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**HIGH TIMES**

JUNE 413

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Liberty and VISC photos by Kat in Skunk issues v3#5 & v3#8

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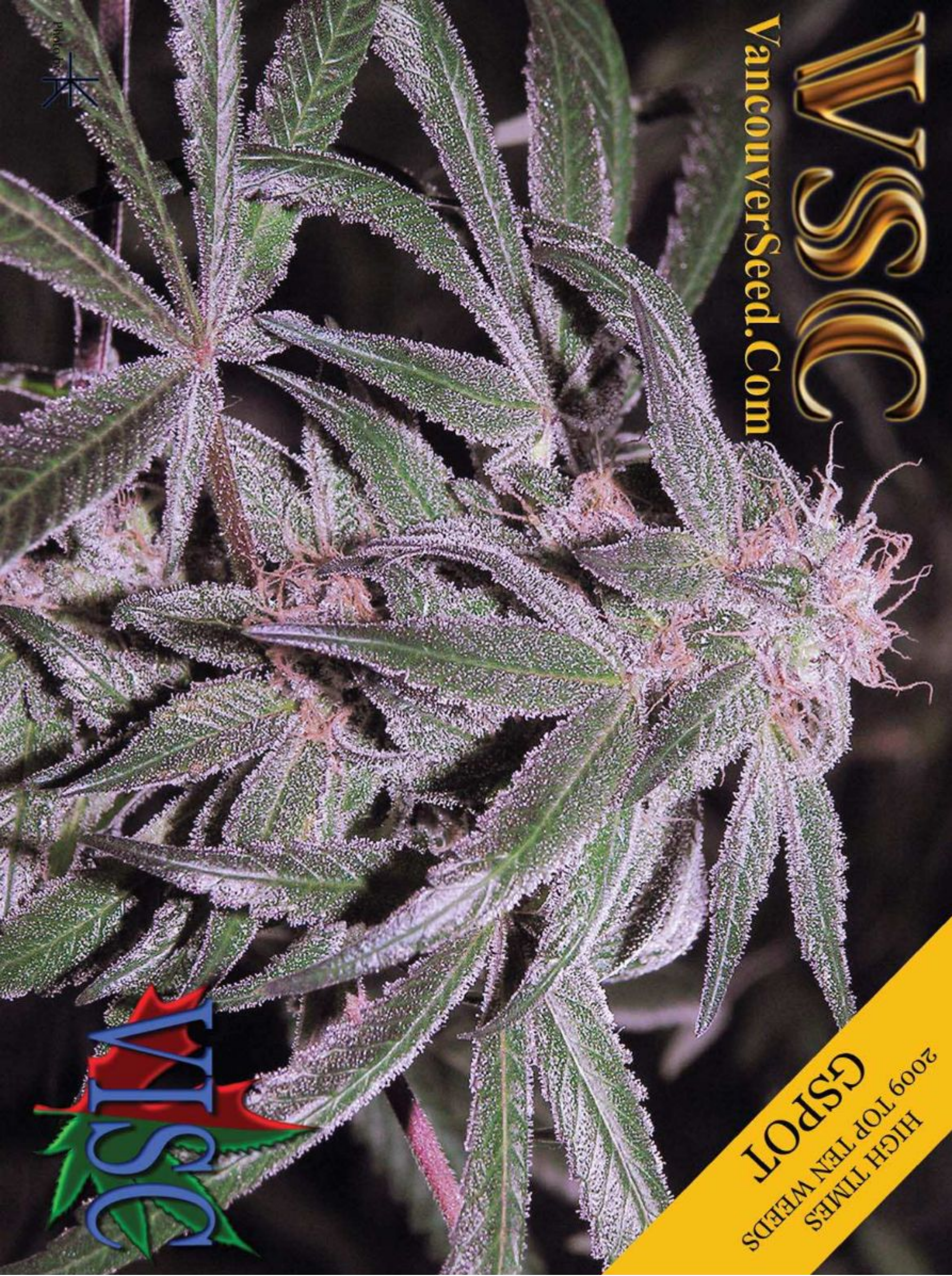
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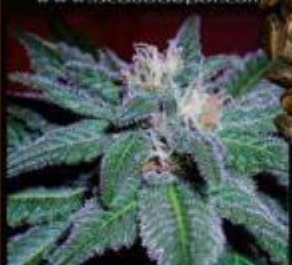
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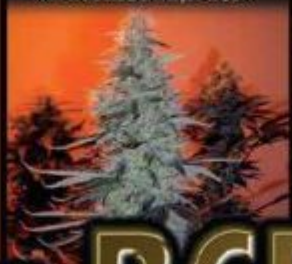
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## THE RECORD BREAKERS

It's now official: Cheech & Chong hold the record for appearing on the most covers in HIGH TIMES' history. Up until now, they'd been tied with Bob Marley and Willie Nelson. Obviously, only ultra-superstar stoners of the highest magnitude could possibly expect to make the cover *five times!*\*

But Cheech & Chong absolutely qualify. Congratulations to the duo, who are currently in the midst of their "Get It Legal" comedy tour.

Just think, the first time they were on the cover was *30 years* ago. Jimmy Carter was the president back then—and the funny thing is, things aren't all that different. We're still embroiled in a Middle Eastern conflict (Carter had the Iranian hostage crisis, Obama has the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan), our economy is limping along once again, and we're still struggling to find a way to legalize cannabis. We've made some incredible progress, but bear in mind: 36 states still criminalize medicinal use, and all 50 outlaw recreational use. So we still have a long way to go.

And we still have to battle outrageous propaganda. The last gasp of the Drug War seems to be the effort to link cultivation and distribution of the plant to funding for terrorism. Contributor Mark Miller examines this insidious myth on page 18.

But nothing demonstrates this nation's skewed notions regarding cannabis more coldly and clearly than its treatment of returning veterans. Using cannabis as a means of relief for psychological or physical trauma can result in denial of other critical pharmaceutical medication that they need—with devastating health effects. Senior editor Bobby Black investigates this travesty in "The Thin Green Line."

In short, there's still a Drug War going on this country, and our citizens are still being picked off on a regular basis.

So, yeah, let's laugh real hard with Cheech & Chong—but let's get *real* serious, too. There's a very good reason they're calling it the "Get It Legal" tour ... lest we forget!

*Dan Skye*

Dan Skye  
Executive Editor

\*Tommy Chong has actually appeared on the cover a whopping *eight* times—three without Cheech.

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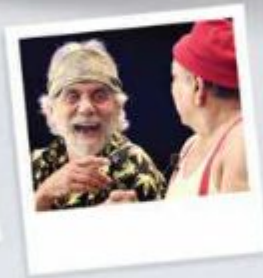
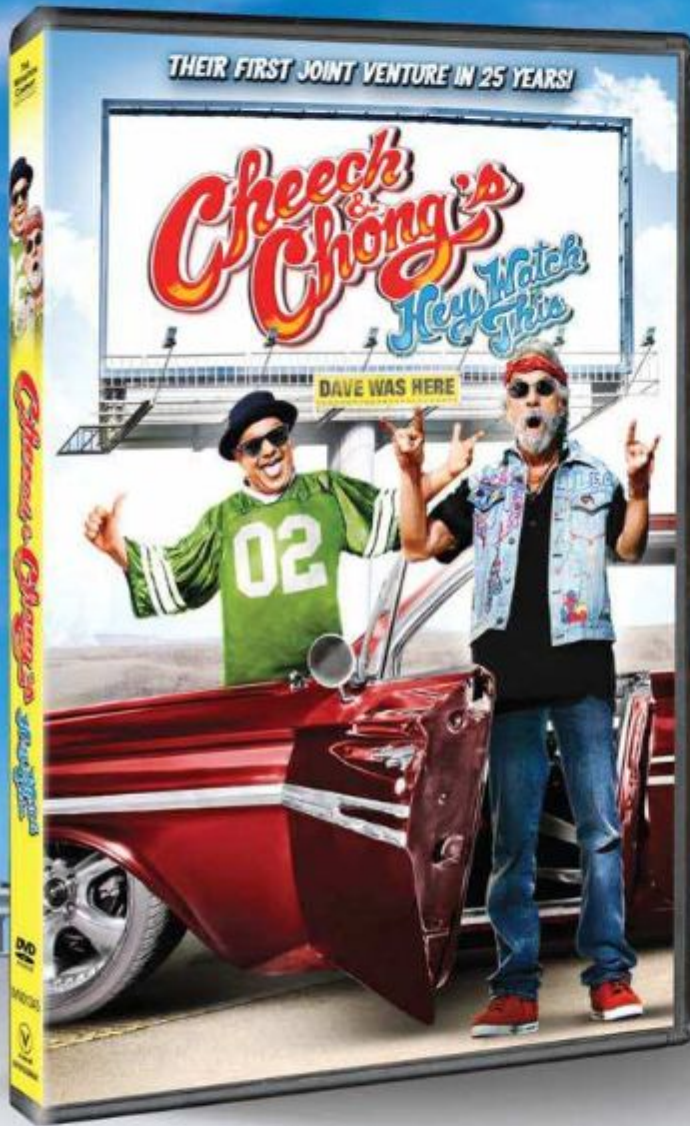
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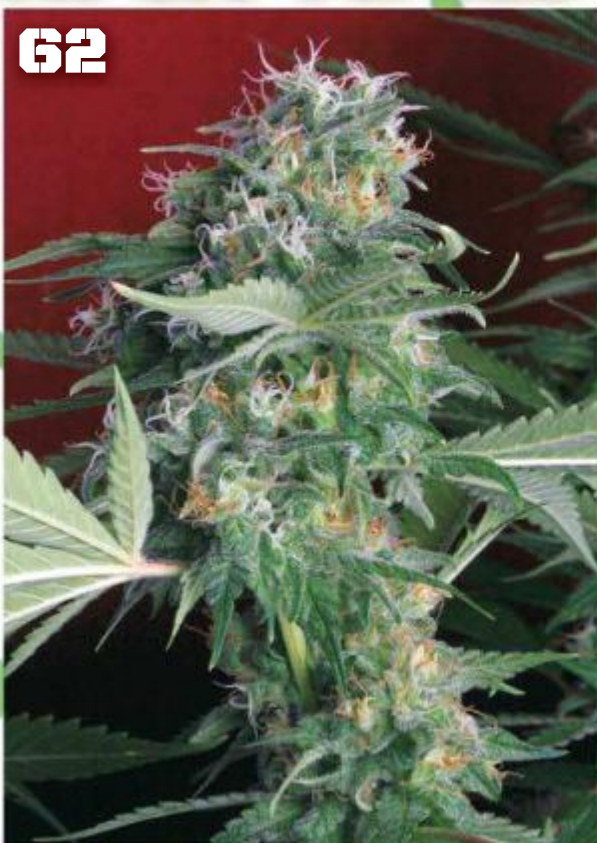
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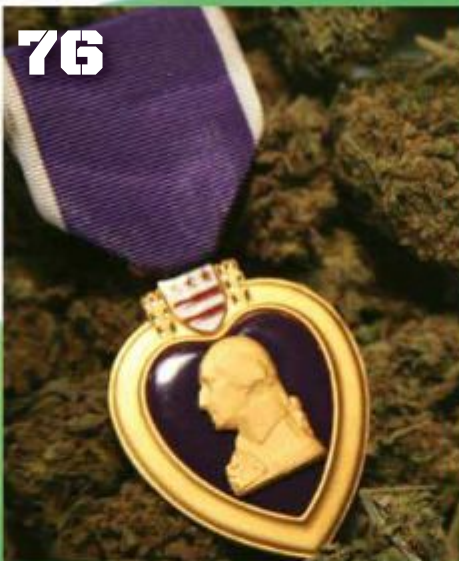
  
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## FEATURES

### 36 COLORADO CHILLOUT

by Dan Skye

Even as Colorado's cannabis scene flourishes, a number of politicians are trying to thwart state law. But with public opinion now on their side, the growers of the Rocky Mountain State have been steadily expanding their operations.

### 46 GROWING VERT: A REVIEW OF VERTICAL GROWING

by Hue Gelder

Our West Coast labs filed this can't-miss report on the pros and cons of vertical growing. Read about the benefits while learning how to avoid some of the pitfalls that can complicate these systems. If you don't get bogged down while growing up, the reward is huge yields of high-quality buds!

### 56 ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Cheech & Chong are bringing laughs to America once more with their new "Get It Legal" tour. Take a look behind the scenes at what life on the road is really like for two superstar stoners.

### 62 RETURN OF CHEMDOG

Danny Danko tracks down the legendary and reclusive grower known as Chemdog for a report on his background and his techniques for cultivating perfect pot. Special bonus: A full description of the latest marijuana varieties in the Chemdog family.

### 76 THE THIN GREEN LINE

by Bobby Black

Disabled veterans are returning home to realize that they've survived one war, only to find themselves casualties in another—the War on Drugs. Vets who suffer from chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder are being cut off from their VA medical benefits for using doctor-recommended medical marijuana.

### 84 HIGH TIMES INTERVIEW: JUDGE JAMES P. GRAY

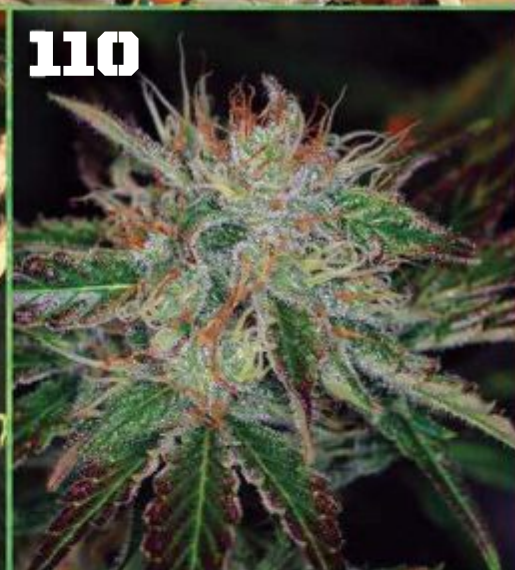
by Mark Miller

A jurist shares his surprising views on drug use in America. Gray proclaims the Drug War a failure and insists that the legalization of all drugs (using marijuana as a pilot program) may be the only sane route for our democracy.

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## DEPARTMENTS

### 06 PAGE SIX

### 12 HIGHWITNESS NEWS/BUZZ

EDITED BY DAN SKYE

Obama's stonewall; LA Woman; DEA bust in Denver; Grower strains; iGrow; Ganja Outpost; Pot-corn; Airborne edibles panic; Sandy Moriarty; Marijuana Myths 2010; THMQ; Southern Metal; As Tall as Lions; DJ Alizay; Reviews; Almost Infamous; Miss HIGH TIMES; Unsigned Band of the Month; Brain Damage Control.

COVER: WILL BLOCHINGER

STRAINS (L TO R): OG KUSH #18, GRANDDADDY PURPLE

### 93 GROWORLD

EDITED BY DANNY DANKO & NICO ESCONDIDO

Pix of the Crop; Cannabis Clinic; Munchies; NORMLizer; Freedom Fighter; Ask Dr. Mitch; SSDP; Subcool's Breeding Chernobyl; Gear/Hot Products; War Stories; Dear Danko.

### 126 NEXT MONTH

### 132 POT 40

CENTERFOLD: BRIAN JAHN

STRAIN: PURPLE URKEL

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**FEEDBACK**

**CUP QUESTIONS**

I'm going to be a judge at this year's Cannabis Cup. Will there be an issue reviewing the 2009 Cup, or has it already come out? Likewise, will there be an issue promoting the 2010 Cup?

*Scott*

Our April issue reviews the '09 Cup. And look for our 2010 Cup preview on newsstands in mid-September.

**MUNCHIE MANUEVER**

Want to know how to keep from getting the munchies after getting high? Brush your tongue after smoking. The heat of the smoke slightly irritates the tongue and triggers the stomach into thinking it is ready for food, leading to the cursed munchies. Me and my friends all have tried it, and it works perfectly.

*Charlie*

**LEAF THE LEFTOVERS**

I was reading your "Cooking With Terpenes" article in the February 2010 issue, and I was wondering why you say it's "BAD!" to reuse weed a second time to make butter.

*Smitty*

If you want to reuse your weed in cooking because you like the way it tastes, go for it. But don't expect it to get you high. It's like smoking vaporizer dregs or eating maraschino cherries—everything that was once good and wholesome has already been stripped away, leaving only a ghostly remnant of the promise that it once held for the consumer ... plus one big headache. Hope this helps.—*Ashley Boudreaux*

**COMMON COMPANIONS**

Thanks for keeping the world informed! I would also like to thank you for mentioning companion plants: They're an essential part of nature, so we might as well try to include them in the Narnia-istic growrooms we have going. I have started using carnivorous plants in all parts of my house and grow spaces, and I've found that they are the perfect pest solution. Most require little to no fertilizer, medium to high humidity, distilled water (or water that's just been left in an open container for 48 hours prior to use), and filtered bright light. *Droseras* (sundews) are the most effective and easiest to care for. I have five different kinds for various pests guarding my personal creation, *Pacific Leviosa*, and I haven't had any bugs since their addition! Keep up the good work, and hit me up if you get out this way!

*TPD*

**SHOW YOUR COLORS**

I just wanted to say thank you! You all ran a picture of me in my pot-leaf suit at the Cypress Hill Smoke-Out 2009 in SoCal. I am over the moon about it! It's in the March 2010 issue, on page 16. Tiny, epic pic; caption reads "Represent!" My stoner fantasy come true! I love you guys! Thanks!

*Andrea*



**4:20 STRETCH**

Aloha, HIGH TIMES editors! Here on Maui, we love weed and we love yoga! The two go together so well that there's even a yoga class just for smokers at 4:20 in the afternoon. [C'mon, don't act like everyone doesn't get high before going to yoga anyway!] Jah bless!

*Sammy*

**OLD-SCHOOL TOKER**

You know, way back in the '70s,

when a lid was four fingers and a nickel could keep you high for a week (unless it was Mexican), there was a new magazine on the market called HIGH TIMES. And we stoners of the times would buzz out and listen to Cheech & Chong albums, yet still have to be able to use our imagination.

I was a really particular kind of stoner, stationed in the military on purpose and blessed with sending out the word of getting high. You could tell us apart from the other boys during locker inspections: While all the other pervs would have their locker walls pasted with pinup girls, we would pin up the centerfolds of HIGH TIMES—much to the chagrin of our first sergeants and captains doing the inspection. Granted, we all liked women; we just felt that we had a *higher* calling (hint, hint ...).

Whatever happened to those days?

*William*

Thanks, William, but be sure to take that onion off your belt. Times haven't changed that much: We get plenty of soldiers and servicepeople who send in active-duty photos of themselves with HIGH TIMES nestled snugly in their hands. And Cheech & Chong are still going strong (see page 56 for more).

**JOE DIMEBAG**

Hey guys, thanks for 35 years of sticking up for what you believe in! Our world is indeed changing right before our eyes (finally!), and many more changes are yet to come. Mother Nature's cannabis plant has, does and will help many people for the better. Unfortunately, too many people are still too blind to see and accept that. But, like I said, things are changing! I've been reading and enjoying your magazine for many years now, and I have a suggestion: Why not feature more "normal" (i.e., average Joe-type) people in your magazine smoking herb? Probably half of the marijuana connoisseurs out there are just normal-looking men and women like myself. Bottom line, we're all the same and have simply found the healing touch from Mother Nature's plant. Keep up the good work—we must all take a stand for what we believe in!

*Rick*

**ERRATA**

In "B-Real's Big Deal" (March '10) the Roor Excalibur Bong that B-Real is holding is available at roor.com, not roorbongshop.com. We regret the error.

Send your letters to: Feedback c/o HIGH TIMES, 419 Park Avenue South, 16th floor, New York, NY 10016. Email: [hteditor@hightimes.com](mailto:hteditor@hightimes.com). We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.



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We would never stereotype anyone—ever. Our only intention is to highlight an outstanding strain of cannabis. Really.

To read more about LA Woman, visit [dnagenetics.com](http://dnagenetics.com).

## OBAMA'S STONEWALL

On February 1, the president hosted a forum on YouTube. Online participants pre-submitted questions, and the most popular ones were then voted on. As in previous online events, questions about marijuana legalization dominated the field. This time, they also received the most votes. The three highest-rated questions from the entire contest were:

- 1) When you asked the country to give you questions, one of the most asked was "Are you going to legalize marijuana?" When you read it, you laughed like it wasn't serious. Why is that?
- 2) What are your plans for cannabis legalization?
- 3) Why don't you legalize marijuana? It seems like a great way to gain tax money, and people should have to right to use it if they please, and it would cripple gang activity. Do you plan to?

The president answered exactly none of these questions. When Obama promised the most transparent administration ever, we had something else in mind.



## AND THEY'RE OFF!

As the brave new world of medical marijuana emerges, there's still plenty of room for paranoia. When local authorities in California contacted the growers responsible for this harvest and informed them they'd be dropping by to inspect their operation, things immediately went to DEFCON 1. They galloped to their drying shed, pulled down the buds and threw them in their horse trailer, which became an instant stash house. "It's not that we were over our limits," explained the owner of the trailer. "We just think it's a better idea that our duty-happy cops don't see pounds of pot hanging up to dry. Sometimes avoiding problems is better than confronting them."



Topher tells a tale.

## THAT '70S FREAKOUT

Actor Topher Grace, who starred in *That '70s Show*, says the first time he got high was the result of ingesting a THC "breath strip," an item commonly available at California medical-marijuana dispensaries. As a guest on *Lopez Tonight*, Grace revealed that he swallowed an entire strip instead of just half while attending a Hollywood party. His ensuing behavior, he confessed, was a "cliche of someone stoned on *That '70s Show*." He recalled asking a friend, "Is there lava coming out of the back of my head? I can touch colors. Should I get naked?"

## WOODY'S GREEN RED CARPET

At the Oscars, Woody Harrelson was up for Best Supporting Actor for his role in *The Messenger*. Woody, whose support for cannabis is well known, chose to wear a Burberry custom-tailored black tuxedo made of hemp. When the show began, co-hosts Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin took good-natured shots at the nominees. When they got to Woody, Steve Martin's only comment was, "He is so high!"



Harrelson and wife, Laura



# APP-SOLUTELY ESSENTIAL!

If you're looking for good medicine at a fair price, check out Cannexx, the new app powered by HIGH TIMES. Cannexx is a medical-cannabis index that users install on their iPhone. Instead of driving all over the state in search of a favorite strain, users pre-shop on their iPhone, then get directions. Cannexx provides a list of all dispensaries carrying the strain, its price, plus consumer reviews. If your budget allows a maximum of \$25 per gram, you can browse strains under that price limit. If Granddaddy Purps at \$18 per gram is a better deal than Strawberry Cough at \$20 per gram, the consumer can now exercise real shopping power by using Cannexx.



#### ENTER

On the entry screen, search for your medicine by using your zip code. Let Cannexx find dispensaries near you.



#### LOCATOR

Google maps will give you directions to your chosen dispensary, plus phone numbers and the dispensary's menu.



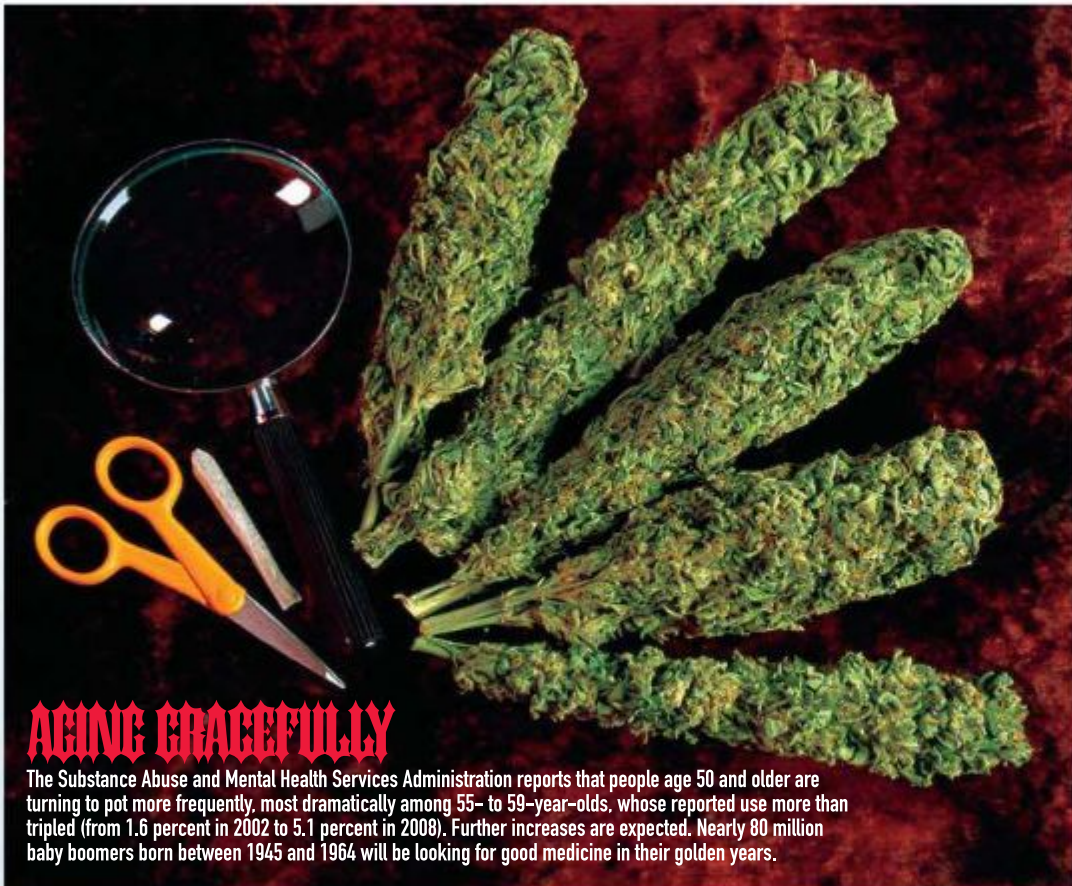
#### DISPENSARY PROFILES

Get details on the dispensary: store hours, user reviews, a photo of the storefront and contact info.



#### RATINGS & REVIEWS

Complete menus of strains: photos, prices, strain names, user ratings and more!



## AGING GRACEFULLY

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that people age 50 and older are turning to pot more frequently, most dramatically among 55- to 59-year-olds, whose reported use more than tripled (from 1.6 percent in 2002 to 5.1 percent in 2008). Further increases are expected. Nearly 80 million baby boomers born between 1945 and 1964 will be looking for good medicine in their golden years.

## COLORADO CALAMITY

Last year, US Attorney General Eric Holder declared that the Feds would no longer pursue cases against medical-marijuana patients and dispensaries in the 14 states where medical marijuana has been legalized. The move was widely hailed as a departure from the usual Drug War tactics.

It was nice while it lasted. In late January, DEA agents raided Full Spectrum Laboratories in Denver, CO. Full Spectrum isn't a dispensary; it's a lab that tests marijuana for mold, fungus and pesticides. Ironically, Full Spectrum had applied for a DEA license to work with cannabis, but never heard back from the agency until the raid. The DEA issued a subpoena requesting customer and patient records for the past six months. No one was charged with a crime, but the DEA did seize about \$10,000 worth of medicine that was designated for patients with multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease.

Then, in February, DEA agents raided and arrested Chris Bartkowicz, a state-licensed medical-marijuana caregiver, after he appeared on a local TV news program. Denver-based DEA agent Jeffrey Sweetin stated: "We're still going to continue to investigate and arrest people... Technically, every dispensary in the state is in blatant violation of federal law."



Growers can't mask their true nature.

## WHAT STRAIN ARE YOU?

Here's our easy field guide to determining the varied characteristics of cannabis cultivators

| GROWER TYPE              | OFTEN FOUND ...   | OFTEN SAYS ...  | OFTEN SEEN ...                          |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>HIPPIE FARMER</b>     | Next to compost heap.   | "Dude, don't panic. It's organic!"                              | Conversing with his plants.             |
| <b>GEEKY TECHNO-NERD</b> | Buying grow gear at Radio Shack.                                    | "I reduce light refraction through deep-water osmosis of ions." | Building grow-bots to do his gardening. |
| <b>GUERRILLA</b>         | Planting trees in trees.  | "I'm going camping again."                                      | In camouflage or not at all.            |
| <b>CLOSET CULTIVATOR</b> | In the bedroom more than a coma patient.                            | "Can you keep a secret?"  | Pacing with air freshener.              |
| <b>CLEAN FREAK</b>       | Dusting plants.   | "Soil is so <i>dirty</i> ."                                     | Buying Clorox by the case.              |
| <b>FIRST-TIMER</b>       | In tears or in jail.  | "What seeds do you need to grow hydro?"                         | Using an AeroGarden—badly.              |
| <b>SENIOR CITIZEN</b>    | Dozing off reading Jorge Cervantes's <i>Marijuana Grow Basics</i> . | "We used to grow barefoot in the snow!"                         | Watering plants in a Hoveround.         |
| <b>MERCENARY</b>         | Nowhere near his massive warehouse garden.                          | "I have no knowledge of this operation or these people."        | With a whole lotta cash.                |



# JOIN THE TEAM!



Kim Manning of P-Funk dons the Bonghitter uniform.

It's hard to believe, but the legendary HIGH TIMES softball team known as the Bonghitters has just begun its 20th season of play. The Bonghitters have always thrived on the high, outside pitch. In fact, the team holds the record for highest team batting average—which is 1.000—because there has never been a Bonghitter who wasn't high when batting. Consequently, the team also holds the record for most consecutive hits.

However, the Bonghitters' overall win-loss record remains a mystery. "We lost track a long time ago," says the current manager. "All I know is, we got a shitload of wins and very few losses."

Celebrate the *high*-storic 20th anniversary with the team. Get your official HIGH TIMES Bonghitters baseball shirt today.

Available at [hightimes.com](http://hightimes.com).

## THIS MONTH IN SHOWBUZZ



Nothing new on Nelson's bus.

### WILLIE'S BUDS BUSTED

In late January, country star Willie Nelson was unable to perform at a concert in Kennesaw, NC, due to pain in his hand following an operation for carpal-tunnel syndrome. So Willie's

bandmates decided to kick back on the tour bus outside the concert venue. Unfortunately, the scent of their pleasure wafted out into the parking lot, which prompted cops to board the bus and cite six members of the band for marijuana possession. A three-quarters-full jar of moonshine was also found, so the owners were charged with unlawful possession of "non-tax-paid alcohol" as well. Mandatory court appearances are required for both charges, which are misdemeanors. Authorities noted that band members were "very respectful" in their encounter with law enforcement.

### DRUGS ACCORDING TO GAGA

In her upcoming bio, Lady Gaga opines: "Sometimes drugs can be like a creative journey. Some stuff's really amazing. But it also can totally ruin like your whole life and can take over you, so I would never encourage anybody to go on that kind of creative journey. It's really a personal choice."



Lady's choice.



Bill disses stoners.

### THE O'REILLY FUCKER

Jon Stewart, host of *The Daily Show*, recently appeared on *The O'Reilly Factor*, conservative talking head Bill O'Reilly's forum to beat up on liberals. The exchanges were fairly good-natured, but some media outlets alleged

that the show had been edited purposely to cast Stewart in a bad light. O'Reilly petulantly disagreed: "Some of these idiots in the press who hate us [are saying] 'O'Reilly cut the interview to make Stewart look bad.' Okay, all of that is bull. It's a fair cut."

Interested parties can check out the footage and decide for themselves—but there was one moment that remained uncensored. Back in November 2008, O'Reilly asserted that Stewart's audience consisted mainly of "stoned slackers." O'Reilly updated that assessment for Stewart's appearance; he now describes fans of *The Daily Show* as "stoned slackers who love Obama."

We won't demean O'Reilly's audience or call Bill names—too easy. But go to the Internet, where we invite you to Google "O'Reilly loafah falafel." Frankly, we'd rather be called "stoned slackers who love Obama" than have to settle a sleazy sexual-harassment suit out of court.

## GANJA OUTPOST

If you're looking to decorate your digs with a cannabis motif, then stop in at the Ganja Outpost, which offers a luscious gallery of pot-themed, visionary art in either posters or art reproductions. This same ethereal imagery is also available on Ganja Outpost T-shirts, so you can say more than just "Legalize It" when you're out stylin'.

In addition to artwork, the Ganja Outpost is the exclusive platform for stories from the life of Skip Steele, one of the first and biggest American pot smugglers in the 1970s. It's also the home of the "Free Ganja" movement, which encourages action by regular businesses and individuals to evoke change in society and reform our marijuana laws.

Visit [ganjaoutpost.com](http://ganjaoutpost.com).



## POTCORN PLEASURE

Wonka is back! Once the premier chocolatier in the cannabis industry, with his own line of pot-laced edibles, Wonka decided to shut the doors of his factory over two years ago. Not that he was tired of chocolate—he just got, well, a little nervous, especially after the busts of some other prominent cannabis-candy companies.

Since that time, Wonka has been wandering the earth in search of answers. And, apparently, he's found one: *No more chocolate!* But that doesn't mean he's left the kitchen.

With dispensaries throughout California requesting that he stock their shelves with scrumptious treats again, Wonka is answering the call, debuting an entirely new cannabis-edibles company this spring called Concentrate. However, this time around, Wonka is working in cold-water taffy and caramel to produce some tasty morsels of medicine not unlike those of the venerable Brach's Candy company. He's also got the Crunky Monkey bar on the horizon, a walnut, banana and toffee delight. But Wonka's outstanding culinary achievement is undoubtedly his signature Potcorn, a bowl of which will sufficiently medicate any patient in need. So microwave up some Potcorn for yourself: It's delicious *and* efficient—everything you could ask for in a marijuana edible!

Visit [pot-corn.com](http://pot-corn.com).

## ONE-STOP POT SHOPPING

Earlier this year, a 15,000-square-foot warehouse opened its doors to the public. But this ain't Costco, Sam's Club or Wal-Mart—iGrow is a spacious shopping center for cannabis cultivators of every stripe. If you need it, iGrow has it: All the necessary gear for indoor grow ops is here, from nutrients and soil to pumps, tubing, lighting and fans. Shoppers can check out the latest cultivation systems showcased in Ikea-like setups that provide a concrete perspective on growing pot. Plus, iGrow has friendly technicians on staff (a.k.a. the Grow Squad) to answer your questions and point you in the right direction—and, for a fee, they'll also help you build and maintain your own system. There's even a doctor onsite to assist you in acquiring a legal medical recommendation for possessing and cultivating cannabis as a California resident.

Located at 70 Hegenberger Loop, Oakland, CA 94621. Visit [igrowoakland.com](http://igrowoakland.com)



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# CALIFORNIA SUPERCHEF

**Sandy Moriarty provides top-quality medical edibles to the Golden State.**

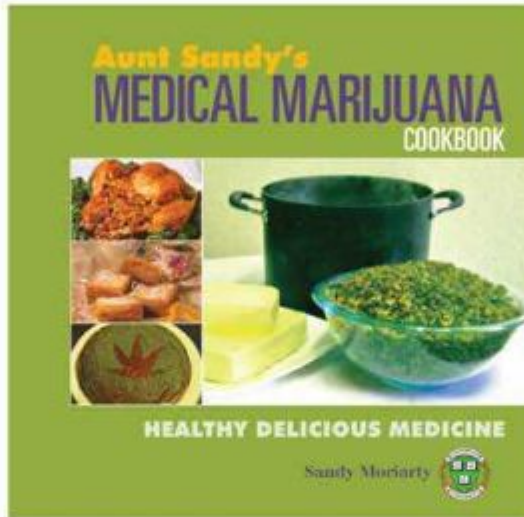
Sandy Moriarty, a lifelong Northern Californian, started cooking with cannabis back in the 1970s. At first, she tried “to perfect edibles for taste.” But as she progressed, she says, “I wanted as pure and as clean a product with the greatest potency possible.”

Now Moriarty is the producer of high-quality edibles for medical-pot dispensaries throughout California. She’s a graduate of Oaksterdam University, America’s first cannabis college, and a full-fledged instructor there as well. She undertook cannabis cooking seriously once medical marijuana became legal in California in 1996 and quickly discovered that the crockpot was the natural enemy of edible cannabis. “My process gets rid of the water and cooks the pot down to a fine concentrate,” she explains. “It enables me to guarantee the potency. Out of the process, you get a psychedelic butter like no other.”

Incredibly, food cooked with her cannabutter doesn’t possess that ganja flavor and aroma typical of most medical edibles. Sandy says, “The long cooking process evaporates the ganja taste and smell away with the liquid.”

As for the potency of her edibles, she says: “The effect can last for a day, not three to four hours. People need to learn their proper dosage before consuming my edibles. The dosage differs for every person.”

Her lemon bars, sold at the Blue Sky Cafe in Oakland, are perhaps the most popular edible in the Bay Area. Some patients drive three hours or more to purchase them. Her next concoction is a cannabis hot sauce for wings, tacos and added zing on pizza. This sauce will be produced with extreme potency, so only a few drops will be necessary for medication.



Some have compared Sandy to the late Brownie Mary, a.k.a. Mary Jane Rathburn, who died in 1999. She was the groundbreaking medical-cannabis activist who famously baked pot brownies for AIDS patients in San Francisco. In fact, Dennis Peron invited Sandy to use the kitchen where Brownie Mary cooked for her forthcoming DVD. It was “a great honor,” Sandy says.

*Aunt Sandy’s Medical Marijuana Cookbook* (Quick Trading) is currently available for budding cannabis cooks, while her *Cooking With Cannabis* DVD will be released soon. Sandy also plans to develop a cooking lab at Oaksterdam where she’ll be able to give students hands-on instruction. Moreover, if Californians approve full-out legalization in the November election, she expects a lot of doors to open—even the door to her own commercial kitchen, where, she says, “I could have even more medicine available for more patients.”—Mark Miller

## CANNABUTTER OF THE GODS

Use a stockpot that might be used to cook a roast. Add one pound of Grade AA butter to four ounces of high-grade ganja. (One pound produces the highest potency, with a smaller yield. Three pounds produces a higher yield but a diluted potency—obviously.)

Next, simmer the butter/pot mix for three to four hours. THC evaporates at 380°F, so everything must be cooked under that temperature or the product will be rendered inferior. THC melts off the leaves and clings to the lipids (molecules that store energy) in the butter. The aim is to boil away the water entirely so that an amber-hued, spinach-like substance remains in the stockpot. The amber color tells you that the plant has rendered all of its THC content, both out of the glands and off the leaf itself. This will be your cannabutter product.

But you’re not done yet. Place the spinach-like material in a strainer. Smash it with a potato masher. Remove as much residual material as possible. Then place your “amber spinach” in cheesecloth, wringing it over a catch-pot that collects the dripping cannabutter. The goal is to remove the pure cannabutter from the spinach material.

For the separation process, refrigerate the cannabutter overnight. The next day, the desired cannabutter will have risen to the top, with more of the “amber spinach” on the bottom. Then spoon or scoop the butter off. You can use it immediately or place it in an airtight container and freeze it for future use. Melting the cannabutter will allow it to better infuse with salad dressings or sauces in a blender.



## WHAT'S IN THAT POT COOKIE?

Roughly 3.3 million Americans are allergic to nuts, and about 150 of them die from allergy-related causes every year. In fact, nut allergies are among the most common and most severe: Sufferers are forced to carefully navigate restaurant menus and grocery aisles, checking lists of ingredients, because they run the risk of a hospital visit—and, in some extreme cases, death—from ingesting even trace amounts of an allergen.

Now they have a new category of food to worry about, because many of the cookies, brownies and other items available at medical-marijuana dispensaries don’t come with a list of ingredients. So that little dab of peanut butter making a batch of pot cookies extra-delicious could give someone seeking relief a nasty allergic shock.

Dispensaries selling medical-marijuana edibles should insist that purveyors provide a complete list of ingredients on the packaging of their wares. Otherwise, someone’s healing medicine could end up sending them to the hospital instead.

## FLYIN’ HIGH

In early February, a medical-marijuana patient from San Francisco named Kinman Chan was charged with interfering with a flight attendant’s duties and now faces up to 20 years in federal prison. Chan blamed his behavior on an accidental “double dose” of cannabis cookies that he ate in Philadelphia prior to boarding a cross-country flight to Los Angeles.

Following take-off, Chan reportedly made “odd gestures” as he entered the restroom, where he began screaming. After exiting the john with his pants around his ankles, he got into a fight with flight attendants and had to be subdued in a chokehold. The plane was diverted to Pittsburgh, where Chan was arrested upon landing.

Predictably, the press coverage played up Chan’s med-pot cookies as the reason for the mayhem. And while it’s likely that he wouldn’t have flipped out had he refrained from his accidental “overdose,” it’s baseless to blame the medicine itself when, in fact, thousands of patients medicate with edibles without incident on a daily basis (sometimes even “double doses”) before their flights. And thousands more medicate daily with edibles—and without incident—*whether they’re flying or not!* As always, the point is to watch your dosage (especially with edibles, which can be potent) and medicate responsibly.





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Since 9/11, the government has tried to link pot with terrorism.  
But the charges are ludicrous on their face—the last gasp in the failing war on cannabis.

By Mark Miller

# THE WAR ON

In this month's HIGH TIMES Interview, retired Orange County (CA) Superior Court Judge James P. Gray, one of the most credible opponents of the War on Drugs, declares: "Drug prohibition is the golden goose of terrorism." Indeed, mainstream-media reports are filled with stories linking hard drugs and terrorism, such as the heroin production overseen by the Taliban, the former ruling body of Afghanistan, which harbored Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks. Peru's Shining Path was originally a Maoist guerrilla group in the 1980s that used cocaine to fund its revolution—but in recent years, the group has degenerated into nothing more than common coke dealers. A similar story might be told about the Colombian FARC.



Hassan-i Sabbah

But while there's some ancient history connecting cannabis (at least hashish) with terrorist plots, it's exactly that—ancient history. The first recorded connection between pot and terrorism occurred during the late ninth and early 10th centuries with the reign of Hassan-i Sabbah, a Shiite Muslim who created a religious community in the Alborz Mountains of northern Iran. Hassan's cult was referred to as the *Hashshashin*, from which the word "assassin" derives. His followers committed brazen public murders of their political and spiritual opponents (by stabbing), after which the Hassan puppet would allow himself to be beaten and killed by the vengeful crowd. The axiom "Nothing is true, everything is permitted," often attributed to Hassan, underscores the fantastical way in which his followers were said to be indoctrinated: Thanks to a mixture of hashish and certain hallucinogenic spices, a simulated "death" would overtake the initiate, who would awaken in a staged "paradise"—a luscious garden of "milk and honey" filled with young female virgins. After sobering up, the recruit was told that this temporary vision of "heaven" could be his for eternity—but only if he killed and died for Hassan.

The connection between drugs, mind control and assassination would be further explored in the 20th century, first by the Nazis and later by the CIA. (Cannabis, code-named "sugar," was among the drugs used on unwitting subjects.) But



throughout history, drugs have far more often been a source of enormous profits, as well as a vehicle for social control. A case in point is the Prohibition era, when alcohol—which had been proscribed as a means of controlling the country's huge immigrant population—became the primary revenue source for organized crime, led by the ruthless Al Capone and killer-for-hire outfits like Murder, Inc. But following the end of Prohibition in 1933, a new substance was needed for the Feds to demonize.

At that time, the recreational use of pot was primarily the province of minorities: blacks in the burgeoning jazz scene (Louis Armstrong would blow pot smoke out of his trumpet playing live), and Latinos from Mexico and the nations of South America, who used pot both as an intoxicant and to cool off during breaks from hot field labor. "Yellow journalism" mogul William Randolph Hearst used his vast media empire to paint African-Americans and Hispanics who smoked

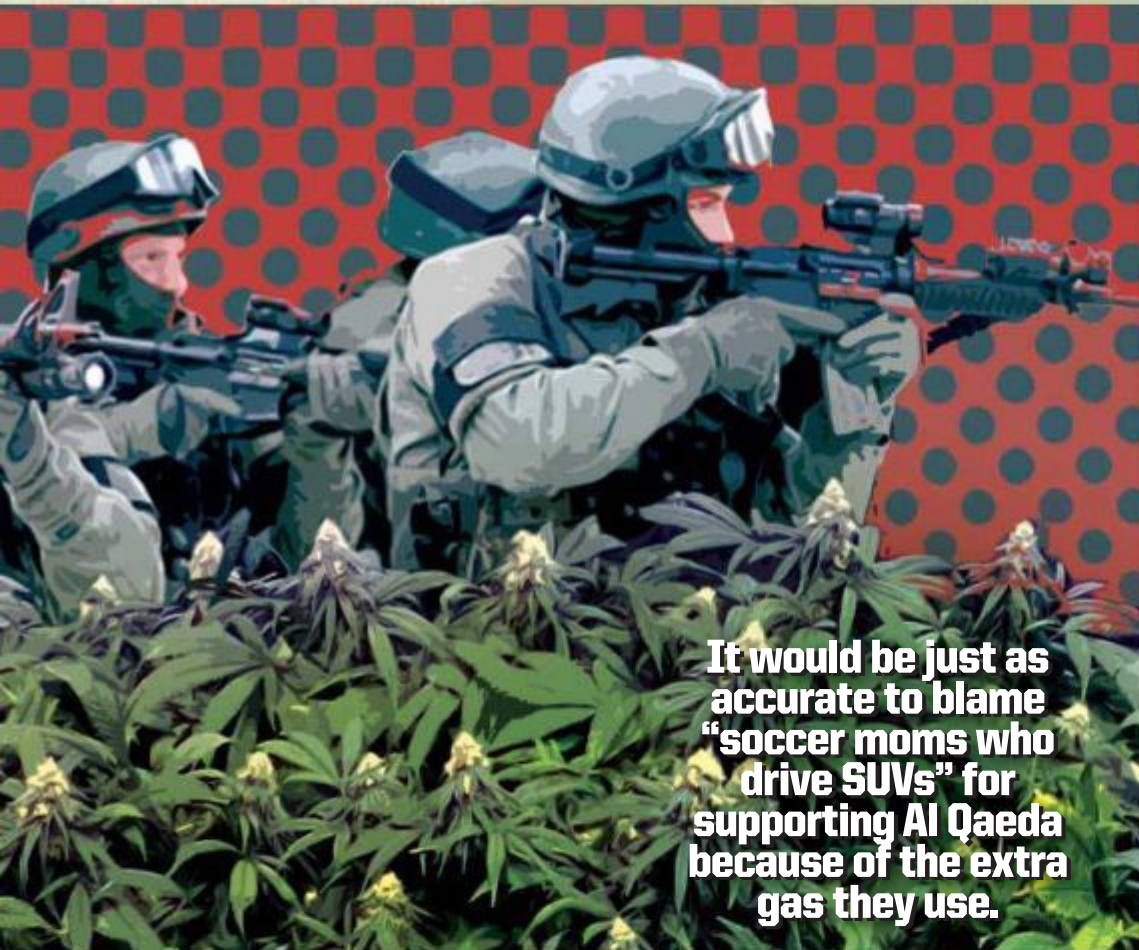
pot as a menace to society (because there's nothing more dangerous than black musicians getting high at a jam session, except maybe Mexicans taking a siesta). As a result of this concerted propaganda campaign, pot was made illegal in 1937, and has remained so to this day.

During the Cold War era of the 1950s, in which the US and the USSR competed for dominance over the rest of the world, pot was further demonized as part of a "Communist plot" to instill a "narcotic pacifism" in Americans who partook. Considering the mind-expanding properties of pot—the very antithesis of the strict social controls practiced in the former Soviet Union—this notion is plainly ridiculous, since pot promotes spontaneity, individualism and idealism of every sort.

By the late 1960s, the American establishment was desperate for anything that would stem the tide of the booming drug culture. Accordingly, pot was speciously linked to bomb-tossing hippies and Yippie radicalism—which, of course,



# YOU!



**It would be just as accurate to blame "soccer moms who drive SUVs" for supporting Al Qaeda because of the extra gas they use.**

contradicted the "pacified zombie" image of pot smokers a decade earlier.

But are there any legitimate links between black-market pot sales and 21st-century terrorism? With the legalization of medical marijuana in California in 1996, you might have thought it was high time to shut the propaganda mill down. Not so fast—following the 9/11 attacks in 2001, the Bush administration produced and aired a series of controversial TV ads linking casual drug use in the US (including cannabis) to terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. The ads showed various people speaking the "truth" about the acts of terror that their drug use had funded ("I helped murder families in Colombia," one said)—though what scoring a bag of weed grown in Humboldt County (or a growroom in Maine) had to do with dead families in Colombia or the World Trade Center attacks was never explained. As Sanho Tree, the director of the drug-policy project at the Institute for Policy Studies

in Washington, points out: "They wanted to hitch an increasingly unpopular Drug War to a very popular War on Terror." But it would be just as accurate, he adds, to blame "soccer moms who drive SUVs" for supporting Al Qaeda because of the extra gas they use.

Many have wondered whether the so-called War on Terror wasn't also being used as a pretext for escalating the four-decade-old War on Drugs. Prior to the 9/11 attacks, former Mexican President Vicente Fox and a consortium of South American leaders called on George W. Bush to end the utterly unsuccessful Drug War being waged in their nations; following 9/11, all such requests fell by the wayside. But as *Time* magazine reported in 2004, drug seizures at the US border doubled—and then doubled again—in the years since 2001, yet not a single terrorist was apprehended smuggling drugs into the country during that same period.

The recent, spurious attempts to link pot and

terrorism haven't been limited to the US, either. In 2008, Israel's Anti-Drug Authority launched a curious campaign allegedly aimed at deterring Israeli citizens from smoking pot by plastering posters of longstanding Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah emerging from a bong as if he were some sort of ganja genie. Under the image, the text reads: "Hezbollah is clearly planning to flood Israel with narcotics, whoever uses narcotics is giving a hand to the next terrorist attack."



Pot terror myth in Israel.

Sound familiar? It's an utterly preposterous image, and one perhaps intended to increase Israeli-Lebanese tensions at the time, in the wake of the then-recent 2006 Is-

rael-Hezbollah War. At the very least, it's Israel parroting the lame "pot use equals terrorism" arguments of their chief benefactor, the US.

These days, pot distribution is also being linked to domestic terrorism. In January 2010, white supremacist Jason Hawthorne pleaded guilty to seven drugs, weapons and conspiracy charges in federal court in Omaha, NE. Hawthorne was the central figure in a federal investigation dubbed "Operation Red Swastika," which resulted in his indictment and that of six other alleged members of the United Aryan Soldiers. Many media reports focused on the marijuana sales by Hawthorne's gang—but Mark Potok, the director of the Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization that tracks domestic terrorist groups, told the *Omaha World-Herald* that methamphetamine production in the US is almost entirely dominated by white-supremacist elements. Speed kills, indeed.

Then there's the old standby trotted out by the media every year: that our national forests have been overrun by pot-growing Mexican drug cartels, who are ready to shoot and kill any American citizen who dares to intrude upon their illicit gardens. The "evidence" cited for the presence of these killer cartels is often leftover or discarded Mexican food (because no white person ever ate a burrito). Mexico is also a convenient scapegoat for other depredations as well, because the cartels are invariably cited for careless grow operations that pollute the rivers and land (apparently, Caucasians rarely seem to cause any environmental damage in national forests).

Let's face reality here: Hard drugs—meth, cocaine and heroin—are the primary sources for terrorist funding in the US and abroad. They're far more profitable and easier to transport in large quantities; pot is bulky, with an aroma that's difficult to control. If there's any link to be made between pot and terrorism, it's the cold, hard fact that marijuana's criminalization is a source of possible terror for all who embrace the plant. Unfortunately, our government is the one funding *those* acts of terror. As the late psychedelic researcher Terence McKenna once wrote: "Drugs which erode dominator values, or cause people to question their situation," are always "savagely suppressed." ✨



Trans-High Market Quotations (THMQ) reports pot prices by the ounce, strain and location. To submit prices, go to the THMQ link at [hightimes.com](http://hightimes.com).

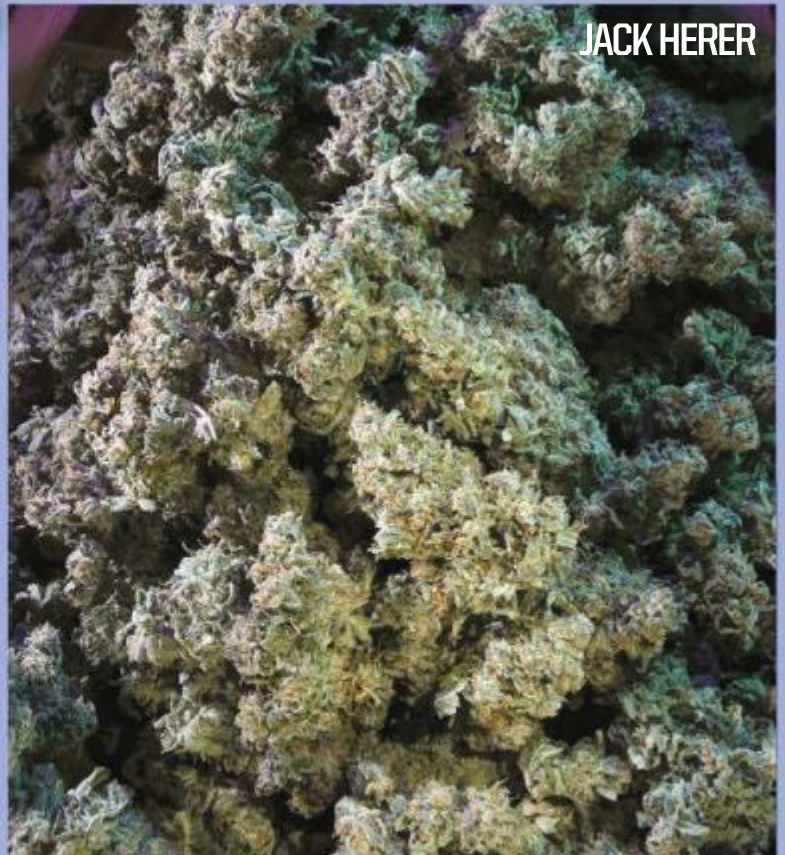
CURRENT US PRICE INDEX: **\$373** (last month: \$334; YTD: \$360)

CURRENT KIND INDEX (\$350+ PER OZ): **\$420** (\$417, \$478)

CURRENT MIDS INDEX (\$150-\$349 PER OZ): **\$298** (\$248, \$278)

CURRENT SCHWAG INDEX (\$1-\$149 PER OZ): **\$105** (\$76, \$94)

| STATE  | CITY            | STRAIN             | PRICE  |
|--|-----------------|--------------------|--------|
| ARIZONA  | Tucson          | Headband Kush      | \$380  |
|  |                 | Blue Dream         | \$380  |
|  |                 | Hash Plant         | \$400  |
| COLORADO   | Craig<br>Denver | Lemon Skunk        | \$400  |
|  |                 | Sour Diesel        | \$400  |
|  |                 | Cherry Pez         | \$520  |
|  |                 | Cheese             | \$350  |
|  |                 |                    |        |
| CONNECTICUT  | Hartford        | Great White Shark  | \$450  |
|  |                 | Blueberry          | \$400  |
|  |                 | Trainwreck         | \$350  |
| FLORIDA  | Gainesville     | Grape Ape          | \$500  |
|  |                 | G-13               | \$325  |
|  |                 | A-Train            | \$375  |
|  |                 | Chemdog            | \$450  |
|  |                 | Pot of Gold        | \$480  |
| GEORGIA  | Lawrenceville   | Headband           | \$450  |
|  |                 | Lavender           | \$300  |
| ILLINOIS   | Lombard         | Lemon Sour Diesel  | \$325  |
|  |                 | Lamb's Breath      | \$400  |
| KANSAS   | Lawrence        | Kush               | \$560  |
|  |                 | Romulan            | \$480  |
| MARYLAND   | Aberdeen        | White Rhino        | \$440  |
|  | Baltimore       | Trainwreck         | \$450  |
|  |                 | AK-47              | \$350  |
|  |                 | Jack Herer         | \$400  |
| MASSACHUSETTS  | Bedford         | Granddaddy Purps   | \$500  |
| MICHIGAN   | Detroit         | Blackberry         | \$400  |
|  | Petoskey        | Lemon Haze         | \$310  |
| MINNESOTA  | St. Cloud       | Diesel             | \$400  |
| MONTANA  | Billings        | C-99               | \$250  |
|  | Helena          | White Russian      | \$300  |
| NEW MEXICO   | Albuquerque     | Blueberry          | \$300  |
| NEW YORK   | New York        | White Widow        | \$400  |
|  |                 | AK-47              | \$425  |
| NORTH CAROLINA   | Jacksonville    | Afghan             | \$430  |
|  | Laurinburg      | Jack Herer         | \$450  |
| NORTH DAKOTA   | Bismarck        | Headband Kush      | \$350  |
|  |                 | Northern Lights    | \$300  |
| OHIO   | Ashtabula       | Death Star         | \$320  |
|  | Mansfield       | Super Skunk        | \$400  |
| OREGON   | Eagle Creek     | Kush               | \$280  |
| PENNSYLVANIA   | Lancaster       | Blueberry          | \$450  |
| SOUTH CAROLINA   | Columbia        | Trainwreck         | \$520  |
|  |                 | Master Kush        | \$460  |
| TEXAS  | Houston         | Sweet Island Skunk | \$400  |
|  | San Antonio     | OG Kush            | \$350  |
|  |                 | Hash Plant         | \$375  |
| WEST VIRGINIA  | Charleston      | Blue Dream         | \$465  |
|  | Morgantown      | Snowcap            | \$460  |
| <b>INTERNATIONAL</b> (prices listed in Canadian dollars) |                 |                    |        |
| CANADA   | Halifax         | Grapefruit         | C\$200 |
|  | Kamloops        | Kush               | C\$175 |
|  | Sudbury         | Jack Herer         | C\$300 |

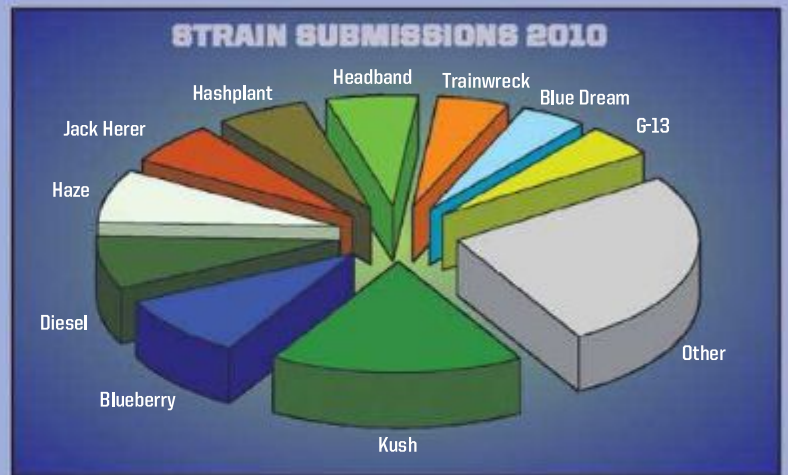


## MARKET ANALYSIS

Hey, California—what happened? No submissions? Did you forget our email address? (It's written below!) Well, despite the Golden State's conspicuous absence from this month's THMQ, Kush still easily ran away with the top pot spot, nearly doubling the total submissions for the next closest strain, Blueberry. Also this month, Jack Herer made a long-awaited return to the top five—the first such finish for the strain since October 2009. The top five submitted strains (with average price) were Kush (\$380), Blueberry (\$383), Diesel (\$371), Haze (\$397) and Jack Herer (\$398).

**Index Watch:** It appears that May's plummeting prices were merely an aberration—every index was up from the previous month, and all but Kind finished June above their year-to-date averages.

HIGH TIMES wants to know what you're smoking. Submit your strain information, including location and price by the ounce, to [thmq@hightimes.com](mailto:thmq@hightimes.com).



**Blueberry - \$400**  
Hartford, CONNECTICUT  
"Sweet and floral. I just don't get tired of this strain."

**Blue Dream - \$465**  
Charleston, WEST VIRGINIA  
"It's very soft and fluffy, with a bright lime-green color and covered in crystals and orange hairs. It has a funky smell, with a great smooth smoke and a light blueberry aftertaste. The high is perfect for daytime activities—very mellow and uplifting. Some of the most enjoyable bud I've encountered."

**Headband - \$450**  
Lawrenceville, GEORGIA  
"This smoke is absolutely amazing—dense, perfectly manicured, frosty buds. All my friends keep asking about it and where to get more. Grown with organic soil amendments and teas."

**Grapefruit - C\$200**  
Halifax, CANADA  
"A tart citrus taste with undertones of skunk. Great daytime smoke. I paid C\$200 for an ounce of it. Totally worth it, as we only get really killer pot out here once in a while."





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# BUDS 'N' SLUDGE

## A STONER'S GUIDE TO SOUTHERN METAL

The musical traditions of Southern USA have spawned everything from Johnny Cash to the Allman Brothers, encompassing country-western, blues, folk and rock ... but what about metal? Sure, most metalheads think of the East and West Coasts first before they go south of the Mason-Dixon line—and yet the 21st century has seen a burgeoning subgenre of metal bands from Dixie, often called “Southern Sludge.” But there’s way more diversity in Southern Metal than just sludge, muck and grime. None of these bands will evoke images of sitting on a back porch in Tennessee, counting the stars and the critters, but their music would be a fittingly chaotic soundtrack if a second Civil War ever breaks out.

BY MARK MILLER

### EYEHATEGOD

The city of New Orleans has been the focus of attention since the national disgrace formerly known as Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Eyehategod certainly represent the rage and frustration felt by their Crescent City hometown, although the band’s brilliant bassist, Gary Mader, subsequently clarified that position: “New Orleans was pretty screwed up way before Katrina—the dysfunction is inbred into the fiber of the city. You can’t kill this place, though, and we survive and exist unlike any other city in the country.”

Eyehategod evoke 1980s hardcore rawness and sincerity mixed with vintage Sabbath slo-mo fuzz, churning out sticky, resinated rhythms. On *Preaching the End-Time Message* (Emetic), amidst all the sludge and fuzz, one can find unique elements like “36 Beers and a Ball of String,” which features what may be the first “fade-out” *intro* in recorded history. The Manson Family samples on “Turn Troubled Tables” ring true, too: Manson gained his infamy in Southern California, but Charlie’s a product of the “Dirty South”—born in Ashland, KY, which some mystics feel is the true “epicenter of evil” in America.

As to whether any of the band members really do “hate God,” Mader said: “It’s not meant to be a *literal* statement, but aimed at what other people perceive as ‘God’—hence the ‘Eye’ instead of ‘I.’ Of course, it’s meant to be shocking to people who believe in religion and psycho fundamentalists in the Bible Belt. We just played a small city in Louisiana, and they billed us as ‘EHG’—initials only. Believing there’s a man in the sky watching us all, so we better behave while he lets horrible tragedies happen, is freakin’ absurd. So we think it’s good to throw a wrench back in their faces.”

As for the question of whether there’s any legitimacy to “Southern Metal” as a genre, Mader opined: “There is now, but nobody thought of it that way when it was developing. Down here, our scene cropped up all around the city and state without us realizing it—and us and a ton of other NOLA groups began to get recognition, and then it became this international thing.”



### ABSU

If Aleister Crowley had managed to live another hundred years and was roaming about the 21st century, he would have been a member of Absu. Although they’re from Plano, TX, a highly affluent suburb of the Dallas Metroplex area, it would appear that there’s more going on there than just backyard barbecues, since this band is named for a Mesopotamian deity.

As evidenced by their self-titled album, *Absu* (Candlelight USA), the band’s forte is state-of-the-art, turn-on-a-dime metal. They’re the fastest of the groups profiled here, but they also utilize acoustic and synthesizer elements to add an extra aural dimension. Thanks to the band’s songwriters, Zucxizu and Aethyris, Absu is not so much a power trio as a *will-to-power* trio, in keeping with their deep occult leanings. And tight-as-a-tourniquet percussionist Proscriptor is the Southern Metal version of Rush’s Neil Peart, handling both the drums and “lyrical magick”—although Proscriptor trumps Peart in that he sings taboot! Proscriptor’s lyrics serve as a platform for spells, rituals and incantations, such as on “Sceptre Command”: “I point the bow at the gold crown/Three arrows spear the heart of the staff!”

Equally intriguing is “Those of the Void Will Re-Enter,” with its reference to the “founders of mankind,” the Anunnaki—the “gods” of ancient Sumeria who may have actually been space aliens who genetically jump-started the human race, thereby solving the “missing link” puzzle that plagues basic evolutionary theory. The *Absu* LP also features a three-part mini-epic, “Of the Dead Who Never Rest in Their Tombs ....”

HIGH TIMES really wanted to interview Proscriptor, or some member of Absu for this article, but they were virtually unreachable; perhaps they’ve locked themselves down in some deep dark dungeon performing a sacred ritual to invoke the spirit of Aiwass. Good luck, guys.







## IRON AGE

Hailing from one of the South's most progressive cities—Austin, TX, where every band in the renowned local music scene is trying to be the “next big thing”—Iron Age is a band for those of us who believe in our hearts that metal peaked in the 1980s with thrash and hardcore ... but with one notable difference: Iron Age's benign metaphysical themes and lyrics steer clear of the Satanic clichés and violent indulgences of '80s speed metal. The music on new album *The Sleeping Eye* (Tee Pee) isn't mystically tinged like Mastodon or Absu, but rather aggressive riffs dispensed by guitarist Wade Allison like so many bullets discharged from a fully automatic. Vocalist Jason Tarpey runs the gamut from metal howls to insane shrieking without ever devolving into Black Metal vocal annoyance.

There's even a “mini-concept-album-within-the-concept-album” here (sensing a pattern with Southern Metal bands?) on “Arcana Part 1” and “Part 2.” But the real attention-getter is the 11-minute closing track, “The Way Is Narrow,” which opens with several minutes of Sabbath slog until a series of ripping chords mugs your noggin. Later, pounding tribal doom dissolves into abstract diffusion before succumbing to complete silence—not a sound—for several minutes, until an awesome final passage led by drummer Jared Allison that turns out to be well worth the wait before it all fades away. Fortunately, there are no conformist parameters when it comes to Southern Metal, and this kind of musical exploration comes naturally to these bands.



*‘One night, me and Gravy had our first pure dextromethorphan [the drug in Robitussin]. It was like four trips at once—we could not speak. I said the band name and “RWAKE” came out, sounding very Neanderthal, very early-man.’*



## MASTODON

Atlanta, GA, is often considered the unofficial capital of Southern USA, so it seems appropriate that one of the bands generally considered as the forebears of Southern Metal, Mastodon, hails from Hotlanta. Mastodon is among the most visible and critically acclaimed of the region's metal bands, starting from a point where Tool and Isis leave off. Like Absu, they show a legitimate commitment to legitimate mysticism, never more evident than on their latest release, *Crack the Skye* (Reprise), which tackles subjects like astral projection and the influence of that otherworldly Russian healer, Rasputin. *Skye* also signals a return to the true concept album, one that tells a full-fledged story (as opposed to just some underlying theme that passes as a half-baked “concept”). There are a host of powerful tracks on *Skye*, including the opener, “Oblivion,” and the four-part mini-concept-album-within-a-concept-album, “The Czar,” with its mellow interludes and shifting time signatures.

## RWAKE

Arkansas gave us Bill Clinton and a Hogs hoops title in the 1990s, but not much else since then ... until the emergence of Rwake, a band that proudly follows in the Southern Metal tradition of groups like Eyehategod. It's fitting that Rwake is the last band profiled here, because they consummate all the various styles and influences of Southern Metal. On their *Voices of Omens* album (Relapse), the opening track, “Intro,” features mandolin playing by Gravy (Rwake is big on one-name band members) that recalls Zeppelin's “Battle of Evermore.” But you don't have to wait long for the aural assault of “Finality” to kick in, with its deliberate, bluesy plodding and psych spirals firing in the background, then shifting into a progressive up-tempo passage before the blue sludge resumes. Rwake is definitely a band that gives you your money's worth, with every song a virtual multi-part epic.

As to the pronunciation and origin of their name, versatile vocalist CT explained: “It's ‘Wake’ with a little rrr-, like a little growl. The band name was ‘Wake,’ but about 100 other bands all claimed to own the rights. One night, me and Gravy had our first pure dextromethorphan [the drug in Robitussin]. It was like four trips at once—we could not speak. I said the band name and ‘RWAKE’ came out, sounding very Neanderthal, very early-man.”

Asked about the influence of earlier Southern Metal bands, CT declared: “I love Eyehategod—they're a huge influence to us and everyone else in the South. They have come full circle: They were so crusty and original, and now they have taken that sound and sharpened its edge from experience and growth and wisdom.”

And when it comes to the role that pot (as opposed to pharmies) plays in Rwake's creative process, CT clarified: “Most of us still smoke weed, but I would say that me and Gravy are the only ones that still use it creatively.” (Gravy's cannabis-fueled creativity can be heard to especially fine effect on “Leviticus”—no, not the shitty Matt Damon movie—with its marching-band-meets-unplugged-acoustic dynamics.) “I never go without smoking it, ever—it's my Valium,” CT continued. “I would definitely not write lyrics or do anything else creative without smoking pot right along with it.”





Alizay shows off the loud pack.

# BLAZED IN DC

Hip-hop producer DJ Alizay is putting our nation's capital on the map. By Chris Ziegler

When Washington, DC's DJ Alizay was about 22, he found out that he still had a lot to learn about smoking, thanks to a hometown NBA player who was working on becoming a rapper, but who had already mastered the art of the blunt. "He rolled real big blunts," laughs Alizay now. "He was like six-foot-nine and real big hands, like 'I can't roll anything smaller than that!' I smoked about noon, and this is no lie—I lived 45 minutes from there, and I did not get home till 8:30 p.m.! To this day, I remember sitting in my car, with the car on for like four hours, just going back and forth like: 'What the fuck did I do? What did I do? What did I do? What did I do?' Back then, I was a poop butt! But now I can hang—it feels good to be able!"

At 29, Alizay is now an internationally experienced weed connoisseur, with two dedicated suppliers (one South American, the other Rastafarian—"so when I tell you I get the best shit, you know I do!") and the kind of marijuana-safari benefits that only come with being a touring musician. As the DJ for Wale, the rising DC

rapper that Alizay discovered and broke, he's tried it all, he says. In fact, he gave up his shoe fetish for his weed fetish: "I used to be a sneakerhead, but sneakers are expensive and weed is expensive, so one had to go!"

**'I used to be a sneakerhead, but sneakers are expensive and weed is expensive, so one had to go!'**

But Alizay's happy with the trade-off: "I been a lot of places people can't say they've been, and I smoked a lot of good shit."

He hopes his debut, *Loud Pack*, will break him nationally when it's released. In DC, he explains, the "super-wack" weed is called "Reggie Bush," but the best is a "loud pack," as in "Yeah, my shit is loud! It stinks! It's funky! It's the hottest shit on the street!"

"So why not call my album *Loud Pack*, because I feel it's the best?" he asks rhetorically.

Alizay's a producer, but he doesn't actually make the beats. Thanks to his years of total immersion in hip-hop, he knows what sounds good, he says, so he decided to put all his favorite DC characters on one record. He hails from a family of DJs himself—eight of Alizay's relatives came up in New York just as disco turned into hip-hop—and

the first-generation, golden-era DJs in DC call him "the last of the Mohicans," he says with a laugh.

"I'm the last one who spun on records—I talk to kids now, and old-school is like Jay-Z! So if I'm the last of the Mohicans, I gotta carry it further! In the history of DC rap 50 years from now, I wanna be in the books: 'DJ Alizay helped build something from DC that was *real* hip-hop!'"

DC radio listeners might not make the connection—Alizay says he plays by the book when he's at his day job at hip-hop mega-station WKYS. But anyone who's followed him to the club after-hours already understands his real inspirations: "I play Notorious B.I.G., a lotta Bone Thugs, Dre, Cypress Hill, 'I Got 5 On It,' Styles P 'I Get High'—I got all the weed smokers in the club going crazy!" he says. "The hardcore smokers: 'I love this shit! *This* is what I love!'"

To Alizay, there are certain artists and songs that he automatically returns to when he thinks of DJ'ing "real weed music," like Bob Marley's "Could You Be Loved," Sade's "Smooth Operator" and Biggie's "I Got a Story to Tell." Those musicians make songs you *love* when you're high, he says.

So, of course, he's holding *Loud Pack* to the same standards: "Am I getting that feeling I get when I listen to Biggie? You gotta put the record to the test, and you gotta do it when you're high. It's made for everybody, but people who are high are gonna hear hidden messages, you know what I mean? The world we live in is a crazy world—and marijuana helps." 🌿



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As Tall as Lions (l to r): Saen Fitzgerald, Dan Nigro, Cliff Sarcona, Julio Tavarez, and Duncan Tootil.

**'I told them to be in the band, they had to smoke,' Nigro half-jokes during the photo shoot.**

# AS TALL AS LIONS, AS HIGH AS SATELLITES By Chris Parker

It's ironic that the very person who talked his bandmates into smoking pot is now As Tall as Lions' sole abstainer. But that didn't stop singer/guitarist Dan Nigro from suggesting that we feature the Long Island quintet in the pages of HIGH TIMES. "I told them to be in the band, they had to smoke," Nigro half-jokes during the photo shoot.

As Tall as Lions' history goes back to their high-school days, when Nigro, drummer Cliff Sarcona and guitarist Saen Fitzgerald were members of another band called Sundays. They broke up in college, only to reform a few months later under the new moniker and with a friend of a friend, Julio Tavarez, now on bass. Over the last seven years, they've grown by leaps and bounds, a streak culminating in their terrific third album, *You Can't Take It With You*, which has landed them on the *Billboard* charts and earned them their second appearance on *Late Night with Jimmy Kimmel*.

The album was fraught with difficulties: As Tall as Lions recorded with (and fired) two different producers before hiring Noah Shain, having already drained more than half their recording budget and with studio time growing short. But you'd never know it from the resulting release, which takes the band's shimmering, carefully layered rock to a whole other level. They were inspired in part by the music-and-dance show *Fuerza Bruta*, which Nigro saw and entreated his mates to witness as well. The high-energy performance encouraged them to explore an even more bristling rhythmic undercurrent.

"I feel we always saw ourselves as a drum-and-bass, rhythm-heavy band that put all the coating on that foundation," Fitzgerald says. "After seeing the show, it was like you could go so far with that idea in the first place, so let's try and open up a bit more."

While still richly textured, As Tall as Lions' sometimes-dreamy drift is pulled taut on the latest album by a bustling percussive pulse and arrangements whose grandiose impulses are reined to a wiry shimmy. Riding

throughout the beauty of the music and Nigro's soaring tenor is a propulsive, visceral rock punch. It's one of the year's best.

Though Nigro didn't literally make band membership incumbent on marijuana use, he certainly wore away his buddies' resistance. Fitzgerald went from casual use to being a daily smoker under Nigro's tutelage during college, and Tavarez relented after Nigro demonstrated the power of music while high. "Smoking pot opened my mind to so many different musical avenues, and playing became this whole different experience," Tavarez now admits.

Sarcona was the last holdout. "You used to have to light Cliff's bowl for him," Fitzgerald recalls. "I would smoke and he would put his mouth out—like by not holding it, he wasn't a pothead. We have a video of Cliff stoned for one of the first times, playing with the video camera, watching his toes talk to each other: 'Hi, I'm a toe.' 'And I'm a toe.' 'We're toes.'"

Unfortunately, Nigro started to have anxiety attacks while smoking during the recording of the band's 2004 debut album, *Lafcadio*. "I'd pick up the guitar and be, 'I don't know how to write songs—who am I kidding?' I started getting so self-conscious I had to stop," he says mournfully. "It's kind of a bummer—I wish I could smoke."

However, that hasn't stopped his buddies. On tour in California recently, they had their first experience with dispensary pot, when the person they were staying with hooked them up with a friend of a friend who knew someone that had a medical-marijuana card. According to the band, it was some of the best pot they'd ever smoked—but that wasn't the most mind-opening part.

"[They] left me in the car, and it was crazy, the people I would see going in and out," Tavarez recalls. "I saw a sexy babe that looked like a model; then a guy with a suitcase and a suit and tie on went in. He was followed by what looked like a mom. It was fascinating watching them come and go; I realized every kind of person buys pot." ✨



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# IVY LEAGUE TRIPPERS

## Birth of a Psychedelic Culture

Ram Dass and Ralph Metzner, with Gary Bravo  
(Synergetic Press)



## The Harvard Psychedelic Club

Don Lattin  
(HarperOne)



It's a sublime coincidence that the Harvard Psilocybin Project began in 1960. Not only was that year the chronological beginning of the sixties, but the Project made it the spiritual—and spirited—kick-off to a truly visionary decade. Tim Leary and Richard Alpert were two Harvard psychologists who saw that psychedelic drugs were capable of transforming human perception, and therefore history itself. From personal computers to the magazine you're now reading, the contributions of acidheads have been plentiful.

In *The Harvard Psychedelic Club: How Timothy Leary, Ram Dass, Huston Smith, and Andrew Weil Killed the Fifties and Ushered in a New Age for America*, Don Lattin follows the lives of four major players from those original Harvard experiments: Leary and Alpert, as well as philosopher Huston Smith and then-student Andrew Weil. Leary, of course, became famous as the acid guru; Alpert blended the teachings from various Eastern religions and changed his name to Ram Dass; Smith evolved into a tolerant expert in the field of comparative religion; and Weil became a top

proponent of healthy cuisine as medicine. The author details the Project's legendary exploits, including the "Good Friday Experiment," in which 10 students were given psilocybin and 10 a placebo in a hyper-Christian chapel setting, in an effort to qualitatively measure the extent of the mystical experience. (Not surprisingly, those who dropped the real deal had a more intense and lasting trip!) Then Weil, who felt ignored by Alpert, snatched out this academic exploration in a *Harvard Crimson* exposé, which led to Leary and Alpert's dismissal—an act he's since apologized for. Apologies are well and good, but there's something even more self-aggrandizing and unsavory about Weil's later incarnation as a brand name for yuppie food.

As for Lattin's book overall, the author has constructed an interesting four-sided story here, but the sloppy research and dry language make him appear to be a dilettante. Considerably more compelling is *Birth of a Psychedelic Culture: Conversations About Leary, the Harvard Experiments, Millbrook, and the Sixties*, a three-way rap session 'twixt Ram Dass, Ralph Metzner (who was a grad student at Harvard in the Project's heyday) and interlocutor Gary Bravo. This is partly because they have stronger storytelling skills, but also because the book dwells on the post-collegiate experimentation at Millbrook in upstate New York, where musician Charles Mingus, poet Allen Ginsberg, and *HIGH TIMES* columnist Paul Krassner (among others) brought a great deal of personal color to the effort to attain "mystical states of oneness." This makes *Birth of a Psychedelic Culture* the stronger of the two books, as well as a fun, evocative history of 20th-century psychedelic bohemia.—Michael Simmons



Leary and Dass

## DJ BABU

*Beat Tape Volume II*  
(Nature Sounds)



Even before joining Dilated Peoples as their DJ, Babu had made his name in the '90s with the seminal turntable crew Beat Junkies. Since the dawn of the new millennium, Babu has released not only four DP albums, but another five of his own, including the *Duck Season* series, *Super Duck Breaks* and 2007's first *Beat Tape* volume, to which this is the sequel. But unlike the *Duck Season* releases, which feature other DJs, remixes and group-related work, *Beat Tape* is Babu in the raw, a collection of short, concise soundscapes without rappers to distract from the sonic mastery. But that doesn't mean there are no vocals here, as Babu plies a variety of alluring samples to enrich the sound of his beats, like the cooing female of "No Secrets," with her plea "If you ever leave me/Here's what I'll go through," or the hilarious "Yacht Hop" with its shot at Hall & Oates (followed by a remix of "Sara Smile").

The album features nearly 40 tracks, almost all of them clocking in under two minutes, with an ethos of getting to the heart of the matter fast. The songs here run the gamut—soul-soaked grooves that sound like a blaxploitation spy theme ("Nelson's Caesar Salad"); thick, sample-heavy mélanges ("Ready") and smooth, late-night vibes ("Canned"); funky, percussive blasts ("Do Not Dispute") and conga-drum-driven, spooky-horror break beats ("Dracoola"); plus spacey, deep-seated grooves fit for the club ("Ghost Romper Room"). This is ideal background music for your next party, thanks to its eclectic, wide-ranging sound and gripping yet subliminal style.—Chris Parker



## VARIOUS ARTISTS

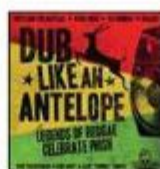
*Dub Like an Antelope: Legends of Reggae Celebrate Phish*  
(Red Hillz Music)



We all know that Phish likes reggae (along with almost every other musical style on the planet), but who knew that reggae liked Phish? This compilation proves that reggae grandmasters like Toots and the Maytals, Steel Pulse and Rootz Underground must be *down with disease*, at least a little. Plus the performers on this album have chosen a pretty diverse selection of songs that translate well into their genre, regardless of style or cultural origin.

The album kicks off with "Back on the Train" (possibly addressing Phish's recent reunion), "Bouncing Around the Room" and "Farmhouse." These may seem like obvious choices, but they do bring the dub style with creatively misplaced guitar themes and rap interludes. "Bug" jams with ambient organ and guitar riffing, while "Free" rocks out with crazy, soulful harmonies by Tessanne Chin, a former Jimmy Cliff back-up singer. Could that "Gumbo" have ganja in it? Possibly. "Wolfman's" is classic reggae with some nice horns, and "Slave" makes for interesting cultural parallels.

"Makisupa Policeman" seems like a shout-out to international marijuana smugglers everywhere, and this one will definitely give goose bumps to Phishheads. "Makisupa" transitions into "Boogie On, Reggae Woman," a Stevie Wonder cover that Phish often plays, while "Waste" proves that folk crosses easily with reggae. There are three instrumental reprises at the end that sum up the album slowly in dub. Overall, these songs end up being refreshing versions of themselves: Some take a while to register and others are obvious, but they all include a giggle and a head bob or two of freshness.—Harmony Hashpipe



## FREE ENERGY

*Stuck on Nothing*  
(Astralwerks/DFA Records)



As a longtime unashamed lover of '70s glam and power pop, I was unbelievably stoked to hear Free Energy's *Stuck on Nothing* after all the hype surrounding it. The Philly-based quintet's debut full-length was produced by LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy, who heretofore has worked mainly with dance-punk bands; the press release has him saying that he "loved making that record .... I kind of forgot that I used to be really good at ... recording guitars." I guess he also forgot what a good rock band sounds like, because this is weak. Sure, there's not an original lick on here—a couple of T.Rex rip-offs ("Dream City," "All I Know") are joined by a song that lifts a Thin Lizzy vocal line and Gary Glitter drums ("Bad Stuff"); another track ("Light Love") clings closely to the chord progression of the Velvet Underground's "Sweet Jane"—but that was never the point of this band to begin with, so I can't fault them for that.

What takes this disc from glitter to gutter is its extreme lack of energy and heart. The bored, disaffected vocals don't help, and neither does the production, which is confusingly bland and unimaginative. My only hope for this band is that they speed up and kick it hard live. In the meantime, if you wanna hear kids ripping out old-school glam-rock licks with that Marc Spitz gold-era power and style, check out NYC's Electric Shadows, Atlanta's Biters or Portland, OR's Nice Boys.—Polly Watson



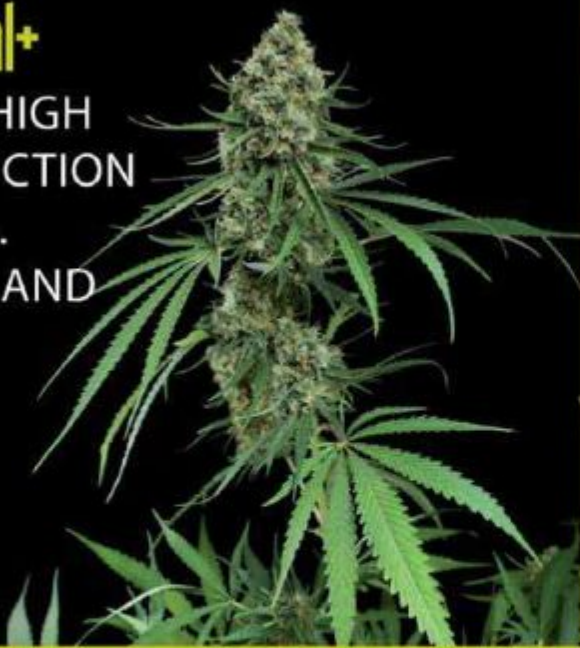


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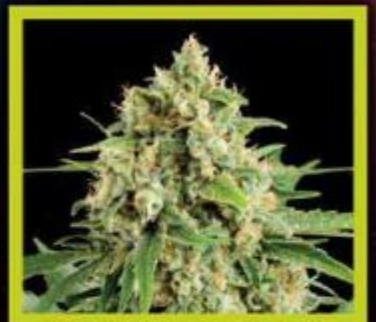
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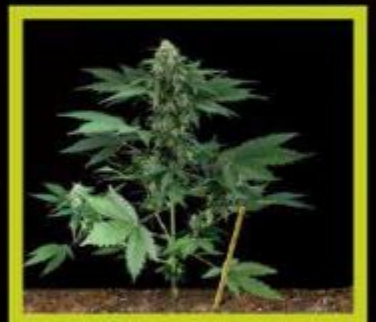
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## HIGH TIMES UNSIGNED BAND OF THE MONTH KICKIN' BEAR

Kickin' Bear is a roots-rock band living and gigging in Philadelphia. The band was formed three years ago in the South Jersey beach community of Ocean City by longtime friends Rob Swift, Chris Ingram, Wayne Gallagher and Tom Williamson, who have been playing music together since childhood.

The band set out for Philadelphia in the fall of 2009, hoping to bring their music to a wider audience. Kickin' Bear live shows have always been known as crowd pleasers, with soaring vocals and evocative songwriting from pianist Gallagher, mind-bending guitar work from Swift, and an assortment of interesting instruments—Indian sitar, violin, mandolin, banjo and more—supplementing their sound onstage.

Kickin' Bear recently finished recording their first album, which is available from iTunes, Amazon and other music outlets. One hundred percent self-produced and -recorded, the album attempts to recreate the aural feel of '70s vinyl by combining traditional recording methods and vintage instruments to produce a uniquely retro sound. Looking forward, the band remains focused on composing inspiring music and experimenting with technologies both old and new, while growing into a nationally recognized act.

For more information on Kickin' Bear, including tour dates, audio samples and live concert downloads, check out [hightimes.com/kickinbear](http://hightimes.com/kickinbear).



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BY BOBBY BLACK

## HEART OF STEEL

Stoner steel sculptor NeverXhale and one of his creations.



Meet NeverXhale—a soldier turned sculptor who gives new meaning to the term “heavy metal.”

Normally, if I said I was a fan of a heavy metal artist, you'd naturally assume I was referring to a hard rock band. And normally, you'd be right. But in this case, I'm using the term literally.

Hailing from northwestern Pennsylvania, 28-year-old Jason Freyer spent his teenage years like most other metalhead kids—skating, smoking weed, playing guitar, and slamming around the moshpits of favorite bands like Pantera, Sepultura and Slayer. After high school, he joined the Army and became a machine-gun-toting mechanic with the “Brave Rifles” of the Third Armored Cavalry in Colorado Springs.

When his tour was done in the summer of 2001, Freyer returned to Pennsylvania, where he enrolled in college and joined the National Guard. Then 9/11 hit, and he was shipped off to Germany as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. When not on duty, Freyer got to explore Europe and ended up becoming friends with the band Killswitch Engage. After being honorably discharged in December of 2004, he returned home and used his GI Bill benefits to attend welding school. With his service to his country complete, he was now free to grow out his goatee and return to his long-lost love—Mary Jane.

Since he already knew a lot of what was being taught in welding class, Freyer had plenty of extra time to toke up and work on personal projects. He started off by building some medieval weapons—a couple of battleaxes and maces. But it was while he was stoned and messing around with an oxygen-acetylene torch one day (an activity not recommended to anyone without his high level of expertise) that he stumbled upon his true calling—a new method of metal sculpture.

“I saw how you could control the heat enough to raise the weld off the steel plate and into the air. I messed around with this a bit, and

before I knew it, I was showing off for the new batch of kids,” he explains. “First I made a little warrior stick figure, next an alien, and so on. Each day the next piece was more detailed and skilled.

“For the first time in my life, I was amazing myself,” Freyer continues. “Everything I'd done before was stuff I learned from different people, but this was different. I got stoned and started doing things in a zone, kind of like the artist dude on the show *Heroes*. My skill grew at an enormous rate. I couldn't explain, even to myself, how I was welding like this—other than ‘I get stoned and it makes itself.’”

After welding school, Freyer moved back to Colorado Springs to reconnect with old buddies from his Army days and begin his career as an artist. Adopting the moniker NeverXhale (taken from a line in the movie *PCU*), he used his love of metal music to fuel his love of metal sculpting and began crafting an impressive collection of abstract, fantasy- and music-based sculptures—including Marvel's Ghost Rider, Slayer's *Divine Intervention*, and a number of dragons and wizards (like the stoner dragon pictured above).

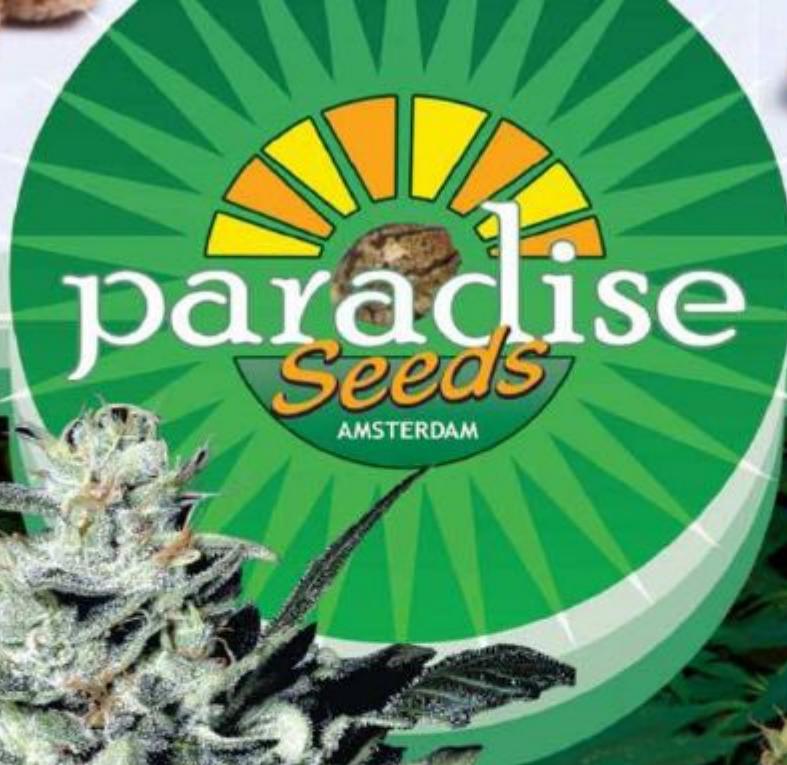
“I make things that can be beat with a hammer and fall from heights of 30 feet or more without sustaining any damage,” he brags. When he's not busy slinging steel, Freyer spends his time earning a living (servicing neon signs), driving up and down the Front Range, and staying Rocky Mountain high.

“Now I can make anything I want—all I need is a little time and Mary Jane,” he says contentedly. “No matter how many times I fall down in life, she's always there to pick me up.” ✨

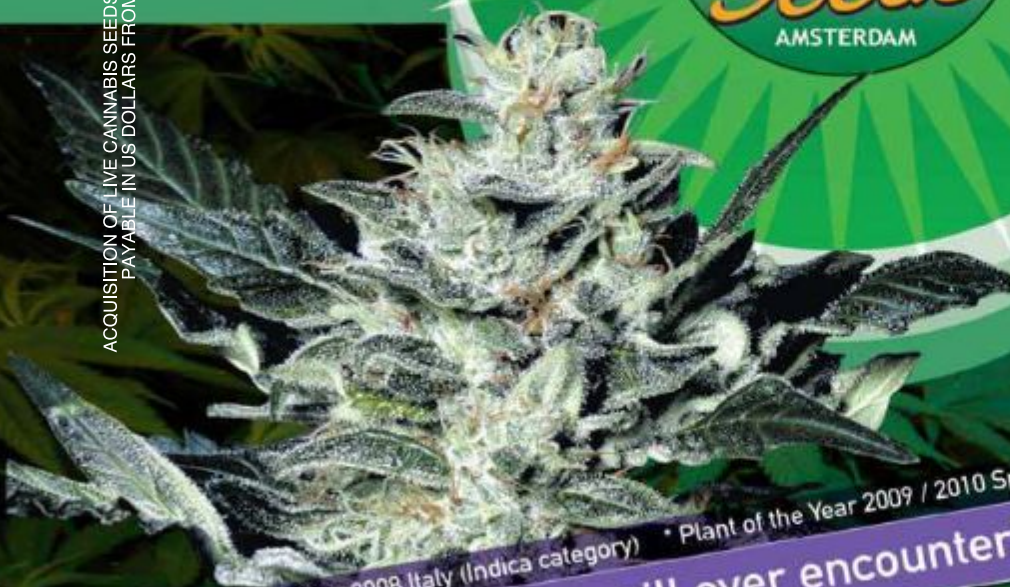
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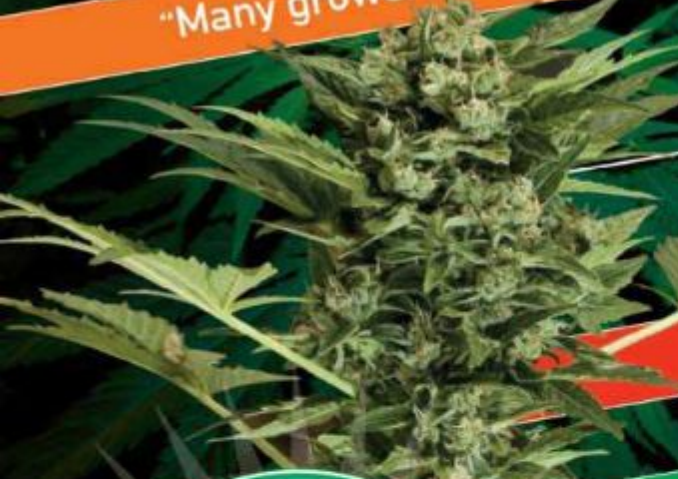
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# AMERICA ATTACKS ITS OWN

A pot bust evokes eerie memories 40 years after the Kent State massacre. By Paul Krassner

In my book, *Magic Mushrooms and Other Highs: From Toad Slime to Ecstasy*, Freddy Berthoff described his mescaline trip at a Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young concert in the summer of 1970, when he was 15.

"Earlier that spring," he wrote, "the helmeted, rifle-toting National Guard came up over the rise during a peace-in-Vietnam rally at Kent State University. And opened fire on the crowd. I always suspected it was a contrived event, as if someone deep in the executive branch had said, 'We've got to teach those commie punks a lesson.'"

Actually, President Nixon had called antiwar protesters "bums" two days before the shootings. While Freddy was peaking on mescaline, CSNY sang a new song about the massacre:

*Tin soldiers and Nixon coming  
We're finally on our own  
This summer I hear the drumming  
Four dead in O-hi-o ....*

Four dead, plus nine wounded. Sixty-seven shots—dum-dum bullets that exploded on impact—had been fired in 13 seconds. This incident, on May 4, 1970, resulted in the first general student strike in US history, encompassing over 400 campuses.

Arthur Krause, the father of Allison Krause, one of the dead students, got a call from John Ehrlichman, a top official in the Nixon White House, assuring him that "there will be a complete investigation." Krause responded, "Are you sure about that?" Erlichman's reply: "Mr. Krause, I promise you, there will be no whitewash."

But NBC News correspondent James Polk discovered a memo marked "Eyes Only" from Ehrlichman to Attorney General John Mitchell ordering that there should be no federal grand-jury investigation of the killings, because Nixon adamantly opposed such action.

Polk reported: "In 1973, under a new attorney general, Elliot Richardson, the Justice Department reversed itself and did send the Kent State case to a federal grand jury. When that was announced, Richardson said to an aide he got a call from the White House. He was told that Richard Nixon was so upset, they had to scrape the president off the walls with a spatula."

Last year, Allison Krause's younger sister, Laurel, was relaxing on the front deck of her home in California when she saw the county sheriff's deputy coming toward her, followed by



National Guardsmen fired on students in 1970.

nearly two dozen men.

"Then, before my eyes," she recalls, "the officers morphed into a platoon of Ohio National Guardsmen marching onto my land. They were here because I was cultivating medical marijuana. I realized the persecution I was living through was similar to what many Americans and global

citizens experience daily. This harassment even had parallels to Allison's experience before she was murdered."

*What if you knew her  
And found her dead on the ground?  
How can you run when you know?*

Now, 40 years later, Laurel, her mother and other Kent State activists have been organizing the 2010 Kent State Truth Tribunal (see <http://bit.ly/8AD8TQ>), to be held May 1 to 4 on the campus where the slaughter of unarmed demonstrators originally occurred. The invitation to participate in sharing their personal narratives has been extended to the 1970 protesters as well as witnesses, National Guardsmen, state and federal government officials, university administrators and educators, local residents, and families of the victims. The purpose is to uncover the truth.

Laurel was only 15 when the Kent State shootings took place. "Like any 15-year-old, my coping mechanisms were undeveloped at best," she recalled. "Every evening, I remember spending hours in my bedroom practicing calligraphy to Neil Young's *After the Gold Rush*, artistically copying phrases of his music, smoking marijuana to calm and numb my pain."

And when she was arrested in California for *legally* growing marijuana, it all came flooding back: "They cuffed me and read my rights as I sobbed hysterically. This was the first time I flashed back and revisited the utter shock, raw devastation, and feeling of total loss since Allison died. I believed they were going to shoot and kill me, just like Allison. How ironic, I thought—the medicine that kept me safe from experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder now led me to relive that horrible experience as the cops marched onto my property."

In court, Laurel's two "felonies" were reduced to misdemeanors and she was sentenced to 25 hours of community service. But she continued to be haunted by what she realized was the interconnectedness of those events: the dehumanization that she and her sister had suffered in the name of "law and order." ✨



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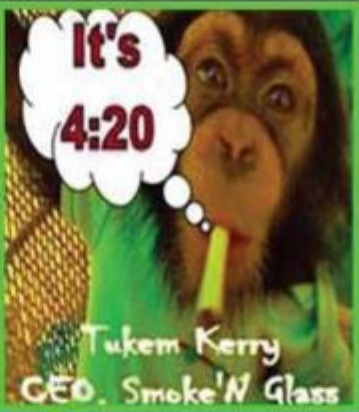
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Sour Willie (Willie Nelson x Sour Diesel) is largely *sativa*. MS and Parkinson's patients report relief with its use.

# colorado chi

The Colorado cannabis industry continues to grow, even as law enforcement, with the acquiescence of politicians, tries to roll it back. Fortunately, residents are rallying to protect the rights they've fought for and the progress they've made—and all the while, the gardens of the Rocky Mountain state only get greener.

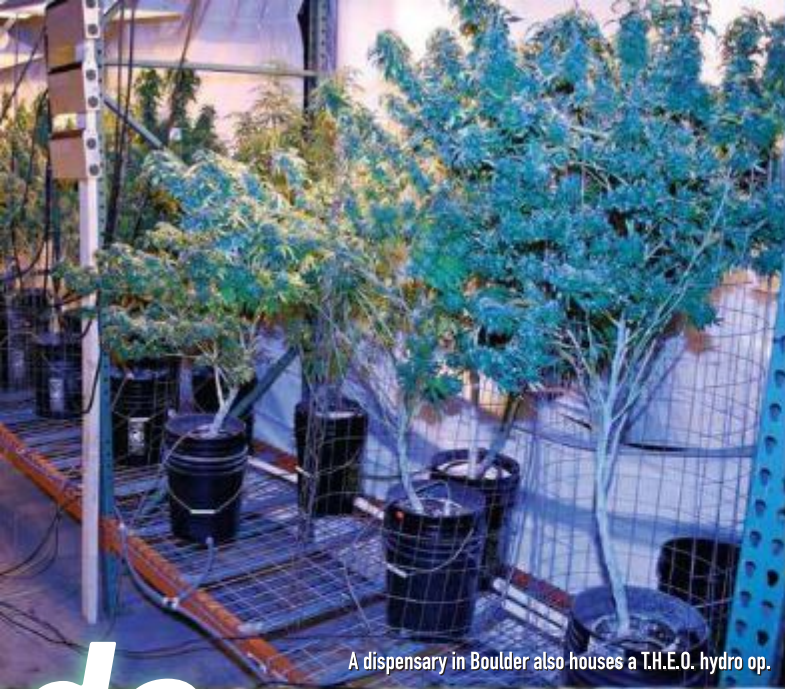
Story & photos by Dan Skye

You can smell spring in the air. Even though seven inches of wet snow fell in the higher elevations last night, there's still that fresh, expectant scent drifting out of Colorado's mountain meadows, made even more pungent by the warming sun.

If you're a patient in need of effective, nontoxic relief for your medical condition, then maybe you're feeling pretty good this morning. You live in a state where the right to possess, cultivate and purchase cannabis is actually guaranteed by an amendment to the state constitution (Amendment 20).

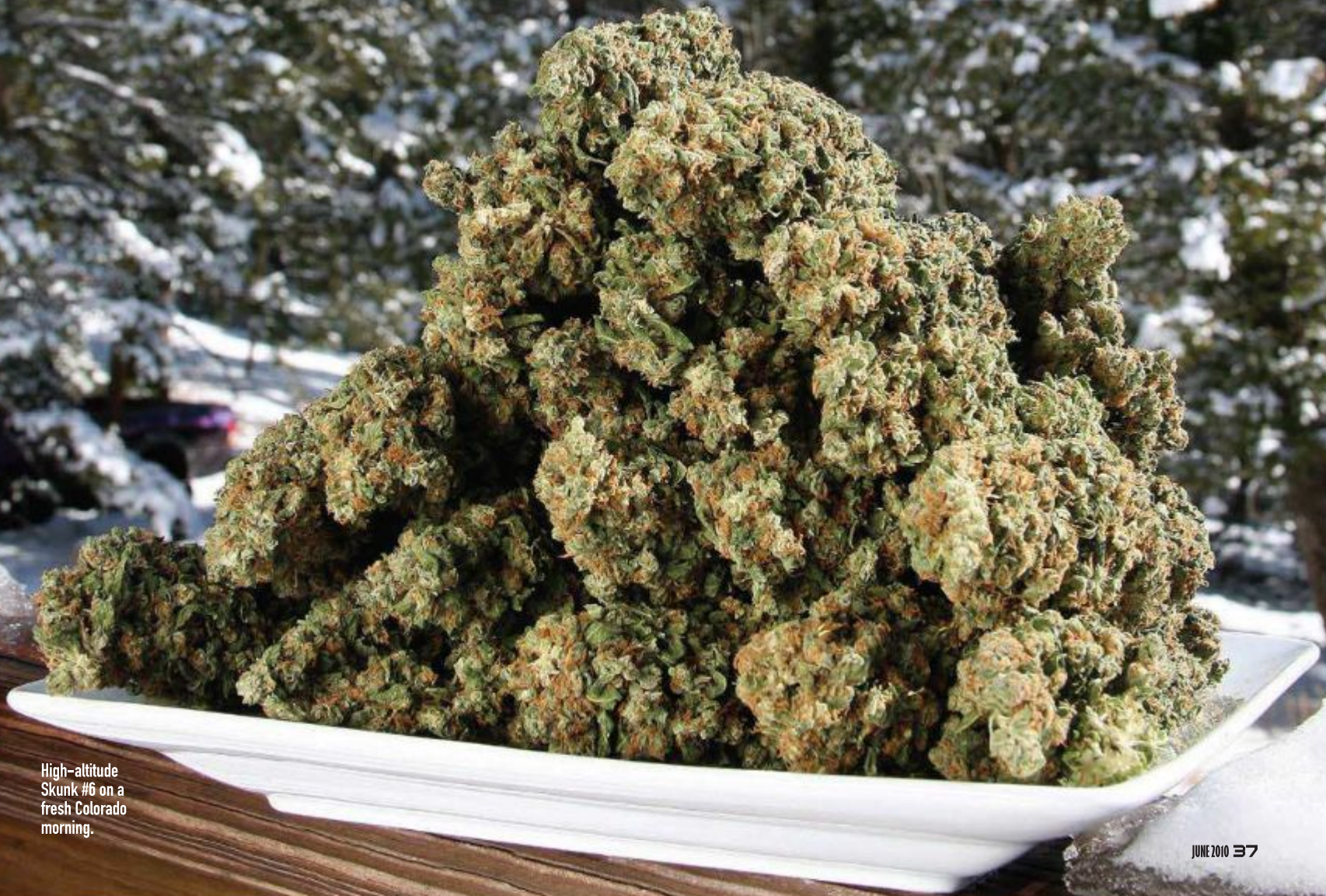
And if you're involved in the medical-marijuana industry as a dispensary owner, there's probably a smile on your face too, because business is booming. That goes for all of the industries that contribute to Colorado's pot economy: the grow-equipment shops, the paraphernalia suppliers, the realtors, carpenters, contractors—even the new medical-marijuana magazines that offer advertising space for the myriad non-pot businesses that are likewise benefiting from this fertile marketplace.





A dispensary in Boulder also houses a T.H.E.O. hydro op.

# do llout!



High-altitude  
Skunk #6 on a  
fresh Colorado  
morning.



However, some would like to slam the brakes on Colorado's meteoric rise in the American medical-marijuana scene. Even though 37,000 residents are enrolled with the state medical-marijuana registry and hundreds of dispensaries operate lawfully and successfully, lawmakers have introduced a bill (SB-109) that would dramatically increase the costs of cannabis medicine, not only raising registration fees but also requiring all patients to undergo a full physical examination that ignores prior medical evaluations. The bill would also allow the arbitrary investigation of doctors who are deemed too liberal in their recommendations for medical pot.

SB-109 isn't only an outrageous intrusion by the state, but it also blatantly violates doctor-patient confidentiality. Unfortunately, the bill was passed out of the Health and Human Services Committee by a 6-to-1 vote and will now be debated by the entire state senate.

## Despite efforts to defy the will of the people, statewide marijuana production is mile-high.

In a formal letter to Colorado legislators, attorney Rob Corry admonished the lawmakers to remember their oath of office to support the state constitution, which "means the voters have entrusted you to uphold all aspects of the Colorado Constitution, even those with which you may disagree."

Corry, who has been one of the sharpest voices chiding the state government to back off and allow the cannabis industry to develop, is the chairman of the Colorado Wellness Association, a trade group designed to promote self-regulation in the medical-marijuana industry without any government "assistance." He has also successfully litigated a number of cases on behalf of medical-marijuana patients.

Corry calls the issues posed by SB-109 "larger and more significant than just medical marijuana: It creates unprecedented governmental intrusion into the sacrosanct physician-patient relationship."

At the same time, however, he is optimistic: The turnout among those expressing opposition to the senate bill has been swift and forceful.

# THE REVERIE GARDEN

Eddie J. has worked as a contract grower for Jesse Irizarry for over a year, but he's been a veteran gardener on the Colorado grow scene for far longer—13 years. Located in the mountains about an hour from Denver, Eddie manages Reverie Garden, a sophisticated warehouse op where he grows such strains as Sweet Diesel and 5280 (a pair of Reverie Garden originals), NYC Diesel, Flo, Sour Bubble Bog, Afghani, Kush, Clownfish and Maui Dreams.

His method is a hybrid of self-fed organics coupled with slight supplementation, consisting of a variety of guanos and castings; it also contains rock phosphate, azomite (trace minerals), and Tarantula from Advanced Nutrients, which is said to provide 57 different types of beneficial microorganisms. Reverse-osmosis water is used and, occasionally, carbohydrates, enzymes and Barri-CADE from Advanced Nutrients are added.

But Eddie's a big believer in just letting the plants and soil do their thing.

By the fifth and sixth week, the soil is maxed out at the highest possible absorption; from weeks six to nine, the remaining nutrients are slowly exhausted and leached out. So, by the end of the week nine, the plant is a healthy, well-fed, well-flushed product.

"Because of the laws in Colorado and the US, we have federal mandatory-minimum laws that kick in at 100 plants," Eddie explains. "So, with a healthy respect for the federal government, I set out to find systems that could maximize plant size but also support a larger plant."

He eventually came to one conclusion: Deep-water culture (DWC) was the way to go. DWC "is a process of growing a hydroponic plant in a large container, usually a 5-gallon construction bucket in which half of the bucket is constantly filled with nutrient. A bubbler stone is placed in the bottom of each bucket to oxygenate the water. The level of the bucket is kept consistent by a float valve in the reservoir that keeps the bucket from overflowing when the drip emitters are feeding from the top. This works much like water in a hose that is plugged on both ends—as you raise and lower the hose, the water meniscus on each side stays even with inverse-level changes. General Hydroponics sells a system that is specifically designed for this application called a Texas Controller, with stackable reservoirs that are 20 gallons each.

"The bottom reservoir has a float valve that keeps the water in the top reservoir from descending to the bottom one unless the water level in the buckets and



Five-gallon buckets in a 12,000-watt hydroponic flowering room.



Intricate tubing feeds plants thoroughly.

Rain catchers are used for the reservoir.

reservoir gets depleted. Then the water level drops and the float lowers, allowing top-off water in the top reservoir to flow to the bottom. This is how we maintain water level. In addition, we have a 4-gallon-per-hour drip emitter on top of each bucket that constantly feeds and drips down to the roots, which begin to explode once they reach the oxygenated nutrient.

"The buckets are connected by 3/4-inch vinyl tubing. Black tubing is preferred; if clear tubing is used, algae forms because of contact with light. Each bucket has a 1-and-1/8-inch bulkhead with a 3/4-inch plastic barbed T to connect all tubing. The last bucket in the line must have a 90-degree, 3/4-inch plastic barb for connection so that end-of-the-line water level can be obtained.

"The 3/4-inch vinyl gravity line is just drilled in and connected to the bottom of the reservoir, and the drip emitter is

connected to the bulkhead near the bottom of the reservoir, which is fed by a pump that sits in the bottom of the reservoir and constantly runs.

This has two functions: One, it helps keep roots clear of any salt buildup; and, two, when transplants are new, it keeps them fed until the roots reach the water."

"The main advantage of a DWC system," Eddie adds, "is the massive rhizosphere, or root zone, that is needed to create large, sustainable growth in order to maximize your plant numbers, thereby meeting the needs of the medicinal community."

As for advice to aspiring growers, Eddie offers this: "Try innovating new techniques by learning the chemistry behind what makes a plant tick. All great things go back to basic fundamentals—there's nothing more satisfying than making your own soil from scratch and watching the circle of life unfold and continue infinitely. In a world of increasing scarcity of food and land, though, embracing hydroponics is necessary for a sustainable future. Use hydroponics, but with care—look for hydroponic products with no mono-ammonium phosphate, di-ammonium phosphate, or urea phosphates in their cutting agents. Look to more natural forms of insect control, such as plant extracts like neem oil. Make sure nutrient solutions have become aqueous or depleted before dumping—and *never* dump chemical concentrates into the environment." *Reverie Garden & Supply is releasing a line of self-fed, nine-week organic soil mixes pending OMRI and USDA Organic certification. Email reveriegarden@comcast.net for details.*





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The Healing Center taught this contracted grower their techniques.



## THE GREENTHUMBS' CABIN

Dr. Greenthumb and his partner, Lady Greenthumb, cultivate their garden in a rustic house at about 8,700 feet. They've been actively growing in Colorado for five years and, "like everybody else in Colorado, we put our hearts and souls into our garden."

"We know that to help sick people," the good doctor says, "we have to produce good medicine. That's why we strive to work in our garden every single day—to make sure that all of our plants get the love and care they need."

The Greenthumbs use the complete FoxFarm line of nutrients and also favor Sunshine Mix #4. They've recently converted to deep-water culture (DWC) and rely heavily on Advanced Nutrients products.

"I prefer deep-water culture, even though I'm partial to soil," Dr. Greenthumb notes. "We spray Azatrol every 10 days to keep the bugs away through veg and the first two weeks in bloom before we rinse it off with pure water. We feed our plants on the lighter side to avoid burns and always make sure to flush for at least two weeks with pure water before we harvest. Also, we change out our DWC reservoirs once a week to avoid stagnation in the water."

Their veg room uses 1,400 watts; the bloom room is lit by 4,000 watts in Daystar hoods with Hortilux Super HPS (high-pressure sodium) bulbs. The temperature is maintained at 74°F in the daytime and 65°F at night. A small dehumidifier has been placed to the side of the garden to maintain a constant 40% to 50% humidity level. A charcoal filter is hanging high to suck up odors from the room.

"We keep track of our feeding, planting, trimming, and drying and curing sessions on a big calendar. We pull anywhere from 2 to 4 ounces per plant, depending on size and strain." They also use CO<sub>2</sub> injection for optimal growth and veg the plants for a full month and a half before flowering them (anywhere from seven to 11 weeks, depending on the strain).

The Greenthumbs believe that in order to treat a range of patients, a good variety of potent genetics is required. But diligent recordkeeping is essential in an operation that oversees a slew of strains like Lime Kush, Sour Diesel x Willie Nelson, Green House's Cheese, Bubble Jack and many others.

As Lady Greenthumb points out: "We like to make each plant as big as possible, since in Colorado, there are only limitations on how many plants you can have—not how big they can be."

"Luckily, Colorado's compassionate voters are more numerous than those who would deny others this miracle medicine," Corry says. "We understand that the medical use of marijuana is controversial, but the majority rules, and the majority of Coloradoans placed this in our constitution."

## This is rich soil for cannabis agriculture to establish strong roots.

Of course, the thousands of marijuana plants growing in countless gardens all over the state are oblivious to the controversy. But so are the growers, it seems: Despite the efforts of politicians to defy the will of the people, statewide marijuana production is mile-high.

Perhaps that's why the recent attempts to rein in the industry have been made. The fear of cannabis hasn't dis-



Eight inches of Blueberry.



The genetics room, the clone source for all Greenthumb strains.





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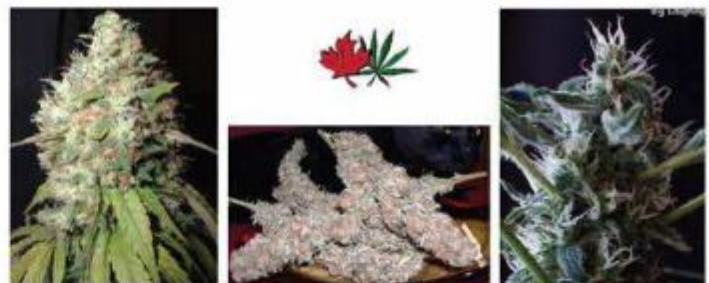
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sipated yet: Only a short time ago, the plant was widely conceived as a dangerous, addictive and socially corrosive substance. These days, however, the state constitution specifically requires that all of the cannabis ingested by the state's medical-marijuana patients must be grown in Colorado. That's a remarkable shift in the status quo.

Although politicians and law-enforcement officials are uncomfortable with the steady rise of cannabis commerce, growers are obeying state law scrupulously to make sure that Colorado patients have plenty of medicine. This is rich soil for cannabis agriculture to establish strong roots, and Jesse Irizarry is on the front lines nurturing them.

A New Jersey native with over 10 years' experience in horticultural work, Jesse has managed a hydro store and is well versed in the latest gear and techniques. He's a member of NORML, SAFER, Sensible Colorado and the Colorado Project, and he also co-founded and manages The Healing Center (also known simply as "THC"), a medical-marijuana dispensary in Westminster, CO. THC provides services for over 1,000 legally registered patients, including cultivation courses.

Jesse has already secured his place as a star grower on the medical-marijuana scene here, having won the 2008 Colorado MMJ Harvest Cup and placing third in 2009. A legal patient and caregiver in the state since 2002, his reputation for growing quality medicine is unmatched.

He and THC co-founder Deborah Schultz have contracted with over 30 skilled growers to develop standards for providing high-quality medicine at low cost to patients. Their growers are required to provide monthly reports listing all of the plants being grown, maturity and height, expected harvest dates and weights—and they must also have their products tested on a monthly basis. Every garden is monitored and secured with alarms and



Jesse Irizarry of The Healing Center.

**'A wide variety of strains can be produced to serve the needs of all patients. No one strain is the wonder drug.'**—Jesse Irizarry

cameras that are recorded offsite. Currently, over 100 different strains grow in their gardens, simply because, as Jesse warns, "you never put all your plants in one patch."

Although he prefers growing in soil, hydro always keeps him thinking, he says, so he engages

in both. His contracted gardeners are free to grow according to their preferred methods.

"Working with different techniques and innovative ideas but using the same quality standards, we promote the advancement of medical marijuana and the quality of patient care," Jesse says. "A wide variety of strains can be produced to serve the needs of all patients. No one strain is the so-called wonder drug at this point."

He reports finding that cannabis with a high cannabidiol (CBD) ratio is best for patients with multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease, while cannabis with a high THC content appears to be more effective for pain, nausea and appetite enhancement. He's even developed a strain that he calls Island Monkey, a Reclining Buddha cross produced specifically for MS patients—it controls many of the symptoms (including twitching and pain) and increases mobility. Said one patient, commenting on the results: "First time I was able to run on a treadmill in years."

However, despite total compliance with Colorado law, The Healing Center may have to relocate. The city of Westminster has voted to close down all businesses not adhering to federal as well as state law. As far as the federal government is concerned, cannabis is still a Schedule I drug, which means it's officially prohibited for medical use. But if they have to, Jesse says, they'll simply relocate.

"The patients' interests will come first," he says. "Our goal is to provide quality medicine at reasonable prices and be the voice for our patients. We encourage regulations for dispensaries at a state level—but ones that are reasonable for patients. We also encourage regulations for professional marijuana growers. Not every caregiver can grow quality medicine, so let's allow the pros to work with the providers—the dispensaries." ✨

## HIGH-ALTITUDE GROWING

Growing in high altitudes can be tricky. The weather is unpredictable and temperature fluctuations can be extreme, so your growroom temperature can swing out of control without an automatic adjuster. Air-cooled lights and good insulation are essential, and an enclosed area makes it easier to control your environment.

It can get hot in the mountains during the summer months. Fortunately, there's no shortage of stand-alone, ventable air conditioners on the market, which can help control ambient BTUs by selective ventilation, decreasing high temperatures and aiding CO<sub>2</sub> absorption.

Also, when dry mountain air is used for intake, it's easy for unwanted visitors to float in, so constant monitoring for powdery mildew and spider mites is a must.





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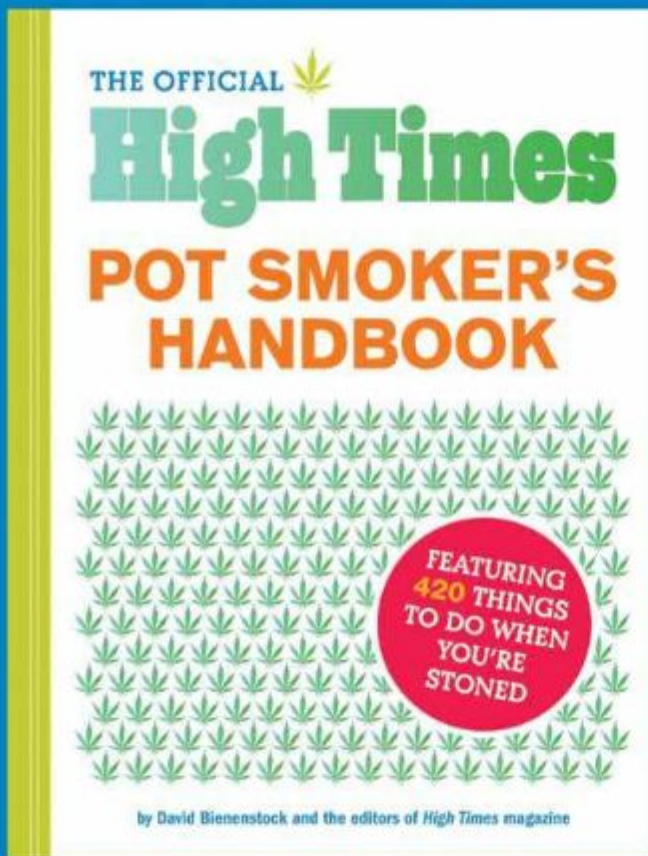


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**ADVANCED GROW FEATURE**

# GROWING

**HIGH TIMES' West Coast labs weigh in on the pros and cons of growing up.**

**STORY BY HUE GIELDER  
PHOTOS BY NICO ESCONDIDO**





In science, it's the job of the theorist to challenge conventional wisdom by proposing controversial new ideas. These new ideas are subsequently productized by entrepreneurs and tested by consumers. Whether it's courage or stupidity that drives them, those few consumers who are the first to adopt these new technologies must in turn provide feedback in order to close the loop.

In order to encourage innovation within the cannabis community, it's vital that growers communicate their experiences to others. The sharing of experiences—both good and bad—is an integral, unifying philosophy amongst growers that prioritizes the health of the community over individual interests. When growers honestly share their experience, we are saying to one another: *Here's what I tried. Don't repeat my mistakes; you can do better.* The following discussion is exactly that—the product of five years of vertical grow experimentation in the HIGH TIMES labs in Northern California.

### WHY GROW UP?

A vertical grow system is defined as a system where the lights are hung vertically and the plants are placed around them in a cylindrical geometry. The initial motivation behind vertical growing was fundamentally twofold: that higher total plant yields would result from greater canopy surface area, and that better utilization of light (i.e., energy efficiency) would result from the elimination of reflectors. The increase in canopy size results from the cylindrical geometry of the vertical grow space. Compared to the conventional horizontal style of growing, the cylindrical geometry of vertical grow systems—calculated by multiplying the bulb-to-canopy distance by  $2 \cdot \pi \cdot \text{height}$ —has the potential to provide more grow space in a given room. The question that must then be addressed is: All things considered, does this increased canopy size truly increase overall system yields?

Furthermore, the removal of reflectors creates a direct path for photons from the bulb to the garden canopy and eliminates the conversion of light into heat that occurs when photons bounce off a reflector. This is because the intensity of light is inversely proportional to the square of the distance that a photon must travel before it reaches its destination. In other words, an object which is twice as far away will receive one-quarter the light intensity from the same source; at three times as far, the intensity will be divided by nine (this, you may remember from physics class, is known as the inverse-square law). By eliminating the need to bounce light off a reflector, more yields should be possible with lower total power consumption. But to what degree is this factor relevant?

An additional noteworthy claim made by some vertical-grow manufacturers is that large shared beds for root systems will also lead to larger yields. This is an issue that deserves particular attention. Only experience can shed light on these questions and answer whether or not this type of grow geometry is worth the effort. This article is intended to provide feedback both for consumers and manufacturers on how to further optimize the vertical-grow technique.

Growing vertically indoors can max out yields, but it doesn't come easy...



## THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR WITH VERTICAL GROWS

There are essentially five issues that the unwary grower will quickly discover about vertical grows. Knowing them in advance will improve system design and results.

**Clean your dirty pipes:** Reservoirs should always be simple to clean fully in order to guarantee that plants are not fed garbage (salt build-ups, algae, etc.). System designers who prefer to automate their watering should expect to replace all plumbing between the reservoir and spigots every few cycles in order to ensure a clean delivery of nutrients and desired biologicals. In other words, use as much low-cost flexible tubing as you can. Also, when dealing with vertical hydro systems, it's important to remember that pinching irrigation lines can severely impact a system's pressure. This is especially true with the vertical "backbone" pipe, where lessening the width of tubing (for example, via "T" joints or clamp valves) beyond most pumps' half-inch to full-inch output will limit the pressure seen at each vertical-grow tier incrementally as water goes up. It's best to reduce the line width at the actual spigots (if absolutely necessary) and abide by the pump manufacturer's recommendations when pumping vertically.

**Watch the dirt on the dank:** When growing vertically, there is always a risk that fluids or wet media will spill over onto the buds below. Whether or not this is an issue will largely be determined by the watering system's throughput and the media's rate of fluid absorption as well as how the tiers of grow sites are stacked. Shared beds filled with soil will drain better with added perlite—hydroton may be too heavy for some shared-bed systems.

**Are you penetrating your canopy?** All plants prefer to be isolated and alone so they can hoard all of the resources they desire. When growing plants within a confined space, anything that can be done to penetrate the canopy in an even manner in terms of light, carbon dioxide and fresh-air exchanges will maximize individual plant health and yields.

**T5s vs. light skirts:** Plants need evenly distributed low-intensity lighting during transplant to minimize transplant shock. Shade cloths can be wrapped like skirts around grow lights or tubes, but this plastic material also melts easily. To avoid melting plastic and potential house fires, the vertical grower can create a ring out of electrical conduit or non-electrical flex-wire to wrap the shade cloth around and drape down the lighting tube. However, this approach may not block sufficient light to fully eliminate transplant stress if a grower is firing numerous bulbs of high wattage. An alternative approach is to strap fluorescent T5s to the light tubes for the purpose of maintaining the proper photoperiod during transplant with much less intensity (not to mention pretty broad spectrum as well).



In vertical systems, light efficiency is maximized, being used 360 degrees around.

## HOW HARD IS IT TO SWAP YOUR SPECTRUM?

Vertical growers use light tubes to move bulb heat up and out of the room before it can affect canopy temperature. However, chains of lights in glass tubes can greatly complicate the swap of bulbs that frequently accompany the switch to flower. The problem is that light tubes are generally not designed for ease of access. When connecting together individual light tubes to create a single light string, it is recommended that the grower pay special attention to the creation of a custom system for access that is convenient to maintain. Attaching light tubes to rails of light movers so that they can slide in and out of verti-

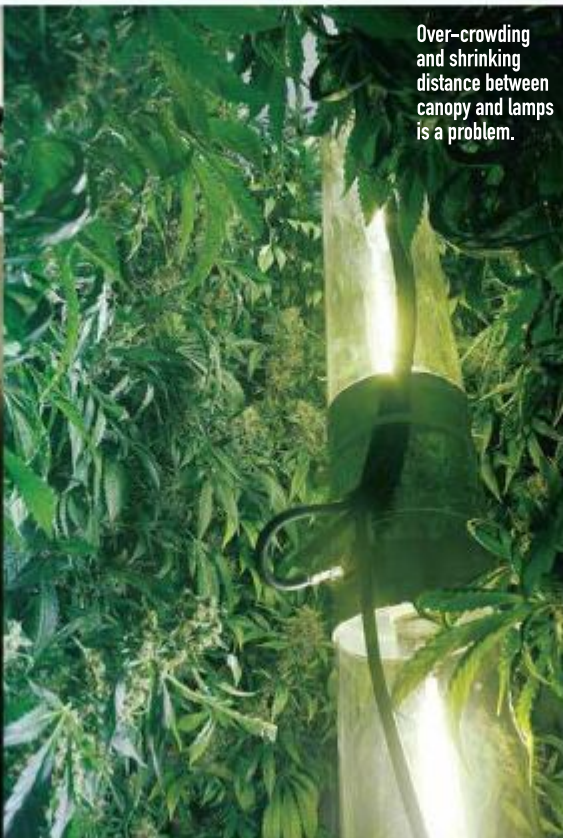
cal systems is one good idea. Another option is to fully veg plants *before* transplanting them into vertical systems and give them only a few days of veg cycle using your high-pressure sodium (HPS) bulbs before flipping to the 12/12-hour flowering stage.

None of these problems are insurmountable by any means. But there are two issues that growers should pay particular attention to, as theory already derived from horizontal grow techniques dictates that ignoring them will limit the yields obtained in their vertical counterparts. These issues that demand extra scrutiny are the *bulb-to-canopy distance* and the *"shared-bed" technique*.

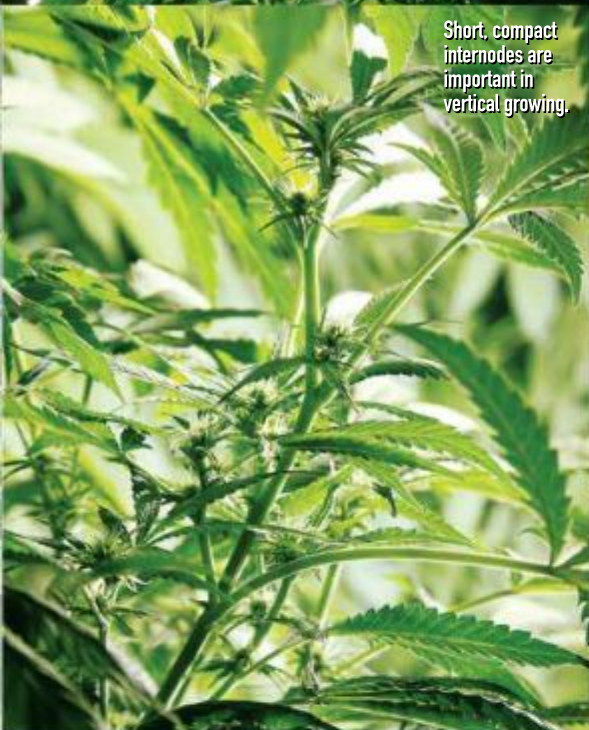




This profile view shows the many tiers of a vertical grow system.



Over-crowding and shrinking distance between canopy and lamps is a problem.



Short, compact internodes are important in vertical growing.



Using light movers to move light tubes is a great system innovation.

## SOLVING THE BULB-TO-CANOPY PROBLEM

Based upon experiences with various vertical grow systems, the designs currently deployed by most vertical grow manufacturers may be in need of some tweaks. The most important issue to discuss is perhaps also the most obvious: Many vertical grow systems do not permit adjustment of the bulb-to-canopy distance, meaning light fixtures remain stationary, with little or no ability for movement. Within a horizontal grow setup, the distance between bulb and canopy can be easily adjusted to accommodate a growing plant—the purpose being to provide the plant with a stable environment as the plant’s shape changes so the

bulb-to-canopy distance can remain constant.

However, as plants grow in a vertical cylinder toward a string of lights fixed at the center, the distance between plant tops and lamps will actually decrease as the plants mature. This alters the total canopy area, as well as leaf temperature and light intensity at the canopy, in unnatural ways.

This problem is most pronounced with *sativa*-dominant strains, whose long internode branching can quickly overgrow a vertical grow system. What this means for the vertical grower is that genetics should be selected to weed out those strains with long internode branching by selecting either *indica*s or *sativa-indica* hybrids. Selecting genetics to match the constraints of the vertical grow system

can dramatically simplify the pruning process and therefore conserve plant energy. Each time a plant is cut, plant energy is wasted. Genetics that require frequent pruning to avoid overcrowding waste both man-hours and plant-hours.

In a general sense, the goal with maximizing a vertical grow is to grow plants with short topsides, very large root structures and an even canopy throughout. Growers might also consider experimenting with methods for limiting the canopy height like plant-training techniques (supercropping, etc.) or growth-inhibiting products like Bush Master’s.

But the bulb-to-canopy issue also presents implications for the grow-system designer or engineer. Vertical grow systems should ideally be built upon wheels (and some are) so that the canopy can be moved away from the light source as plants mature, and also so that plants can be easily accessed for maintenance. Space should be left around the system structures in order to permit this movement. Indoor growers should always use light and temperature meters to gauge the proper bulb-to-canopy distance regardless of the grow system’s geometry. A change of system geometry is not an excuse to abandon grow principles which we already know to be true with horizontal grow techniques.

One innovative solution for bulb-to-canopy issues rests in utilizing the tried and true light-mover technology. Advanced gardeners in our California grow labs have created lamp chains that attach six bulbs (600 watts each) on one line while also accommodating cylindrical glass tubes for cooling. These lamp chains have ductwork attached to each end of the glass tubes and cool the bulbs on a closed air circuit.

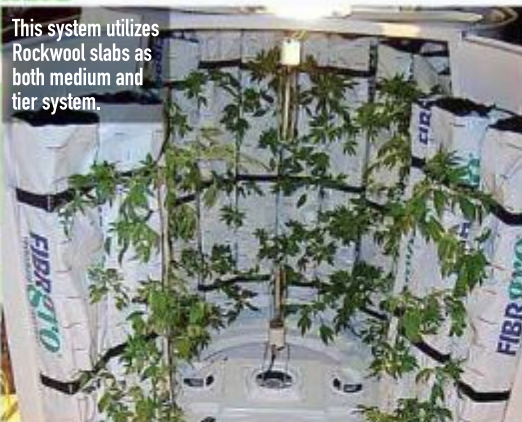
Even more impressive is the fact that these lamp chains are attached to light-mover rails on the ceilings, thereby making it a simple mechanical matter to slide the lights in and out of vertical grow systems for easier access to plants. This light-mover solution comes in especially handy for transplant issues, general maintenance, emergency situations and, of course, at harvest time.

## DOES MORE ROOT VOLUME MEAN HIGHER YIELDS?

Vertical grow systems can be divided into two categories: those that can accommodate the movement of plants within and around the structure (such as with plants in pots) and those that cannot (without causing some sort of root damage, anyway, such as in a shared-bed scenario). There are now numerous vertical grow systems offered by manufacturers that feature shared beds for root systems.

We know that, in theory, a larger root structure usually translates into larger yields. However, growers are human beings, and we can be sure that mistakes will be made. Systems that do not take such considerations into account are heavily performance-based, so the results become determined by a grower’s skills and mistakes. For instance, limiting the bulb-to-canopy distance requires that a grower know the genetics





This system utilizes Rockwool slabs as both medium and tier system.



Lush, thick canopies lead to big harvests.

being grown out well enough to properly estimate the canopy height at various stages of growth. With trial and error, such as guessing plant heights with new genetics, the system yield becomes inconsistent from cycle to cycle and cultivation mistakes begin to dictate yields. And this kind of stress can certainly take some of the fun out of growing.

Beginner and less advanced growers should adopt systems that can tolerate and even assume some degree of error without affecting their bottom line. Furthermore, the choice to grow in a shared-bed system must also justify the transport, setup and removal of large amounts of soil or media. If you are not filling an entire shared bed with roots, then you're wasting time, soil and money while potentially drawing unwanted attention as a big-yield grower at the time of purchase (even if your yields turn out to be less than impressive).

Some systems offer the ability to grow in netted pots or small containers, and in this case, plants can be vegetated outside of the system and inserted when ready. However, where this scenario is not applicable, the problem with growing in a shared-bed system is that it requires an often-hazardous transplant phase. Even if your pre-transplant clones are all equivalent in size and strain, the process of transplanting is still prone to error. And transplant mistakes will leave holes within the canopy if plants end up needing to be removed.

## TRANSPLANTING INTO VERTICAL GROW SYSTEMS

Depending on the number of plants in a system and the vegetative time received, one or two plant vacancies will probably be filled in by neighboring plants with no problem. But five or 10 mistakes may leave the shared-bed grower with much bigger problems (and holes).

If the vertical grow has an excessive amount



This transplant went wrong and left too many holes open.

of light hitting the system structure instead of the garden canopy, the light efficiency gained by removing the reflector will be severely lessened. With little room for error, keeping hundreds of plants all at the same height can be very tough. Because transplanting is prone to error and there is no good technique for replacing weak or dead plants, a shared bed can actually take away from the pros of maximizing light usage. A grower's only option is to have extra clones on standby

ready to fill the holes, but accessing plant sites in huge vertical grows can be tough after the initial group transplant, not to mention that having clones at the same stage of growth nearby is also a complicated task.

In a competition between a shared-bed vertical system and a vertical system where plants remain in 3- or 5-gallon containers, the system with individual plant sites will be able to provide a more constant yield from cycle to cycle. Canopy management with pots inherently accommodates plant failure—a vital grow principle accepted as fact in commercial or large-format horizontal grow ops.

There are additional advantages to container-based vertical grow systems as well. First of all, shared soil or soil-like beds that are also tall will tend to dry out at the top long before they dry at the bottom, as gravity pulls moisture downwards towards the ground. The difference in ideal watering times for top versus bottom segments of a vertical grow system can amount to a couple of days for a volume of vertical soil that is 3 to 4 feet tall. Although the problem might not be severe enough to induce root rot for the bottom-most plants, many cannabis strains are known by growers to prefer a very thorough drying-out when the plants are still young.

To deal with such problems, some growers may opt to increase the airy nature of their media by adding additional perlite or coco fiber. That will reduce the drying time, with the side effect of also compressing the ideal top and bottom watering times for these vertical grow structures. Many growers, however, will just prefer to grow in short containers.

## TRANSPLANTING IN VERTICAL GROWS

Transplanting is especially important in the shared-bed variety of vertical grows. That's because growers will be penalized for transplant mistakes with lower total system yields. There are essentially three separate stages to transplanting: first, the application of a miticide/pesticide (preferably organic) of some sort to the plant's topside, then the application of vitamin B (to reduce shock) to the roots, and, finally, the actual transplant itself. These three steps can, if necessary, be split up as part of an assembly-line process.

Organic miticides such as a neem-oil solution tend to be more effective when plants are dipped, but this process can be sloppy. It's not the sort of thing you want to do with dangerous pesticides like Avid or Floramite unless you have an industrial suit to protect your body from absolutely any chemical contact. It's generally wiser to stick to the safer substances like neem and Azatrol when dipping plants as part of the transplant procedures in a vertical grow.

Leave the miticide on the plants for at least several hours, then rinse it off with plenty of purified water, starting from the top of the plant downwards. Wherever the miticide is left on the plant leaves, these leaves may become burned (brown and crispy) once full light is introduced. As a general note, at no time during transplanting, vegging or even flowering should plants with fluids on their leaves be exposed to full light, as these fluids can act as little magnifying lenses and burn the leaves.

Vitamin B helps plants to cope with impending shock. The vitamin B soak should be pH-adjusted to better match the medium into which the plant is going. One way to apply the vitamin B is in a soak (20 to 30 minutes) just before transplant.

When a vertical operation involves more than 100 plants, the transplant process can become more difficult as workers tire from the workload. It may make sense to dip plant tops into a miticide, soak plant bottoms in vitamin B, and perform the actual transplant as separate projects, or with the help of an assembly line of assistants.

Although low growroom temperatures can be useful for limiting the rate at which pests like mites replicate, it can also limit the growth of your plants. Keep the growroom at 76°F to 78°F and growth should be normal. This is especially important when the soil is raised high above the bottom of the room, as low soil temperatures can stunt plant growth.





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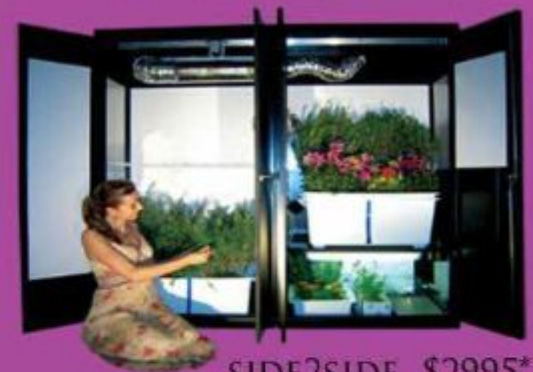
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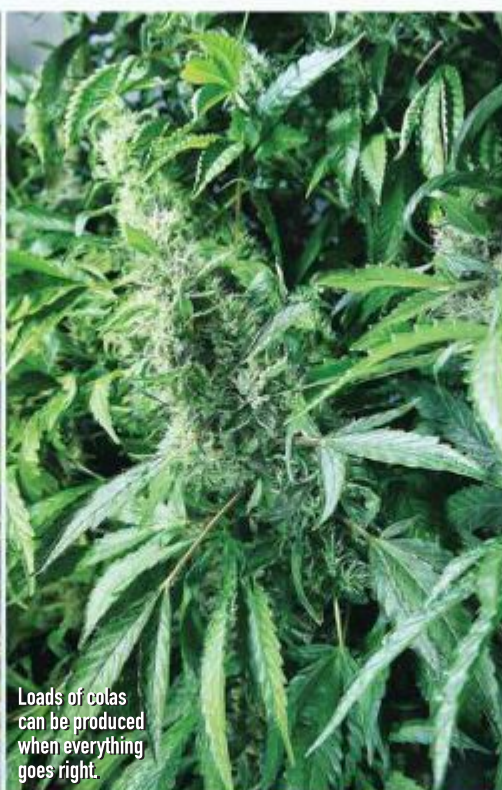
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Fitting seedlings or clones into small plant sites may pose problems.



Loads of colas can be produced when everything goes right.

## VEGETATING PLANTS IN VERTICAL SYSTEMS

Another interesting question regarding shared beds is that of cycle time. When working with a shared-bed system, the number of cycles per year that can be run is partly a function of your system's hole size (at each plant site). This is because clones can only vegetate in media that can fit the plant's entire root structure through these holes into their individual sites without inordinate physical damage.

For those hoping to reap huge yields out of a shared-bed vertical system, one must consider the intended use for such a system. While some of these systems are created expressly for growing large numbers of plants, they may not be ideal for growing large plants. This is because growing clones in a limited-size medium (such as 3-inch rockwool cubes) will take clones only to a certain size before they become root-bound. Once this happens and growth slows, growers will be tempted to place them into the vertical grow systems to vegetate for a while longer before switching to flowering.

The problem here is twofold. First, this may require changing bulbs from HPS to metal halide (MH), which can prove tricky in these systems. And second, this can add weeks to the overall cycle time, effectively reducing the total number of cycles per year for some shared-bed systems, as you are then using your flowering room instead of your nursery for vegetative time.

If you decide to vegetate plants inside a vertical system, it is important to remember that large shared beds are most useful when they are being completely filled with roots. Thus, the post-transplant vegetative time must be more focused upon root development than canopy development.

To maximize yields within shared beds, it's necessary to veg with what's called *low or negative differential*. Low or "neg diff," as it's sometimes called, is the practice of keeping a garden's dark



Once plants are in, dense root systems prevent removal.

cycle a few degrees warmer than the light cycle. By keeping the difference between daytime temperatures and nighttime temperatures near zero—or even warmer at night, if possible—the plant will dedicate the proper amount of energy to root development (and will also grow more compact, with shorter internode lengths).

In a general sense, this is a much safer route than vertical-growth inhibitors, which rely upon hormones that can burn plants. It's also worth noting that vertical-growth inhibitors are generally more suited to aeroponic or hydroponic setups than soil. Exceeding the proper application time or dosage can lead to various symptoms of plant damage, such as curled leaves and stunted growth.

## MORE PROS & CONS

Another consideration in switching away from container-based systems pertains to the inter-cycle downtime. In shared-bed systems, a lot of work occurs at the transition between cycles: Harvesting, trimming, emptying media, cleaning the system, refilling with media, and transplanting are all very time-consuming. In a shared-bed system, growers will inevitably experience quite a bit of laborious downtime as they struggle to compress all of these functions into the shortest period of time possible. Even when hiring extra help, the shared-bed approach can waste a lot of time when com-

pared to a flat sea-of-green (SOG) technique.

One final thought worth mentioning with regards to large shared beds pertains to security and evacuation concerns. Compared with pots or grow bags, large shared-bed structures are spectacles which invite curiosity. And when loading these systems into a growroom, special care needs to be taken, not to mention extreme caution when hastily removing them due to security breaches.

Black stretch wrap can help to some degree to shield the system from onlookers, but those who don't have a garage connected to their grow space might consider easier-to-move systems (which might utilize grow pots or bags). Or growers can take it upon themselves to construct their own customized vertical grow setups. There's no reason why growers can't design a system using low-cost collapsible components like grow bags, metal racks, drip trays and large flexible ducting. To keep air properly moving through a system, avoid using 4- or 6-inch flexible ducting. Vertical-system designers who are looking to avoid rigid ducting will want to select 8-, 10- or even 12-inch flexible ducting in order to reduce the resistance to airflow that such ducting introduces.

## THE JURY IS STILL OUT

While it may be true for some growers that vertical systems can generate higher yearly indoor yields than flatbed systems, it's important that we remain aware of the pros and cons associated with the two techniques as we continually strive to improve them.

Before the grow community can get to the point where the theory of vertical growing is absolutely judged, we need to see a new generation of flatbed and vertical grow systems where some of the current problems that plague these operations are finally corrected. The burden of this shouldn't be placed solely on manufacturers or designers, but rather on all of us as experienced growers who have plenty of feedback to offer.

While vertical grow systems allow growers to maximize both space and light, some don't permit root zones to fully dry out, and others introduce unnecessary yield penalties from imperfect grower performance (for example, transplanting issues). Meanwhile, horizontal or flatbed systems are more forgiving in certain areas (they don't always use shared beds and are more accessible), but may not be as efficient in maximizing some areas of a growroom. Once the playing field is leveled among systems via adjustment, upgrades and improvements, we can then truly judge the correct space and use for the various systems available to us today.

Ultimately, growers still need to evaluate the original premise: Can the vertical grow geometry be made to yield better on a per-square-foot basis for a particular room over the course of a full year? And to what extent does removing the reflector significantly improve energy efficiency? These are the questions that the technique was initially designed to address, but it's tough to answer them when we get bogged down by lesser issues that can have adverse affects on herb quality and yields. 🌱





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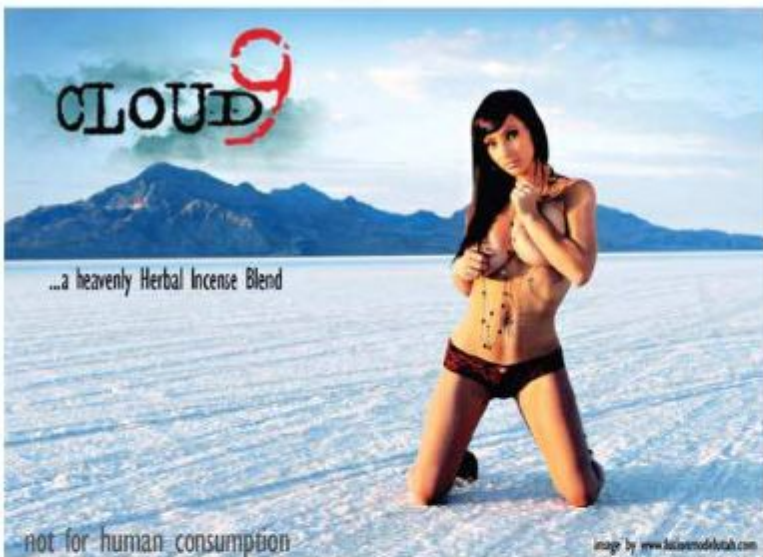
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# ON THE

Two years ago, Cheech & Chong brought joy to the stoner world when they reunited as a comedy team and blazed across North America in the “Hey, What’s That Smell?” tour—proving that legends who get high never die!

Now they’re on the road again with “Get It Legal,” a brand-new tour whose aim is pretty obvious. “We want to promote change through laughter,” says Tommy. “The marijuana laws are so ridiculous, you’ve got to laugh at them!”

HIGH TIMES caught up with these two marijuana icons in the middle of their tour. We were permitted to document an up-close and personal look at what life on the road is really like for a pair of pot superstars.

It ain’t always pretty!

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILL BLOCHINGER**





# ROAD AGAIN

**11:47 a.m.**

Life on the road requires a schedule. Our boys are on the move early—barely six hours after the sun has risen. They've got meetings scheduled with publicists and lawyers and managers and dealers throughout the day, so they want to make sure they look their best.

Cheech & Chong adhere to the age-old maxim: "Cleanliness is next to godliness—assuming God has showered too."



**12:57 p.m.**

Before they start their day, Cheech & Chong make sure to get some morning exercise in: They pack multiple bong hits for their cardiovascular workouts and enhance their hand-eye coordination by keeping their joint-rolling skills sharp.

Cheech says: "When I was doing *Nash Bridges*, I completely lost my edge. Don Johnson has got some serious manual-dexterity problems, and I think they rubbed off on me."





**1:46 p.m.**

Now that Cheech & Chong have worked up an appetite, it's time to prepare a healthy, nutritious meal with cannabis as the main ingredient. (Actually, they prefer to bake with pot as the *only* ingredient.) But they can't decide on a dish.

Why? Cheech likes cooking with Granddaddy Purple, while Chong prefers OG Kush #18. Will the combination of two killer strains wreak havoc on their digestion?

"Fuck it!" they say.  
"Let's order out!"



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## 4:01 p.m.

Now that their pre-performance meal is history, Cheech & Chong get in some serious time monitoring television signals.

Don't mind the mess on the table. This is focus time.

Cheech & Chong are firm believers in the use of multiple water pipes to enhance concentration. As Tommy points out: "You gotta stay in the moment. Every bong has a different mechanism—sometimes you pull the slide, sometimes you put your finger over the carb hole. We keep our minds really agile this way."

## 4:20 p.m.

The limo always comes to pick them up for the show at 4:20 sharp. Yep, there's the knock at the door.

*Uh-oh.* This doesn't look good. Seems like there's a new Cheech-let or Chong-let on the horizon.

Kinda gives the "Get It Legal" tour a whole new meaning .... 🌿

For "Get It Legal" tour dates and tickets plus Cheech & Chong merchandise, visit [cheechandchongtour.com](http://cheechandchongtour.com).

Special thanks to KAOS Glass, DNA Genetics, and the Healthy, Wealthy & Wise medical dispensary of Los Angeles.

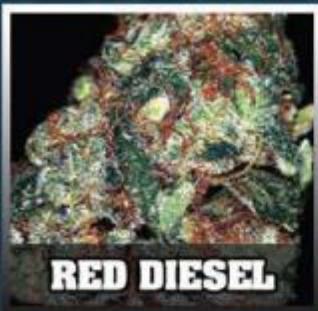




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Danny Danko tracks down the legendary and reclusive “grower to the stars,” for a revealing look at what it takes to create some of the most stinky and potent pot in the world for a well-heeled cannabis clientele of marijuana aficionados and medical users.

## *The Return of*

# Chemdog

Photos by Brian Jahn



A total of four high-intensity discharge (HID) lights illuminate Chemdog's growing space.

### Origins of Chemdog

Legend has it that 13 seeds found in the bottom of a two ounce baggie of “Chemdog” bought on a Dead tour almost 20 years ago spawned the extraordinary line of cannabis genetics known as the Chemdog family. These powerful and odorous classic strains—Chem D, Chemdog Sister, Super Snowdog and Chem 91—are now known to ganja farmers and connoisseurs around the world as the cream of the crop. Medical patients prize these varieties for their potency and healing properties, while dank devotees marvel at their layers of flavor and scent. But while many people know the story, few of them know the man behind the myth.

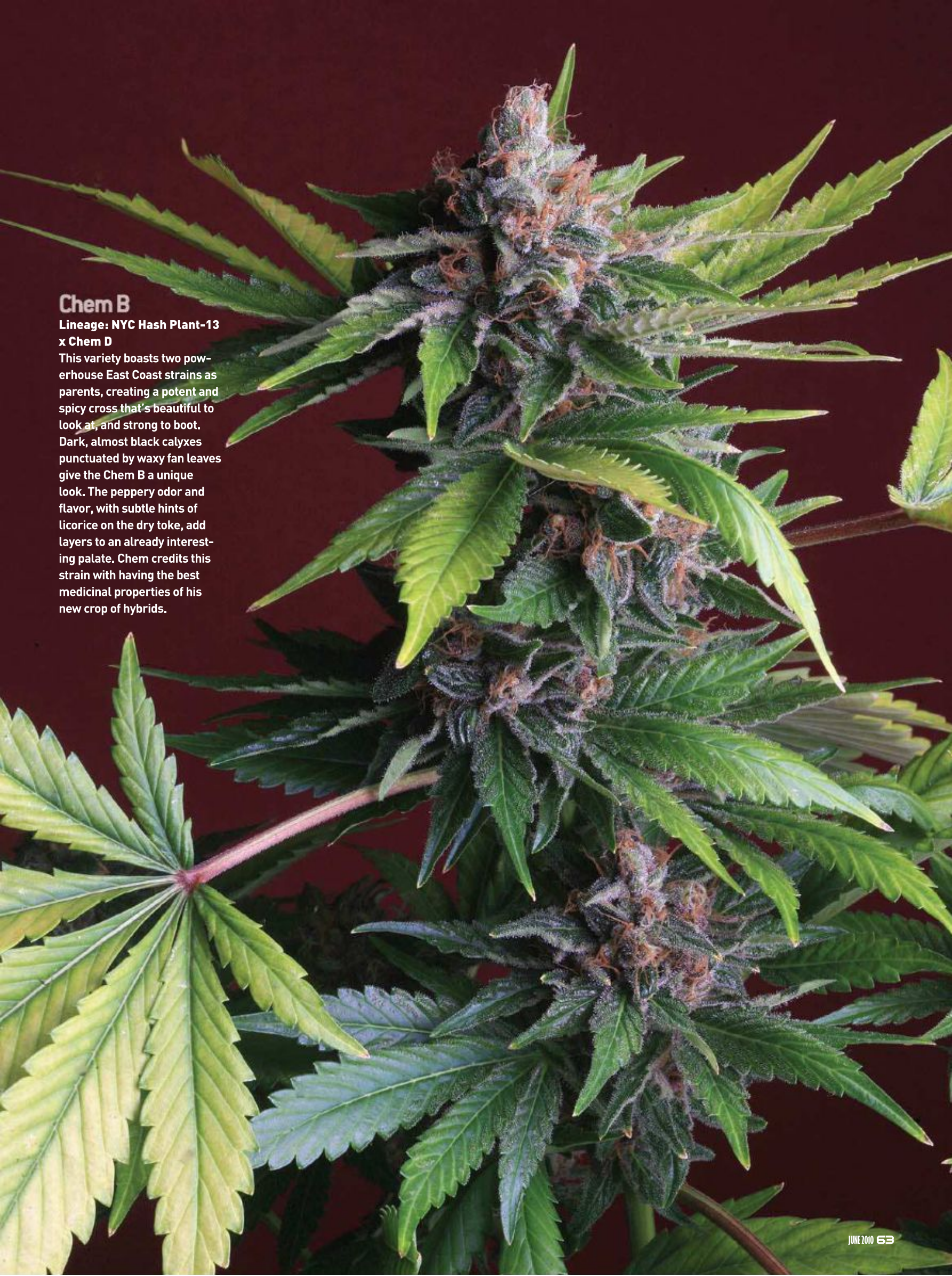
I first met Chemdog about five years ago while working on my “CSI: Cannabis Strain Investigation” story (May '06 HT). After smoking what I thought was the most potent, best-flavored and strongest-smelling cannabis I'd ever

encountered, I simply had to know where it came from and how he got it.

We learned that Chemdog the man was even harder to find than his elusive strains. He has supplied top-shelf nugs to high rollers and superstars from the rock and hip-hop worlds, as well as to NFL Super Bowl winners. He was famous among the famous, but virtually unknown among the general public. Chem was eventually tracked down through the proper channels, and some serious testing ensued.

At that time, a big spliff of Super Snowdog put me down on one knee, dazed and wondering if perhaps I'd finally found the Holy Grail of weed strains. To this day, the Chemdog lines are still my favorites to smoke and vaporize (and I'm not alone in this). So I recently set out to find this reclusive farmer once again, to determine the difference between good pot—and the best pot.





## Chem B

**Lineage: NYC Hash Plant-13  
x Chem D**

This variety boasts two powerhouse East Coast strains as parents, creating a potent and spicy cross that's beautiful to look at, and strong to boot. Dark, almost black calyxes punctuated by waxy fan leaves give the Chem B a unique look. The peppery odor and flavor, with subtle hints of licorice on the dry toke, add layers to an already interesting palate. Chem credits this strain with having the best medicinal properties of his new crop of hybrids.



Mango looks beautiful but was ultimately scrapped from the collection.



**Real connoisseur-quality bud is always grown in some kind of a mix with organic nutrients. It gives the cannabis good flavor.**

**What do you use for nutrients?**

I use pretty much only Earth Juice Bloom and Grow. I swear by a one-time dose of Bush Master during the second week of flowering—it thickened up the buds and cut a week off my flowering time. These plants are all at 52 days, and most are coming down today.

I hand-water with approximately a gallon of nutrient solution per pot and ease up to about half a gallon towards the end. Lifting up the buckets lets me know if they need watering or not. After a while, you just know.

I also flush for two and a half weeks. It's important to flush properly, even with organics—and don't reuse your mix to avoid toxic buildups and pH fluctuations.

**What about drying and curing?**

Dry your weed well! Don't jam yourself up on the last and most important step. Trim the fan leaves and sugar leaf off your branches and hang them up. When that dries to almost a crisp, stick the colas into sealed Tupperware or glass jars for the final cure. Burp the jars until the moisture evens out. Wet weed is my pet peeve.

**What separates "Triple-A" cannabis from B-grade "work" bud?**

Living with your weed ... caring about it, and the end result, more than any profits or awards. Genetics are important, but any bud grown with care will be better than one grown with false or bad intentions. Bless good people with your finds.

**What is your stance on strain hoarding?**

After 18 years, I'm over strain hoarding—I think, at this point, everybody should be sharing the genetics with good-hearted people and making sure they have the real authentic genes, not poly-hybrids. Share the clones!

**The obvious question: How does the average Joe get their hands on your genetics?** They don't yet, but we're working on it. I'd like to announce that I'm working to make seeds and once they are tested out, they'll become available at auction online.

## New Chem Strains

The first thing that Chemdog tells me is that he's not a professional breeder and never claimed to be one—he simply found great pot and grew it out because he liked it. From there, various experiments and "happy accidents" have led to each new and wonderful strain in his quiver.

Starting out with some of the best genetics in the world makes it difficult to fail, but Chem does routinely toss out lines he's not interested in exploring (such as the Mango). His years of picking and choosing the strongest-smelling and most potent pot has led to new discoveries that dazzle the palate, resulting in quite an array of frosty selections.

Describing his new strains, Chem sounds more like an enthusiast than a scientist: "A lot of bud on that plant ... four ounces or more, huh? Good yielder and strong!" As our expert photographer shoots strain after strain of these beautiful buds, we all share a few joints while Chem and I attempt to glean what makes the Chemdog so special.

**Tell me a little about your growing habits.**

I'm just an average Joe; I grow in soil. I know that, technically, Pro-Mix isn't soil—it's a soilless mix that holds the roots together—but you know what I mean. In my opinion, hydro sucks ... both growing it and smoking it. Real connoisseur-quality bud is always grown in some kind of a mix with organic nutrients. It gives the cannabis good flavor. Soil yourselves, people!

I use three 1,000-watt HPS (high-pressure sodium) lights and one 600-watt HPS light, and mostly 5-gallon buckets filled with BX Pro-Mix. I vegetate for five weeks, giving the plants plenty of time to set roots. I believe having a bigger root mass is crucial to getting bigger yields. More root, more fruit.



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## Mass Purple Kush

**Lineage:** “The original came from a clone from a friend in Vegas that was hit with hermie Chem D pollen.”

This beautiful specimen combines the best of the West with the beast from the East. Long a staple in Cali and Nevada, Purple Kush now reigns worldwide thanks to its combination of the sugary flavor of the Purps with the potency, trichome abundance and telltale fuel-like odor of Kush. At full maturity, these MPK colas—displaying violet calyxes covered with frosty white gland heads and bright orange hairs—looked almost too pretty to cut down. Almost.

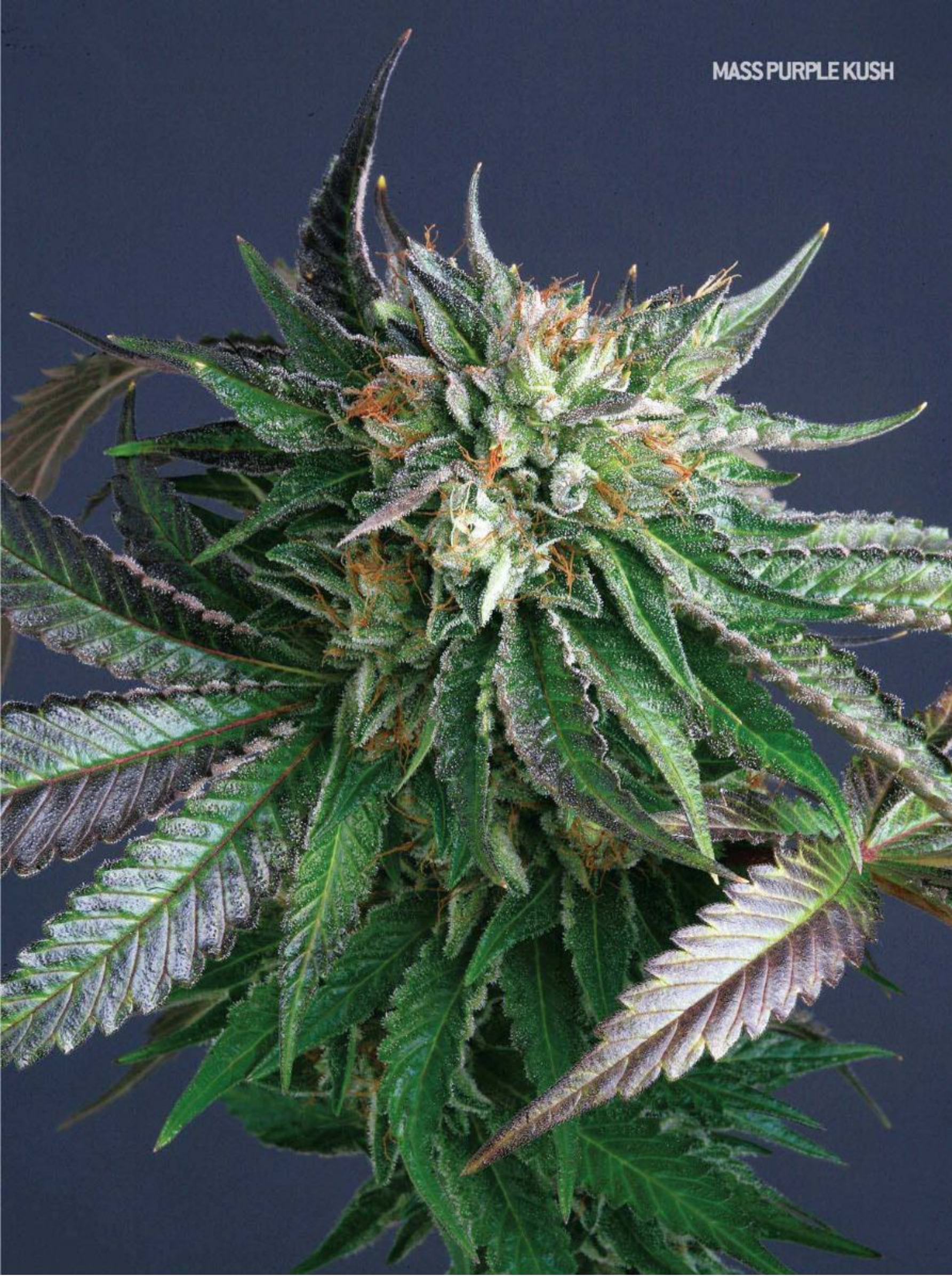
## Chemdog Sister

**Lineage:** seed from the original Sister

The “Sister” isn’t a new name, but this phenotype—nicknamed for a fallen comrade—popped out from a nugget and grew out with a different strain profile. Skunky like the Chem D but also very earthy, the Chemdog Sister’s potency can nearly take down all but the most avid aficionados. A grinder is a must, as these oily buds break up too sticky using just your fingers. The Sister’s odor permeates and is practically impossible to contain without heavy-duty sealing—open a jar and you’ll instantly stink up your surroundings.



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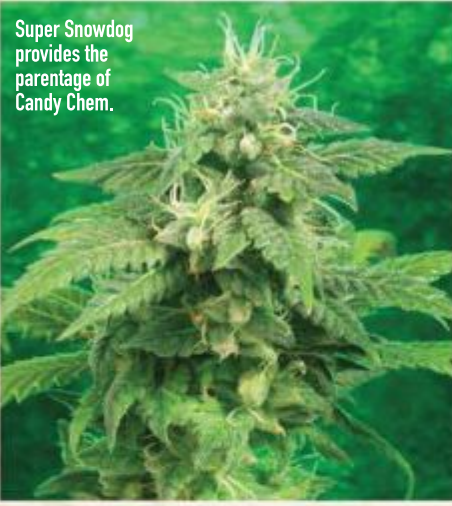
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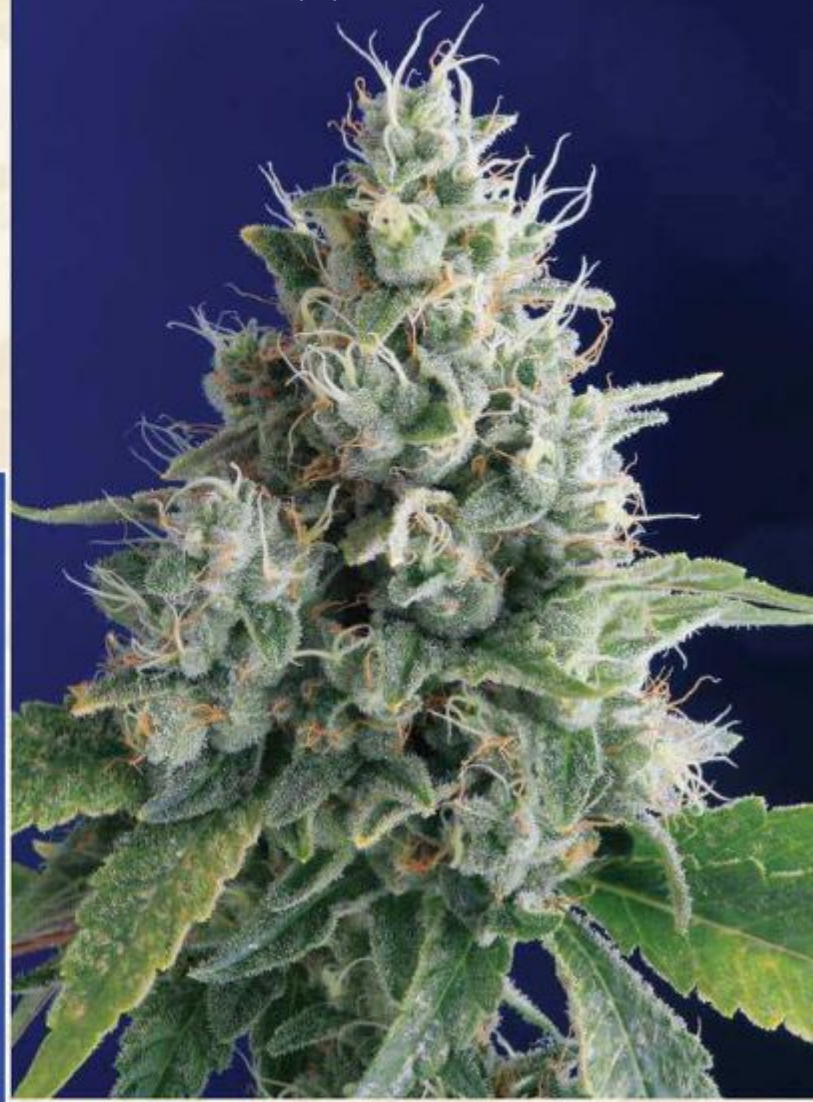
## Candy Chem

**Lineage:** pollen from a hermed Super Snowdog on the Chem D cut  
People typically associate the Chem line with *indica*-dominant strains, but Candy Chem is definitely on the *sativa* side. The sweet odor and “sour candy” flavor precedes a typically cerebral and lasting high. “She’s like the Snowdog in her growth patterns, but stronger, with no ceiling to the heady effects,” Chem notes. Crystal-coated nuggets of Candy Chem glisten like diamonds and smell like a seductive perfume.

OG1 fills out and packs on weight towards the end of flowering.



Don't discount the bite of the Barking Dog.



## Barking Dog

**Lineage:** mystery seed from the Chem D  
The strain called Barking Dog also has quite a bite. Chem told me that his buddy Tone Loc found “one seed—I think it just selfed.” His reasons for holding on to this cut, however, are difficult to dispute: The fat-leaved, chunky Barking Dog that we looked at was covered in frosty calyxes and had a taste reminiscent of the skunky *indica* strains of yore.

“It reminds me of the original Chem 91 cut,” Chem says, which growers still revere as one of the finest phenotypes.

## OG1

**Lineage:** “SFV OG Kush maybe touched with the Chem D.”

A monster of a plant! With the dense structure and skunky odor of the San Fernando Valley’s Original Gangster Kush, this West Coast heavy hitter packs a serious punch. Due to certain unmistakable characteristics, Chem suspects that the OG cut he got from friends in Cali was hit by pollen from a hermy Chem D. (That wacky lady sure gets around.) Bud branches laden with thick, chunky nugs affirm Chem’s claim that OG1 is “the biggest yielder in the bunch.” ✨



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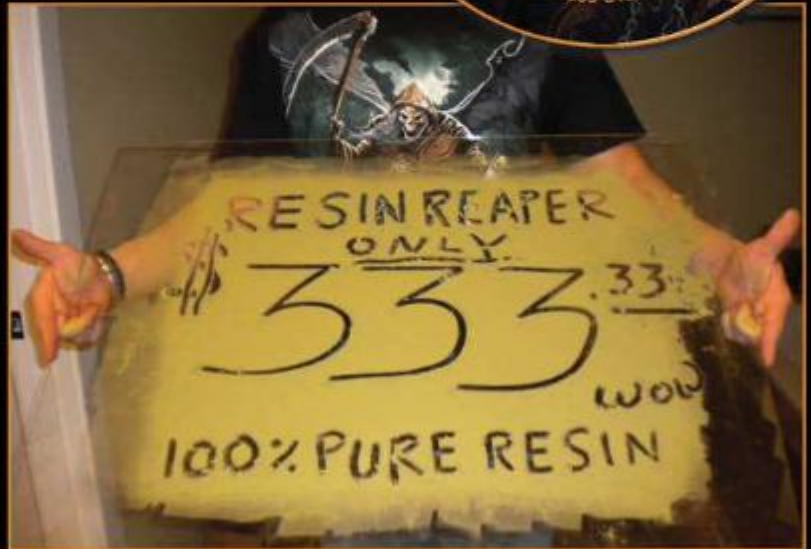


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All across this great nation, disabled veterans of all ages and eras are being abandoned and persecuted by our government for choosing to use the only medicine that truly alleviates their suffering from chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder—*marijuana*. by **Bobby Black**







# LINE

America is a country at war—not just with terrorists, but with ourselves. In the midst of all our government’s partisan posturing, there’s one issue that supposedly unites Republicans and Democrats alike: supporting our troops. But medals and parades, however noble the sentiment, aren’t what our wounded men and women in uniform really need; what they need is compassion and proper treatment for the agonies and injuries they brought back with them. Unfortunately, the sad truth is that a great many vets come home and realize they’ve survived one war, only to find themselves casualties of another—the War on Drugs.

There are approximately 33,000 Iraq and Afghanistan war vets who have returned home with serious injuries and conditions that cause them chronic pain. In



Wounded  
Iraq War vet  
Chris Bowser.

addition, the National Center for Mental Health reports that nearly 30 percent of US troops who have spent time in war zones suffer from some degree of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—including about 115,000 Iraq and Afghanistan vets, and nearly a million Vietnam vets. The symptoms of PTSD include insomnia, night terrors, depression, flashbacks, migraines, rapid heart rate, irritability, outbursts of anger, apathy and thoughts of suicide. These symptoms are so severe that according to the Department of Veterans Affairs’ mental-health director, Dr. Ira Katz, close to 1,000 veterans a *month* attempt suicide. Tragically, statistics show that about half of them succeed. Unbelievable as it may seem, more vets have actually committed suicide since 2001 than have died in battle.





The medications typically prescribed to treat PTSD are antidepressants such as Prozac, Zoloft, Selexa and Paxil—selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) that increase serotonin levels in the brain. For chronic pain, most patients are given highly potent anticonvulsants like Klonopin, as well as powerful opioids like OxyContin and MS-Contin (a form of morphine)—narcotics so powerful that they practically turn the patient into a zombie. These medications are also extremely habit-forming (with nearly a 60 percent dependency rate) and can be very dangerous; according to a 2006 Fox News report, 5 percent of patients using SSRIs exhibited psychotic and/or suicidal tendencies. And in June of 2008, the *Charleston Gazette* reported that four PTSD victims died from medications (Paxil, Klonopin and Seroquel) prescribed to them by VA clinics.

“Treatment by the VA is far more dangerous than combat in Baghdad,” writes Dr. Phillip Leveque, a columnist for Salem-News.com, an online-only news agency that has devoted a great deal of coverage to veterans’ issues. Dr. Leveque is uniquely overqualified to speak on this subject: Not only was he a professor of pharmacology and a forensic toxicologist, he was also a concentration-camp liberator in World War II who suffered from PTSD himself and specialized in treating vets with the illness during his time as a practicing physician. This 86-year-old doctor (nicknamed “the most dangerous man in Oregon”) has become a passionate champion of veterans’ rights and was one of the principal petitioners for Oregon’s medical-marijuana law back in 1988.

“Having covered combat operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan, I have many concerns for our returning veterans,” says Salem-News.com executive editor Tim King. “I’ve received hundreds of emails and comments from combat veterans over the years telling me that marijuana is the only thing that brings them relief from the nightmares and related problems stemming from PTSD. This is the biggest reason we’ve gone out on a limb in recent years to cover medical marijuana.”

Of course, pot’s effectiveness in dealing with PTSD is no secret to those who served in Vietnam—like the former machine gunner who now goes by the handle Hemp Solo.

“We needed weed to survive there,” he says flatly. “When you smoked a joint, you were able to forget the atrocities of the day before. If you didn’t smoke, you couldn’t sleep.” Solo continued to use marijuana for his PTSD after coming home, but soon found himself at odds with the law for doing so. “We figured, if it helped us over there, it’ll help us over here. But here, it gets you in trouble.”

Tired of getting busted, this pot-smoking patriot decided to fight back and created Veterans for Weed (theveteransforweed.com)—a website dedicated to vets who’ve been prosecuted or persecuted because of weed. This “new VFW,” as he calls it, serves as a forum for stoner soldiers to vent and get advice. “We got feedback from this one vet who, after working at the same company for 20 years, was given a random urine test and lost his job,” says Solo. “That kind of stuff happens to vets every day.”

As if losing a job for smoking pot wasn’t devastating enough, vets are also losing their medical benefits. That’s because many hospitals in the VA system require patients to sign a “pain contract” be-



Top: The Veterans For Weed POT/POW crest. Above: Salem-News.com columnist Dr. Phillip Leveque (right) with Jack Herer at HempStalk in Portland, OR.

fore they can receive any prescription medications. While the specifics of these contracts vary from hospital to hospital, the one universal provision is that patients must consent to random drug screening—and if they test positive for marijuana, their pain meds will almost certainly be discontinued.

In 2005, disabled Air Force veteran Michael Krawitz refused to sign a pain contract at a VA hospital in Virginia and was immediately cut off from his meds. He challenged the contract’s legality on the grounds that it violated his civil rights—namely, his Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable search and seizure, his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination, and his 14th Amendment right to equal protection under the law.

“Basically, what I said was this: You, the VA, can’t leverage my pain treatment against me to make me pee in a bottle for a non-medical test,” Krawitz explains. “You don’t have the authority.”

Sergeant Krawitz is now the executive director of Veterans for Medical Marijuana Access (VMMA), an advocacy group founded in 2007 by Michigan marijuana activist Martin Chilcutt. The VMMA started out just trying to “rally the troops”—getting all the different veterans’ organizations together to pass resolutions in favor of medical-marijuana access. But in the past year or so, it’s taken on more of a leadership role, shifting its focus to lobbying lawmakers on behalf of sick and injured veterans.

“We’re developing a direct relationship with the VA authorities and every single member of the Veterans Affairs committees of both the Senate and the

House,” says Krawitz. “Every single one of them is going to know our names and our faces by the time we’re done, and we will effect a medical-marijuana policy in the VA.”

Contrary to common belief, the imposition of pain contracts isn’t universal in the VA system—nor is it mandatory. A 2003 Veterans Health Administration directive on the treatment of pain noted that “adherence with [an] opioid agreement, if used,” could be part of a patient’s overall evaluation, but the decision to use one was supposed to be left to the doctor’s discretion. However, the doctors aren’t making these decisions; hospital administrators are. The VA claims that these contracts are meant to protect the patient—but protect them from what? Does the VA really believe that marijuana is more dangerous than the toxic cocktails they’re currently prescribing?

“The funny thing is that every veteran hears again and again that the reason marijuana is illegal is that it might lead to using hard drugs like morphine,” says Krawitz. “So think about the irony of coming into the VA hospital and being offered any amount of morphine you want as long as you stay away from marijuana!”

In reality, Krawitz believes, these contracts only serve to protect the VA and its doctors from any possible liability or legal repercussions. In a memorandum issued to the New Mexico VA Health Care System in March 2008, physicians were forbidden from recommending or authorizing the use of medical marijuana under threat of their licenses. According to a top official at said organization, this policy is based solely on the “advice” of the Drug Enforcement Agency.

“The DEA has done a great job of scaring doctors,” Krawitz says. “If a doctor is prescribing opiates, they’re extremely hesitant to recommend marijuana, and vice versa.”

Jeff Flesher, who runs Vets Help Center (vetshelpcenter.com) out of Oregon, takes narcotic medications to treat his Gulf War syndrome as well as a broken back. But he has yet to try marijuana as a medicine because, like many of his fellow vets, he’s afraid even to broach the subject with the VA.

“Even though I have a [medical marijuana] license card—what might happen to me if the VA doctors, after testing my blood, find marijuana? How might that impact my medical benefits? It’s questions like these that keep most vets from thinking about using medical marijuana.”

The tragic irony here is that, in the vast majority of cases, patients report that smoking marijuana actually helps them *reduce* the amount of narcotic pharmaceuticals they need to take. Roger Dowty, a medical-marijuana patient and licensed clinical counselor in Missoula, MT, has been taking narcotic pain medications for over two decades for the injuries he sustained during his 12 years as a firefighter in the Air Force. While he acknowledges his need for prescription painkillers, Dowty says that using marijuana has helped him cut the amount of pharmaceuticals in half.

“I survive in a much happier world now because of cannabis,” he says. “I’m able to sleep better, play longer, have dropped 55 pounds, and my blood work is the best it’s been in 20 years.”



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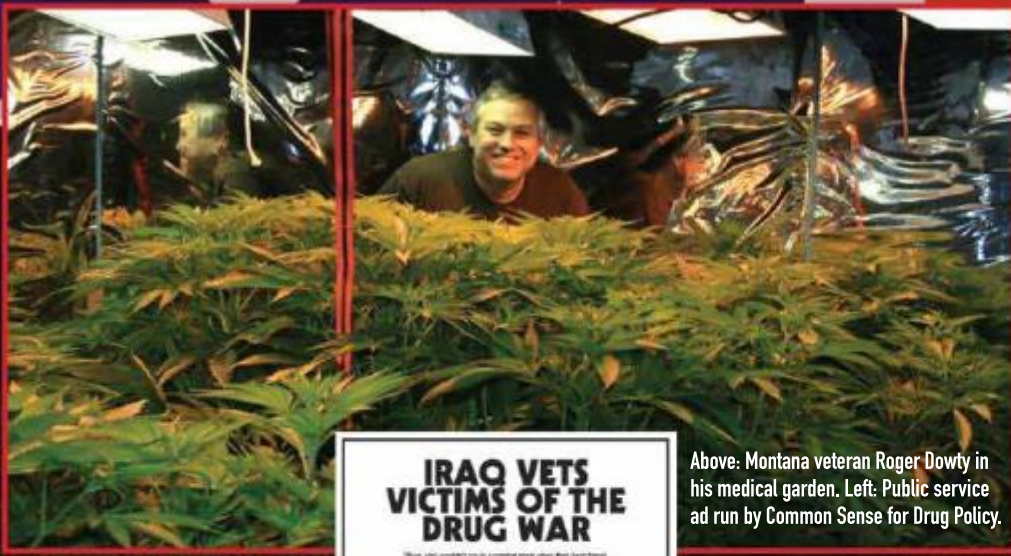
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Above: Montana veteran Roger Dowty in his medical garden. Left: Public service ad run by Common Sense for Drug Policy.

Dowty found the caregivers in his area too expensive, so with some help from *HIGH TIMES*, he designed his own hydroponic system and began growing his own medicine. Partnering with an investor, he formed the caregiver company Medical Cannabis of Montana. But when he approached the county attorney to file the necessary paperwork and ensure that his new operation was in strict compliance with the law, he was immediately denied approval and threatened with prosecution.

Nikolai Jackson served as a combat medic during Operation Iraqi Freedom before being honorably discharged for PTSD and multi-level degenerative disc disease. As part of his treatment, the VA prescribed a staggeringly dangerous mix of medications, including Seroquel (an antipsychotic), Ambien (a sedative), Citalopram (an antidepressant), Prazosin (for hypertension), Ativan (an anticonvulsant/muscle relaxant used for anxiety disorders) and Clonazepam (ditto)—none of which helps him as much as cannabis does.

"Marijuana has cut my pill intake down to almost one-quarter of what it once was," Jackson tells *HT*. "I smoke it daily, and it's helped with my flashbacks, intrusive memories, anxiety, sleeping and social disorders. My quality of life has been greatly improved—as well as my memory and concentration. No manufactured pill has given me the pain relief and mobility that medical marijuana has for my problems and pain."

Yet when Jackson tried to explain this to his therapist, the latter refused to see him again until he "got clean."

"All I got was reefer-madness propaganda thrown in my face," Jackson complains. "I don't understand how the government could withhold medicine from *any* sick patient—especially those who have served their country honorably and developed symptoms from that service that marijuana alleviates."

Even if PTSD sufferers live in a state that allows medical marijuana, it's unlikely that they'll be able to obtain a doctor's recommendation for their condition, as PTSD is not on most states' list of "acceptable" ailments. Most state laws allow medical-marijuana use only for severe physiological conditions (AIDS, cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, etc.), not psychological ones—in fact, Washington, Maine and Vermont have explicitly ex-

cluded mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression from their lists. Aside from California, New Mexico is the only other medical-marijuana state whose guidelines are broad enough to include PTSD (23 percent of the patients enrolled there are diagnosed with PTSD—more than any other illness). The reason for this is that PTSD is classified as a form of depression and lumped in with a number of other psychiatric conditions (such as anxiety and schizophrenia), making it extremely problematic for doctors and elected officials to include it in medical-marijuana legislation.

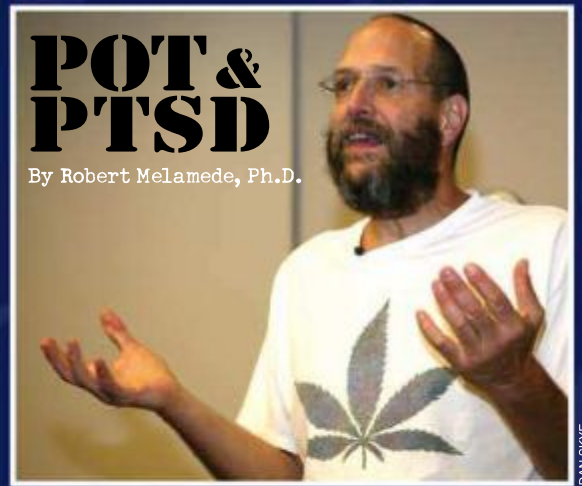
However, in a recent interview with *Salem-News.com* publisher Bonnie King, Dr. Leveque insisted that PTSD shouldn't be classified as "depression" at all. "My dictionary defines *depression* as 'dejected, dispirited, lowered in vitality or function or activity, and sad'—and that's just not it. On the other hand, *anguish* is defined as 'distress, difficulty, extreme pain, agony, torture and torment.' Being in an infantry battle is all of those things—and when you survive an infantry battle, you *have* all of those things. But you're not 'depressed.'"

Leveque believes that categorizing PTSD in such a way also allows the VA to delay and deny disability claims, which saves the agency money. PTSD needs to be separated from depression and other more ambiguous disorders before groups like VMMA can launch a successful nationwide push to include it under state medical-marijuana laws.

"When you get a vet in there talking about smoking a little pot so they don't have to stay up all night revisiting the horrors of war," he says, "it becomes a little less controversial and a little easier to get that legislation through."

Of course, testimonials—no matter how numerous or passionate—are no substitute for scientific research. Fortunately, the evidence that cannabis has legitimate medical value in treating these conditions continues to grow—and Israeli researchers have been at the forefront.

At the 2004 Clinical Conference on Cannabis Therapeutics (hosted by Patients Out of Time), Professor Raphael Mechoulam of Hebrew University in Jerusalem—the man who first isolated and named the THC molecule back in 1964—postulated that cannabinoids aid the brain's natural function of discarding unneeded



By Robert Melamede, Ph.D.

*Dr. Melamede is an associate professor at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs and the CEO and president of Cannabis Science Inc. He is also on the advisory board of Veterans for Medical Marijuana Access.*

In order to understand why so many people—especially our veterans, dating back to the Vietnam era—have found marijuana beneficial for dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), we must first understand the endocannabinoid system (a term that refers to the cannabis-like compounds produced by the body—literally, "cannabinoids from within"). Most animals, including all vertebrates, produce these compounds, which play an important role in combating stress.

The Free Online Dictionary defines stress as follows: "A mentally or emotionally disruptive or upsetting condition occurring in response to adverse external influences and capable of affecting physical health, usually characterized by increased heart rate, a rise in blood pressure, muscular tension, irritability, and depression." The all-pervasive endocannabinoid system regulates each of these physiological parameters. Throughout all levels of the complexity that identifies living systems, the fundamental characteristic is one of dynamic biochemical balance (or *homeostasis*). Like a seesaw going up and down, opposing forces in our bodies oscillate within the boundaries defined by our genetics and life history. Thousands of peer-reviewed scientific articles have shown that our endocannabinoid system is involved in homeostatically regulating literally all of our bodily systems—cardiovascular, digestive, endocrine, excretory, immune, nervous, muscular, skeletal and integumentary (skin).

In these biological systems, both endocannabinoids and phytocannabinoids (those found in marijuana) function in a *biphasic* manner. This means that these compounds can have one effect at a low dose and the exact opposite effect at a high dose. Their function is to maintain the biochemical balance in a manner similar to the way that a thermostat maintains a particular average temperature setting—by turning the heat up when it senses cold, or turning the heat down (and turning on the air conditioning) when it gets too hot. Similarly, our bodies have inflammatory biochemical pathways that typically involve free radicals, "the friction of life," coupled with anti-inflammatory biochemical pathways that often involve endocannabinoids, "the oil of life."

However, evolution selected the settings for all this biochemical activity way back in our less sanitary (and far more unhealthy) past. Infectious diseases are no longer the leading cause of death in first-world countries; now, age-related illnesses are. This means that to combat infection these days, our inflammatory thermostat is set too high, while



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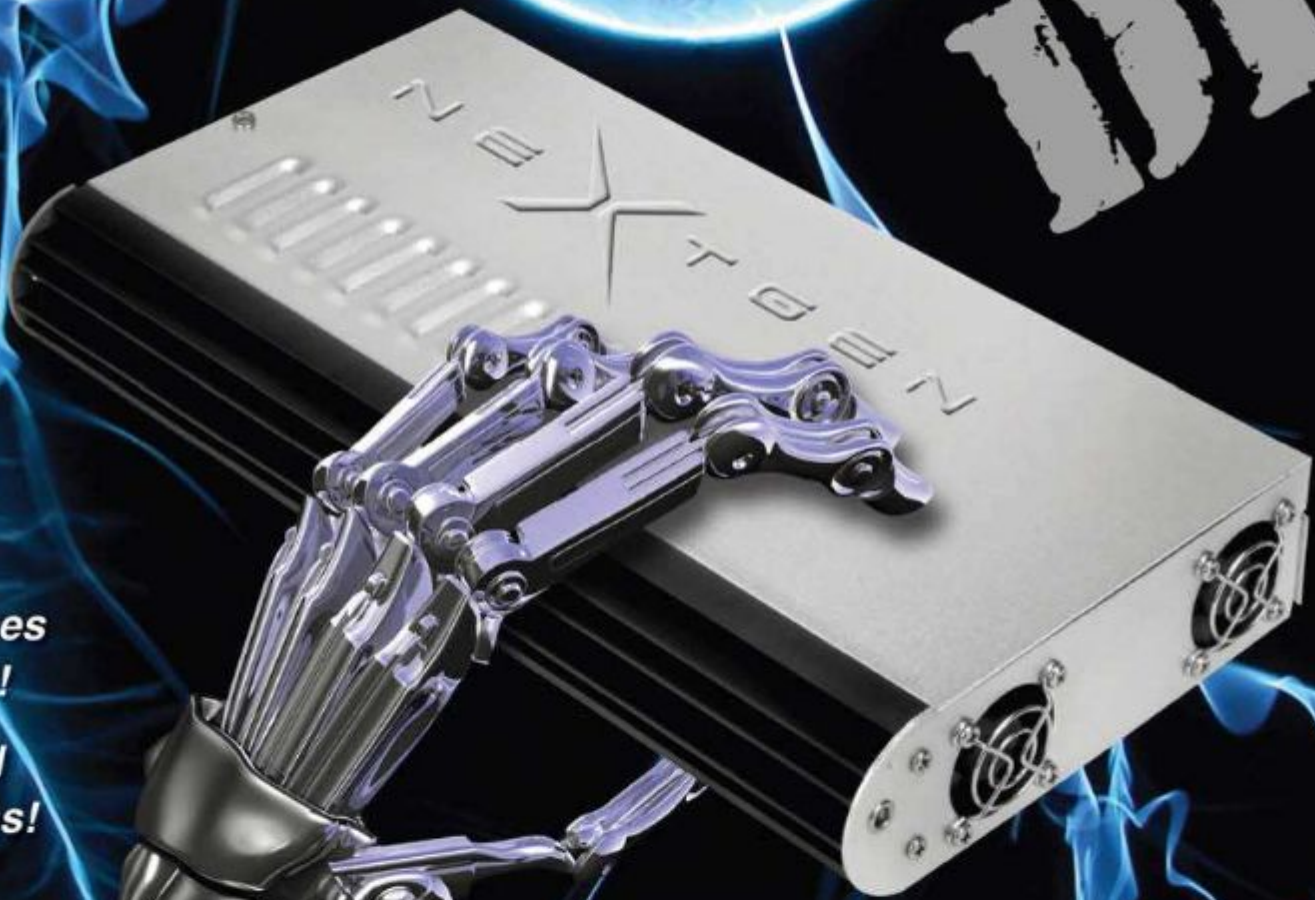


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information, making them a possible treatment for PTSD (see sidebar).

Taking this theory a step further, a recent study conducted by the Department of Psychology at the University of Haifa (published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*) found that a synthetic compound resembling THC can prevent the stress-induced enhancement of fear memories in rats—in effect minimizing or reducing traumatic memories.

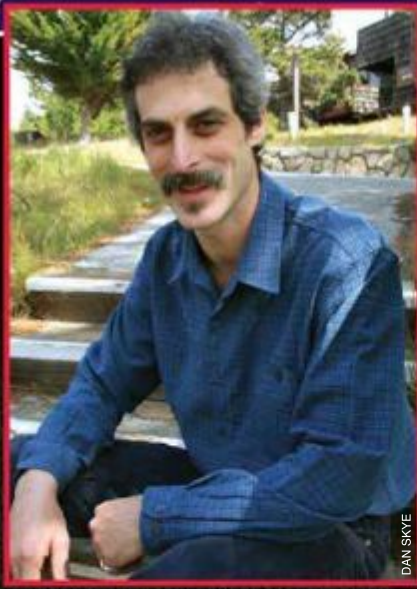
“The endocannabinoid system has recently emerged as important in the regulation of extinction learning and in the regulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis,” the study states. “Our findings may support a wide therapeutic application for cannabinoids in the treatment of conditions associated with the inappropriate retention of aversive memories and stress-related disorders.”

On the heels of these findings, the Israeli Health Ministry began approvals for full clinical trials on over 50 Israeli soldiers with PTSD. The ministry already supplies cannabis to approximately 800 licensed patients suffering from severe pain due to cancer, multiple sclerosis and certain other conditions—as does Canada, whose Department of Veterans Affairs implemented a policy in May 2009 whereby the use of medical marijuana is not only accepted as part of treatment, but actually paid for by the government. Yet despite this mounting evidence and the overwhelming testimony from PTSD sufferers, our VA has still refused to acknowledge marijuana’s benefits or even discuss it as a treatment option.

There are glimmers of hope, however.

On Saturday, June 6, 2009, the *Saginaw News* posted a letter from Gabriel Perez, the director of the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center in Michigan, which said that the VA would now accept medical-marijuana use in states where it was legal and would no longer remove veterans from its pain-management programs if they test positive for pot—provided they have a doctor’s recommendation, and as long as they don’t bring their medicine to a VA facility. The letter stated:

“It is acknowledged that testing positive for marijuana in a patient, based upon a random drug screening, will not serve as a breach of the current pain management agreement if the patient submits documentation in support of the marijuana being prescribed and dispensed in conformity with Michigan law. The legalization of medical marijuana in Michigan is acknowledged. However, pursuant to federal law, VA physicians, nurse practitioners and other licensed clinicians are not authorized or permitted to participate in the recommendation for treatment of or prescribing medical marijuana to a VA patient that would otherwise be legal in Michigan. Furthermore, the VA will not dispense, prescribe or store medical marijuana, and its possession on VA property remains illegal and a criminal offense.”



Sgt. Michael Krawitz, executive director of Veterans For Medical Marijuana Access.

According to the veterans’ advocacy website VAWatchdog.org, this policy appears to be the same in all states where medical marijuana is allowed by law. However, the VA has yet to release an official statement on the matter. HIGH TIMES made several attempts to contact the VA by phone and email regarding its policy on medical marijuana—none of which were successful.

“It’s important to understand that in the VA system at this point, there is no policy,” says VMMA’s Krawitz. “As best as we can tell, that was a regional decision that was made in that part of the country.”

But according to Krawitz, that’s about to change. “I’ve been told by inside sources at the VA that they’re about to clearly spell out their policy regarding marijuana in their new guidelines on pain management, which are expected out any time now. Because of our work, it’s very possible that the VA may become the first federal agency/entity that recognizes medical marijuana.”

In the meantime, if you’re a vet out there who’s encountering problems related to marijuana use, VMMA offers this advice: “First, try to communicate with the doctor politely and see if you can correct the situation,” Krawitz suggests. “If not, go to the patient advocate’s office at the hospital. If all that fails, contact us. We’re here, and we’ll try to help them in any way we can. Most of all, if things seem shitty right now, just try to ride it out. Things are changing very fast, so just hold on.”

This year, our government passed the largest-ever increase in the VA’s budget (\$15 billion). Unfortunately, nowhere inside did it contain any provision for (or even discussion of) medical marijuana. With the American Medical Association’s vote last year to reclassify cannabis as a Schedule II drug under the Controlled Substances Act, isn’t it high time that we took the advice of former Surgeon General Dr. Jocelyn Elders and “put science ahead of politics”?

We owe our men and women in uniform an immeasurable debt of gratitude for defending us and our way of life. If our government and our political leaders truly want to honor this service, they need to retire their outdated reefer-madness rhetoric and put the well-being of our wounded heroes first. Otherwise, all those parades and promises will ring as hollow as the rifle blast at a military funeral.

*Semper high, fellas. ✨*

*Thanks to Salem-News.com, Veterans for Medical Marijuana Access, Veterans for Weed, Dr. Melamede, Dr. Leveque, Michael Krawitz, and especially to all the brave souls who fight for our freedoms both at home and abroad. For a full list of resources and information on this topic, go to [hightimes.com/tags/veterans](http://hightimes.com/tags/veterans).*

# POT & PTSD

our endocannabinoid thermostat is set too low for optimal human life in a modern environment of good public health, nutrition and antibiotics.

It should also be noted that illnesses caused by excessive endocannabinoid activity are extremely rare; one such example is found in the hypothalamus, which can drive excessive food intake, which in turn may lead to obesity and related health problems. In contrast, there are many illnesses that appear to be the result of endocannabinoid deficiencies. In fact, it may be that any illness that benefits from increased cannabinoid activity is intrinsically the result of an endocannabinoid deficiency. From this perspective, one can understand why cannabis provides such a natural solution for the treatment of so many illnesses—especially PTSD.

PTSD occurs when an individual’s capacity to buffer stressful events is overwhelmed. The endocannabinoid system plays a fundamental role in regulating the biochemistry that appears to underlie PTSD. Cannabinoids offer protection from stress starting at birth, and are even found in mother’s milk. In the nervous system, they typically protect neurons from the cell death that results from excessive stimulation by excitotoxins (substances that have a destructive reaction with brain cells). The neurotransmitter glutamate is one such substance; it is a key player in learning and memory, but too much glutamate can lead to excitotoxicity and cell death.

Cannabinoids regulate the strength of the connections between neurons in critical areas of the brain that control the emotions, such as fear and stress, as well as memories. Repeated, coupled neuronal stimulation—i.e., the stimulation of one neuron by another—can lead to a facilitated connection between the two, a process known as long-term potentiation (LTP). The role of endocannabinoids is to inhibit LTP (though in the right circumstances, they can also increase it).

When an organism is subject to a particularly stressful stimulus, what occurs is a combination of cell death and the establishment of memories that are too intense—particularly unpleasant ones that are too clearly and frequently remembered. Endocannabinoids maintain the basic neurological balance of stimulus and response by keeping neuronal activity within a safe range. We now know that a specific role of endocannabinoids is to promote the forgetting of unpleasant memories. Again we see the homeostatic balance between opposing forces (in this case, remembering and forgetting) controlled by our endocannabinoid system in a manner that inhibits illness.

One of the biological consequences that result from taking antidepressants is the development of new neurons, or *neurogenesis*. Interestingly, neurogenesis in the brain appears to be controlled by endocannabinoids and can specifically occur in response to excitotoxicity. Thus we see that cannabinoids have a positive influence on the factors necessary to heal those suffering from PTSD—and even to inhibit its development in the first place.

Clearly, the scientific literature is in stark contrast to the blatant lies spread by governmental agencies. Rather than killing brain cells, cannabis actually protects them and promotes their regeneration. People suffering from PTSD—especially military personnel injured in the service of their country—should no longer be denied the freedom to use the natural, miraculous medicine that we call marijuana. ✨



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# GRAY MATTERS

The HIGH TIMES Interview with Judge James P. Gray. By Mark Miller

**It's not every day that you find a conservative judge from the most conservative pocket of California advocating the legalization of all drugs—not just marijuana. But then, Judge James P. Gray isn't anyone's idea of an everyday judge.**

The son of a US Army veteran, Gray was born in 1945, making him one of the original baby boomers. His relation to drug culture may be far less linear than typical members of the boomer demographic, but it's no less vital. Though he was born in Washington, DC, Gray regards himself as a native Southern Californian. He was raised here and received his BA from UCLA in 1966, after which he taught in the Peace Corps in Costa Rica—an experience, he says, that never truly left him. Gray then received his law degree from USC in 1971.

After stints practicing law as a Navy JAG, as a federal prosecutor and in private practice, Gray found his true calling when he was named as a judge to the Santa Ana Municipal Court in 1983, and then to the bench of the Orange County Superior Court in 1989. (One of the ironies of his original appointment was that the resigning judge, Alan Plaia, was later convicted of a major pot conspiracy in Hawaii.)

It was in 1992 that Gray issued his first salvo of “friendly fire” in the War on Drugs: In a groundbreaking press conference, he denounced the multiple failures of drug prohibition. Then, in 2003, this lifelong Republican abruptly switched to the Libertarian Party. (However, his ultimate reasons may surprise you.) In March 2004, Gray captured the Libertarian Party nomination for the US Senate in a statewide primary. He suspended his judicial activities to run against the incumbent Democratic senator, Barbara Boxer. He received over 200,000 votes, but finished in fourth place.

Retired from the bench in 2009, Gray currently serves as a private judge for ADR Services Inc. in Irvine, CA. He resides in Newport Beach with his wife, Dr. Grace Walker Gray of Walker Physical Therapy. The couple has four children. He has also written two books, *Why Our Drug Laws Have Failed* and *What We Can Do About It: A Judicial Indictment of the War on Drugs* (Temple University Press) and *Wearing the Robe* (Square One Press).

**Describe the circumstances that led to your stance against drug prohibition.**

I still consider myself a Peace Corps volunteer—I look at problems in our society and try to figure out ways to make things better. I've done that throughout my judicial career. I established the first drug court in 1984, for alcohol screening. Then I looked at other drugs and found that these drugs are always available. I decided, who better to have a meaningful conversation about this than a conservative judge in a conservative county?

You couldn't be in my courtroom and see what we were doing without becoming of the opinion that what we were doing was wrong. We're churning low-level drug users through the system—not only is it very costly, but as soon as the addict is back on the streets, he's looking for another hit or drink. The tougher we get on the low-level drug users, the softer we get with the prosecution of robbery, rape and murder.

Furthermore, we're sending emotionally fragile people who self-medicate to jail. In my experience, females with mental-health problems use crystal meth, and males with similar problems

use cocaine, and the only time they say they feel normal is when they're on drugs. Jail is a more expensive option we have in our arsenal than treatment.

America has a more radical drug policy than any other Western industrialized nation—and we have a bigger drug problem than any other Western industrialized country. We are mindlessly punitive in this country with our mandatory-minimum incarcerations. Drug prohibition is the second-most-failed social policy in US history, short of slavery.

**Elaborate on your historic 1992 press conference.**

It was unprecedented in that a sitting judge was speaking publicly at a press conference and stating that marijuana, cocaine and heroin should be legalized. My attitude has been the same since 1992; my opinions and my confidence in those opinions have not changed. At the time, I thought it was the most patriotic thing I could do for my country. I thought we'd have a new drug policy by the year 2000. Obviously, I was wrong.

My fears over job security were less impor-

tant than the welfare of the country. Fortunately, in 1991, I had just won a six-year [election], so I did have some security. I was worried they'd run someone against me—both the Orange County sheriff and district attorney were against me, but they're long gone now. I was expecting death threats, but didn't receive any.

Ultimately, I am gratified by the results of the press conference. The *Los Angeles Times* and the *Orange County Register* treated it as a big deal. Within a week, I was on the cover of the *LA Times* with a stack of letters of support on my desk. The response was deeply gratifying and has remained so.

**What has been the public reaction to your viewpoints?**

Whenever I make public appearances, people don't take me on; they agree with me. When I appear on radio shows, there is almost no hostility. Also, being involved with drug-policy reform has introduced me to some of the best people I've ever met, even some that are in prison, some who are drug users, and others like me—conservative non-drug-users. There's a sense of integrity among these people. They're not doing it for personal gain; they see a failed system they want to help change.

Whenever I begin my discussions, I ask, “How many people think the US is in better shape today than five years ago when it comes to drug issues?” And no one raises their hand. I tell them that we have no legitimate expectation of being in better shape for the next five years unless we change things.

**You have six points that substantiate the legalization argument. What are they?**

1. To save hundreds of millions on the futile effort to eradicate marijuana and incarcerate nonviolent offenders. Despite all these efforts, marijuana remains the No. 1 cash crop in California; grapes are second.

2. The State Board of Equalization, which is responsible for taxation, confirmed that legal mari-