries fared well in Portland Magazine's July edition as it pumps up Oregon Craft Beer Week with articles including "25 Oregon beers we're crushing for." Three of those 25 crush-worthy libations are from Hood River: Double Mountain Kolsch, Full Sail Session Black, and pFriem Family Brewing Belgian Strong Blond.

'Weird Beer' fest comes July 11

Things are about to get weird along the Columbia River waterfront in Washougal. Weird Beer on the River will be coming to Marina Park at the Port of

Camas/Washougal on July 10 and 11. The tasting event has attracted 23 local and regional beer and cider breweries and is challenging them to create and serve their weirdest brew made from ingredients such as fruits, vegetables, candy, seafood, and even insects (food-grade, or course).

Proceeds from the event will benefit the CDM Caregiving Services, a non-profit agency providing in-home care, adult day services, and other supports for veterans, seniors and people with disabilities in southwest Washington, in an effort to keep them living in their own home.

"Fundraising should be fun, and our committee, our brewers, and our sponsors all thought this was one of the more unique ideas to raise money for a great cause," said Eric Erickson, Executive Director of CDM Caregiving Services. Weird Beer on the River costs \$20 per day, which includes a tasting glass and six tokens for 4 ounce tastes of the weirdest beers ever, organizers promise. The event is 21-and-over only.

Advance tickets are \$17 if purchased before July 8 and are available online at cdm-caregiving.org/events/weird-beer-on-the-river. Hours are Friday from 4 to 10 p.m. and Saturday noon to 9 p.m. There will be food vendors, picnic tables and live music with rotating bands throughout both evenings.

**Shop Local
the Gorge**

HR Parks District presents Guignard Road park proposal

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**
News editor

A new park for the south part of Hood River took one step closer to reality last week.

Negotiations are still in progress on the deal, but reception at last week's meeting hosted by Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District indicates broad public support for an 8.3 acre park on Guignard Road near the Hood River transfer station.

The property is currently zoned light industrial, which Parks District director Lori Stirn acknowledged could be an issue with development, though the property has been on the market for about five years, and the district has a willing seller in Joyce Reinig.

Stirn said Reinig, a charter member of the Gorge Scenic Area commission, looks upon establishment of the park as a legacy in mem-

ory of her husband, Don, who died in 2011.

Stirn and board members Glenna Mahurin and Art Carroll attended the meeting at Port of Hood River offices, where a dozen or so people expressed support for the main intended use, ball fields to be used for soccer, lacrosse, and potentially softball.

Six members of the new, and growing, Gorge Pickleball Association attended, and told district officials that they'd like to see four or more pickleball courts established there. Stirn presented a preliminary design of the property that incorporated such courts.

The land is mostly flat, though it contains a wetland that would likely be preserved and incorporated into the park, according to Stirn. Access would be from Guignard Road, and the preliminary design sets aside parking for about 40 cars. Stirn emphasized it would qualify



PROPOSED PARK PROPERTY on Guignard Road, just southeast of the transfer station property. This view looks south to Mt. Hood. At left is a building in neighboring property, formerly Italstone.

as a community park, not a neighborhood park, meaning most users would travel there by car or other means.

The district has met with County Planning to discuss applying for a conditional use permit to develop the property.

The projected cost, including land acquisition, is \$2 million. The key funding piece would be State Parks'

\$494,000 "Local Government Grant" originally designated for the Barrett Park site. The district would also look at funds from systems development charges, which are utility-related fees used for public projects that are charged for new construction.



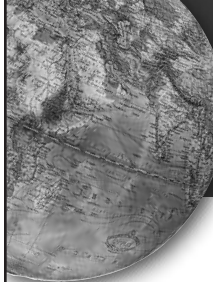
Don't get TAKEN.
Call Jeff for his very particular set of skills.

Home Purchases • Refinances • Equity Lines

JEFF SACRE
Sr. Mortgage Specialist
NMLS-140302, MLO-140302
(541) 436.2662 Office
806.1556 Cell

DIRECTORS.
Mortgage

This is not a commitment to lend. Information deemed reliable but subject to change without notice. Consumer Loan License NMLS-2240, CL-2240



**Explore the world
with Odyssey
Tours by Liz!**

Western Wildflowers and Gardens of Texas Tour: April 4-11, 2016

Odyssey Cruises the Greek Isles aboard the luxurious Azamara Journey: May 23-June 4, 2016

Odyssey and Collette Tours present "Discovering Poland": August 18-29, 2016

The Pines Winery and Klindt's Booksellers present *"Bubbly, Burgundy, and Provence"*, a wine tour of France: **September 1-12, 2016**

Odyssey and Scenic River Cruises present *"Highlights of the Rhine"*, a luxury Rhine River cruise and pre-tour to Lucerne, Switzerland: **September 16-26, 2016**

Odyssey Tours BY LIZ LLC.
For more information, please go to our website at www.odysseytoursbyliz.com, email me at clarkliz@outlook.com, call 541-980-8827 or find us on Facebook.

Joe Guenther
Financial Advisor

1631 Woods Ct
Suite 102
Hood River, OR
97031
541-386-0826

www.edwardjones.com Member SIPC

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

HOODRIVERHOMES.COM
Your Oregon & Washington Broker

RE/MAX River City

Tom Jenkins
CRS, GRI
541-490-6045



**CALLING ALL
SOFTBALL PLAYERS**

Building a **NEW** Gorge team of motivated softball players.

12U ASA Tryouts for the 2016 Spring Season for the new Gorge Softball team will be held in August.

For information on tryout date location and time, call Coach Tonya Schroeder at (541)705-7217