

New Treatment Center to Open

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fordable substance-free family housing owned and operated by Home Forward, formerly the Housing Authority of Portland.

The Center for Hope and Recovery at 3650 N.E. Mallory will include LifeWorks NW's 36-bed Project Network and the 32-unit Home Forward Beech Street Apartments.

Officials say the facilities will allow female clients who transition from the treatment facility to

have access to drug- and alcohol-free permanent family housing within walking distance of their outpatient treatment. On average, women stay in the Project Network program for six months.

"This innovative collaboration provides a treatment facility and permanent housing that helps families to build a solid base of recovery, maintain a crucial support network, sustain the success of their treatment and remain in their local community," says Mary Monnat, president and chief executive of-

ficer of LifeWorks NW. "We are truly honored to work with our families alongside Home Forward to rebuild community one family at a time."

The Center for Hope and Recovery will increase Project Network's treatment capacity by nine percent to serve primarily African American women in the northeast Portland community. To support families, the center also includes an on-site child development center, a playground, computer space, therapy rooms,

medical office and group rooms.

"Successful programs for women with substance abuse issues are rare," says Monnat. "Programs that address the needs of both addicted women and their children are rarer still. For women, the single most important factor in sustained recovery is access to safe, permanent and affordable drug- and alcohol-free housing."

Research conducted for LifeWorks NW and the Portland Business Alliance dating back to 2007 indicated a growing need for drug and alcohol treatment. A survey of the community indi-

cated that this should be housed in the historically African American community in northeast Portland.

"There is a tremendous need for the brand new treatment facility in the community," says Ed Washington, LifeWorks NW's board member emeritus. "The treatment facility and the substance-free housing are tremendous assets for the local community - and for the city, the county and the state. The new development will lift the spirits of the young women getting treatment and their children."

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A Falling Taboo

continued ▲ from front

if pulled over with marijuana in the system, a Driving under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUI) charge could still be coming your way.

Oregon has a long and current history toward decriminalization of pot. Less than an ounce of the drug is punishable by a fine only. If possession of such an amount occurs in a public place or within 1,000 feet of a school attended by minors, the person committing the offense is guilty of a Class C misdemeanor. It should be noted that growing one's own marijuana plant remains a Class A felony.

For medicinal purposes, ranging from glaucoma, nausea, to anxiety, patients have been able to register through the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program since 2009, allowing them access to a number of marijuana dispensaries selling a wide span of marijuana strains for treatment.

Still, more than 10,000 adults in Oregon are arrested every year for marijuana, according to the latest numbers from Oregon State Police. That's an average of one person every 51 minutes.

Charles E. McCloud III, a medical

marijuana card holder and owner of the Oregon Alternative Medical Center in northeast Portland, says he greatly sees the benefits of marijuana for its healing purposes. McCloud says when his late great-grandfather was dealing with grueling symptoms of bone cancer, he would rub him down with marijuana-infused products that would offer some relief.

As far as legalizing it for recreational purposes, he says, "people are gonna want what they want" and if the time should come that Oregonians vote to legalize the weed, he may consider expanding his services, but for now he takes pride in servicing the ill.

Monday, a measure to regulate recreational use of marijuana in Oregon was qualified by the Oregon Secretary of State for the Nov. 4 General Election. The political group New Approach Oregon had turned in at least 145,710 signatures last month to get the measure on the ballot. If approved, the 'Oregon Legalized Marijuana Initiative' would allow possession, manufacture, and sales of marijuana by and to adults, subject to state licensing, regulation, and taxation.

"It's time to stop wasting tax-

payer dollars on treating marijuana use as a crime," said Peter Zuckerman, press secretary for the New Approach Oregon campaign. "Prohibition of marijuana is ineffective, costs the state tax revenue and fuels violence. It's time to try something new."

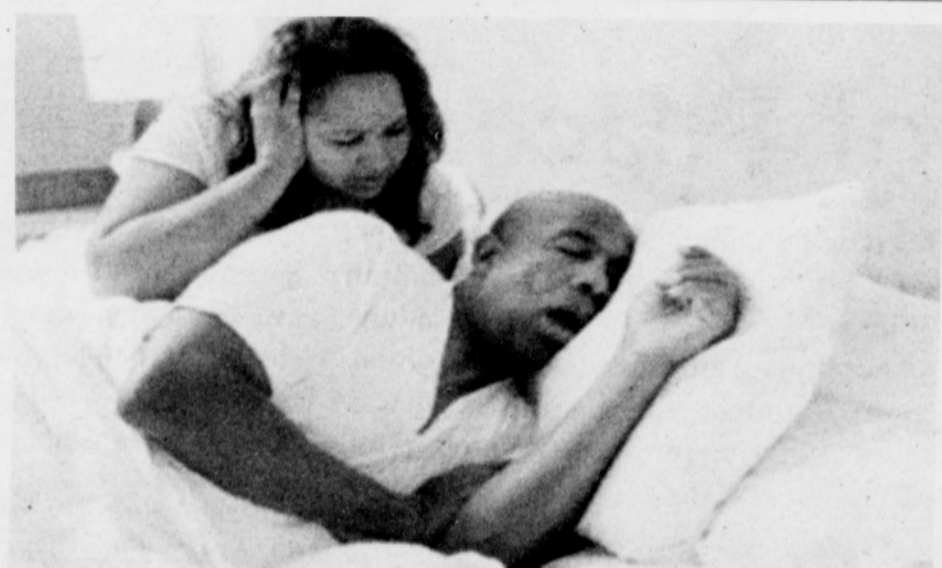
Similar measures have been struck down by Oregonians on ballots past.

But one Portland-based criminal defense attorney, Brian Michaels, says with the passage of the law in nearby Washington it is likely Oregon will also follow suit during the next voting cycle.

Michaels says marijuana is a safer alternative to alcohol; one that has almost universally been proven not to result in the acts of anger and violence that has been associated with the abuse of liquor. With two decades working in the judicial system, he says taxation of the plant also seems to make more economical sense for the state.

According to a 2006 report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in 2003-2004 Oregon ranked in the top fifth of states for cannabis usage in three age categories: 12 to 17, 18 to 25, and 26 and older.

It's estimated that more than 8 percent of Oregonians are marijuana users.



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