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HIGH TIMES JANUARY



Should any male plants release their pollen around these lovely females, the buds on the female plants will shut down their resin production and begin forming seeds within their flowers.

—Sex in the Growroom, page 72

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45 The Stoner Orgasm

As any toker can tell you, catching a buzz before a roll in the hay is absolutely essential. But the power of pot in the sexual realm goes far beyond merely enhancing pleasure.

By Sophie Saint Thomas

63 Om, Sweet Om

The members of a women's cannabis collective in California are pooling their talents and energy to produce great medical pot for the state's dispensaries as well as an award-winning line of edibles. *By Dan Skye*

72 Sex in the Growroom

There's more than meets the eye to both determining the sex of your plants and attempting to create new strains. Nico breaks down the basics of sexing and breeding for beginner growers looking to expand their horizons. *By Nico Escondido*

89 LED Lighting Technology

Many pot farmers wonder about using LEDs (light-emitting diodes). Check out the pros and cons of this revolutionary lighting technology.

By Jorge Cervantes.

99 30 Days in Tent City

For more than two decades, the outdoor prison complex known as "Tent City" has housed thousands of Arizona's inmates. Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who created this horror, calls it a "concentration camp." A recent visitor recounts his stay. *By Brian Penny*

109 The High Times Interview: Dan Savage


He's perhaps the most popular (and controversial) sex-advice columnist in America. Dan Savage pulls no punches when it comes to the bedroom—including recommending cannabis as an excellent way to improve your sex life and achieve those moments of ecstasy. *By Dan Skye*



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An early frost murdered this Montana garden.

Tragic Growing

Sometimes your grow op becomes grow slop! Mother Nature gets nasty, or your carefully calibrated cultivation goes haywire. Disasters happen—from bug infestation to bud devastation. Check out our online gallery of gardens gone terribly wrong!



Danko's Back!

Senior cultivation editor Danny Danko is back on the Internet airwaves dispensing cultivation tips, pot wisdom and checking in with top pot celebs. Check out *Free Weed From Danny Danko* weekly on hightimes.com!

Glass Artists of the Month

Brian and Rebecca Peterson, also known as “Wicked” and “Mrs. Wicked,” are owners of Wicked Water Works (wickedwaterworks.com). They met in 2003 in an art chat room and became quick friends. Drawn together by their love of art, they began dating in 2004 and married in 2005.

Amazingly, Wicked only started blowing glass as a hobby in 2005. But it became his obsession within a year, and he turned full-time to the torch as admiration for his work grew. His passion has produced spectacular pieces, ranging from blood and



gore to coral reef pieces. Wicked is completely self-taught, but he views that as an advantage: “I think I’ve conceived a few glass-blowing techniques never seen in the industry before.”

The other half of the Wicked duo started her career alongside her husband in 2009, working as his apprentice. Wicked sales were skyrocketing and Mrs. Wicked quickly mastered the

craft, and her own unique style of sculpting glass art evolved. She says simply: “I enjoy creating beauty out of glass, from flowers to coral.”

Since then, the Wicked husband/wife team has consistently challenged themselves. Although their signature production line remains their popular calling card, their passion lies with high-end glass. “We love that functional glass pipes are proudly displayed as art by buyers, ignoring the stigma that some people associate with smoking,” says Wicked.

Check out more of the Wicked’s work online!



Stoner Zodiac

Do you look to the heavens for guidance? If so, check out High Horoscopes, our new weekly forecast from star astrologer Nick Dagan Best. Don’t step outside your door without knowing how the stars have aligned for your sign!



Tent City Tyrant

This month, contributor Brian Penny tells the tale of his 30-day visit to Tent City, Arizona’s disgraceful outdoor prison. Who runs the place? Infamous Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Read our online profile of this heinous prison warden.

DAN SKYE (2)

POT POLL

Is Pot Your Sex Partner?



We can safely say that the High Times audience has no problem toking up for most daily activities. Obviously, that includes sex. But sex is pretty great no matter how you slice it. So we asked you to respond honestly: Does pot improve sex for you, detract from it—or does it make no difference at all? No surprises here. Of nearly 3,000 responses, 83 percent said stoned sex was super. But 5 percent said pot detracts from the experience. Maybe you’re not doing it right! (We mean smoking, not screwing.)

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Cannabis: a path to ecstasy.

Pot = Great Sex

Because cannabis remains illegal on the federal level, research into this miraculous plant has been severely hampered. Anecdotal evidence of its beneficial properties and power to heal—the personal experience of its users—is often the only source of reference to guide those considering cannabis as medicine.

Most of us crave a fulfilling sex life. We want to touch and be touched. We desire ecstasy. There's a mountain of anecdotal evidence proving that cannabis is a healthy pathway to sexual fulfillment.

In this issue, contributor Sophie Saint Thomas lays out a first-person narrative of how pot saved her sex life in "The Stoner Orgasm." But she also relies on top experts to confirm what all of us already know: Sex on pot is fucking fantastic! Whether you suffer from PTSD, shyness, social anxiety, premature ejaculation or simply want to be more "in the moment," cannabis has the capacity to both improve and enhance the sexual experience.

Adding to our obsession with sex in this issue, no-holds-barred columnist Dan Savage weighs in on how being high heightens sexual pleasure, while editor-at-large Nico Escondido takes matters a bit further, regaling us with "Sex in the Growroom," an inside look at pot plants doin' the wild thing.

We also cover Om, the all-women's collective that grows great pot and turns out delicious edibles in its California kitchen. Plus we visit the infamous "Tent City" prison in Arizona, courtesy of contributor Brian Penny.

The world of cannabis overflows with tales of our personal experience. Some are stories of hope, enlightenment, even ecstasy; others tell of the terrible persecution that still afflicts our community.

Fortunately—or unfortunately—we are bound to cover both.

Dan Skye
Editor-in-Chief

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Back to Basics

For almost 10 years, I've been a *High Times* subscriber—I love the magazine and all the helpful articles. Just one suggestion, though: Get back to the basics of growing! We know there's been a sharp shift when it comes to growing in the legal states, but the fact is that half of the US still can't legally grow. We don't have hundreds of square feet available to grow in (although it's nice to imagine), so can we get some good articles about smaller grows in tents again? I'm flowering in an 8' x 8' area and vegging in a 4' x 4' space, and I would love to see some semi-professional grow ops highlighted in the magazine instead of these mega-bunkers and massive greenhouses. (Pretty soon, one of those huge grows will have a major corporation's name on it; as an avid grower and toker, I would hate to see that happen.) Please show us some nicely built amateur grows, and get back to the basics of cloning and good ventilation setups. Coverage of auto-flowering plants would be nice as well!

Best regards,
Casey

All good suggestions, Casey—in fact, look for an issue dedicated to smaller grows later this year. But you can also find answers to many of your concerns in our monthly grow coverage.

Property of "The Man"

The legalization of marijuana is a sad and serious blow to the freedom once obtainable from that good weed. Through legalization, thousands of opportunities for conscientious objection have been erased. Hanging out with Mary Jane was once a delightful opportunity to step outside the boundaries set by "The Man," but now she belongs to him—and so, when stoned, do we.

Mary Jane is now the property not only of The Man, but of his minions, too: the physicians, educators, cops, bureaucrats and other determinists who seek to define and prescribe freedom. What was once a delightful opportunity for wrongdoing and crime-think has become a legal means to keep the population not dangerously high but satisfactorily stoned, and thereby more vulnerable to advertising, propaganda and medical advice. Think soma from Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

Legalize marijuana? Next, legalize fun. Then it could be researched, organized and prescribed.

Joseph Gretsch



I've put my life on the line for my country and, now, my community. I will continue to do so as long as I wear this badge, but there's never been a more useless part of my job than arresting nonviolent marijuana offenders.

Yes, it's a much better idea to continue to bust and incarcerate people who use pot. And as far as pot making stoners more open to exploitation by "advertising, propaganda and medical advice" we've always found the exact opposite to be true. But your notion that keeping marijuana illegal is the best way to stick it to "The Man" is definitely one we haven't heard before.

A Cop's Plea

I don't use marijuana, mainly because I was never really exposed to it. Also, I wanted to join the military and then civilian law enforcement.

I don't get our society. Personally, I would rather spend my time dealing with the meth and pill problem. In my career, I've seen more good people go to jail—keeping me from really protecting my town—because of these stupid pot laws.

Wake up and write every representative you have in the state and federal government. Get out and vote. Politicians are our employees. I cannot do the type of job I feel is necessary because of these laws. I've put my life on the line for my country and, now, my community. I will continue to do so as long as I wear this badge, but there's never been a more useless part of my job than arresting nonviolent marijuana offenders.

Ty Coach

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Heroic Stoner

I'm from Grand Haven, a small beach town on the

shores of Lake Michigan. Just a little over a week ago, a friend of mine, Zebulon Boeskool, was out surfing during a huge storm. Two teenage girls who were swimming were swept away by the rip currents. People on the beach were able to reach only one of the girls; Zeb was able to rescue the other one, who had become unconscious. It was national news. Zeb is being honored with a hero award from our city.

Zeb is an avid smoker and is very much involved in the herb community. Except for places like *High Times*, there aren't enough positive stories involving people who partake and showing that we, in fact, make a difference and are a huge part of society.

Stephanie Nash
Michigan

Ounce vs. Gram

I'm a longtime subscriber to *High Times* living in Switzerland. This is what disturbs me: I don't have any idea what a gram of weed costs in the US, despite reading THMQ for over two decades!

Please, can you—maybe in brackets, after your price quotations—indicate the equivalent value in a metric measurement such as grams or kilos? Please understand that many of us don't have a clue the way it reads now: "price per ounce" or something like that. So I would like you to make it easy for those of us in Europe and other parts of the world to get an idea what the prices are in the US. This isn't too much to ask, and I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Also, would it maybe be possible to put a team of people in different important locations of the world and have them make monthly reports on the prices there? I'm thinking of places like Holland, Spain, Jamaica and others that have good herb or "good" laws.

Andreas Hinteregger

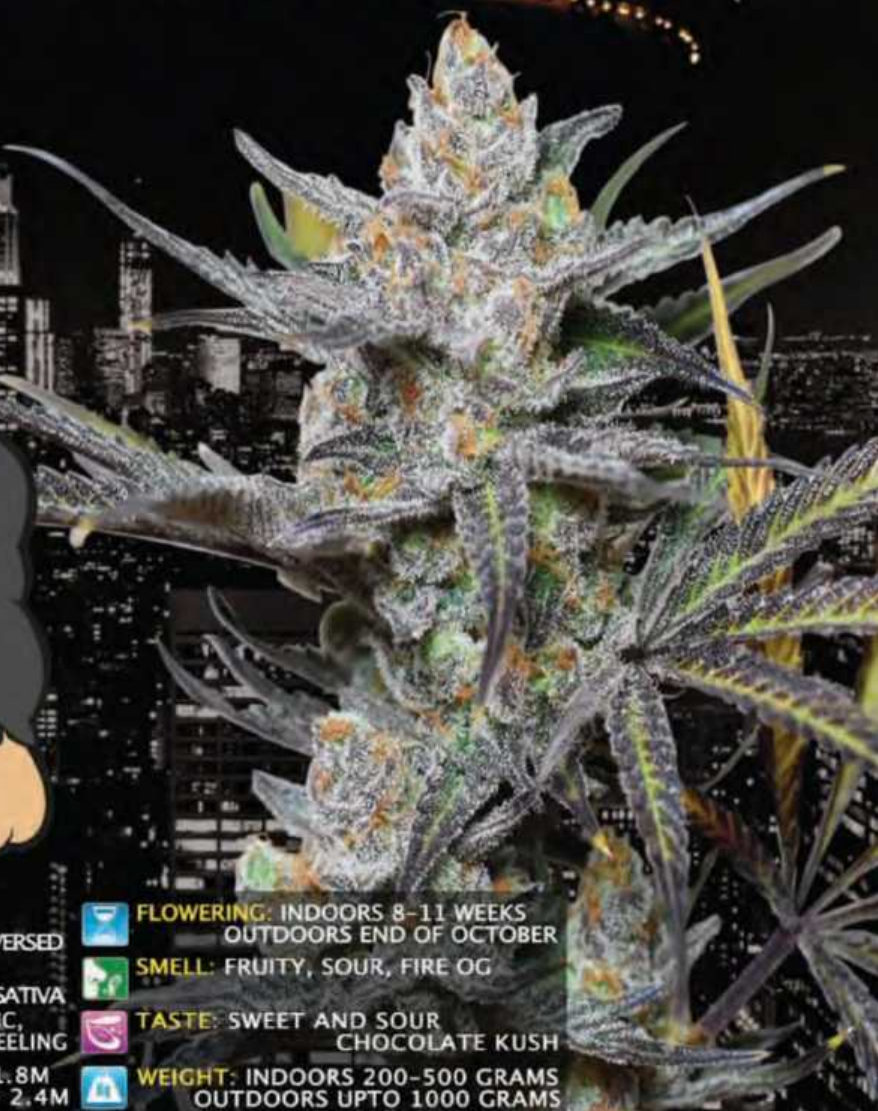
We'll consider your suggestion, Andreas. But FYI, an eighth of an ounce equals 3.5 grams, a quarter-ounce is 7 grams, and so on. As far as HT news bureaus worldwide, we can only dream...



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**Contact
High**

FABULOUS FEMALES This Northern California garden belongs to the Om Grown Collective, whose membership is all female. As harvest approaches, you'll find the ladies of Om performing all of the duties involved in the cultivation process. And once the plants are dried and cured, they'll become part of the award-winning line of Om Edibles. Read "Om, Sweet Om" on page 63. *Photo by Dan Skye*







SEX IN THE GROWROOM The birds and the bees? Pretty close. Here, male pollen sacs open to release their plumes of pollen as ripe, full sacs hang in the background. Find out how your favorite strains are made and how to determine your plant's sex early on with Nico Escondido's feature "Sex in the Growroom" on page 72. *Photo by Mel Frank*

**Contact
High**



**Contact
High**

LED LIGHTING Grow guru Jorge Cervantes illuminates the details surrounding the use of light-emitting diode (LED) technology for cultivating marijuana. Get the inside scoop on electrical cost savings, reduction in heat and whether LEDs will replace traditional indoor growroom lighting on page 89. *Photo by Jorge Cervantes*





REBEL YELL

They live life to the beat of a different drummer, are sure of who they are and what they stand for.

They're the free and forward thinkers, innovators and creators whose ideas and words inspire, polarize, spark imaginations and powerfully connect.

They're rebels, outcasts, Davids in a world of Goliaths, that come from the least likely of places.

They tread where others fear to go, dislike conforming to the norm, and don't care much for the man or his machine because they truly embrace freedom.

It's hard to fool them because they have a clear perspective on the world and see things for what they really are.

They're fiercely aware of what's right and wrong, speak their minds and take no prisoners.

They look at life differently, society can't pigeon hole them or put them in box, and they see things where others don't.

Their ideas are sometimes out on the fringe, the ragged edge. They have to be, because they're open to the possibilities and realities that change the world.

Some see them as a fish out of water, trouble makers and oddballs. We see them as gifted, profound and uniquely brilliant.



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Entertainment

UMO Gets Weird

Puffin' with the maestros of psychedelic pop. p.34



Food

Ganja Granola

Award-winning crunchy munchie stoner treat. p.40



Jeff Mizanskey is all smiles following his release.

A Crime of Justice

Jeff Mizanskey, Missouri's marijuana lifer, bids farewell to the Big House. *By Mike Adams*

Twenty-two years after being thrown into a maximum-security prison in Missouri, Jeff Mizanskey, a 62-year-old non-violent offender sentenced to life without the possibility of parole for marijuana possession, was released on September 1. His release followed several years of intensive lobbying efforts by Missouri cannabis advocates, who launched a full-throttle liberation campaign that managed to gain the support of a powerful contingent of state lawmakers. Ultimately, Governor Jay Nixon was persuaded to show compassion for a man facing the prospect of dying in prison. Mizanskey, whose case became the

subject of national attention, received a commutation of his life sentence in May 2015. A favorable decision by the parole board came three months later. "I think it was very good of Governor Nixon to grant clemency," said Mizanskey attorney Dan Viets, speaking to *High Times*. "Jeff would've had no hope if it weren't for his action."

Mizanskey's tale begins in Sedalia, Missouri, in 1984, where he was slapped with his first felony after an ounce of weed he sold to a relative ended up in the hands of an undercover cop. A search of his residence led to the discovery of a half-pound of marijuana—enough

to earn him a nasty reputation with local law enforcement as a drug dealer. Because it was his first offense, Mizanskey did what most people in his position do: He accepted a plea deal in exchange for probation.

Seven years later, police learned that Mizanskey was still slinging the occasional dimebag out of his home. With a new search warrant, cops discovered two ounces of weed—enough to charge him with a second felony. Mizanskey, who never anticipated that these two pot charges would come back to haunt him, accepted another plea agreement and took a lesser sentence.

Two years later, Mizanskey's fate was sealed when a sting operation caught him on video accepting a package of marijuana at a local hotel. Despite having only a small amount of marijuana on his person at the time, Mizanskey was charged with felony possession with the intent to distribute. This time around, because of his two prior felony convictions for marijuana, the prosecutor offered him a raw deal: 20 years in prison in exchange for a guilty plea.

Mizanskey opted to take his chances in a jury trial. Randall Johnston, his attorney at the time, warned him that the decision could backfire—and it did, in a big way. After two days of deliberation, the jury handed down a guilty verdict. The judge imposed the maximum penalty allowed by law: Due to the state's three-strikes rule—now repealed—Mizanskey received a sentence of life in prison without parole.

Because the judge hadn't instructed the jury that they could find Mizanskey guilty of misdemeanor possession instead of the felony, the initial verdict was successfully appealed. A new trial was set, and there was light at the end of the tunnel. But then Mizanskey drew the same judge, who relished the opportunity to nail him again. Despite numerous requests by his attorney for a lesser sentence, Mizanskey

“One-third of my life I spent in prison. It's a shame for something like that to happen in America. We have child molesters walking out on parole, while somebody smoking marijuana may never get out.”

received the most severe punishment available—life. He became the property of the Missouri Department of Corrections in 1993, and would have remained in prison until his death, had it not been for a story profiling his case in the *Riverfront Times* in 2013.

Activists with the pro-pot group Show-Me Cannabis created momentum. State Representative Shamed Dogan and State Senator Jason Holsman were instrumental in garnering support for Mizanskey in the Missouri General Assembly. In time, a letter signed by 126 Democrat and Republican lawmakers demanding a commutation of Mizanskey's sentence made its way to Governor Jay Nixon's office. According to Dan Viets, who has represented Mizanskey for the past two years, that letter, along with the governor's decision to offer clemency, really “carried some weight” with the parole board.

On the morning of his release, Mizanskey—visibly overwhelmed by the media attention—sat down with *High Times*. He said that walking out of prison after all

these years was like a “dream.” He wants to ensure that no one else ever endures the hell of prison over using or selling the cannabis plant.

“Nobody deserves to go to jail or prison for marijuana,” he said. “It just doesn't make any sense. People have been using it for thousands of years—and now all of a sudden it's illegal and they're putting you in jail for it.

“One-third of my life I spent in prison,” he continued. “It's a shame for something like that to happen in America. We have child molesters walking out on parole, while somebody smoking marijuana may never get out.”

Jeff Mizanskey will now be joining that fight on the outside. In addition to catching up on some fishing, enjoying a few welcome-home parties and taking a cruise, he plans to join forces with Show-Me Cannabis, which is pushing to end pot prohibition in Missouri and legalize marijuana statewide, as well as working to free anyone currently behind bars for a pot-related offense. 🌿

HIGH FIVE

Baccalaureate Buzzkills

Last month, we profiled some cool colleges for stoners. Here are a few at the other end of the spectrum.



Brigham Young University

Provo, UT

It's fun seeing *The Book of Mormon* on Broadway while stoned, but forget about getting high on this repressive campus, where even drinks with caffeine are banned. It's a hassle scoring weed at BYU, as only 4 percent of the students there admit to pot use. The heavily Mormon student body abstains for religious reasons.



Auburn University

Auburn, AL

One of the most repressive, anti-pot public colleges in the US. Whether it's a joint or an ounce, being busted at Auburn won't just get you expelled, the local police get involved, too. Combine the Stone Age social conservatism with Alabama pot laws and a general scarcity of good weed in the South, and you get a shitty situation for scholarly stoners.



University of Notre Dame

South Bend, IN

“Toke one for the Gipper,” and do so at your own risk. Indiana isn't known for quality bud, and Indiana pot laws are among the worst in America. Students who get busted for weed are sanctioned and face drug education. Subsequent warnings may result in hopelessly being tied up in rehabilitative bureaucracy.



Stony Brook University

Stony Brook, NY

Once tagged “Stoner Brook” for hosting pot festivals in the mid-'70s, social toking now requires caution due to the increased police presence on campus. The school's policy for first-time pot offenders is typically suspension or expulsion. Ironically, Stony Brook received \$1 million in medical-marijuana research grants this past summer.



Azusa Pacific University

Azusa, CA

Even in pot-friendly Cali, private Christian colleges wield harsh anti-pot policies. This evangelical school in suburban LA requires all students to pledge not to smoke. Unlike some private colleges in the state, APU refuses to permit the use of medical cannabis with a prescription, adopting the federal government's position that all ganja is a crime.

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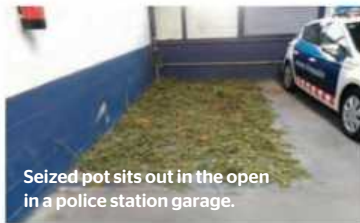
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Odor in the Court

The erosion of New Jersey's medical cannabis law continued when a state appellate court ruled that the aroma of weed remains grounds for a warrantless search by police. The decision comes despite medical pot being legal in the Garden State since 2010.

The case originated with the 2012 arrest of George A. Myers, who was busted with a small baggie of weed after a state trooper smelled burnt marijuana in his vehicle. Myers argued before the court that the state's medical marijuana law removed the presumption that the scent of pot is evidence of illegal use. Unfortunately, the three-judge panel disagreed and ruled that police officers detecting such a smell have probable cause for a search.

As usual, pot (and pot users) received better treatment on the West Coast: As we reported last month, Oregon's Court of Appeals has ruled that marijuana's odor isn't "inherently offensive" and therefore provides no grounds for a search warrant.



Seized pot sits out in the open in a police station garage.

Spanish High

Officers in rural Spanish towns are complaining about getting stoned against their will thanks to the massive marijuana seizures being stored at their stations. According to a police-union spokesman, "The odor is intolerable. There have been cases of officers who have had to leave before their shift was over because their head hurt and they were feeling dizzy."

Police stations surrounded by Spanish farmland sometimes end up storing thousands of marijuana plants during the summer, when outdoor growing is at its peak. The confiscated cannabis must be held at these stations until a court order is issued to destroy it, which can take more than a month.

It's hard to tell if this report says more about the quality of Spanish outdoor pot or the tolerance of Spanish cops. Either way, authorities might want to look into the time-honored tradition of vacuum-sealing stinky weed.

**POT BEATS
BOOZE AGAIN!**



In yet another incredible milestone for marijuana, Colorado announced that it has become the first state to take in more tax revenues from pot sales (\$70 million) than from alcohol (\$42 million) in 2014. The figures, released by the state's Department of Revenue, are staggering—particularly when you contemplate how much cash the majority of US states are passing up.

Anticipating the windfall, CO had declared Wednesday, September 16, a one-day pot-tax holiday, meaning the 25 percent sales tax on all recreational-pot-related purchases was suspended. As you might expect, many cannabis retailers reported significant increases in sales for the day.

"Marijuana taxes have been incredibly productive over the past year, so this tax holiday is a much-deserved day off," explained Mason Tvert, the Marijuana Policy Project's director of communications.



Miley shares a joint with photographers after the VMAs.

Miley vs. the Truth

The anti-tobacco group Truth Initiative took issue with Miley Cyrus's pot-centric performance at the 2015 MTV Video Music Awards. The 22-year-old queen of controversy sang her new pro-pot song "Dooo It!", tripped out on pot brownies in a sketch with Snoop Dogg and encouraged audience members to shout "Marijuana!" during a group selfie.

Unfortunately, the Truth Initiative, whose anti-cigarette commercials aired during the broadcast, wasn't thrilled with Miley's marijuana references.

According to a Truth rep, "It is entirely understandable for viewers to be confused, after hearing so much about marijuana during the VMA broadcast, to see a powerful advertisement about the dangers of tobacco."

Hmm. Actually, that is confusing. Why would an anti-tobacco group have a problem with references to benign, non-carcinogenic cannabis? Marijuana causes none of the harmful side effects associated with cigarette smoking. And, as pot use rates have increased among college students, tobacco use rates have plummeted. So the truth is, marijuana is an ally, not an enemy, in the war against cigs.



Come to Jamaica!

Jamaican Event Granted Historic Pot Exemption

In August 2015, Justice Minister Mark Golding signed the first-ever exemption-in-law to Jamaica's Dangerous Drug Act. The move protects attendees at Rastafari Rootzfest™—a four-day celebration of Rastafari ideology, livity and culture to be held in Negril from November 12 to 15, 2015—from prosecution for possession of up to two ounces of ganja. This historic exemption paved the way for the Rastafari Rootzfest™ to host the *High Times* Jamaican World Cannabis Cup at the November event.

"It is good that this government can recognize that I and I do have the right and am able to enjoy that right of herb as I and I's sacrament," said Rasta elder and event organizer Ras Iyah V.

Earlier in 2015, the Jamaican government amended the Dangerous Drug Act to finally recognize Rastafarians' religious and sacramental right to use ganja. The government also decriminalized the possession of up to two ounces of marijuana by adults, including tourists.



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Telling Pot's Story From the Beginning

The Cannabis Evolution Project, lead by Portland, Oregon-based Phyllos Bioscience, is seeking to unravel the mysterious evolutionary history of pot. Analyzing the DNA of thousands of cannabis samples of varied origin will explain how the plant gained its diversity through the ages. Marijuana is one of the most genetically diverse plant species on Earth, and its mysterious genome might even teach us something about ourselves, since human intervention has been the primary factor in the plant's development.

Researchers are even harvesting DNA from cannabis pulled off pharmacy shelves in the 1930s, giving them a peek into the genome of high-THC weed before the advent of modern breeding techniques.

Similar to the Open Source Seed Initiative, this project will prevent large biotech companies from patenting existing strains once they're coded and may even help to maintain cannabis as patent-free for good.

High History in Washington State

The new age of legalization in America saw another marijuana milestone recently, as the nation's first-ever tribal/state cannabis compact was signed between the Suquamish Tribe and the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board.

The 10-year agreement regulates the production, processing, purchase, acquisition and sale of marijuana on tribal grounds, with a retail storefront expected to be operational late in 2015. Cannabis sales to non-tribal members will be subject to a fee equivalent to the state's excise tax.

Governor Jay Inslee is expected to officially enact the compact thanks to recent legislation allowing him to make pot agreements with tribes in Washington State. The Suquamish reservation is located in Port Madison, and the tribe is famed for once being led by the legendary Chief Seattle.

SOCK BROKER BUSTED



An unscrupulous dealer in Lenawee County, Michigan, was busted for attempting to sell dirty socks in place of real pot. The sock broker, 33-year-old Michael Suarez, was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison for committing fraud through false pretenses (i.e., selling a backpack supposedly filled with marijuana but that was actually stuffed with old socks!). He'll be up for parole after one year.

Suarez and two other defendants got \$2,800 for the bogus buds but were later busted in their car by police after the couple that received the fake weed claimed they were robbed. That money is now subject to civil forfeiture.



Nick Diaz Banned for Bud

The Nevada State Athletic Commission has suspended MMA fighter Nick Diaz for five years after Diaz failed his third post-fight drug test for marijuana in early 2015. If it stands, the lengthy suspension effectively ends the 32-year-old's UFC career, as he'll be approaching 40 and out of active competition for half a decade when he's eligible for reinstatement in 2020.

Diaz is a legal medical pot patient in California and has spoken openly about his cannabis use as well as methods for beating drug tests.

UFC superstar Ronda Rousey immediately came to Diaz's defense, declaring: "It's so not right for him to be suspended five years for marijuana... I'm against them even testing for weed at all. It's not a performance-enhancing drug," she added. "It's only tested for political reasons."

Rousey isn't alone in her outrage. Other UFC stars have vowed not to fight in Nevada to protest the hypocritical policy that penalizes pot use more than steroid abuse.



Albania's War on Weed

Albanian officials claim they've eradicated nearly all the weed (99.2 percent) from the small, southeastern European country. According to Interior Minister Saimir Tahiri,

Albania's cannabis crackdown reached new heights with the destruction of 690,000 pot plants over 109 acres in 2015. Last year, authorities took out 550,000 live plants and destroyed 102 tons of dried cannabis, collectively worth roughly 7 billion euros (\$8.5 billion), more than two-thirds of Albania's entire annual gross domestic product.

Albania has long been considered a major producer of cannabis in Europe. Officials appear desperate to change that perception, especially as the country is now a candidate for entry into the European Union.

VA: Veterans Can't Have Pot and Pills

A disabled veteran was denied his prescribed pain medication by the Department of Veterans Affairs because of his marijuana use. Gary Dixon, 65, was exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam and now has Stage IV lung cancer. He uses marijuana daily in addition to pain meds to treat the symptoms of his terminal illness.

Unfortunately, the VA has instituted a new refill protocol that forces vets to take a drug test and sign an opiate consent form outlining the supposedly deleterious effects of mixing pain pills and pot. The VA's new regulation forces veterans to choose between getting their prescriptions filled and using cannabis.

According to Dixon, "I have always had marijuana in my blood and will continue to have it in my blood." He must now come up with the cash to pay out of pocket for the pain medication he takes 10 to 15 times a day.

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HIGHWIRE

Dispatches from the international drug war. *By Bill Weinberg*

More Clashes in Mexico Over Anti-Narco Militias

Another bloody incident in the ongoing government crackdown against Mexico's anti-narco citizen militias has been reported from the conflicted west-central state of Michoacán. On July 19, a detachment of soldiers and marines was sent to the indigenous community of Santa María Ostula, in Aquila municipality. Villagers mobilized upon the troops' advance, blocking the road into town. Soldiers fired on the villagers in the ensuing fracas, leaving a youth dead and four other community members injured. The troops then carried out their mission: to arrest Semei Verdía Zepeda, leader of the Aquila self-defense group. He was charged with the illegal possession of two rifles, including an AK-47.

Since mobilizing two years ago, Michoacán's self-defense militias have effectively broken the grip of terror that the Knights Templar cartel maintained over the state. But a government ultimatum last year ordering the militias to either disarm or register as official paramilitary forces has generated a backlash. New self-defense forces are still emerging, insisting on their independence from the federal government in defiance of the ultimatum. In early July, photos released on social media by a new group calling itself Los Blancos de Troya (the White Trojans) showed five heavily armed men posing with rocket launchers and an anti-aircraft gun. The



Colombia Overtakes Peru in Coca Production

Colombia surpassed Peru last year in the amount of land under coca cultivation, resuming its number-one position for the first time since 2012. The latest annual report from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime finds that territory under coca cultivation in Peru dropped 14 percent, from 49,800 hectares in 2013 to 42,900 in 2014—the smallest area under cultivation since 1998. Colombia, meanwhile, experienced a 44 percent jump, from 48,000 to 69,000 hectares. Peru made gains against coca growing in the Upper Huallaga Valley, while the coca fields expanded in Colombia's Putumayo, Caquetá, Meta and Guaviare regions—all on the frontier land of plains and rainforest east of the Andes.

The findings don't necessarily mean that Colombia is now the world's top cocaine producer, since much of Peru's crop is more mature and higher-yielding, having never been subjected to eradication. While Peru decreases coca cultivation in the Upper Huallaga, it resists US pressure to do so in a second cultivation zone, the Apurímac-Ene Valley, for fear of inflaming peasant unrest.

accompanying statement proclaimed that Los Blancos would defend the interests of Apatzingán, a Michoacán municipality that has been the scene of much violence. The manifesto also accused the Mexican government of inciting conflicts among the self-defense forces to weaken the movement, which at its peak last year included self-defense militias in 36 of the state's 113 municipalities.

The government crackdown and violent factionalism have indeed weakened the movement—which may leave a window for the return of cartel terror. On July 15, the leader of the self-defense group at Huetamo village, Camilo Santana Aguirre (a.k.a. "El Bombón"), was gunned

down from a passing taxi while drinking beer with friends. Three of his comrades were wounded in the attack. State authorities attributed the hit to Knights Templar *sicarios* (hit men).

"Trigger-Happy" Police Kill Hundreds in Brazil

In a report issued August 3, Amnesty International charged that military police have been responsible for more than 1,500 deaths in the last five years in the Brazilian capital of Rio de Janeiro, accusing them of a "shoot first, ask questions later" policy. Amnesty released the findings ahead of the one-year countdown to the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. The report, titled "You Killed My Son:

Homicides by Military Police in the City of Rio de Janeiro," reveals that nearly 16 percent of the homicides registered there in the last five years were committed by on-duty police—1,519 in total. Just in the *favela* (shantytown) of Acari, in the city's north, Amnesty found evidence of "extrajudicial executions" in at least nine out of 10 killings committed by the military police in 2014.

"Rio de Janeiro is a tale of two cities," said Atila Roque, director of Amnesty International Brazil. "On the one hand, the glitz and glamour designed to impress the world, and on the other, a city marked by repressive police interventions that are decimating a

significant part of a generation of young, black and poor men."

According to Amnesty's research, military police across Rio have regularly used unnecessary and excessive force during security operations in the city's poor districts. The majority of those killed by police from 2010 to 2013 were young black men between the ages of 15 and 29. Such killings are rarely investigated; many are filed as "resistance followed by death," which effectively closes the books and shields the perpetrators from civilian courts. Amnesty also found that the crime scenes are frequently altered, with police officers removing the bodies without following proper procedures and planting weapons or other "evidence" on the scene. When there are investigations, they tend to focus on the victim's criminal profile to legitimize the killing.

Roque pointed to the policy roots of the problem, arguing that Brazil's failed War on Drugs "is backfiring miserably and leaving behind a trail of suffering and devastation. Too many lives are lost to the toxic cocktail of a corrupt, violent and ill-resourced police force, communities so poor and marginalized they are hardly visible, and a criminal-justice system that constantly fails to deliver justice and reparations for human-rights violations." 🌿

For updates on these and other stories, see Bill Weinberg's websites, GlobalGanjaReport.com and WorldWar4Report.com.



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Social Sparks Fly

Looking to connect with like-minded cannaseurs? It's not always easy to find your own kind. But in this über-connected age of OK Cupid and Match, of course there's a dating app for people who smoke weed!

High There! is basically Tinder for tokers. Users build a profile by adding a photo and writing 420 characters of information about themselves. Then they can swipe through potential matches, optimized by their preferences for consuming cannabis: smoking, vaping, edibles or "all kinds." The app also asks users to specify their energy level when using cannabis—low, medium or high—so that a couch potato seeking a gaming buddy won't be paired with a hiking enthusiast.

The Denver-based company's CEO, Todd Mitchem, created the app after a date he was on abruptly ended when his dinner companion found out that he smoked pot. The divorced dad then turned to a couple of tech buddies to create a social network for weed aficionados, and the result has gone global. High There! is now sparking the conversation between weed lovers around the world. The free app is available for iOS and Android use.

Visit highthereapp.com

All That Glitters

It took me a while to come down from the magnificent high I felt just speaking with Trixy Starr about her fabulous '80s-inspired pop-art jewelry. This Toronto-born bundle of positivity absolutely beams with energy as she describes her varying sources of inspiration. "I pay attention to street art, fashion mags, bright colors and Instagram, but then always add my own spin to it," she says. "I'm an '80s baby who grew up with [My Little] Pony colors like iridescences, gold—feel-good joy colors that bring along a sense of nostalgia."

A Los Angeles resident these days, Starr enthusiastically admits that vaping with her Pax and Volcano frees her to "leave her brain" and access the "rainbow realm and goddess land" a lot quicker than if she didn't—and allows her jewelry to basically "design itself."

When she isn't frolicking the cosmic fairy planet where she absorbs her design cues, Starr happily encourages clients to create their own custom designs by sending her screen grabs and color ideas. "I make people happy and smile through jewelry," she says. "I am forever grateful." *Jen Bernstein*

Find your fun, cosmic Trixy Starr bling at trixyjewels.com or on Instagram at [@trixystarr](https://www.instagram.com/trixystarr).



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The lads of UMO
puffin' tough



Summer Daze

Unknown Mortal Orchestra take a smoke break from touring. *By Paul Kwiatkowski*

"My father was a jazz musician," says Ruban Nielson, lead singer and guitarist of Unknown Mortal Orchestra. "Naturally, everyone in my family smoked weed."

It's an overcast afternoon in June, and Nielson, UMO bassist Jake Portrait, drummer Riley Geare and keyboardist Quincy McCrary are at my Brooklyn apartment taking a smoke break from their international tour supporting their new album, *Multi-Love*. We light up and pass around several joints of Lemon Haze to Miles Davis's "He Loved Him Madly," and Nielson muses on the connection between his father and his musical inspirations.

"My dad was a Miles freak," he says. "His favorite era was *On the Corner*, high-energy electric stuff. John Scofield, [Miles's] guitarist from that time, as well as John McLaughlin and Robben

Ford, are what I hear as good guitar-playing.

"When I was big into Biggie and Wu-Tang Clan," Nielson continues, "my dad would hear certain hip-hop tracks I liked and show me which artists they sampled. He also pointed me towards Frank Zappa and old soul records. It was easy to make the transition to mix those two things together. When we first started UMO, it made sense that those things could live in the same world—to be heavily influenced by soul, but have the beats be exaggerated like hip-hop."

Although no one in UMO is a heavy weed smoker ("Growing up, I was the person who smoked the least weed in my family," Neilson admits), the band's music is a perfect soundtrack to smoke to, and *Multi-Love* glows with heavy doses of psychedelic finesse.

In addition to soul and

hip-hop, UMO's predilections range from Sly and the Family Stone to '70s-era David Bowie to Jimi Hendrix and James Brown-inspired breakbeats.

Although the flower power is lavish, it doesn't come across as a retro homage, but rather as a bridge to the trip. Infused with the lo-fi fuzziness of tracks like "Can't Keep Checking My Phone" is a deeply rooted pop sensibility. Braid-ing together these vintage strands of soul, funk and R&B is a difficult balancing act to pull off without stumbling into the pitfalls of nostalgia, but it's exactly that kind of hard-to-categorize sound that ushers in UMO's unique style.

Coasting on the wavelength of childhood, rap and weed, Portrait asks: "Remember Donkey Lips from *Salute Your Shorts*?"

I nod, vaguely recalling the

Nickelodeon show about a perpetual summer camp that, in my memory, plays out like a Nerf-gun version of *Lord of the Flies*.

"I was in LA with a friend," Portrait continues, "and these girls left a note on my car that said, 'You guys are hot, you should call us sometime.' We called that night, and one of them came to my house with weed brownies. Naturally, we ate them. Afterwards, she took us to Donkey Lips' house. We show up at his door, and he's fried—totally destroyed—and suddenly the high starts going bad. I found myself backed into the corner of Donkey Lips' kitchen, and he's loaded on other stuff as well. Turns out he's a rapper now, and he starts performing for me, right there in the kitchen. It was one of the darkest moments of my life." ✨

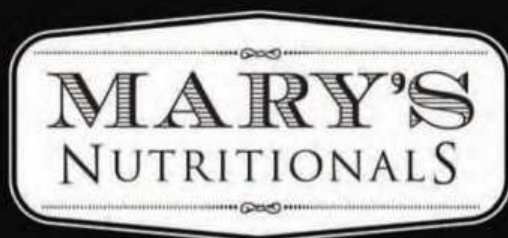


Pot in the South Pacific

"The weed situation in New Zealand is very developed," says Neilson, an Auckland native. He attributes the popularity of reggae in New Zealand to the Kiwi love of marijuana, noting: "Reggae and dub are really big there."



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Sal Abruscato steps into the spotlight.

Behold a Pale Horse

Brooklyn metal icon Sal Abruscato talks about his early days as a musician, his transition to frontman, and naturally, his love of weed. *By Bobby Black*

Seeing him perform as the frontman of A Pale Horse Named Death, you might not guess that until a few years ago, Sal Abruscato spent all his time onstage behind a drum kit. Because, as any metalhead can tell you, it was his skills on the skins with two of Brooklyn's most iconic bands—Type O Negative and Life of Agony—that have earned him a place in the headbangers hall of fame.

Abruscato began his musical career at 14, when he started taking lessons from Louis Beateau, the drummer for the hardcore/metal band Carnivore, who lived down the block from him.

"I became like his little brother, and he started taking me to Carnivore rehearsals in Peter [Steele]'s basement," Sal recounts. "I remember being this little kid sitting there, being just pummeled by the loud, brutal sound."

Abruscato soon started roadie-ing for the band, and before long had formed his own group, Toximia, whose self-titled album I brought along for him to sign.

"This was almost 30 years ago now," he muses nostalgically. "This is what I was doing when I was hanging out with Carnivore—we were emulating them."

It was this admiration for the late Steele that led Sal to approach him about starting a new band after Carnivore's breakup in 1988.

"I just showed up at Peter's house unannounced and said, 'Hey, how you doing? I know a guitarist if you want to jam.' And he was like, 'Well, I want to do something with keyboards, with Josh [Silver] next door.' We all got together in the studio, jammed on a Carnivore song, and it just went from there."

"Peter [Steele] was a huge influence on me... I definitely learned a lot by playing with him."



Early days: Type O Negative's Peter Steele, Kenny Hickey, Josh Silver and Sal Abruscato, circa 1990.

That jam session evolved into the goth-metal group Type O Negative. With its controversial lyrics and absurdly long songs, Type O's first album, *Slow, Deep and Hard*, was oft misunderstood and maligned. Their second album, *Bloody Kisses*, was far better received—earning them a gold record, some critical acclaim and a legion of devoted fans. Still, Abruscato wasn't sure about the direction the band was headed.

"Peter was a huge influence on me—I loved what he was doing and definitely learned a lot by playing with him. But after *Bloody Kisses*, I was bumping heads with him a lot. There was this feeling of frustration, like, 'When are we gonna make this happen?'"

So in 1993, after sitting in as a session drummer on Life of Agony's debut *River Runs Red*, he decided to leave Type O and join LOA full time. The group has since broken up and reunited, recorded another album and is now enjoying a renaissance of sorts. But

that hasn't stopped Sal from pursuing his own project: A Pale Horse Named Death have released two albums and continue to tour extensively.

Of all of the cities he's played in, one holds a special place in his heart. "I went to Amsterdam for the first time in 1990 and fell in love with the place, with the whole mentality of it," he says. "Of course I liked grass before, but most of the grass in New York in the '80s was brown brick weed—well-cultivated stuff wasn't accessible, and home-grown stuff was like oregano."

Nowadays, he has more sophisticated tastes: "I like Northern Lights #1, Silver Haze, Barney's Farm's Blue Cheese... at the moment, though, my two favorites are Purple Trainwreck and Sour Diesel #2."

Naturally, his love of weed also led to an appreciation of *High Times*.

"When I was touring back in the early days, we were putting *High Times* centerfolds up on the ceiling and walls of our van," he tells me. "Then one day, somewhere in fucking Indiana, a trooper pulls us over. Here we are, in the back with our weed we've collected from all over the country and *High Times* posters all over the back, and we're praying that he doesn't stick his head in, because we'd be dead!" ✨

For more on the music, go to lifeofagony.com and apale-horsenameddeath.com. Read the full, extended interview at hightimes.com/abruscato.



Musical Misnomer

Despite its somewhat misleading title (and the fact that some members of the band were avid tokers), "Weeds"—the hit single from Life of Agony's third album *Soul Searching Sun*—actually has nothing to do with cannabis.

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Power-ballad pros



True Believers

Station deliver lusty, impassioned rock'n'roll that will knock yer knickers off.

At this point, anyone playing almost any form of rock'n'roll can be compared to any artist playing Delta blues after the 1940s, in that (a) they're performing music that represents a specific region and period of time, and so must adhere to an established set of rules, and (b) they're fighting extinction. Long Island's Station play diamond-bright American hard rock of the kind that glowed from cathode-ray-tube TVs in the '80s to the early '90s. With hot-blooded licks that recall Cinderella (Pennsylvania, peak 1986–88), incandescent melodies worthy of Night Ranger (California, peak 1982–85), and a singer who could give the vocalist of Steelheart (Connecticut, peak 1990–92) a run for his money, Station gleefully deliver the kind of long-haired, hip-thrusting, good-times rock that ruled commercial radio in the Reagan era.

Refreshingly, they do so without a trace of irony.

The lyrics are as appealingly inelegant as tradition demands, and the production as hot and glossy. I count at least five singles on this album (their first): the gritty "I Don't Wanna Know Your Name," the raucous "Everything," the cheerfully uplifting "True Believer," and the power ballads "Are You Sleeping Alone" and "With

Me Tonight." Other contenders include "Waiting for You" (another power ballad—this band does not mind going straight for the panties!), though at 6:50, it's about three minutes too long; and "I Can't Live Without You" (power ballad number four!), which is slightly Cimmerian, but does showcase a wrenching guitar solo and some thrillingly high vocals at its zenith.

Though Station can hardly expect to reap the glory rained upon their predecessors, their obvious talent and ability to write memorable, hook-laden songs should at least earn them a spot on the *Billboard* Hard Rock chart one of these days. And did I mention the panties? *Polly Watson*



Station
Station
(Electric Cheetah)

MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS



Lucifer
Lucifer I
(Rise Above)

After exploding into prominence last year with the killer short-lived metal outfit The Oath, vocalist Johanna Sadonis joined forces with former Cathedral riff-master Gaz Jennings to form the international doom conglomerate Lucifer. Their debut is an infectious col-lusion of witchy vocals and

booming hooks, like some lost mid-'70s collaboration between Black Sabbath and Heart—or Fleetwood Mac, for that matter. From the sinister moan of "Purple Pyramid" and cosmic choruses of "Izrael" to the blazing NWOBHM licks of "Morning Star," *Lucifer I* is essential listening. *J. Bennett*



Sun Kil Moon
Universal Themes
(Caldo Verde)

Universal Themes finds Mark Kozelek mining his diary for a bittersweet batch of beliefs on life, death and the minutiae of his current reality. Averaging nine minutes in length, "With a Sort of Grace I Walked to the Bathroom to Cry," "Ali/Spinks 2" and other tracks interpolate the snarly

and the lyrical, while, like roadside restroom breaks, the instrumentals "Birds of Films" and "Garden of Lavender" provide pretty inter-ludes, with deftly chorded arrangements that bolster the truth of tough-guy Kozelek's surly spin away from the sun and gently pull him down to Earth. *John Payne*

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS



Girl in a Band
Kim Gordon
(Dey Street)

Kim Gordon is the proto-typical preppy/punk icon amidst a scene of waspy avant-garde tourists. She can intellectualize the pageantry of performance but is inherently reserved—seeming to float above the degradation that passes for authenticity in the soiled circles of anti-pop personality. Gordon's

unflinching candor is stunningly revealed in her heartbroken autobiography. She never poses or pulls a punch. This is a story of perpetual dissonance—the familial, musical and romantic fractures that grace her with a uniquely sensual comprehension of the world.

Josh Chambers

DVD RECOMMENDATIONS



The Other: The Long, Strange Trip of Bob Weir
Mike Fleiss
(Next Entertainment)

Despite a career in the shadow of Jerry, this film makes the case that Grateful Dead rhythm guitarist Bob Weir was equally important in shaping the band's sound. While *The Other* faithfully documents the days of Acid Tests and Merry Pranksters, it's Weir's description of the challenges

of playing on LSD, and how that led to the Dead's singular sound, that provides real insight. The explanation of his contrapuntal style is equally illuminating. While not digging too deeply into the dynamics of the band, this is a compelling portrait of an artist who refused to play second fiddle. *Fritz Meier*

GAMES RECOMMENDATIONS



Farming Simulator 15
PlayStation 4
(Maximum Games)

A gaming experience that seems tailored for a niche audience: Instead of relying on action or suspense, *Farming Simulator 15* creates a relaxed environment in which the player simply tends the earth or goes logging. The tranquil setting is reminiscent of the *SimCity* franchise, except in a more

rural environment with the calming goal of harvesting crops. Adding to the pleasant gameplay are beautiful graphics that are perfectly up to par for a next-gen console, successfully mimicking real life. Recommended for those seeking a game that is as soothing as a Robert Frost poem. *Mike Calazzo*

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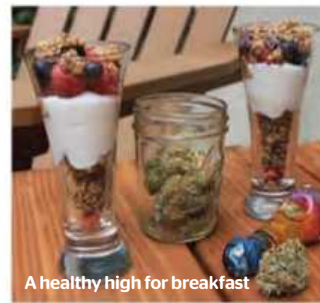
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A healthy high for breakfast

MUNCHIES

Ganja Granola

Get medicated with an award-winning granola recipe from the Michigan Cannabis Cup.

It's tough to be an edibles chef in Michigan, since the state's medical marijuana laws don't specifically mention cannabis-infused foods, creating a situation with confusing, conflicting interpretations of what's legal. "There's not really laws against it or for it, leaving it a gray area," explains Joe Kenwabikise, a Cannabis Cup-winning chef from Arborside Delights in Ann Arbor.

Regardless of the legalities, the market for infused foods is booming, with Joe baking 10 dozen cookies per week to meet the growing demand. A biochemistry major and cook with 10 years' experience, Kenwabikise joined the Arborside team last fall and has

introduced many new products, including an infused granola parfait that won first place for Best CBD Edibles at the recent *High Times* Cannabis Cup in Clio. "The inspiration was the Cherry Pie strain, so I made a sherbet," Joe says. "I was aiming for something gluten-free with no dairy that would be fruity, light and refreshing."

In Ann Arbor, patients prefer edibles that provide a "lot of bang for their buck," Joe relates. "People like more potency in a smaller bite." After the Cup win, Arborside Delight's business has exploded, and Joe is currently turning out as many parfaits as he can, along with cookies, granola, cheesecakes, medicated honey-roasted peanuts and ice-cream-cookie sandwiches.

Arborside is also working to expand its edibles line to other provisioning centers throughout the state, and hopes that local activists can successfully pass a new state bill that would specifically allow edibles and concentrates, as well as define regulations for dispensaries.

Combine Joe's delicious, award-winning medicated granola with fruit and yogurt for a satisfying, healthy breakfast, or keep a bag of it handy for medicating on the go! ✨

ARBORSIDE DELIGHT'S GANJA GRANOLA

225 g. rolled oats
25 g. each of slivered almonds, chopped pistachios, sunflower seeds and chopped pecans
100 g. toasted flaxseed
90 g. shredded coconut
50 g. light brown sugar
1.5 g. sea salt
225 g. honey
50 g. cannabis-infused coconut oil
7 g. vanilla extract
80 g. dried apricots, thinly sliced
70 g. dried cherries
60 g. golden raisins

Preheat the oven to 250°F. Mix the oats, nuts, flaxseed, shredded coconut, salt and brown sugar. Combine the honey, vanilla extract and coconut oil, then whisk until smooth. Stir in the oats/nuts mixture and spread in a light layer on a parchment-covered baking sheet. Bake for one hour, stirring every 20 minutes. After 40 minutes, stir in the dried fruit. After baking, do not stir for about 20 minutes to let it set; then it can be crumbled up or cut into bars. *Stones 18.*

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- ¾-1 cup/180-240 ml MagicalButter Tincture (to be reduced to MBO in step 1 below)
- 4 packages (3 ounces/85 g each) flavored gelatin of your choice
- 10 envelopes (¼ ounce/7 g each) unflavored gelatin

Skill level: Easy
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 2 hours

Serving size: 1 Gummy
(1 tablespoon/15 ml)

- 1 ¼ cups/300 ml fruit juice of your choice, chilled
- 2 tablespoons/30 ml flavor extract
- 1-2 tablespoons/15-30 ml Monk Fruit or stevia liquid sweetener
- 1 tablespoon/15 ml Tart & Sour or citric acid powder



How to

1. In a large, nonstick sauté pan on low heat, reduce your tincture until almost all the alcohol has evaporated, creating MagicalButter MBO. It should look like molasses.
2. Add flavor extract and Tart & Sour, and stir until it again resembles molasses; then remove it from heat.
3. Add the chilled fruit juice into the pan.
4. In a large bowl, whisk all the gelatins and sweetener together; then whisk gelatin mix into the MBO/juice mixture until completely combined. Let it sit for 15-20 minutes.

5. Begin to eat the gummy mixture over medium-low heat.
6. Once the mixture begins to melt, stir constantly for 7-10 minutes, or until the gelatin and sweetener have completely dissolved.
7. Transfer the mixture into your molds using a large measuring cup with a pour spout, and refrigerate it for 45-60 minutes.
8. Remove your Magical Gummies from the molds, serve, and enjoy! They're so tasty and fun...you'll barely be able to bear it!!

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4

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5

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COOKIES
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(Commercial)
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by yourself you
might get high."
-Nashville, TN

MARKET ANALYSIS

Prices by the ounce

All indices, with the exception of the Schwag Index, began the New Year down from their previous month's average. The Kind Index experienced the biggest drop, falling \$23 from its December 2015 average. The Schwag Index closed the month up \$20.

US Price Index

YTD Average: \$298



Kind Index

YTD Average: \$369



Mids Index

YTD Average: \$259



Schwag Index

YTD Average: \$117



(Girl Scout Cookies)
"Outdoor is cheaper
than indoor in SoCal
even though the
nugs are better in
my opinion."
-Anaheim, CA

TRANS HIGH MARKET QUOTATIONS

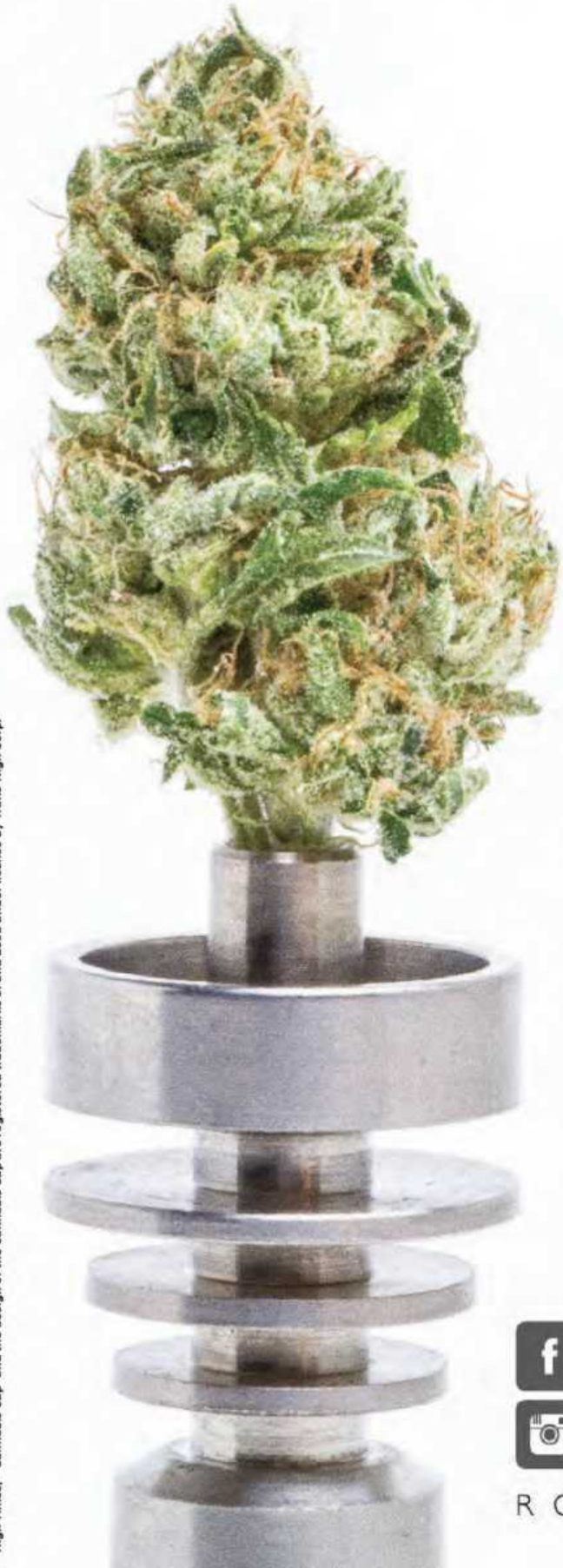
STATE	CITY	STRAIN	PRICE
Alabama	Birmingham	Blueberry	\$360
Arizona	Chandler	Tahoe OG	225
Arkansas	El Dorado	Crazy Train Cheese	300 320
California	Anahelm	Girl Scout Cookies Larry OG	180 190
	Bishop	LA Confidential Granddaddy Purps	280 280
Colorado	Colorado Springs	Blue Dream Goji OG	120 120
Connecticut	Hartford	Sensi Star	375
Delaware	Newark	Sweet Tooth	350
Florida	Orlando	Bubba Kush	400
Georgia	Atlanta	Purps	360
Illinois	Chicago	Deadhead OG	400
Indiana	Indianapolis	Blue Dream	380
Iowa	Cedar Rapids	White Widow	350
Maine	Bangor	JillyBean	320
Maryland	Baltimore	Super Silver Haze	380
Michigan	Ann Arbor	Chemdog	220
Missouri	St Louis	Bubblegum	380
Montana	Missoula	Guava Chem	280
New Hampshire	Exeter	Chernobyl	225
New Jersey	Hoboken	Banana Kush	380
New York	New York	Strawberry Cough	400
North Carolina	Raleigh	Purple Haze	350
Ohio	Columbus	Master Kush	375
Oregon	Portland	Pineapple Express	175
Pennsylvania	Coal Township	Bubba Kush	350
Tennessee	Nashville	Commercial	120
Texas	Dallas Houston	Grapefruit Haze Haze	350 280
Vermont	Burlington	Skywalker OG	330
Virginia	Alexandria Richmond	Girl Scout Cookies Master Kush	260 350
Washington	Lake Stevens	Sour OG White Fire Allen	280 280
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Costa Rica	San Jose	Jamaican	\$350
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better..."
-Bangkok, Thailand

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Raising the Bud Weights... and Reputations... of Top Growers

Weed saved my life. Well, it saved my sex life—
and that's the same thing, right?

The Stoner Orgasm

By Sophie Saint Thomas



Last winter, after a night at a listening party in Brooklyn complete with a Hawaiian string band, I returned to my former boyfriend's place to blaze. I quit drinking a while ago because it makes me an asshole, and after trying the whole totally sober thing for about a year, I reintroduced cannabis into my life after coming to understand that it absolutely is a medicine, and a miracle one at that. I credit replacing alcohol with weed for saving my sanity as well, but that's for another story.

After the Skywalker was smoked, we made our way, horny and high, to his bed—where, among other things, we proceeded to eat each other's assholes in the 69 position. If my ex-boyfriend had been secretly filming us, and that night became my leaked sex tape, I would feel nothing but deep pride. I felt like myself again. Scratch that—I felt like a sex goddess.

Skywalker is an *indica*-dominant hybrid fantastic for relaxation and treating post-traumatic stress disorder. I mention PTSD because I suffer from it as the result of a nasty sexual assault in 2013. According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), there's an average of 293,000 sexual assaults each year (victims age 12 or older), or one every 107 seconds.

Enjoying many aspects of sex had become impossible for me. Certain triggers would result in horrific flashbacks and lead to panic attacks, which are not exactly conducive to an orgasmic sexual experience. If you've been sexually assaulted, you know that it steals something from you. It fills you with shame that is as undeserved as the assault itself. The incident had made it impossible for me to relax and enjoy some of my favorite sexy activities—that is, until I began treating my PTSD with cannabis.

We've been taught by irrational anti-pot campaigns that short-term memory loss is a negative effect of smoking. But for those with PTSD, it's actually part of what makes it such a fantastic medicine.

"The endocannabinoid receptors are highly concentrated in the hippocampus and amygdala. And those parts of the brain are responsible for short-term memory and the processing of pain signals," says Dr. Jeff Hergenrather, president of the Society of Cannabis Clinicians. "I really consider it not necessarily an adverse affect that people have short-term memory loss under the acute effects. It's a value for people,

particularly with post-traumatic stress, to get things out of their head that are haunting them. And certainly [a PTSD diagnosis] would be quite readily and quite effectively treated with cannabis, if people are tolerant of the effects of THC."

If you're someone who does better with less THC, try a strain high in CBD. Cannabidiol has anti-anxiety properties, but without the psychoactive effects that THC provides.

"I have a hard time saying to somebody that a specific strain is what they want to try," Dr. Hergenrather continues. "I might give some recommendations, but honestly, people tend to do well with most any strain of cannabis. And then they may find a strain that they just like the feel of—and that may be related to whether or not there's CBD in it, if they don't really care for the high of THC. But it's also related to what their particular

If my ex had been secretly filming us, and that night became my leaked sex tape, I would feel nothing but deep pride.



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chemistry likes the feel of when it comes to the terpenes of different strains. These are the molecules that go by names such as limonene. They are plant oils that impart all kinds of specific effects.”

So while the chemistry is a bit more complex than simply a matter of *sativa* versus *indica*, the good news is that, if you’re looking for a strain to reduce any anxieties getting in the way of your sex life, it’s pretty fun to research what works best for you.

The night of the Skywalker was the first time in a year and a half that my body felt like my own again. I never realized that I was gripped by such extreme anxiety and tension until I was finally able to relax. My shoulders arched back in pleasure, breaking the

“Weed makes me feel less inhibited about touching, moving and taking up space.”

straitjacket they’d been tied up in. Not only did I feel my orgasm, I felt my partner’s as my own. My post-assault reintroduction to marijuana has eased my anxiety regarding sex far more effectively than over a year of talk therapy and pharmaceutical pills did. “You definitely relaxed when you smoked, and were able to just enjoy the moment and not get sucked back into that place,” my ex told me.

Cannabis rocks as a treatment for sexual-assault victims whose PTSD is getting in the way of their sex lives, but its reach goes far beyond that. “Weed, in general, is great for sex in just relaxing the user and getting into it on a deeper level,” says Rosco, a 32-year-old male who doesn’t suffer from a diagnosed mental-health condition, but rather from everyday anxiety.

Stress and anxiety cause chest pains and high blood pressure, and they also kill boners. “Weed makes me feel less inhibited about touching, moving and taking up space,” says Marley, a friend who has struggled with anxiety and depression for 15 years. “It helps me relax physically and can make orgasms come more easily. It physically makes

A Perfect 10 for Sex

Here’s an alluring list of buds for bedtime.



SHY WALHER

This *indica*-dominant hybrid is the love child of Blueberry and Mazar. It’s a relaxing medicine, as excellent at knocking out PTSD as it is at encouraging analingus.



VOODOO

This *sativa* is magic indeed! It’s long-lasting and stress-relieving—just the ticket to calm your nerves and keep you energized for your next friendly threesome.



BLUE CHEESE

This *indica* cross has a funky name and smell. A fabulous painkiller, it will let you try some funky stuff without the “ouch” (i.e., butt sex).



ASIAN FANTASY

A rare *sativa* with an uplifting, euphoric effect, it’s the perfect vacation-sex weed. This one will keep you hopping (and humping) like the Energizer Bunny.



SHUNK #1

The big, bad godfather hybrid that led to a zillion Skunk crosses. The cottonmouth is severe, so avoid oral. Smoke it before good old-fashioned P-in-V sex, ideal for a movie night in.

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me tingle. I can feel blood rushing to places on my body, and I become more aware of how I want my body to feel. It can make me want to be physical and overcome some of my own physical hang-ups."

Everyday emotional issues can also get in the way of sex. For me, it's sometimes simply worrying that a new partner will find me unattractive because my face is breaking out, or that he'll want to stick it in my butt before I'm ready.

"I would say that cannabis is really uniquely qualified as a medicine to treat anxiety," Dr. Hergenrather says.

As women (or pretty much anyone who has had a girlfriend) will tell you, vaginas can be pretty high-maintenance. Along with the mental and emotional issues that can get in the way of sex,

I can feel blood rushing to places on my body, and I become more aware of how I want my body to feel.

there's the physical stuff. But cannabis can fix that up, too! According to Dr. Jennifer Berman, a urologist who specializes in women's sexual health: "Women who struggle with pelvic pain due to menstrual cramps, due to endometriosis or inflammatory conditions called vulvodynia, they potentially, in my clinical opinion, can benefit from topical use."

Dr. Julie Holland, editor of *The Pot Book: A Complete Guide to Cannabis*, has a similar take. In her latest book, *Moody Bitches: The Truth About the Drugs You're Taking, the Sleep You're Missing, the Sex You're Not Having, and What's Really Making You Crazy*, she writes: "Women and cannabis enjoy a special relationship. Anandamide levels fluctuate throughout the menstrual cycle, peaking during ovulation. This may help to explain how great most of us feel midcycle. Peaking estrogen is also responsible, but it may act indirectly through the endocannabinoid system. Estrogen inhibits FAAH activity, thereby increasing anandamide signaling, keeping us calm. This same estrogen/

A Perfect 10 for Sex



GOO

With a name like Goo, expect to get messy. This 80 percent *indica* provides heavy calming effects without losing the cerebral high. Use that brainpower for an oral-sex marathon.



GRAND DADDY PURPLE

My first time smoking this strain, I was in bed with a lover who was thinking about leaving New York. All I could manage was: "I want to move next door to this weed." Bring this *indica* home and put a ring on it!



FLO

This hybrid will make you super-sexy and also provide great cerebral clarity. I recommend Flo for one-night stands, so make sure to wrap it before you tap it.



ULTIMATE TRAINWRECH

This *sativa* provides an orgasmic body buzz that will addle you in the most delightful way possible. Smoke it with someone you love. The ultimate makeup-sex weed!



SOUL DREAM

The offspring of Blue Dream and Sour Diesel, this *sativa*-dominant hybrid will ease your social anxieties but keep you up all night. Roll a few joints for the next sex party you attend.

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Lowdown on Lubes

Along with enhancing your orgasm, cannabis-infused lubricants like Foria are hot items for their ability to relieve pain and induce relaxation. However, the added coconut oil makes them non-latex-friendly. So if you use condoms, I recommend Good Clean Love: Almost Naked Personal Lubricant—it's latex-friendly and 95 percent organic. For the condoms themselves, give Sustain a try. Sustain also manufactures an unscented, latex-friendly personal lubricant that's made with 95 percent organic ingredients.

FAAH interaction happens in the uterus, which is full of cannabinoid receptors. This helps to explain the oldest known recommended use of cannabis: An Egyptian papyrus from 1550 B.C.E. detailed treatment of menstrual cramps with a vaginal suppository of cannabis and honey."

I've never tried putting cannabis and honey in my vagina, but I do prefer a toke to taking Advil for menstrual cramps. Once, back in ninth grade, I had some nuggets in my pocket to smoke before a school dance—but I got paranoid about being caught, so I went into the bathroom and just ate them. I got a lot of stems in my teeth and felt nothing but woozy. Obviously, I went about it the wrong way, not yet understanding how to properly eat weed. But at 14, I was on to something: There are other ways to consume pot than smoking it.

One of the most recent developments in the pot-and-sex world is topical use—a trail that the makers of Foria are happy to blaze. Foria is a marijuana-infused lube in the form of a mist, meant to be sprayed on women's sexy spots 10 to 15 minutes before intercourse. A blend of liquid coconut oil and California-grown cannabis oil, Foria increases the intensity of orgasms.

"It sort of helps get them there a little bit easier," says Foria founder Mathew Gerson. "There is a sense of reinvigoration or reawakening of their

"Personally, I think that a little pain during sex can be fun."

sexual senses. And that's obviously a turn-on, and their partners respond when they're turned on."

Even better, Foria not only enhances the mental aspects of sex; the cannabis lube treats physical ailments getting in the way of sexual enjoyment as well.

"We quickly realized that there was something happening here that was

broader in its benefits than just sexual enhancement for pleasure," Gerson tells me. "And we were hearing a lot of feedback from patients that it was also helping with pain. We know that they call [cannabis] 'biphasic' because it can diminish pain, and it can also help to increase pleasure. It has two almost magical properties that can direct different signals in the body."

Personally, I think that a little pain during sex can be fun, like having your nipples pinched, your ass slapped or just enjoying really rough role-play. However, unwanted pain is never good. If you're stressed and your pelvic muscles are all seized up, penetration is going to be difficult.

"What we do know is, there's a relaxation response that occurs at the level of the muscle tissue itself, when the cannabinoids come in contact with that tissue," Gerson explains. "When we talk to physicians, if you base the conversation around orgasm and pleasure and all of the things that can cause women to shut down from stress sexually,

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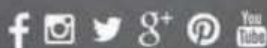
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introducing something that provides a level of relaxation in the body can allow a deeper embodiment or access to relaxation—which then could allow the natural process of lubrication to occur on its own.”

A wet vagina is a happy vagina. And when it comes to anal, a lubed butthole is a happy butthole, although that orifice doesn't lubricate naturally. Foria's dual ability to lubricate and reduce the pain associated with sex can make it an awesome choice for foreplay prior to anal sex—but only if you're in a monogamous relationship and have both been tested, since the coconut-oil base is *not* latex-friendly.

So if you're using condoms, stick with Foria for just fooling around and give Sustain condoms a try. They're environmentally friendly, vegan, fair-trade and come in beautiful packages with nature scenery. They'll also protect you from unwanted screaming babies and any nasty infections.

Men, don't worry, I haven't forgotten you. In fact, I'm thinking about you right now—but in a less-than-professional manner, since all of this writing about sex with a joint in hand is an extreme turn-on.

I'm more likely
to specifically
want sex, not just
cuddling, and to
ask for what
I want in bed.

Aside from reducing anxiety and any other hang-ups that may get in the way of fully enjoying the moment, cannabis can be great in treating premature ejaculation. Historically a psychological disease, premature ejaculation affects 30 to 70 percent of males in the US at some point.

“Cannabis is a good choice to explore for people with erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation,” Dr. Hergenrather notes. “I do think it gets people out of their head and more into relaxing, reducing the anxiety around whether they're going to be able to perform well.”

Just be careful not to smoke *too* much: Whether you're treating anxiety or erectile dysfunction, going overboard might make it hard to move *anything*. And then you'll fall asleep—but not from an earth-shattering orgasm. “Besides the endorphin system, our body's natural cannabis system is involved in sexual

enjoyment as well,” Dr. Holland writes in *Moody Bitches*. “The endocannabinoid system helps to keep sex arousing and pleasurable, so a little puff might enhance your enjoyment, but smoke too much pot, and you've given the endocannabinoid system too much gas. There's a chance your orgasm will be impeded.”

But taken in the right amount, cannabis can unlock the doors to some serious human pleasure. “Weed just makes me horny,” my friend Marley says. “With my current boyfriend, some of the most exciting, fun, fulfilling sexy times we've had was after smoking or eating weed. It absolutely helps us feel closer together, sexier, less inhibited. I'm more likely to specifically want sex, not just cuddling, and to ask for what I want in bed. Don't think he minds.”

She's absolutely right. Marijuana's biggest superpower in the realm of sex—perhaps even more encompassing than its role as a medicine for PTSD, anxiety or premature ejaculation—is its ability to profoundly turn us on. I used to joke that the smell of weed got me horny because, since I always dated stoners, it reminded me of sex. But now I credit the weed itself with being an aphrodisiac.

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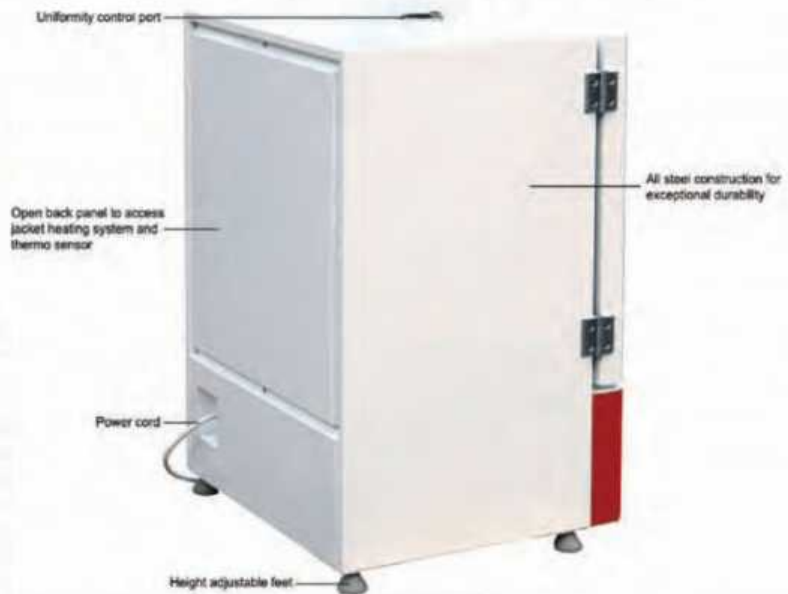
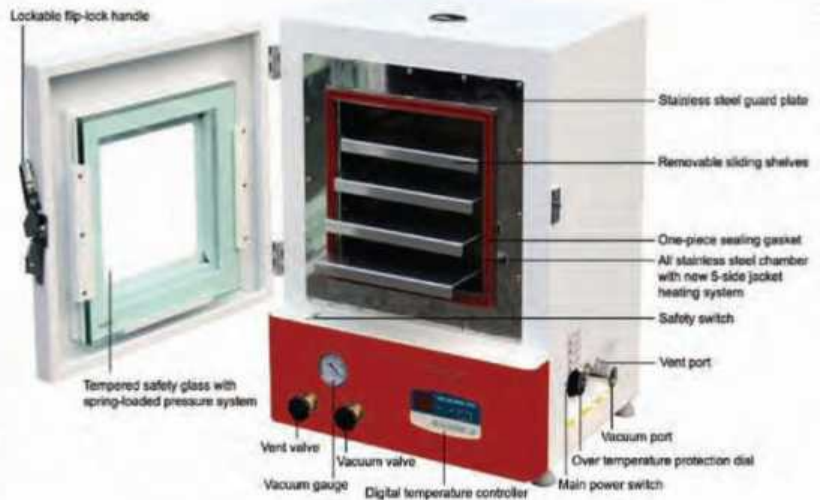
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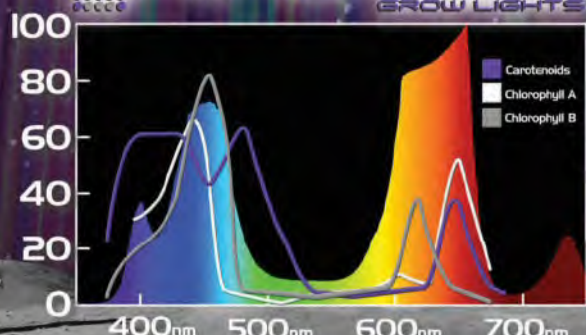
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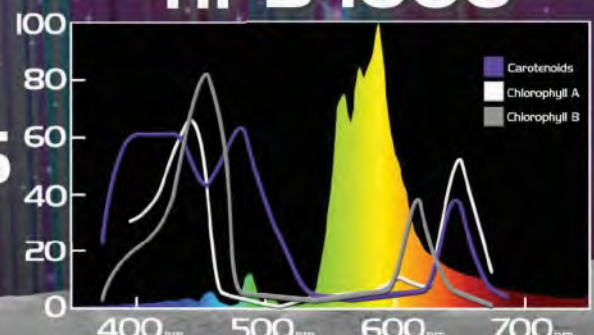
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The Om Grown Collective core five: (clockwise from top) Maya, Emily, VV, Iz and Ellie.

Om, Sweet Om

An all-women's collective in California dedicates itself to producing great pot crops and an award-winning line of edibles and topicals. *Story & Photos by Dan Skye*

"So, why do you hate men?"
Maya bursts out laughing. "We don't!" she replies. "We love men!"
Maya is one of a group of five women who run the all-female Om Grown Collective, whose power and success spring from what she calls pooled "feminine energy." She's quick to explain that men do assist in a number of tasks to help Om run smoothly, but the brunt of the work required is performed by women.

Maya oversees Om Edibles and Topicals, working in her Bay Area kitchen to produce scrumptious cannabis treats, as well as an expansive line of tinctures, balms and bath salts. In Grass Valley, about two

and a half hours east of the Bay, lady gardeners are tending Om's pot crops. Iz, the master grower, directs the workflow. The crops serve the needs of the collective's members—about 25 in all—and also supply the plant material that Maya needs to produce Om Edibles.

In August, following a visit to the Om gardens, *High Times* posted a video featuring Iz, who gave a brief explanation of Om's mission. The online reaction was generally laudatory, but a number of other-sex detractors weighed in as well, scoffing at the notion of women banding together to create a cannabis business and decrying what they deemed "reverse sexism"—as if some diabolical scheme had been hatched to marginalize male stoners.



Om produces two varieties of medicated Epsom salts.



Raw CBD Sipping Cacao won the Cannabis Cup for Best CBD Edible in NorCal.



Mix that spoonful of cacao with hemp milk, high in Omega fatty acids, for a super stress reliever.

Actually, the founding of Om had nothing to do with men whatsoever.

"We just happen to be all females, and we happen to be best friends," Maya explains. "We've all known each other for almost 20 years, and we've always been big-time cannabis appreciators and connoisseurs. We love the herb! Although our core is female, our extended collective of patients is coed—people with disabilities that span all ages, ethnicities and demographics; people that we've been caretaking for upwards of five years. Our goals are the same as they were on day one: to help others, to be of service and to produce the best medicine possible. We work in harmony, with patients' needs in mind, to provide medicine for women and men."

Maya was born and raised in the Bay Area. She describes her parents as "pretty liberal, educated hippies" who experienced the Summer of Love back in 1967 and used cannabis

"Our goals are the same as they were on day one: to help others, to be of service and to produce the best medicine possible."

regularly. "They were great examples of successful, professional, functional, productive, educated stoners."

Her entry into the industry took place 10 years ago, when she started working at CannaMed Care (CMC)—a top-notch dispensary, now closed. Her job title was "medicated barista," responsible for making infused coffees and teas. She also worked as a budtender, which gave her "an education on different types of cannabis. I studied their effects, smells, textures and flavors. We offered 50 choices of herb, and I began matching looks, structures, colorings and fragrances that were associated with each different strain."

It was at CMC that she debuted her first edible product, a medicated dough that she dubbed "Mama's Cookie Dough." It allowed patients to purchase a take-and-bake, single-serving cookie and enjoy a potent, fresh-baked edible at home.

Following CMC's closure, Maya worked as a trimmer and cold-water hash-maker while furthering her prowess in the edibles kitchen. With a friend, she started Queen 215 (named for Proposition 215, California's historic medical marijuana initiative) to market their medicated truffles. Eighteen months later, Queen 215 morphed into Om.

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Emily prepares Om Medicated Elderberry Syrup while Maya put's the final touches on Lion Balm

That was nearly eight years ago. Since then, Om has become an undisputed leader in the emerging cannabis edibles industry. Om's kitchen turns out a dozen different products, four of which have won Cannabis Cup awards.

Working side by side with Maya is Emily,

who shares her expertise and keeps the ovens hot when Maya is called away to conduct business.

"Working in the dispensary firsthand taught me that it's essential to have different medicines to suit every type of patient," Maya says. "For every one who wants a residual

effect from their edibles the next morning, there's also the patient who absolutely does not want to feel altered—someone who may not enjoy the feeling of being high at all; someone who may have just received terrible news about their health and needs to feel grounded, not elevated."

Om's first product was called the Buttercup. It's a Belgian-chocolate shell with an organic-peanut-butter and puffed-rice center—175 mg each—and it took third place for Best Edible at the San Francisco Cannabis Cup in 2011.

"It's not a beginner's edible," Maya notes. "It's made with mostly Kushes and *sativa* crosses, so it's very potent and *sativa*-dominant."

At the 2015 NorCal Cannabis Cup, Om took the top prize for its Raw CBD Sipping Cacao in the Best CBD Edible category. Additionally, Om's Treehugger, a gluten-free, vegan collaboration with Golddrop—composed of almonds, pecans and hemp seeds, and flavored with vanilla, maple and cinnamon—grabbed third place for Best Edible.

Patients can also rely on Om's hard candies, available in both *indica* and *sativa* form, for medication. Om's tinctures are gentle by design, ideal for very sensitive or elderly folks. "They're made with vegetable glycerin—a gentle solvent with a very pleasant taste,"

An advertisement for GoFire Evolve. On the left is a vertical image of a silver dabbing pen. To its right are three hexagonal icons: a blue one with 'WX' and 'WAX', a yellow one with 'SH' and 'SHAG', and a blue one with 'CO2'. In the center is a large, stylized 'G' logo. Below the logo is the word 'EVOLVE' in a large, serif font, followed by a small yellow flame icon and the text 'by GOFIRE™'. Below this is the tagline '"The true dabbing experience with dose control."' in a script font. Underneath the tagline is the text 'Available for pre-order | GoFirePen.com'. At the bottom are social media handles: '@gofirepen', '@gofirepen', and 'f/gofirepen'. Below these is the text 'PLEASE CONSUME RESPONSIBLY'. At the very bottom, in small print, is the copyright notice '©2015 GoFire. Evolve™ and GoFirePen.com are registered trademarks of GoFire™ LLC.' and a disclaimer 'Concentrated cannabis consumption impairs your ability to operate machinery. This product has not yet been approved by the FDA.'



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Om offers a variety of medicated tinctures that patients swear by.



Maya explains. "Each dropperful has approximately 2 mg of activated THC and 2 mg of THCA, which is extremely helpful for seizures and epilepsy. Two of our tincture formulas are multi-herb. Our daytime formula consists of echinacea, ginger and *sativa* ingredients; the nighttime contains lavender, chamomile and indica."

Om's medicated elderberry syrup is

made with raw honey. Maya refers to it as a "superfood," because elderberry strengthens the immune system, soothes the throat and aids the lungs. It also has amazing properties in fighting cancer.

With nearly a decade of kitchen experience under her belt, Maya calls topicals the wave of the future. "Not everyone wants to feel high, but everybody wants to be free

from pain," she points out. "One of our first products was Lion Balm, a non-petroleum-based spicy balm with shea butter, cocoa butter and beeswax. It's loaded with essential oils and Thai liniments to bring relief. We also make two varieties of Epsom salts. One is a lavender-infused Epsom salt [also a Cup winner]; the other is a lemon-ginger-eucalyptus bubbling Epsom and sea-salt soak."

And for those perhaps seeking a bit of "spiritual" medication, try Om's Holy Anointing Oil. The recipe is straight out of the Bible, a magical ointment that can be used for meditation or to reduce bodily pain and dermatological imbalances.

Obviously, Om's edibles wouldn't be possible without the Om garden. And if "girl power" really does exist, it's been actualized here. Maya says, "From the root through fruition, we take great care in creating organic medicine for our patients, which results in organic edibles and topicals for our patients."

Om's core members all pitch in to make the plants perfect. In addition to Iz, the cultivation guru, this core includes Ellie and VV, who work in the garden and perform marketing, packaging and trade-show duties year-round. Maya and Emily commute from the Om kitchen during busy harvest season.

Iz tells it like it is: "I used to seek out medicine before I grew, and I realized that so

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many people cheated and used synthetics. They tried to take their indoor skills outside. That model strips the earth; it doesn't feed the earth. Your soil should get better every year. You shouldn't need to replace it all the time.

"Outdoor cannabis is absolutely superior," Iz adds. "A lightbulb can never compete with the sun. You'll never produce the size or the quality of bud that the sun is capable of producing."

She also says that *High Times* shares some of the blame for creating a bias against outdoor weed.

"All those fucking indoor pictures," she laughs. "Everybody thinks that this is what it's supposed to look like. Through media sources, they have an idea of what pot is supposed to look like, taste like, and what it's supposed to make you feel. But every strain is different, and every person responds differently, because our cannabis receptors are unique."

Maya adds: "We know that not one bottled nutrient, not one synthetic chemical, has touched the plants—only organic amendments. When you're dealing with people who have compromised immune systems and may be going through a medical procedure like chemotherapy, it's extremely important that the medicine is toxin-, mold- and chemical-free."



The ladies of Om collaborate on a sensational garden.

The Om Grown Collective's signature line of genetics is called "The Ladies' Line," an outdoor collection bred exclusively—not surprisingly—by ladies, in collaboration with the Cookie Fam. Powerful strains like Sunset Sherbert (a well-balanced hybrid), Cherry Pie (a delicious, heavy *indica*) and Girl Scout

Cookies (a distinct, stony *sativa*) were crossed with Om's stalwart outdoor genetics. The result is bud that any grower—male or female—would harvest with pride.

So, all you dudes out there! Take a deep breath, embrace your feminine side and let's all chant together: Om Om 🌿

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Sex in the Growroom

Understanding the gender and breeding of cannabis plants.

*By Nico Escondido.
Photos by Mel Frank*

These nodal pre-flowers can be an early sign of plant gender. But which sex—male or female?



When we talk about “sex” in the growroom, a couple of meanings come to mind. For those who have ever started a cannabis plant from a regular seed, the first thought centers upon determining the sex of your young seedling. For the more serious grower who has forayed into the adventurous world of breeding, this phrase will conjure memories of hybridization projects, likely involving lots of pollen, seed shucking and high hopes for finding a new wonder strain.

This latter inclination is perhaps one of the most fascinating aspects of cannabis. However, before we can begin to understand the basics of breeding, we must first understand the basics of cannabis genders.



Male vs. Female

For new cannabis growers, one of the most oft-asked questions is how to determine the sex of a young seedling. To start with, it's important to remember that cannabis is a *dioecious* plant, meaning that it will produce either male or female flowers. In rare cases, hermaphrodites do occur—whereby a single plant will exhibit both genders—but these cases are usually due to harsh environmental conditions and poor plant genetics. Most plants started from regular (i.e., non-feminized) seeds will produce a seedling that is either male or female.

The primary reason that growers want to know as early as possible whether their plants are male or female is so that they can remove the males from the garden before they begin to produce flowers. Male flowers take the form of small, roundish pods, which grow bigger and eventually turn into full-blown pollen sacs. In contrast, female plants produce the gorgeous flowers that have graced the pages of *High Times* for decades. Should any male plants release their pollen around these lovely females, the buds on the female plants will shut down their resin production and begin forming seeds within their flowers. The result is seeded bud that is also less potent—neither of which is desirable to the cannabis connoisseur.

Ripening male pollen sacs, with a few fully matured sacs opening to release their pollen.





An example of male pre-flowers in week four of vegetation. Notice it is one single shoot at the node.



A female pre-flower, with its first stigma coming out of a fuzzy round ovule.

More Tips on Sexing

Besides watching for pre-flowers, there are some basic (and less complicated) ways that growers can determine plant gender. However, while these methods are easier, they may not be as accurate.

PLANT HEIGHT

Once out of the seedling stage, male plants grow taller and faster than females, thereby making it easier for them to pollinate the surrounding female plants.

BRANCH STACKING

After the initial seedling stage, females exhibit shorter, stockier growth. Their internode lengths will be much shorter than the males', and their overall shape will be bushier and rounder.

NODE SWELLING

A pronounced swelling at the nodes is usually a sign that the plant is female.

As the male plant stretches, very small yellow or pale-green growths appear. These take the form of a single tiny shoot, which will develop into a hanging cluster of pods that eventually fill with pollen.

Determining Gender

Determining the gender of a young plant—or “sexing” the plants, as it is commonly called—is the process of identifying whether a plant will be male or female at the earliest possible time. This can be a tricky, even harrowing, experience for new growers, as a race against the clock begins: Once the male pre-flowers begin to show, there may be less than 10 days before the pollen sacs are fully developed and begin releasing pollen. Identifying males at the onset of development is crucial in producing a garden full of *sinsemilla* (a Spanish term meaning “without seed”) bud.

To determine the sex of a plant at the onset of maturation, we look for pre-flowers, which generally start to show between weeks four and six of vegetative growth. This timeframe depends largely on how long the seeds took to germinate and take root: Advanced seedlings may exhibit pre-flowers as early as week three or four, while slower-developing plants may take six to eight weeks. For this reason, patience and diligence are critical during this process.

Pre-flowers start to appear on plants at their internode sites. The internode *length* is the space between two joints or branches on the stem. For our purposes here, the *node* is the place where

a branch and stem meet. Depending on the age and height of the plant, pre-flowers first appear between the sixth and twelfth nodes a month or so into the vegetative stage. You will see minuscule pre-flower formations begin to develop at these nodes.

Male plants will begin to flower earlier than females. The first sign of a male plant is the elongation of the internode lengths near the top third of the plant. As the male plant stretches, very small yellow or pale-green growths appear. These take the form of a single tiny shoot, which will develop into a hanging cluster of pods that eventually fill with pollen.

Females, on the other hand, develop flowers at the nodes sites a week or two after the males start. These pre-flowers first appear as two stigmas that take the form of a “V.” The stigmas are white and usually hairy or have fuzz running along them. Soon, a tiny green pod forms at the base of the “V”: This pod contains the ovule, which, should the plant become pollinated, will hold a developing seed one day soon. If left unpollinated, these flowers will continue to develop around one other, forming tight clusters that eventually produce the denser flowers we have come to know simply as smokable “buds.”

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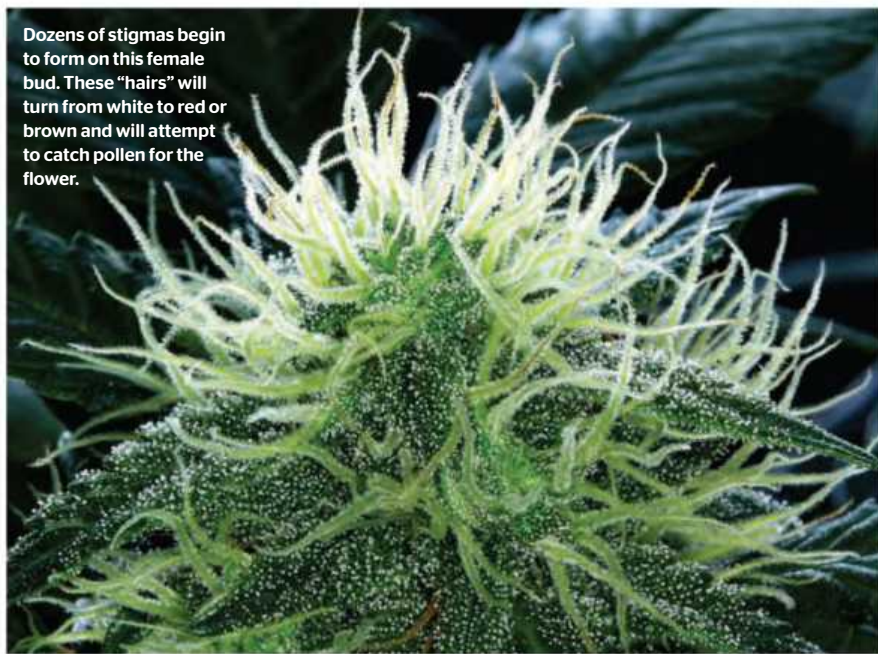
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Dozens of stigmas begin to form on this female bud. These “hairs” will turn from white to red or brown and will attempt to catch pollen for the flower.



Selective breeding via artificial pollination almost always takes place indoors using carefully chosen male and female plants.

plants, the male's pollen can be collected and applied to the female's flowers using cotton swabs (Q-tips) or small paintbrushes.

Alternatively, if the breeder is looking to create a lot of seeds or pollinate an entire female plant—or even several females at once—the male can be placed inside the same growroom as the females. Once the male plant is mature and his pollen sacs are full, they will

Breeding Basics

Now that we have an understanding of the differences between male and female cannabis plants, it's time to look at how they breed and, more important, how they can be selectively bred. Pollination between the two sexes in nature occurs just as one might expect: Everything from the birds and the bees to the blowing wind can contribute to ensuring that the male's pollen makes its way to female flowers.

Once the pollen arrives, it attaches to the stigmas of a female flower and travels down into the ovule, where it will be enveloped. Once it's been fertilized, the ovule will begin to develop into a seed. A single female plant is capable of producing tens of thousands of such seeds in a single harvest.

In nature, cannabis plants aren't picky about their mates. But once human growers enter the equation, they can be quite selective about which plants they want to cross. Selective breeding via artificial pollination almost always takes place indoors and is performed by growers who have carefully chosen the male and female plants they want to produce offspring. This selection is based on the desirable traits that the breeder wants manifested in the progeny—everything from color to potency (cannabinoid levels), flavor and aroma (terpene content), maturation time and so on. After the selections are made, it's time for sex in the growroom.

For most breeders, whether they're amateurs or master growers, the key is always to determine the sex of their



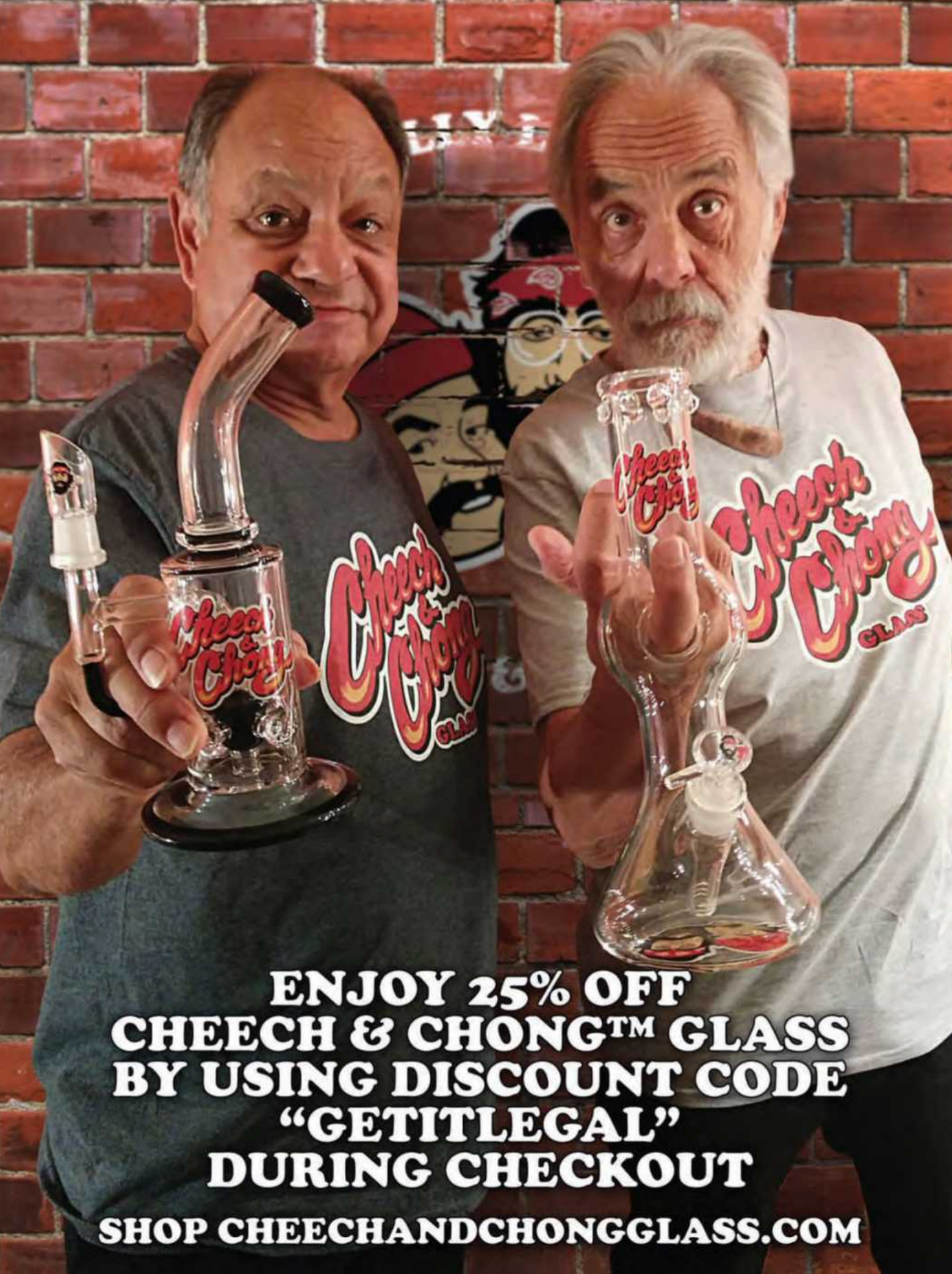
This male pollen sac has opened and dropped its pollen on the nearby females below it.

plants early on. Once their sex has been determined, the males are moved to an isolated space where they cannot interact with the females. Each group of plants is allowed to mature, and cuttings are taken to produce clones. Once mature, the flowers of both the male and female plants are harvested and tested, either by smoking, lab tests or visual inspection—or all three. Finally, once the most desirable mates are chosen, the clones are regrown for the breeding process.

This selection and testing process is time-consuming, and sometimes the steps are repeated several times, with several groups of seeds being grown out as the breeder looks for special phenotypes of each strain. But once the breeder finally settles on the male and female

open and unleash small bursts of pollen. With the help of a small oscillating fan, most of the female flowers will receive pollen and begin forming seeds. Placing a saucer or paper plate at the base of the male plant will help catch extraneous pollen that can be stored and used again in future breeding projects or applied to the females manually.

Once pollinated, the females will immediately channel all of their energy into seed production (hence the reason seeded flowers are less potent than sinsemilla buds), and some seeds may become viable as soon as two weeks after pollination. But for higher viability percentages, it's best to wait a couple more weeks, until the seeds are well matured and have a good size and darker color.



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A breeder is collecting pollen from a mature male plant to use in a later breeding project.



Small paint brushes can be used to manually apply pollen to select parts of a female plant to create smaller batches of seeds.



Inbreeding vs. Outbreeding

Growers who wish to become breeders must first answer an important question about their breeding goals: Are you trying to produce seeds of your current favorite strain, or are you looking to create something entirely new?

The former is known as *inbreeding*, and it requires both a male and a female of the exact same strain in order to make seeds that will closely replicate the traits of the parents. The latter option—the creation of a new genotype, which is much more easily accomplished—is known as *outbreeding*, and it requires a male and female from any two different strains.

Inbred lines, commonly known as IBLs, are much more difficult to create because in today's age of clones and feminized seeds, it is increasingly harder to come by a male plant of the same desired strain as your female. Compounding the problem is the fact that even if a grower has both a male and a female of the exact same strain, the probability that the offspring will be identical to their parents is only 50 percent at best. This law of genetic probability is captured by a diagram tool that biologists use called the Punnett Square (see Figure 1), which predicts the outcome of a particular breeding experiment. The Punnett Square helps breeders identify the dominant and recessive traits of gene sets based on the outcomes of their crosses. While it can be a tedious process, this is an excellent

means of understanding how the best breeders create our favorite strains.

With outbreeding, there's never a guarantee that the offspring will be anything special. In fact, the results of outbreeding are usually quite the opposite at first—but then, after several plant cycles,

breeders can begin to hone in on the desired characteristics. Of course, one of the best results in outbreeding is finding a completely mutant phenotype—something that is rarely exhibited or possibly nonexistent at the time, but possesses an entirely new and highly desirable quality. Outbreeding helps to reinvigorate the cannabis gene pool and is responsible for all of our favorite flavors, aromas and peak potencies.

Figure 1

		FATHER'S GENES	
		B	b
MOTHER'S GENES	b	Bb	bb
	b	Bb	bb

A Punnett Square can help breeders determine the probability of dominant and recessive traits showing in offspring.

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Female Seeds

The arrival of feminized seeds into the mainstream cannabis market brought with it an intense debate concerning cannabis genetics. On the one hand, it enabled far more hobbyists and home growers to cultivate their own marijuana—something that has aided greatly in the revolution to legalize cannabis in many countries around the world, including the US. On the other hand, by creating so many feminized seeds—nearly 80 percent of all cannabis seeds currently sold worldwide are feminized—we are putting the cannabis gene pool at great risk.

When breeders create feminized seeds, which are essentially a genetically modified organism (GMO), they're forcing a genetic occurrence that would otherwise happen less than 1 percent of the time in nature. The seeds are created using chemicals that stress female plants to the point of hermaphroditism, meaning the female plant creates both male and female flowers.

Because female plants do not carry the Y chromosome that males do, the pollen created by a hermaphroditic female only has X chromosomes, making the seeds they produce wholly female.



The final product: fully mature and viable seeds embedded within a mother bud.

The problem here is that the Y chromosome is effectively being bred out. Should this trend continue, the only way to produce certain strains will be by cloning, as the Y chromosome dies off and the male plant is eventually lost. Thus, many cannabis varieties are now

at higher risk for extinction, with many strains already lost. So remember: It's always a wise idea to purchase a small pack of regular male and female seeds along with your feminized ones, since you never know what the future may hold for your favorite smoke! 🌿

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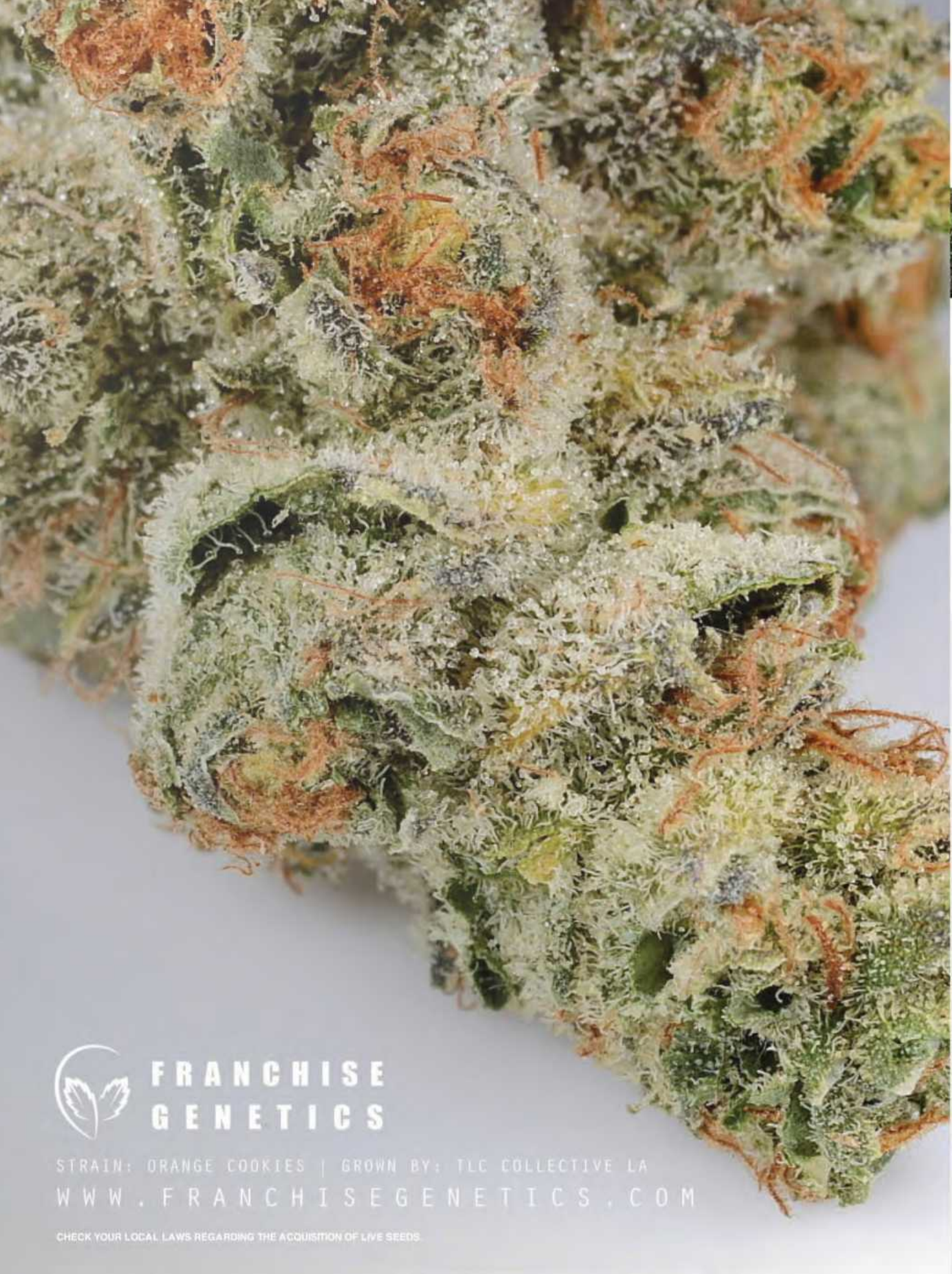
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LED Lighting Technology

Find out the facts about LEDs and discover if they're the right lighting system for you.

By Jorge Cervantes



All high-quality LEDs in these EVO LED 70 fixtures are made by Cree.

About LEDs

Light-emitting diodes are everywhere: You see them in stoplights, flashlights, household lighting, Christmas-tree decorations and more. The technology has come a long way since it was developed in the early 1960s, when LEDs were found in appliances and generated a faint 0.001 lumens per watt. New LED technology is advancing rapidly: The diodes are becoming much brighter and electrically efficient, and LED lamps are available across the visible spectrum and from ultraviolet through infrared. These days, marijuana growers are

successfully using LEDs to cultivate medical cannabis.

LED lamps can be used for pre-grow and propagation in horticulture, as well as for experiments with inter-lighting indoors and in greenhouses. At present, LEDs don't provide an economically viable replacement for the high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps traditionally used in greenhouses or indoor grows. However, the horticultural industry has a very big interest in LEDs, so keep an eye out for advances in this fast-changing technology.

There are so many new and different LED types, and so much marketing information about them, that it can be difficult to understand which specific LEDs work best as a light source to grow medical cannabis.

LED lamps use solid-state semiconductor energy to produce light, a technology similar to that used in computer circuits. LEDs do not use the filaments found in incandescent and tungsten halogen bulbs, or the gas used in HID, fluorescent and compact fluorescent bulbs. As a result, LED lamps generate less heat and are rated for regular household current. LEDs work with both 120- and 240-volt, 50-to-60-cycle electrical service.

LED lamps are a promising replacement for high-pressure sodium (HPS) lamps because of their high efficiency (up to 54%), very long life (they still produce at least 70% of their original output after 50,000 hours), small size and low operating voltage.

Rather than a ballast, a series of resistors or current-regulated power supplies are required to deliver the precise voltage and current necessary for LEDs to operate most efficiently. The power can also be decreased to dim the lights, since LEDs have a dimming range of 20% to 100%. The necessary hardware is hardwired and soldered into a small (circuit-board) fixture that is connected to the power supply. Individual clusters of LEDs that can be replaced are the most practical and economic option when purchasing a fixture.

Other types of lighting use constant voltage—that is, they require a certain voltage to work, and they're usually fairly tolerant of slight variations in that working voltage. For example, a normal incandescent bulb designed for European 230 volts of alternating current (VAC) will work fine from about 40 to 270 VAC. LEDs, however, are constant-current devices and require that the voltage be controlled to maintain an exact current flow. Unlike other light sources, LEDs are non-linear, which means that a small increase in voltage causes a large increase in the current flow. As a result, LEDs have to be driven by a constant-current power supply that adjusts its output voltage to maintain the current at a consistent preset level.

LEDs are often connected in series or strings. They're unique in that, if they fail, there's about an 80% chance that they'll still conduct electricity (a.k.a. "slag down") rather than "blow" like an incandescent bulb. However, this increases the voltage to the remaining diodes, which means that the current can spike to the point of causing more diodes to fail, or even a chain reaction that can destroy all of the LEDs in a string. But a constant-current power supply will detect the

increase in current and lower its output voltage to compensate—thereby protecting the remaining diodes.

Another option is to use a less-expensive constant-voltage power supply, in which the output is constantly adjusted to provide an exact voltage no matter what load it's driving (usually 24, 36 or 48 volts of direct current, or VDC). If this type of power supply is used, the circuit boards on which the LEDs are mounted need to have a small current-regulator chip. Some manufacturers don't use these regulator chips; instead, they use resistors to adjust the voltage (and therefore the current flow) through the LEDs. However, this is not recommended, since the voltage requirements of the diodes vary depending on age and temperature, and it can lead to all of the LEDs receiving too high a voltage and then failing.



Keep LEDs as close as possible to plants, because light diminishes to the square of the distance.

Turning On LEDs

When you turn on an LED lamp, electrons recombine with electron holes in the diode and release photons (light energy) in a process known as electroluminescence. Peak performance depends on the operating temperature. To date, the most efficient LED is 1 watt; LEDs with larger wattages run hotter and are less efficient, producing fewer lumens per watt. For example, a 3-watt LED produces only 35% more lumens than a 1-watt LED; the extra electrical energy is converted to heat rather than light.

If ambient temperatures in the operating environment climb too high, LEDs overheat and "droop," producing substantially less light. Much like solid-state computer chips, LEDs fail quicker when overheated over time.

LEDs are driven in milliamperes (mA). Some are driven at lower mA to increase efficiency. The science behind the circuitry is more complex than can be explained in this

article, but the best way for cannabis gardeners to discern the brilliance of an LED lamp is to measure its output with a light meter.

Overall, most indoor gardeners can decipher LED output using the following equation: amperes x voltage = watts (also known as Ohm's Law). Otherwise, determining the light output can be complicated and confusing—for example, a 3-watt LED that runs at 350 mA will yield 1 watt of light.

Small LEDs heat up quickly and lose efficiency—that is, the light energy will be converted to heat beyond a specific operating temperature. The operating temp is a function of the electric-current (mA) input. At too high an operating temperature, the LED will fail—that is, if too much current is run through the little diodes, they get too hot, become inefficient (light energy is transformed into heat) and fail (burn out).

For this reason, humidity is detrimental to LED circuits, which are exposed and must be protected to avoid corrosion. The LEDs must be enclosed to isolate them from exterior humidity.

LED Costs

An inexpensive 30- to 50-watt LED fixture with emitter costs 65 to 70 cents per watt, while HIDs cost less than 50 cents per watt. A 90-watt LED grow light costs about \$300 when purchased at a garden store or from a specialty retailer; however, three 30-watt LED floodlight fixtures cost \$66 when purchased at a discount retailer. But remember: All LEDs are not created equal!

Indeed, there's a huge variation in the cost and quality of LEDs. High-quality, high-brightness lamps from top manufacturers like Cree, Osram and Philips can cost 10 or 20 times as much as low-quality Chinese LEDs, and there is also a large market in counterfeit LEDs.



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LEDs emit the characteristic purple glow that turns all the photographs purple!

LEDs and Heat

All electrical devices create heat, and LEDs are no exception. The more efficient the LED, the greater the amount of light produced and the smaller the amount of heat: For example, a high-quality blue or white LED that uses roughly 2.4 watts of electricity and converts 50% of its input to light produces about 1.2 watts of heat. That may not sound like much—and even a low-quality LED that converts only 20% of the electricity to light generates about 1.92 watts of heat.

However, that heat must be removed or the chip will overheat and fail. The cooler the LED stays, the more efficiently it will operate (i.e., produce more light) and the longer it will last. Some lights have their LEDs mounted on conventional plastic circuit boards to save money. But these plastic boards don't conduct heat well and will cause the LEDs to overheat and fail very quickly.

LED Power Ratings

Much confusion surrounds LED power ratings. LEDs are rated in watts, but this rating is not their actual power consumption. The wattage rating of LEDs (1, 3, 5, 10 watts, etc.) is actually a "class" or "family" rating that bears no real relationship to the actual power consumed by the diodes. Consider the following:

- 1-watt LEDs operate at 350 mA**
- 3-watt LEDs operate at 700 mA**
- 5-watt LEDs operate at 1,000 mA**
- 10-watt LEDs operate at 1,500 mA**

(though keep in mind that larger LEDs require higher voltages and are less efficient).

These wattage "classes" were set to standardize power supplies and to allow LEDs from different manufacturers to be combined within the same fixture—and they were intended for white and blue LEDs only. Each rating (or class) was fairly accurate at the time: A 3-watt LED did consume about 3 watts of electricity. But the efficiency of LEDs has increased dramatically since then, and the voltage required to drive a 3-watt LED to 700 mA has dropped. Today, the average 3-watt white or blue LED consumes about 2.4 watts. Also, different colors of LEDs in the same class consume different amounts of power, because the colors use different materials and require different voltages.

Here's a breakdown of the actual power drawn by 3-watt LEDs of several different colors:

RED/HYPER-RED: 2.4 volts (the actual wattage at 700 mA is 2.4 volts x 0.7 watts = 1.68 watts)

BLUE/ROYAL BLUE/WHITE: 3.4 volts (the actual wattage at 700 mA is 3.4 volts x 0.7 watts = 2.38 watts).

LED Brilliance

When LEDs are "ganged" or grouped together, they can produce enough light to grow medical cannabis. An LED fixture must be kept 12 inches (30.5 cm) or less from the plants to be an effective light source for cannabis cultivation.

Depending on the manufacturer, modern LEDs produce from 40 to 70 lumens per

watt (lm/W). New and experimental LEDs can produce more than 200 lm/W, and in 2014, Cree started selling an LED that delivers 152 lm/W. But as you'll see below, lumens per watt are just part of the story.

The brightness of LEDs is rated in two ways, depending on their wavelength. LEDs between 640 and 460 nm (nanometers) are rated in lumens; LEDs with wavelengths longer than 640 nm or shorter than 460 nm are rated by their radiant power (radiant flux) in mW (milliwatts).

Lumens are not a good system for measuring the output of LEDs. For one thing, it is not a linear system, meaning that it doesn't measure all wavelengths/colors equally. Lumens were developed as a measurement for visible light and its apparent brightness—i.e., how bright it appears to the human eye—and to rate white-light sources rather than to measure monochromatic LED light. Furthermore, the human eye's response to light is extremely uneven: Colors in the center of the visible spectrum, such as green, appear much brighter than an equally bright light of red or blue.

Lumens can be used only to compare LED light sources with the exact same wavelength. This explains why some LEDs with wavelengths of 660 nm hyper—near the extremes of human vision—are often rated as "dominant-wavelength 640 nm."

LED Spectrum

LEDs are monochromatic (unlike common fluorescent or compact fluorescent lights, etc.), meaning they produce a single color over a narrow range of wavelengths—for example, white LEDs are actually blue or sometimes ultraviolet. Some LEDs have a phosphor coating (a.k.a. downshift phosphor), which absorbs the blue light and re-emits it at longer wavelengths. The coating contains a mix of different phosphors, each of which emits a different color that combine to create white light. The proper mix of colors causes different temperatures, and this creates white light. More red and less blue produces a warmer white, while less red and more blue yields a cooler white.

LED grow lights take advantage of diodes of different wavelengths to create light at only those wavelengths that plant can use most efficiently. In other words, the wavelengths match the plants' absorbed PAR (or photosynthetically active radiation) peaks. LED technology allows manufacturers to dial in the spectrum of their fixtures to produce incredibly high PAR ratings. This fact alone makes them more efficient per watt.



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This floodlight has multiple LEDs inside, and screws into a household light socket.



Weird-looking LEDs that resemble a bundle of chips emit more heat than light.



This small, yellow, 30-watt LED emitter produces 2700 lumens and a lot of heat.

“LEDs have a life span running from 25,000 to 50,000 hours—sometimes even longer—and fail by dimming over time.”



This 30-watt LED fixture uses standard heat-dissipation technology to stay cool.



A 2-watt LED is bright, but the bulb needs a reflector.



The LED UFO was one of the first LED grow lights available commercially.

LED Bulbs and Tubes

A vast array of retrofitted LEDs can be packed into a larger bulb that fits in a household incandescent-bulb screw fitting. Such LED bulbs cost from \$15 to \$30 and are generally not bright enough to grow plants well. Also, they are rated in terms of replacements for incandescent bulbs—for example, a 15.5-watt LED bulb replaces a 75-watt incandescent.

LED tubes are shaped like regular T5, T8 and T12 fluorescent bulbs, but the tubes are filled with LEDs. More than 200 diodes will fit into a 4-foot (121.9 cm) T12 tube. An energy-efficient 4-foot, 22-watt T8 LED tube produces 1,248 lumens, and these flicker-free tubes have a lifetime of more than 50,000 hours—but they do not fit into existing T8 fluorescent fixtures.

T8 red tubes are 660 nm and contain 288 LEDs. The spectrum can also be split into blue and white light, with a 50/50 mix of 144 red and 144 white 420 nm/5,000°K LEDs. Some fixtures allow LED tubes to be mixed with T8 fluorescent tubes to improve the overall spectrum. The tubes run cool and can be placed within inches of the plants.

LED Fixtures

Usually, different LEDs are combined in a fixture to achieve a specific spectrum. A series of individual LEDs can be mounted and hardwired into a single fixture that is square, rectangular or circular; the fixture can also contain long T12 and T8 glass tubes loaded with LEDs. The most practical fixtures allow individual clusters of LEDs packed into a bulb to be easily replaced. Such fixtures also make upgrading to LEDs inexpensive.

LED vs. HID Lamps

We can easily compare LED and HID wattage, lumen output and lm/W output. But comparing milliwatts per square meter (mW/m²) and PAR watts is the true measure of the light that plants need for photosynthesis.

Despite their current cost, LEDs offer several advantages that HIDs don't. They produce very little heat and can be placed closer to the garden canopy, which inherently provides plants with more bright light. The light from LED lamps can also be focused and directed through a lens, thereby intensifying it. This factor can be compared only when we

look at overall fixture brilliance.

There are a few spectrum details that must be addressed as well. LED fixtures contain several to hundreds of diodes, which can be of many different spectrums. The fixtures are manufactured to include LEDs of different spectrums to provide the highest ratings for plant growth. However, I've had a difficult time finding accurate brilliancy tests for LED fixtures.

End of Life

LEDs have a life span running from 25,000 to 50,000 hours—sometimes even longer—and fail by dimming over time. LEDs are so new to gardeners that there is no specific information about when to replace them.

A single LED that fails or isn't as bright as the rest may not affect the fixture's overall output enough to warrant replacing it. Overall, I recommend replacing a fixture when it yields 85% to 95% of its previous output. Also, you don't have to worry about hazardous substances when disposing of LEDs: They contain no mercury to pollute the environment, and the diodes and their fixtures can both be recycled. ♻️

Adapted from The Cannabis Encyclopedia by Jorge Cervantes, \$50 (softcover), \$70 (hardcover). Find it at Amazon.com or by visiting Jorge's website, MarijuanaGrowing.com.

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Sheriff Joe Arpaio proudly calls Tent City a “concentration camp.”



30 Days in 'Tent City'

For over 20 years, in the desert of Arizona's Maricopa County, the jail complex known as “Tent City” has housed thousands of prisoners, most of whom are awaiting trial. Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who created this horror, calls it a “concentration camp.” A recent visitor recounts his stay. *By Brian Penny*

My inmate number is T137883. I'm a bank whistleblower. On December 12, 2014, I was found in contempt of a default judgment in the Mesa, Arizona, Superior Court by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO). I was hit with a \$1,000 bail, which I couldn't pay. I was told that I would be held until my review hearing, set for January 9, 2015.

A Whistleblower Twisting in the Wind

In March 2011, I leaked internal bank documents through the online group Anonymous that showed corruption in so-called force-placed insurance, an overpriced insurance product imposed on struggling car- and homeowners. Working as an operations manager in the backend of the mortgage and insurance industries throughout the foreclosure crisis, I saw

people forced from their homes for profit.

In the following years, I worked with everyone from the Arizona attorney general and the New York Department of Financial Services to President Obama's Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Federal Housing Finance Agency in an attempt to spearhead regulations against this product. Tens of millions of dollars in fines were levied, and dozens of class-action suits are pending against the industry.

I was provided neither compensation for my time nor whistleblower protections. I was left to fend for myself, blacklisted from the industries in which I'd worked my entire adult life.

In my leak, I had named an executive, who sued for defamation and obtained a default judgment against me. A hearing was then scheduled in Arizona to hold

me in contempt of the default judgment.

The content of the leak was never in dispute, but the executive who'd been named was fired and found himself unable to get a comparable job. The leak showed up on every background check, and he proved to the judge that he'd lost a job offer over it.

Terrified of being arrested on a bench warrant, I reached out to my government contacts for help, but my predicament was dismissed as a personal employment issue. Upon returning to Arizona, I knew jail was inevitable—the executive's expensive Scottsdale lawyers had pushed hard.

Now my home is Tent City, one of America's most infamous prisons housing some of our most notorious criminals, from Jody Arias to Mexican POWs held on charges incurred in the Drug War. It's the brainchild of Sheriff Joe

Arpaio's Zion

I was 12 in 1992, when Arpaio was first elected sheriff of Maricopa County, one of the most populous in the United States. A year later, Sheriff Joe obtained some old Army surplus tents and erected a city of tents within the MCSO jail system to create what he calls a “concentration camp” for convicted and sentenced prisoners.

Tent City is a series of jails, including Estrella, Lower Buckeye, Towers and Durango, along with the inmates who simply sleep outside Estrella in tents. With the temperatures in Phoenix topping 110 degrees in the summer, it wasn't long before Tent City garnered global media attention and criticism from human-rights groups like Amnesty International.

By 2005, Sheriff Joe's hard stance on immigration became national news, as the MCSO rounded up illegal immigrants from around the city to keep the jail numbers up to contractual quotas. In Arizona, prison is a big business.

Arizona has always been behind in its laws; if not for Utah, it would be the least progressive state in the nation. But while my friends and family are emblazoned with the insignias for teams like the Cardinals, Sun Devils, Wildcats, Lumberjacks, Suns, Coyotes and Diamondbacks, I'm emblazoned with the words “Sheriff's Inmate.”

Having been through Army basic training, I wasn't too worried about being shanked, though I was anxious about coming off nicotine, caffeine, sugar and cannabis all at once. I also had no idea what would happen to my van, left in the court's parking lot. The loss of income would certainly hurt, in addition to the fact that my personal blog had already been deleted.

Without my cell phone, I would only be able to make a collect call to the one phone number in my memory: my parents. We hadn't spoken in nearly a year.

Tent City Processing

My first three days are spent in the Fourth Avenue processing and intake center, affectionately known as “The Matrix.” I'm shuffled around to various concrete community cells, fed bags of dry bread, unflavored peanut butter and bruised apples. My only water source is a sink above a community toilet in a monitored room.

At the end of the week, we're placed in a prison pod for a few hours, which gives the “weekenders” a chance to

We sleep outside in the old Army tents, allowed indoors only to shave, eat or file complaints with the MCSO.



Sheriff Joe Arpaio runs the show.

sober up and the long-term inmates a taste of what's in store for them if they continue down this road. By the time you're assigned a regular bunk and given your first meal of warm but flavorless gray slop, you're thankful just to have the monotony broken. But the monotony soon returns. Every day's menu is unseasoned and flavorless: a bland concoction of soy meat, carrots, potatoes and powdered milk, made by the inmates, designed to look and taste like dog food. Controlling your food is one way to control your mind.

Tonight, it's slop and mashed potatoes. Tomorrow, slop and rice.

The next day, slop and refried beans. Repeat until sick.

Most of what's served is borderline rotten. The MCSO prefers to let food expire rather than feed it to the inmates. The trustees of Tent City (working inmates) are forced to throw hundreds of pounds of food into dumpsters while the detention officers watch, smoke cigarettes and taunt the inmates.

I'm surrounded by people addicted to real drugs: oxy, Perc, black, meth, Xanax or worse. My cellmate is Montez, a Chicano (Mexican-American), who explains to me that the only good narcotics they prescribe in jail are to those withdrawing from benzodiazepines. Cannabis, cocaine and meth withdrawals won't kill you like withdrawing from these prescribed medications. Though designed for temporary use, these drugs are highly addictive, and their over-prescription in America is tragic.

After a few days getting to know each other, Montez shows me the ropes about sharing “spreads”—whatever food you may have in your possession—and teaches me to hustle my writing skills as way to participate in the pod's black-market economy.

Christmas in the Tents

After a week in Durango, my cellie lends me \$80 to help me get on my feet. I'm transferred on Monday, which is commissary day, to the tents outside Estrella jail.

Because I'm arriving in Tent City during the winter, I'm issued an extra pair of pink socks, as well as a pink thermal shirt and underwear to survive the cold. I'm issued five pink blankets to make up my bed and devise a pillow. In the desert, winter days are warm, but the nights can be frigid. We sleep outside in the old Army tents, allowed indoors only to shave, eat or file complaints with the MCSO.

When I arrive at my tent, I'm told that the tent yard is on restriction because the Chicanos keep intimidating the white guys. In fact, I'm told this—quite obnoxiously—about five times a day by a Chicano tent mate. (He reminds me of an asshole I went to school with who thought he was badder than everyone.)

Prisoners in the tents are offered a variety of incentives to work on the chain gangs, including two-for-one deals on time served, enhancement meals, and the opportunity to purchase commissary goods from Sheriff Joe's overpriced junk-food-and-hygiene-goods store.

Each tent represents a shift for a job—sweeping, mopping, serving food, cleaning holding tanks or throwing out thousands of meals per day—at any of the indoor jails. Other jobs include working in the laundry room, cleaning up after the horses or making slop in the jail cafeteria.

Rain or shine, seven days a week, holiday or not, you wake up to get your hygiene completed in time to begin your shift on the chain gang. I'm on the first shift, so I'm roused every morning between 3 and 4 a.m. I get no pay or perks. I'm forced to work in a warehouse in open-toed sandals, violating numerous OSHA and health codes.

We own nothing; we are nothing—and the detention officers of the MCSO love to remind us of that at every chance, regardless of how well we perform our forced labor.

When placed in such an environment, mental stimuli disappear. It's a forced

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state of sensory deprivation, a form of psychological torture. The courts and jail cut off our communication with the outside world, placing financial obstacles in our way. Collect phone calls and video visits are allowed but recorded; fees for both start at \$5 a minute. When we don't tuck in our shirts or follow other arbitrary rules, we're denied chow, forced to stay in our bunks, and lose commissary, visitation and phone privileges.

On Christmas Eve, I begin vomiting and decide to stage a hunger strike.

Prisoners of Different Wars

I'm held with the prisoners of America's various wars—the border war, the Drug War and other conflicts—in a modern-day Wild West. Tonight, I'm in the D7 detention pod at Durango, sitting on my bunk and making string out of garbage bags. I'm a "wood" (white guy) sharing a cell with two "paisas," the term for Mexican nationals in jail. The younger of the two is especially crafty.

Upon entering the cell, I give up some extra blankets and thermals I snuck out of the tents. The buildings have controlled temperatures, and the extra warmth is appreciated during the winter. I keep only a set of pink long johns for myself, ensuring that my cellmates are comfortable before I begin dealing with everyone else in the pod.

Still on my hunger strike, I give my breakfast and dinner to a variety of inmates, trying to spread the wealth as evenly as possible. On the sixth day of my hunger strike, the clinic changes me to a liquid diet—without notifying me and without my permission. It consists of a variety of small plastic condiment cups filled with chicken and beef broth, along with flavored vitamin waters.

Despite the language and cultural barriers, my cellies and I learn to communicate, and the paisas teach me a variety of skills, including how to make paint, pencils, pens, string and ear plugs. These dudes are quite skilled at making something out of nothing. Many work for the cartels.

Outside our cell, the dayroom is bustling. Inmates are breaking bread, each contributing a food item as an ingredient in a shared meal (the "spreads" I mentioned earlier). Detention officers keep an eye out for hooch and other contraband. Hiding contraband in a cell is a lot more difficult than it looks in *The Shawshank Redemption*. Sheriffs walk by your cell at least five times a day, and if given a reason, they'll flip over your mattress

These dudes are quite skilled at making something out of nothing. Many work for the cartels.



The Tent City menu is a variation of slop.

and look through your commissary bag. There's nowhere to hide anything except in plain sight.

The TV is on. The kinfolk (black guys) are playing dominoes, the Chicanos are playing spades with the woods, and our cell is full of conversation. We're sharing the details of our cases with each other through a translator.

One of the paisas has a chunk of his arm missing near the elbow. "What happened?" I inquire.

He smiles and stands with an imaginary rifle, as if at the shooting range. "AK-47."

"Nice!" I reply.

The paisas know I'm interested in what they do. Growing up by the border, Mexican dirtweed was what got me through high school, college and all the harder parts of growing up. My cellie is an immigrant who got sold out by his dealer after buying two grams of pot. He asked me to read his police report, a sad story I've heard far too many times: An anonymous source tipped off the authorities, and his dealer took him for a ride in her car after the deal. A patrol officer pulled them over, and the car was searched. He was busted and charged with multiple drug-distribution felonies. He's been stuck here indefinitely, just like me.

I explain that I'm a journalist.

"What is a 'journalist'?" the translator asks after a quick back-and-forth.

"I'm a writer—magazines, newspapers, Internet."

The translator struggles to find words. "Reportero?" my cellie asks.

"Yes! Yo soy reporter!" I smile. "You were set up by your dealer. You know you're being screwed. Would you like me to write about you to help you out?"

"Si!"

"Simon," I reply. (You can count on me.)

"There Is No Happy in Jail!"

We snort some white powder and, for a few moments, I almost forget I'm in jail. Bonding through all the barriers and against all odds makes us feel somehow free, if only temporarily.

I'm down to my last contact lens. Having only one working eye kinda sucks, but I'm getting used to it. I can still see the painting of Santa Muerte on the wall, painted by my cellie. This man is an artist.

9:45 p.m. The Chicanos next door are pounding on the walls, beds and windows to create a jailhouse stomp beat. They're singing the traditional *narco guerra* songs. They go out of their way to ensure a positive energy throughout the dayroom.

A heated game of spades rages in Spanish at the other end of the room. The TV blares ESPN2. I'm beginning to learn the ways of the paisa POWs by dealing poker at their Texas Hold'em games. Every piece of the puzzle knows his place. They work as a pack, always understanding their purpose and focusing on the main goal: beating the outsiders.

Most prison beefs start at the poker table, and I'm smart enough to stick to my position as dealer. There's no risk: I'm guaranteed that the winner will tip me one item, and the paisas always win. They work together. They have the kind of honor we'd expect from American POWs in the countries they're held in.

The paisa POWs have clearly learned to troll the social contracts of people in prison like no other. They communicate with simple glances that can't be seen on camera. Gambling against them isn't a good idea. I stick to dealing and learning.

10 p.m. The DO (duty officer) comes around for the final inspection of his shift and wishes us a happy New Year, yelling, "Enjoy the hooch! I won't even search for it!" as he leaves the locked room.

We're gathered around the barred windows of the dayroom, looking outside. It's raining in the desert. I bet the people sleeping in the tents tonight aren't too happy about that, especially those doomed to the top bunk.

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11 p.m. The third-shift DO locks us down and spends 20 minutes lecturing us loudly on the rules, as though it's everyone's first day. This guy is fat in all the wrong ways, no doubt having issues getting laid on the outside.

"Happy New Year, DO!" an inmate yells from his bunk.

The rejoinder from the DO is harsh: "There's no happy in jail! Stop trying to show off and have a Hollywood moment in front of your friends, or I'll taze you and lock you down all day tomorrow!"

The pod fades to black.

11:59 p.m. My cellies and I have rows of empty milk cartons lined up on the floor. They're folded into squares to trap air in them. In one more minute, we're going to jump on them to make loud bangs. Someone a few doors down jumps the gun. Others are joining in. Hold out, men!

12 a.m.—New Year's Day, 2015. One of the paisas emits a yell, and the singing begins. My cellies and I stomp up and down on over a dozen milk cartons, slamming our hands on the glass and yelling alternately, "Happy New Year!" and "Fuck you, DO!"

Free at Last

A little over a week later, on January 9, at 4:20 p.m., I'm getting ready to be released from jail, 28 days after initially being held. I'm made purposefully late for my telephone appearance at the court. The commissioner tells me I'll be temporarily released, with an opportunity to delete my blogs under the supervision of my old boss's arrogant lawyers.

I spend hours in a holding tank in Lower Buckeye jail, where I finish reading the copies of Dennis Lehane's *Shutter Island* and Dan Brown's *Digital Fortress* that I picked up in jail.

I strip naked, use the on-camera toilet in front of open windows. Then I slowly put on my old clothes, including my black leather Chucks, the laces of which still haven't been returned. I slide my pink boxers into my paper bag, along with the spare pink socks I hid in the bag's false bottom. Having already given up all my pink blankets, thermals and long johns, these will be my only souvenirs from Tent City—aside from the signed artwork that my cellmate gave me.

After getting dressed, I'm led to another desk, where I'm forced to stand with my back against the wall while

they go through my bag. First they throw away the string I made from my pink towel. Then they find my souvenirs. "Trying to steal the boxers, eh?" the female guard says imperiously. "Oh, and socks!"

After she's done with her search, the guards point at the door. I stand and wait to hear the click as it unlocks. Then I push the door open. It leads to a small room with another door. I look back at the DO. He nods. I walk through.

As the door slams behind me, I stand for a moment in front of the second door, waiting to hear another buzz and click.

Nothing happens. I reach out, turn the handle and push—and, for the first time in a long time, I open a door on my own. Dressed in a crumpled three-piece suit and wearing only one contact, I savor my freedom for a minute. I bum a cigarette from the first person I see. Then I begin walking three miles south to the nearest Walmart to top up my cell phone and call for a ride.

I decide that I'm not going to delete any more of my blogs. Maybe I need to prepare for my next incarceration. Which begs the question: Should I run or fight? 🌿



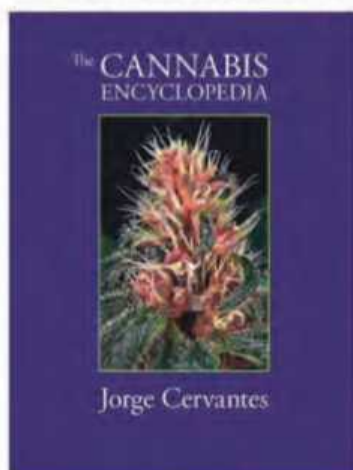
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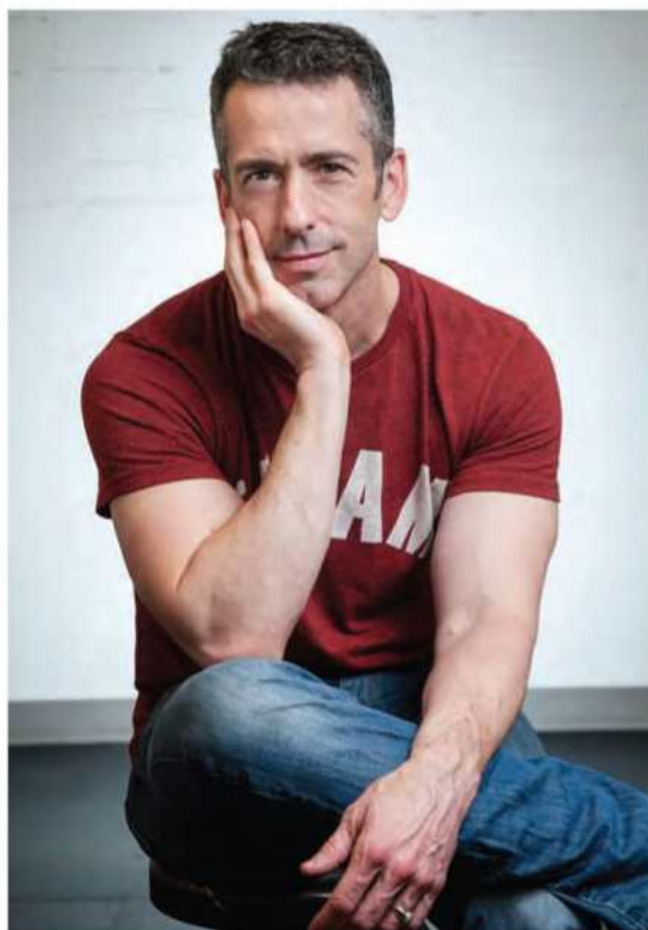
WHAT MAKES DAN SAVAGE PERHAPS THE MOST POPULAR—AND CONTROVERSIAL—SEX-ADVICE COLUMNIST IN AMERICA? “I’M NOT TERRIFIED OF SEX,” HE SAYS.

NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT. “SAVAGE LOVE,” WHICH DEBUTED IN SEATTLE’S ALTERNATIVE NEWSPAPER *THE STRANGER* IN 1991, HAS BECOME A WEEKLY MUST-READ FOR HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS. THE OPENLY GAY SAVAGE IS WITTY AND LUCID, EQUALLY ABLE TO BE COMPASSIONATE OR BRUTALLY HONEST, DEPENDING ON THE NATURE OF THE QUESTION. HE’S BECOME A MEDIA STAR AS WELL, APPEARING ON COUNTLESS POLITICAL TALK SHOWS TO OFFER HIS SINGULAR COMMENTARY ON A RANGE OF ISSUES APART FROM SEX.

DAN SAVAGE IS ALSO A SELF-PROCLAIMED POTHEAD AND AN ACTIVIST FOR LEGALIZATION. AND, AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT, HE HAS NO PROBLEM RECOMMENDING CANNABIS AS AN AID TO BETTER SEX.

You were raised Catholic. Was there a lot of torment for you in terms of discovering that you were gay?

I’m one of the lucky ones. There were basically two distinct groups: guys who, when they realized they were gay, thought that there was something wrong with them—they thought they were sick, terrible,



awful, rotten people; otherwise, they wouldn’t be gay. Then there were guys—and, frankly, I fell into this latter camp—who thought, “I’m fine. Everybody else is crazy. I’m okay.”

The fact that I had that in my head, I credit to people like Harvey Milk and the early LGBT civil-rights movement. It was creeping through

the news, and the images were almost as important as what was being said. I saw happy, seemingly fine “out” gay people in the world. I was lucky enough to grow up in Chicago, a big city, and to go through puberty in the late 1970s. There were gay people around—gay waiters who I’d see, gay people on the street.

When you encountered discrimination or bias, what was your reaction?

After I came out, my reaction was: “Who do I pummel? How do I fight this?” I came out in high school, which is really unusual for gay men of my generation. Now, you have people in middle school coming out. Almost all of the gay men at my universities came out after they graduated. I came out in high school, and I immediately became a gay-rights activist. When I went away to college at the University of Illinois, I was a gay activist. There were no protections for queer students on campus then, nothing in the antidiscrimination code of the university protecting them. I was on a committee that was appointed following some protests to formulate a policy—and to create cover for the university president. I immediately started plugging away.

Do you consider yourself a confrontational person, someone who tries to speak truth to bullshit?

Yeah, I do that, and it gets me in trouble sometimes. As with anyone who’s been writing and thinking out loud for 25 years, there are times I was convinced that I was right, or that I had a handle on something, but didn’t. Maybe I

have a form of Tourette syndrome: Sometimes I feel compelled to say something because I know I'm right and I know something is fucked up. And I just flinch as I post or publish it or say it out loud in an interview, because I know it's going to get me in trouble.

How did "Savage Love" become so successful?

I met Tim Keck, who founded *The Stranger*. He and his business partner sold *The Onion*, and Tim moved to Seattle to start *The Stranger*. I met him, and he told me about his new newspaper. I suggested having an advice column, because everybody reads those. He looked at me and said, "That's excellent advice! Why don't you write it?"

We started talking about it—what it would look like to have a gay guy writing a sex-advice column in a straight newspaper for straight readers. Straight advice columnists had always condescended, every once in a while, to take a question from someone who was gay. We thought it would be funny if I treated straight readers and straight sex with the same contempt and revulsion that straight advice columnists had always treated gay readers and gay sex with—that it was awful and gross and unnatural. "How can you do such a disgusting thing? You must have one of these sick and twisted straight relationships."

That was the shtick. I thought I'd do this for six months or a year, then head back to Germany, where I'd been living with my boyfriend. But the column just took off. It got syndicated, and the mail just poured in. It hasn't stopped. It was funny at the time: Straight people had never been treated this way before. They thought it was a new experience to be treated with contempt and



Savage cracks up Stephen Colbert on *The Colbert Report*.

There are lots of things you can do unto people; as long as you enjoy it and they enjoy it, and you're considerate and respectful, it's not a problem.

revulsion. It went from being a joke to an actual advice column in about nine months.

I didn't want to be an advice columnist when I grew up. But I grew up in a newspaper family. We got all the newspapers and comics. Advice columns were sort of the point of entry for kids—that's what we'd read. I grew up reading Ann Landers, then Xaviera Hollander in *Penthouse* magazine, who wrote the "Happy Hooker" advice column. My brothers got *Penthouse* for the pictures, and I'd read the articles. I loved her column, and my column was very consciously modeled on Ann Landers and Xaviera Hollander—and my mom, who was kind of the Dr. Phil of the neighborhood when I was a kid.

How many papers carry "Savage Love" now?

About 100. There are fewer papers now than there were 20 years ago. And I have my international readers in Hong Kong, Italy and Canada. And *Savage Lovecast* has thousands of listeners in Australia and the UK—all over the world, there's thousands.

What's the most common question you get?

"Is this normal?" Which usually comes at the end of a very abnormal description of someone's unique sexual interests. I call them the "Mother, may I?" questions—questions from people who are seeking permission to do something that they want to do. They're likelier to get the "Yes, you may" from me than from a lot of other advice columnists, because I'm not terrified of sex.

If there's one basic piece of advice you could give, what would it be?

Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you... with a much broader understanding of what is possible to do unto someone. There are lots of things you can do unto people; as long as you enjoy it and they enjoy it, and you're considerate and respectful, it's not a problem. Usually, when people are treated badly, it's a failure of empathy. Empathy is doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. Empathy is the golden rule: You try to protect the other person's experience or

feelings when they're on the receiving end.

What's the most disturbing thing about doing your column?

Digital photographs. Because when it was all letters—that's how long I've been doing the column: pre-Internet, pre-Google—people would have to write me: "Oh, I have this sore on my genitals—or my anus, or my labia—and this is what it looks like, and this is how long it's been there." And these letters would always end with: "I'm too embarrassed to go to the doctor. What do I do?"

I'd run these letters every once in a while and write: "Even if I knew what it is, you still have to go to the doctor. Even if I could diagnose it, I can't print the column in penicillin this week so you can stuff it in your panties. You still have to go to the doctor!"

Now, because of digital photographs and email, I don't get the descriptions; I get photographs—with the same "I'm too embarrassed to go to the doctor." But they're not too embarrassed to bend over in front of a mirror, stick a camera between their legs and take a picture of their anus, and then email it to me, over an unsecured server, with their real name attached to it. Not too embarrassed to do that, but too embarrassed to go to the doctor.

Do you think America's attitude toward sexuality has improved?

I think it has gotten better—I think it's evolved. We see more openness and honesty. I think gay people helped create more openness and honesty in our culture about sexuality. A lot of the early right-wing, conservative religious fears about the existence of openly gay, happy people changing straight marriage and straight relationships has been borne out:

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Living as who we are, telling our truths, has inspired a lot of straight people to be who they are and to tell their truths. And the religious right thinks that's a problem.

I don't think that's a problem. We see more openly non-monogamous straight couples now. We see kind of an organized "poly" movement that was inspired by gay people. Gay people telling the truth and gay people being honest with friends and relatives and each other—as well as the wider culture—created a conversation as to whether monogamy is an opt-in choice, not a default setting. That's inspired a lot of straight people to wonder: "Should it be our default setting? What do we want?"

I always point out that there's nothing straight about marriage, family and having children. We believed that it was "straight" because gay people weren't allowed to do it. It's like saying doctors or lawyers are male because we don't allow women to be doctors or lawyers. But there's nothing about lawyering or doctoring that women couldn't do; they weren't allowed to.

What's interesting now is that you see lots of gay people who are—quote/unquote—"doing the straight thing" by marrying and having children. But you see many more straight people doing what had always been held up as "the gay thing." So much of gay culture from the '70s and '80s has been adopted by straight people wholesale, but they've changed the names. We had "fuck buddies"; they now have "friends with benefits."

We "tricked"; straight people "hook up." They changed the names, but it's like the gay lifestyle.

What kind of comment really makes you want to tee off on someone?

When people like Herman Cain and Ben Carson and Mike Huckabee run

"I smoked pot for the first time when I was 34, and I was like, 'Oh my God! Where have you been all my life?'"

around saying being gay is a choice. Or the Family Research Council saying that gay kids are committing suicide because they realize that they've made a terrible decision about who they're going to be—that they've chosen to be gay, and it's so devastating that they kill themselves.

One way to defeat a bullshit argument is to take it seriously. I've gotten in trouble for this. Ben Carson said that being gay is a choice. My response was: "Ben Carson, you should choose it, then. Prove it, to win the argument. Suck my cock!"

That's what it boils down to. What Ben Carson is saying is that people can choose: Men can choose to want to give other men blowjobs.

You've apologized for some of your comments in the past, but you've never apologized for finding a new definition for Rick Santorum's last name.

[Laughing] Yeah, and I will never apologize.

What's your stance on outing?

Outing is brutal and should be reserved for brutes. I've never supported hanging around outside gay bars, writing down people's license plates, and then outing dentists from Milwaukee to their wives in Madison, Wisconsin. But if someone is reaping political benefits from attacking gay, lesbian, bi and trans people—by legislating against us, by being a demagogue, by making the world a dangerous and unsafe place for gays and lesbians—and then that person is himself gay, that person is a legitimate target for outing. That's not an attack; that's self-defense.

After Barack Obama endorsed gay marriage—though he opposed it while running for president—what was your reaction?

When your understanding evolves, you don't have to apologize. I don't think Hillary Clinton should have to apologize constantly for not supporting marriage equality in 2008. Nor should Barack Obama. They changed their minds. When you ask somebody to change their mind and they change their mind, you say thanks. You don't say "Fuck you!" for the rest of their lives because they didn't agree with you the entire time.

In the past, you weren't a pot smoker. Has that changed?

I was not a pot smoker; now I'm a total pothead. I smoked pot for the first time when I was 34, and I was like, "Oh my God! Where have

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you been all my life?" It shuts down that part of my brain that I need to shut down every once in a while—the part that's hypercritical and subconscious and overthinks everything. I can smoke pot and watch "The Bachelorette" and not feel bad about it.

What about pot and sex?

I frequently recommend pot to callers on the web-cast and to readers of my column. You don't have to get blitzed; you don't have to do the full Maureen Dowd in a hotel room. But if there's something that you want to do, a hit of pot can put you in the moment, closing that third eye that's floating on the other side of the room, where you're watching yourself from across the room. Pot closes that eye and helps you to be in the moment and be yourself. Pot can be very sensual. In the same way that it makes food more delicious, it can make somebody's ass more delicious.

Are you involved in the legalization movement?

I was involved in the Washington State legalization movement, inasmuch as I wrote about it frequently and stumped for it and my paper, *The Stranger*, was all for it. Legal pot and legal same-sex marriage passed here by a wider margin than in any other state. I think *The Stranger* is partly responsible; we deserve some credit. One of the things that *The Stranger* did for every candidate interview over 25 years was to ask people running for governor, people running for City Council, people running for anything, where they stood on pot legalization and on gay marriage. We made everybody take a position, and we roasted people who were against marijuana decriminalization. I think we helped lay the groundwork for legal pot in Seattle just by engaging and

having this argument about the ridiculousness of these prohibitions.

Tell us about the It Gets Better Project.

My husband Terry and I were reading about the suicide of this one kid, Billy Lucas. The feeling was, and the feeling has always been, when we hear about the suicide of gay kids: "If I could only have talked to that kid for five minutes, I think I could have helped him." We always think we could have given him hope for the future by sharing our own experiences with bullying—where we were then compared to where we are now, and how we got to where we are now ... not to sit passively and wait for it to get better around you, but how we make it better for ourselves. We could help that kid. A kid is bullied because of his race, his faith or his class. He goes home to parents and family—the same race, same faith, same class. Who can they ask for help? Who can put what's happening to them into perspective if they never talk about it?

If the kid is bullied because of his faith, he goes home to parents of the same faith who are responsible, happy, successful. That kid instinctively knows what he's being told at school or by bullies is a lie, because his parents disprove it just by their existence. But the gay kid doesn't go home to gay parents—usually doesn't go home to any gay relatives or friends of the family. Tragically, he often goes home to parents who also bully him. So the whole idea behind the It Gets Better Project was, by using the Internet and YouTube, to provide the adult perspectives and adult role models to gay kids and lesbian kids and bi kids and trans kids that they lack. ✨

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Rent-a-Growroom

A Michigan attorney becomes a landlord to pot growers.

By Dan Skye



Growing in the open

Attorney Matt Herman loves Grand Rapids. He was born in Buffalo, New York, but after attending law school in Michigan's second-largest city, he said to himself, "I'm staying!"

For good reason: Grand Rapids consistently appears on Top 10 lists of "Best Places to Live in America," and it ranked fifth in *Forbes's* survey of US cities enjoying a robust economic recovery. And while Grand Rapids has long been a conservative enclave, Herman says that's changing: "We have a young, vibrant community, noteworthy for its dedication to the arts."

Herman's pretty noteworthy himself. In addition to being a prominent medical marijuana attorney with an intricate knowledge of the state's laws (as well as the owner of a minor-league basketball team, the Grand Rapids Cyclones), Herman serves as the CEO of Cannabis Solutions, a company that rents garden space to pot growers.

"What we do is based on problems we identified in the community," he says regarding the company's business model. "People want safety, and they'd like to get their gardens out of

their homes. We provide safe, secure spaces for people to grow indoors."

A shareholder-owned company, Cannabis Solutions raised \$250,000 in capital to get started. It now has seven buildings in different phases of construction—two in Grand Rapids and one each in Byron Center, Portage, Ionia, Flint and Detroit.

Growers determine their own space requirements, and Cannabis Solutions charges them a monthly rate of \$300 per each 1,000-watt light used in their flowering rooms. Both soil and hydro are welcome here—plus there's no charge for the first 90 to 120 days, so growers can get a successful garden underway before their rent kicks in. (Each grower is also required to have an attorney on an "availability" retainer, but one not associated with Herman's practice.) Onsite consultation is available courtesy of each site's "super"—a knowledgeable grower who ensures that correct cultivation practices are followed.

"I think growers feel pretty safe here," Herman notes. "If I'm willing to put my license to practice on the line, they feel pretty secure." 🌿



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Dry plants until the branches snap instead of bending.

SUBJECT: **Drying While Away**

FROM: **SigZag**

🌱 I'm getting ready to harvest a few plants, and I'm letting them go as long as I can. Unfortunately, after I harvest them, I'll be leaving town for 18 days. I have a few questions if you're inclined to answer them. I'm planning on hanging my plants in a dark room in my house that stays at 70°F and 60% humidity—is that acceptable? Also, should I wet-trim the plants to reduce the chance of mold, since I'll be gone for 18 days and won't be around to keep an eye on them?

Dear SigZag,

I highly recommend not going away for 18 days while your plants are drying—in fact, I can't emphasize enough how bad an idea that is at this stage of the game. Why go through all of the hassle of cannabis cultivation just to mess it up on the final lap?

Eighteen days is too long for your plants to be hanging without someone to look after them and determine when the drying process is over and the curing process should begin. Someone should be present to test the stalks (i.e., to see when they break instead of bending),

after which the buds should be cut from the stems and put into glass jars to cure. Wet-trimming your plants will only shorten the drying process, and that's the last thing you want in your situation.

If you absolutely have to be gone, my recommendation is to have a very trusted relative or friend keep an eye on your plants as they're drying. This way, someone can be there to monitor the process and do the necessary work to ensure that your harvest doesn't dry into dust. Otherwise, you'll be in for an unpleasant surprise upon your return.

Danko Tip: Foliar feeding during the vegetative stage provides mild levels of nutrients and cleans off leaves.

SUBJECT: Odor Control
FROM: Rob G.

🌿 I live in an apartment and have a legal prescription for medical marijuana. I'm concerned about the smell if I decide to grow my own. What about grow tents or anything else for maximum discretion in terms of cost and practicality?

Dear Rob,

Odor control is an important part of cannabis cultivation, particularly in the days before harvest and during the drying process, when the smell of your medical marijuana will permeate the area. My advice is to use a strong inline fan to exhaust all of your room's "spent" warm air through an activated-charcoal filter.

Filtration will eliminate much of the smell, as long as you're pumping out enough air to create negative pressure in the room. This means the amount of air being expelled from your garden will pull in fresh air through any cracks and thus keep odors from seeping out of your grow space.

A grow tent is a good, affordable way to accomplish this: Most of the ones I've seen already have built-in vents, and some even come with a fan and filter. If you're not a perpetual-harvest grower, you can also use the tent as a drying chamber and take advantage of the filter during this most odiferous of times.

SUBJECT: Dusty Leaves
FROM: Julius S.

🌿 My (outdoor) plants have been flowering for a month now. The sun leaves are turning yellow, and there's lots of white dust on the buds. How much longer do I have before they're ready to harvest?

Dear Julius,

You have two alarming issues going on with your plants. First, the sun (or fan) leaves shouldn't be turning yellow after only a month of flowering. They should start to show fall colors only in the last two to three weeks of the flowering stage, so I'm thinking you may have an issue with nitrogen deficiency or a pH imbalance.

The second—and more disturbing—situation is the one you describe as “lots



Auto-flowering plants stay short and stocky.

of white dust” on the buds, because you just might have an issue with powdery mildew. To determine what you're dealing with, take a closer look using a loupe or microscope. If you see tiny, mushroom-like glands with a stalk and bulbous head, those are just the normally occurring trichomes (a.k.a. crystals or resin glands) that contain the desirable cannabinoids, and you're in the clear. But if what you see still looks like dust, then you definitely have an issue with PM.

SUBJECT: Light for Auto-Flowering Plants
FROM: Greg T.

🌿 I hope you can answer my question. Can I grow my auto-flowering plants using

just an MH bulb throughout the whole grow and get a bigger yield? If they flower anyway with the MH, I would think getting more vegetative growth on the plants would mean more buds. But if they need a flowering light, should I wait till the last two weeks when the buds are fattening up before switching to an HPS bulb, or should I switch it at about the fourth week?

Dear Greg,

The answer is yes, you can grow auto-flowering plants using only an MH (metal halide) light. You can also switch to HPS (high-pressure sodium), but it certainly isn't necessary. However, if you do make the switch, do it when the plants begin to flower instead of waiting until two weeks before harvest.



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Danko Tip: When growing indoors during winter, keep your plant containers and reservoirs off the floor to avoid damaging roots with cold water.



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SUBJECT: **Old Seeds**

FROM **Slinger**

I've got a question about old seeds. They've been kept in a glass jar, in the cold and dark. They still germinate, and the seedlings have strong stems. Do you think they'll be worth a shit? Does their potency diminish over time? Some are from the 1980s.

Dear Slinger,

As long as your old seeds germinate, they should be fine. Their genetics aren't affected by the length of time they've remained unplanted, but they may need some extra TLC in order to thrive. As for their quality, as long as they were from decent stock, they'll be strong plants. Some strains that were thought to be lost forever have been found and revitalized under similar circumstances, so you may have something very interesting on your hands.

SUBJECT: **Hash From Fresh-Frozen or Dry Bud**

FROM **Maui Turtle**

First off, I'm a big fan—after a peek at the centerfold, I go straight for your grow tips. I want to try my hand at bubble hash and am just waiting for my ladies to finish. My question is this: Can you make bubble hash from fresh-frozen buds and trim? I've run into many different opinions on this. Some people say that fresh-frozen bud means higher quality and less green matter in the finished product. Others swear that the bud must be dried before freezing for proper results.

Dear Maui,

Thanks for the kind words! It feels great to know that people are learning how to grow better-quality cannabis by reading this column. It's truly an honor to be trusted and appreciated by marijuana farmers worldwide.

In my opinion, you'll get a better product, with more terpene preservation, by using fresh-frozen buds and trim for your bubble hash. Using dried buds and trim may provide you with a larger yield, but the stuff I've sampled made from fresh-frozen material simply tastes and melts better.



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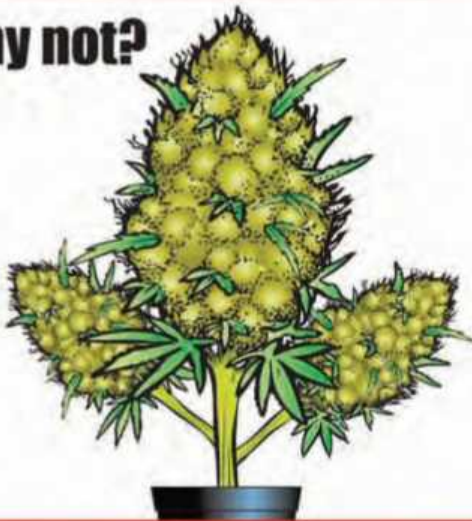
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Danko Tip: Use flat white paint on your growroom walls instead of Mylar or tinfoil, which can create hot spots and areas for pests to hide.

Flowers form
under 12 hours of
light per day.



SUBJECT: **Flower Power**

FROM: **Danielle D.**

🌱 I'm a first-time grower, long-time reader. I've recently started growing my own cannabis, and I just can't seem to get my plant to flower. I don't have it in the best growing conditions, but it's been growing now for four months and it just keeps getting bigger. It's about 5 feet right now, with little red hairs all over, but only where the leaves grow out. Maybe it's a male? If so, how do I check? I've watched numerous videos on determining the sex, but I just don't have any other notions as to why it's not flowering yet.

Dear Danielle,

Cannabis plants flower when they receive 12 hours of light and 12 hours of uninterrupted darkness per day. Either your plant is getting too much light, or its dark time is being interrupted with light.

You didn't mention whether the plant was indoors or out, but I'm going to assume from the time frame and size that it's growing outdoors. If that's the case, then you need to use the light-deprivation technique and cover it with a dark tarp for 12 hours a day. If the plant is indoors, then you need to set your grow light's timer to turn it off for 12 hours per day.

The red hairs make me think that your plant is female. If it were male, you'd be seeing tiny spikes protruding from the nodes where the leaves meet the stalks. Eventually, these spikes would grow into yellow male flowers that resemble tiny bunches of bananas hanging down.

SUBJECT: **Regenerating Plants**

FROM: **Adrianna H.**

🌱 Can I take my outdoor plant, cut off the buds, and move it indoors for winter? Will the plant stay alive, and can I clip off the branches next spring to make clones?

Dear Adrianna,

The process you're describing is called "regeneration." Normally, after harvest, you'd need to plant new seeds or clones in order to grow for next season. However, if you just cut off the buds and leave some leaves and branches, the plant will eventually grow new shoots and stay alive. You have to provide it with plenty of light and be quite patient, but over time, you'll see the plant showing signs of new life. At that point, keep it happy under at least 16 hours of light and you'll have plenty of clones for the spring. 🌱



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Veronica “Roni” Stetter says: “My glasses aren’t a fashion statement. I need them!”

Noted. But she also acknowledges that her specs fit the stock image of a busy working gal on the go—which is what she is!

Roni, 24, lives in San Diego and works as the business-development manager at Cashinbis, a multimedia platform for cannabis business news. She writes and edits news content, coordinates trade-show and event coverage, and consults with clients on media and advertising strategy.

Her journey on the cannabis path began when she discovered the value of medical marijuana for her own health: It helped to relieve her intractable knee pain, as well as a vertebral-joint injury that ended her high-school swimming career. At 18, she led the campaign effort at San Diego State University to pass California’s Proposition 19.

“Prop. 19 failed,” she says,

“but the skills I obtained made me realize that working with cannabis was far from a career-ender. I was part of a brand-new industry and way of thinking.”

An avid athlete who runs half-marathons, Roni says she’s all about crushing negative stereotypes. “I author a health and fitness blog and share training and nutrition tips for people trying to become more active. My ultimate goal is to be an evangelist, to showcase the health benefits of the plant.”

Roni’s years as a med-pot patient and passionate activist haven’t always been easy. “There were times when I was judged and told I was making a mistake,” she says. “But I held to my convictions, and now that I’m working in the industry, I’m floored by the support of friends and family. And I’ve made connections with others who are equally passionate about the plant.” ✨

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Ganja Gospel

Bonghitters, cirrhosis, creativity and social media.

Got a question for Dr. Mitch? Email him at 420research@gmail.com.

The *High Times* Bonghitters dominate softball play. Does this mean cannabis is a performance-enhancing drug?

Mary Jane Lasorda

Hi MJ,
Multiple factors contribute, but I wonder why no one asks if the team simply isn't more skilled. Maybe the players wait until after the game before ingesting. (Okay, stop laughing.) Anyone can develop tolerance through practice, which might be the best explanation for success. Players on the other team who aren't cued for cannabis might find their performance impaired if they're persuaded to partake. That could provide an edge.

Can CBD protect against cirrhosis?

Ernie Gallo

Hi Ernie,
Whoa! CBD has been shown to protect liver cells in mice against one kind of alcohol-induced trouble, but a high-CBD strain is not going to eliminate all of the harms of binge drinking. Follow the American Medical Association's guidelines: one drink per night for women and two for men. Always splurge on something you'll enjoy and pay attention to every sip. You'll get more pleasure out of it, with less unpleasantness afterwards.

I still don't believe there's no link between marijuana and creativity.

Potent Picasso



A high performance team

Hi PP,
Acute intoxication at high doses has been shown to decrease divergent thinking—a measure of creativity—while low doses don't seem to help. This stereotype exists because marijuana use and creativity correlate with the same personality trait: openness to experience. People who are open to experience end up experimenting with their creativity and often with cannabis as well. But it's not that one causes the other.

Is there more pro-marijuana content on social media these days?

FaceCook EdibleChef

Yo FaceCook,
Research on "Twitter chatter" reveals 15 times as many pro-marijuana tweets as anti-marijuana ones. There's nothing published on other social-media sources, but I wouldn't be surprised if they're comparable. (And don't forget [@mitchearywine](https://twitter.com/mitchearywine) and [@high_times_mag](https://twitter.com/high_times_mag)!) 🌿

Dr. Mitch Earleywine is a professor of psychology at SUNY Albany and the author of *Understanding Marijuana* and *The Parents' Guide to Marijuana*.

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Grow Tips for Extract Artists

How to customize your crop to produce better concentrates. *By Craig Coffey*

If you're growing cannabis to make concentrates, you have to shift your goals a little.

This can be tricky if you learned to grow prior to the age of extraction. Some of the "pre-run" cultivation techniques go against what we were taught back when everyone was growing flowers just for smoking. But remember: You're no longer a bud farmer—you are now a terpene farmer. And there are different things that we want from the plant when making dabs. Here are a few tips.

Growroom temperature: Basically, keep it cold. All the compounds that make great-tasting and potent concentrates are volatile, which means they evaporate easily. You can trap these compounds before they escape into the air by keeping your growroom temps (very) low—especially in the last few weeks of flowering. Keep your room in the mid-60s during the flower cycle. Your plant growth may slow a little bit, but the terpene profiles will be much stronger in the final product.

Raise the lights: This tip probably flies in the face of everything you learned about growing pot, but raising the lights will help keep temperatures down while also forcing your plants to stretch. Lighter, fluffier buds extract more efficiently, meaning you'll pull more concentrates from your crop.

Nutrient selection: It's always a good idea to grow with organic nutrients and a "less is more"

mentality. We recommend using a very diluted nutrient solution, especially during flowering. Some nutes can greatly affect the flavor profile of your plants. What you may not even notice in flowers can become unbearable in dabs,

because in the process of extraction, every aspect of your plants is concentrated—the good, the bad and the ugly.

Chop in the dark: This one is recommended even if you aren't growing for concentrates. When you're ready to cut your garden down, unplug your lights:

Plants produce

lots of terpenes in the nighttime hours. Those terpenes are responsible for flavor, and they start evaporating as soon as the lights come on. On the last day before harvest, crank up the AC, turn off all your fans and don't let the lights fire up again. This will go a long way toward producing a more terp-rich final product.

Pesticides/fungicides: Once again, when you take a plant and make extracts, you're concentrating everything within that plant in the resulting dabs. If you use pesticides or fungicides to finish off your crop, you'll be concentrating all those chemicals as well, which will surely affect the flavor and could even be dangerous. If you wind up with a pest problem that requires some sort of chemical treatment, you might want to consider harvesting early or even scrapping the garden altogether rather than treating it with chemicals. ✱



Step up your concentrates game by growing with extraction in mind.



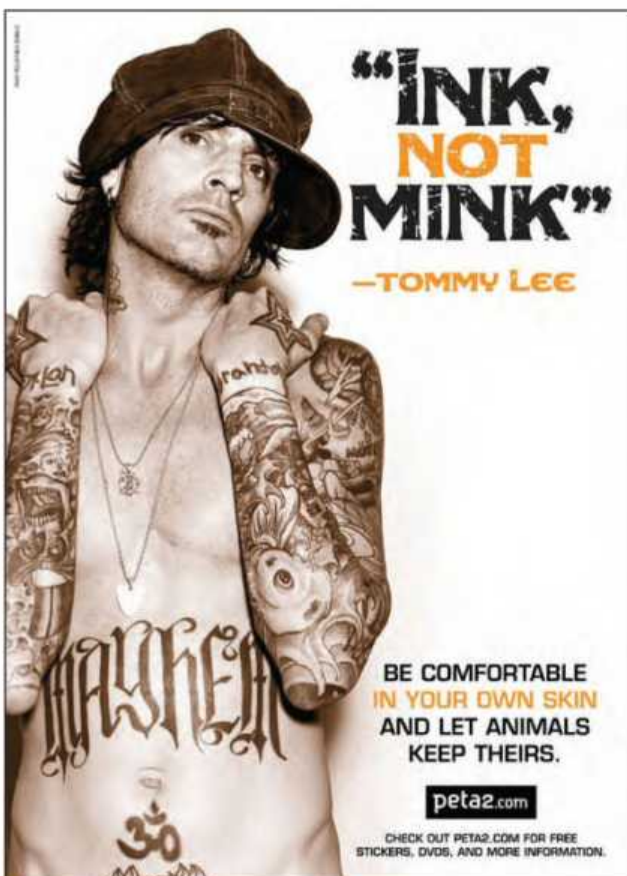
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Date With a Playmate

Remembering a racy rendezvous with a future Playboy model.

Back in the final days of the 20th century, when the Cannabis Cup was a once-yearly event populated almost entirely by menfolk, this salacious young stoner journeyed to Amsterdam with the desire of hitting more than just a bong. Whilst wading through the sea of sausage one evening, I came upon a pair of petite young raver girls from Sacramento—a brunette, whose name is lost to history, and an adorable blonde by the name of Colleen. When, during the customary pleasantries and flirting, it became clear that they wanted to roll and go out dancing, I graciously offered to take them to one of the hottest clubs in town: Sinners in Heaven. They enthusiastically agreed—but first, they said, they'd need to stop off at their hostel by Vondelpark to change. After a smoke outside, they invited me up into their coed dorm room, where they proceeded to strip down to their underwear before donning their club attire.

Yes... that really happened.

A few hits of Ecstasy and a taxi ride later, and we'd arrived at Sinners. As we walked through the door, the bouncer shot me a sideways glance, as if to say: "You're lucky you're with these two hotties or I wouldn't be letting you in." Hell, if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't even *try* to get in—drum-and-bass is definitely not my thing. But with the prospect of hooking up with one (or, dare I dream, both!) of these babes, I was more than willing to make an exception. Besides, once that E kicked in, I had little trouble letting loose.

We spent the next few hours grooving and grinding, and before long it became clear that

Colleen was more into me than her friend—which was just fine by me. When we finally left (some-time after 3 a.m.), I hailed a taxi and took them home. This time, I wasn't invited inside, but Colleen stayed outside for another

20 minutes or so to bid me a long and luscious good night. And that was it—the next day, they were gone, and I never saw or heard from her again.

Five years later, I was in a magazine shop across the street from our New York office, and I happened to see the 50th-anniversary collectors' issue of *Playboy*.

Getting cozy with future Playmate Colleen (Amsterdam 1999).



While thumbing through it, I realized that the model featured in the centerfold spread looked oddly familiar to me. It took a second, but then the face suddenly clicked: *Could it be?* I turned to the bio page, and sure enough, her name was Colleen Shannon. I couldn't believe it: That cute young raver chick I'd almost hooked up with at the Cup was now a gorgeous blonde bombshell that had beaten out 10,000 other applicants to become *Playboy's* 50th-anniversary Playmate! What's more, she'd made a name for herself as "the world's sexiest DJ"—performing around the world with the likes of Funkmaster Flex and Snoop Dogg.

I tried contacting her on social media but got no reply; apparently, our brief rendezvous was a case of "What happens in Amsterdam stays in Amsterdam." All good, considering that two years later I'd meet another bombshell at the Cup who would eventually become my wife. But Colleen, if you ever want to return to the Cannabis Cup, just let us know. ✨

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Advanced Nutrients has recently launched **Grow Med University (GMU)**, a free, self-directed online hydroponics course that reveals the latest techniques, tips, tricks, and technology used by the most competitive marijuana growers in the world.

Step-by-step tutorial videos, white papers, efficacy reports, and informative scientific articles allow any grower with an Internet connection to hone their skills and help produce their best harvest yet, free of charge.

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The medical marijuana industry is growing every minute. Legal marijuana is the fastest-growing industry in the U.S. and a slew of other businesses are jumping on the bandwagon as well. At present, 23 U.S. states allow medical-marijuana use, while 7 have legislation pending to issue licenses for it.

4 states and Washington, D.C. have legalized cannabis outright, while another California referendum in 2016 will allow recreational use in a state that was the first to permit medical marijuana use way back in 1996. It is estimated that medical marijuana is already a multibillion-dollar industry (without counting recreational sales).

While a great deal of information and misinformation appears daily on the Internet, novices and more advanced growers alike are always looking for a source of reliable information which can serve to improve their yields, both in terms of quality and quantity. A whole community of growers inhabit the growers' forums and are always looking to perfect their growing skills, without having to wade through hours and hours of irrelevant or misleading forum posts.

GMU is a bold step in a better direction, and by elevating the general level of education among growers, the quality of marijuana, especially as medicine, will skyrocket worldwide. This isn't just for connoisseurs. It's for children with epilepsy, as well as adults suffering from the effects of chemotherapy, chronic pain, and glaucoma. Thousands of YouTube videos help document the impressive results of therapeutic cannabis use.

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Dark Days Behind Us

The federal government's relentless War on Pot has failed, and cannabis freedom is becoming a reality.

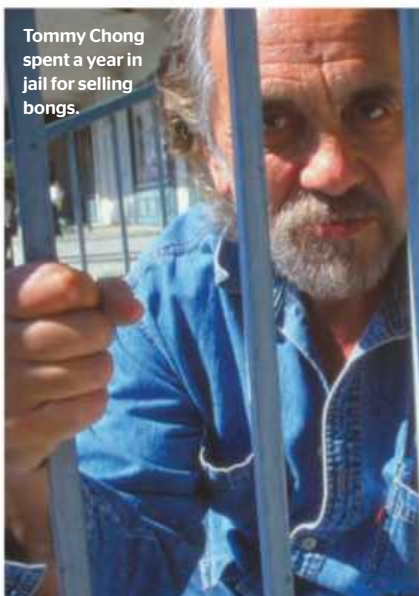
Allen St. Pierre is executive director of NORML. Visit norml.org.

Aside from cultivators, sellers and consumers, the biggest winners in a post-pot-prohibition America will be the “mom-and-pop” shops that make up the heart and soul of the paraphernalia and home-cultivation industries.

After failing to eradicate the national marijuana market back in the 1980s, state and federal law-enforcement agencies turned their attention to paraphernalia wholesalers and retailers and home-cultivation centers, especially those specializing in hydroponics and indoor lighting.

The paraphernalia industry was among the very first targets of Ronald Reagan's renewed War on Drugs, which had first been declared by Richard Nixon. The government's targeting of paraphernalia manufacturers reached its peak in 2003, when the Feds launched Operation Pipe Dreams and Operation Headhunter, busting members of the industry nationwide—including Tommy Chong, who served nine months in federal prison for selling his signature bongs. (Chong was the only person who served time as a result of these raids.)

Frustrated by its inability to eradicate Americans' taste for pot, the Feds also focused on home-gardening stores



specializing in hydroponic equipment and indoor lighting. Among the many law-enforcement campaigns of the 1990s was the DEA's overly aggressive Operation Green Merchant. In dozens of states, the sellers and buyers of legal cultivation equipment were targeted—wasting taxpayer dollars and wreaking havoc on hundreds of lives in the process. The rationale given by law enforcement at the time was

that this gear would ultimately be used to produce illegal marijuana products.

One of the stated goals of the government attacks on paraphernalia and cultivation-equipment producers was to drive *High Times* into bankruptcy by depriving the magazine of advertising revenue. But *High Times* survived and flourished, thanks to forward-looking lawyering and courageous advertisers who stuck with the magazine.

Dark days like these are behind us now, we hope. More than half of US states have adopted some kind of cannabis-law reform, with even more far-reaching changes to come. Self-evidently, despite aggressive policing and draconian penalties, American law enforcement—as with the case of alcohol prohibition earlier—has failed to deter citizens from engaging in commerce for a product that they desire to use.

In these heady days of sweeping change, do whatever you can to promote the cause of cannabis freedom. Support reform organizations like NORML. Patronize legal cannabis businesses and grow ganja legally wherever possible. Elect pro-pot politicians. Purchase a new pipe, vapor pen, bong or dab rig. Strike a blow for freedom by supporting your industry today! 🌿

FREEDOM FIGHTER

By Kevin Mahmalji, NORML national outreach coordinator

Onward, Christian Soldier!

Chris Christian leads the way to Wyoming legalization.

Shortly after earning two bachelor degrees from the University of Wyoming, Chris Christian moved to Jackson, where she worked as a drug and alcohol counselor at a local clinic. During this time, she became increasingly uncomfortable with the clinic's practice of pushing misinformation on patients seeking help for drug abuse. She routinely witnessed physicians, nurses and counselors making outlandish

claims about the dangers of marijuana and warning patients about its highly addictive nature. This contradicted everything Christian had learned about cannabis, so she decided to take action.

In early 2013, Chris established Wyoming NORML. Immediately following its formation, she began meeting with elected officials and influential members of her community to discuss the need to legalize medical marijuana. After much discussion, Chris felt she had



enough support to launch a ballot initiative that would allow the acquisition, growth, cultivation, extraction, production, retail sale and medical use of marijuana and cannabis-infused products.

Wyoming NORML is now working hard to gather the 25,000 signatures needed to qualify the measure for the November 2016 ballot. However, Chris says the organization is aiming for 50,000 total signatures, just in case the Wyoming secretary of state

disqualifies a number of them.

Throughout last summer, members of Wyoming NORML held public meetings, rallies and informational gatherings and even stood on street corners wielding placards that read “Sign the Petition.” If successful, the measure could be enacted as early as February 2017.

Christian is known as one of Wyoming's most outspoken cannabis-law reform advocates, stating forcefully: “We have the power to move our state to a more balanced and rational view of the failed and monumentally costly War on Drugs.”

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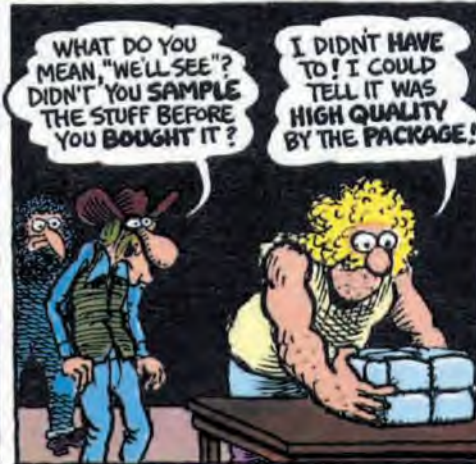
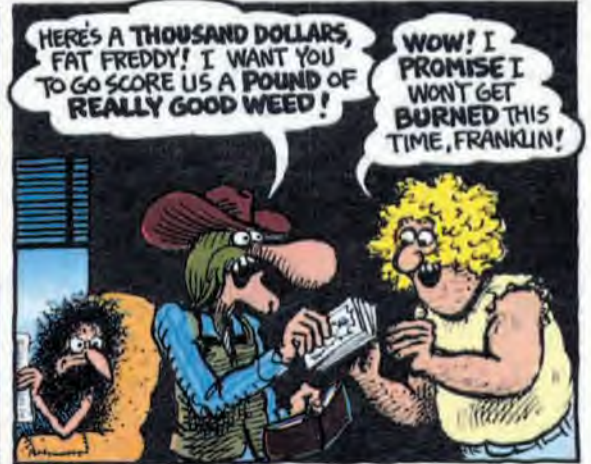
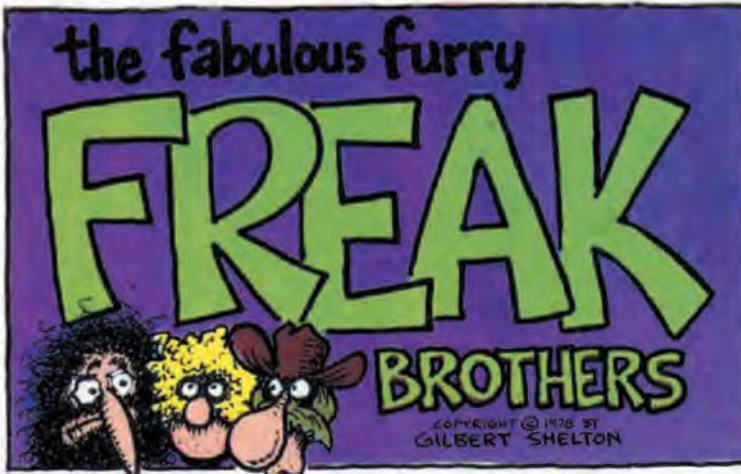
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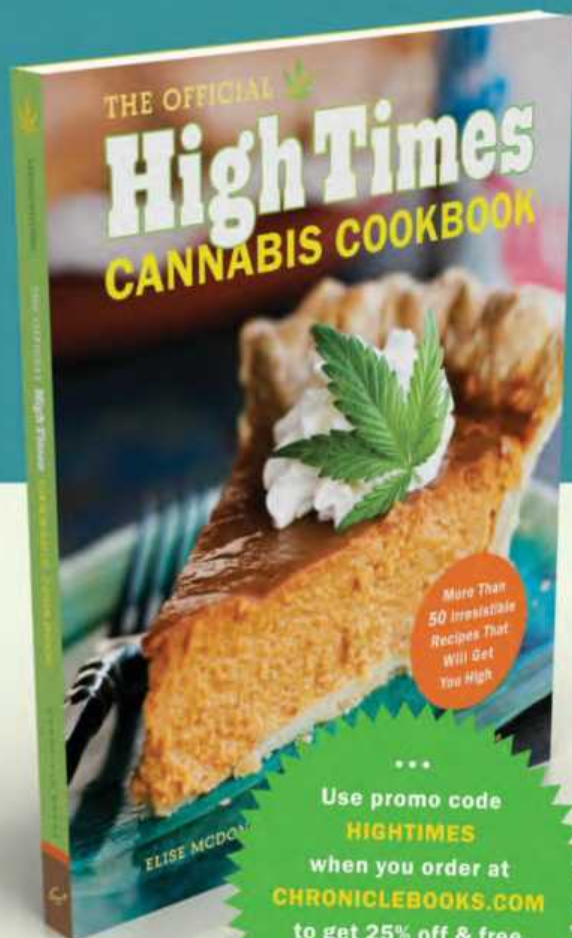


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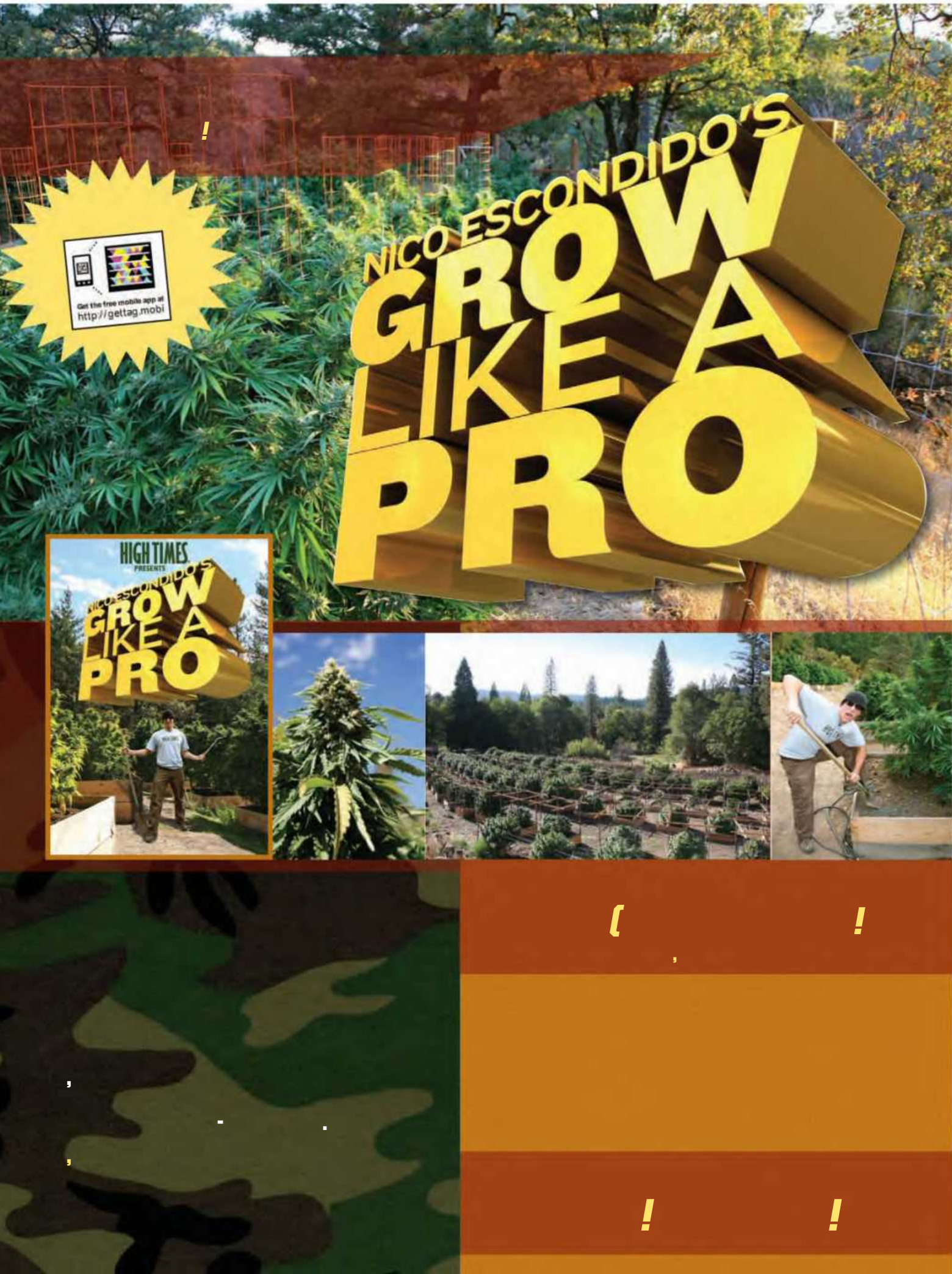
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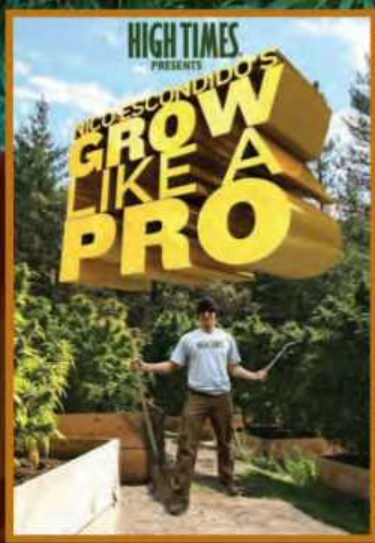
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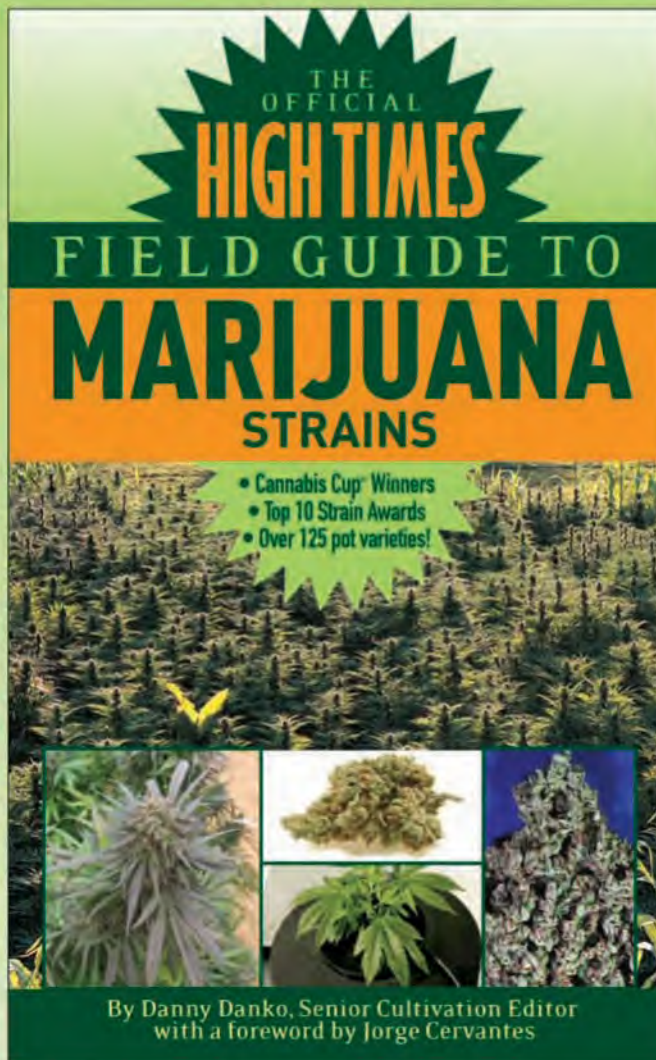
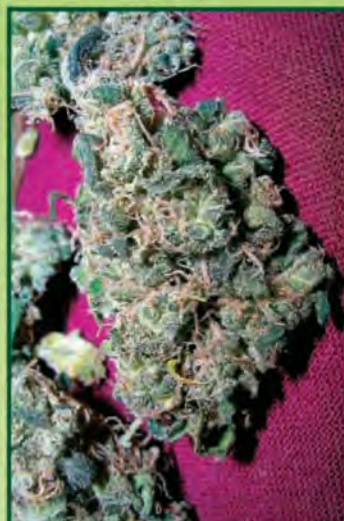
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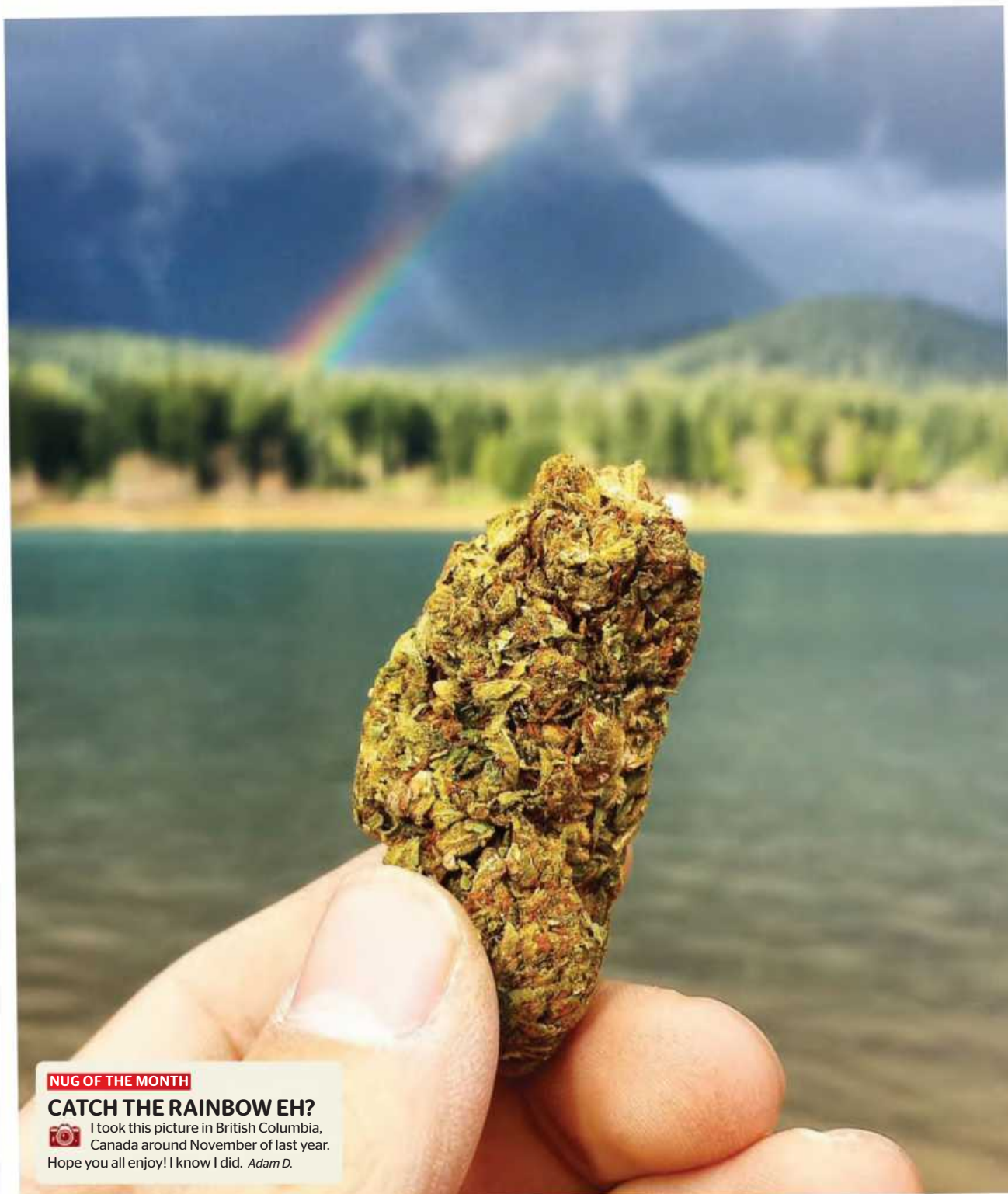
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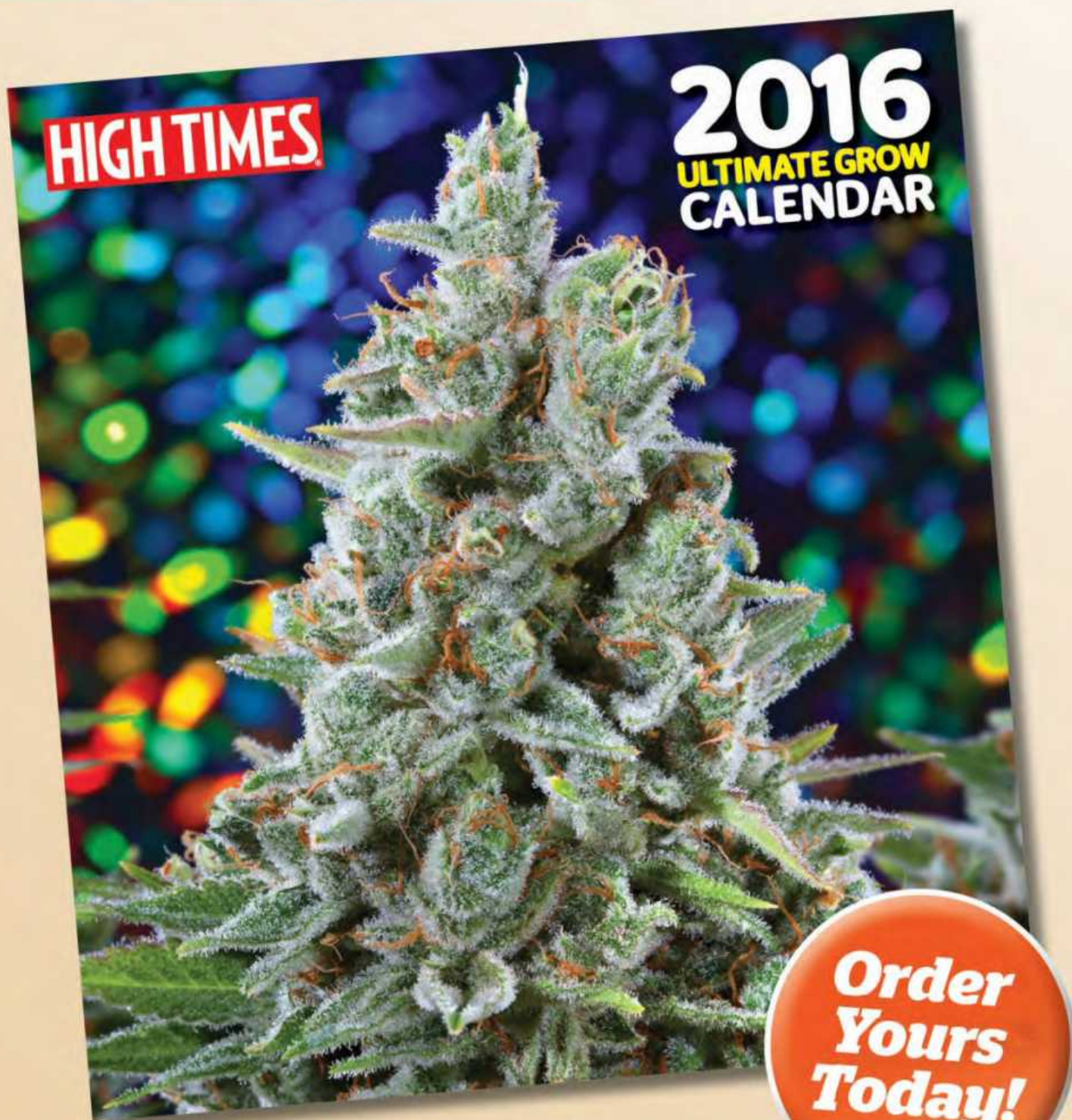
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I took this picture in British Columbia, Canada around November of last year. Hope you all enjoy! I know I did. *Adam D.*

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
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 I would like to submit my grow pictures 'cause I've learned so much from your magazine. This is from our 2015 outdoor medical marijuana grow in Colorado. *Brian A.*

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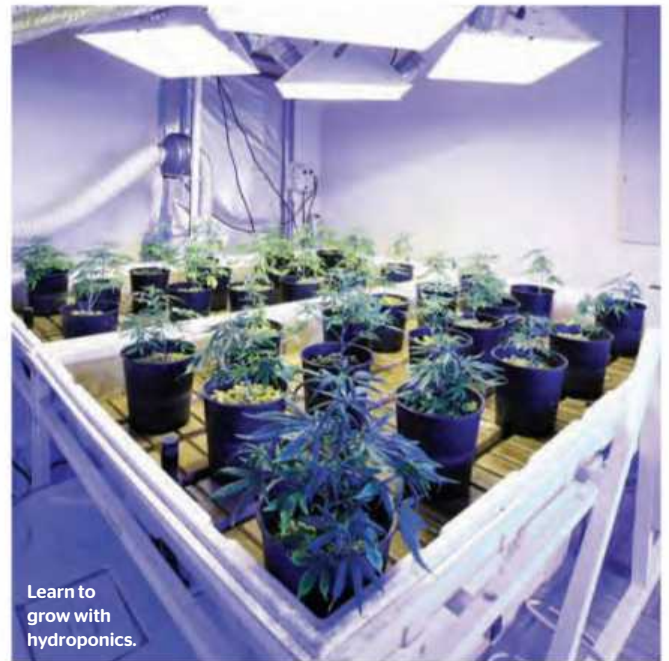
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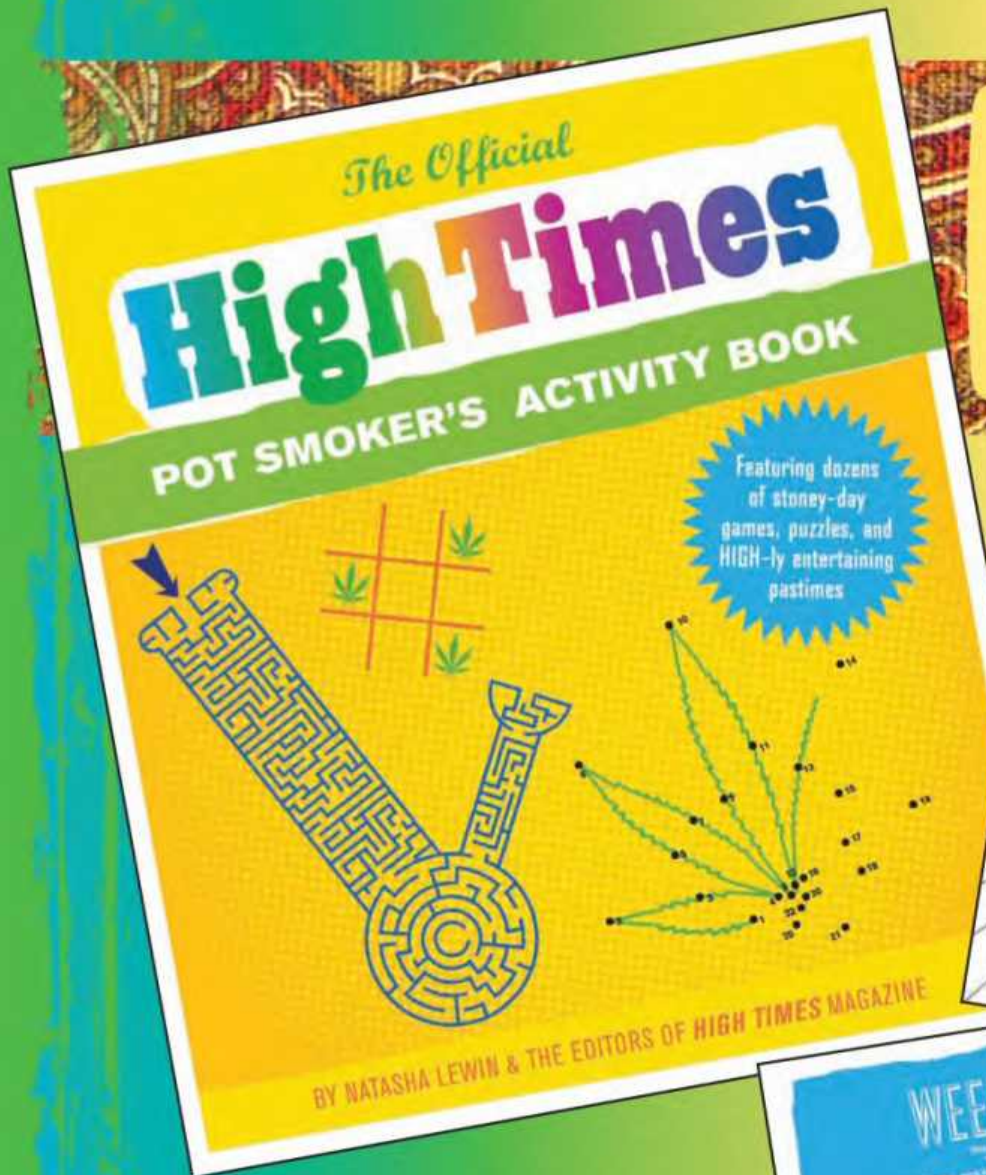
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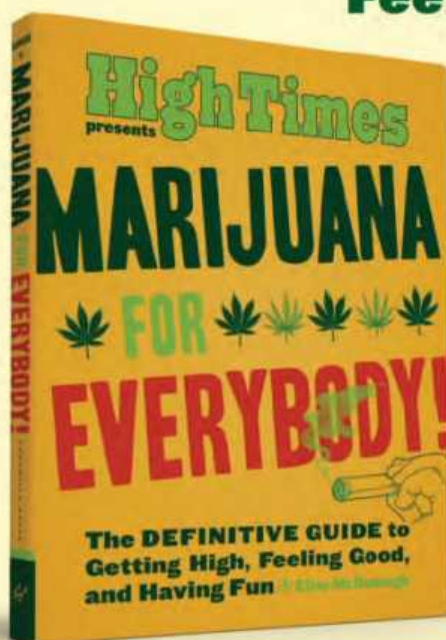
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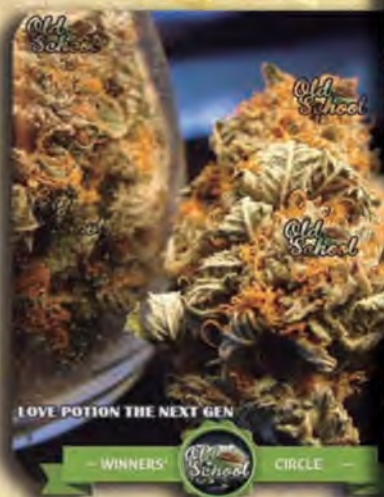
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