



World's Largest Annual Pot 'Protestival' Takes Place

Seattle, WA, USA: Event organizers expected over 150,000 attendees at the 18th annual Seattle Hempfest, which took place Saturday and Sunday, August 15 and 16 at Myrtle Edwards Park in downtown Seattle. More than 80 speakers and dozens of musical and comedy guests performed on six stages during the two-day event, which is now recognized as the largest marijuana law reform gathering in the world. The event happens every year on the third weekend in August in Seattle.

Speakers at this year's event included: NORML Executive Director **Allen St. Pierre**; NORML Founder **Keith Stroup**; NORML Outreach Coordinator and Audio Stash host **Russ Belville**; NORML Board Members **Dale Gieringer**, **Madeline Martinez**, **Bill Panzer**, **George Rohrbacher**, **Jeffrey Steinborn**; as well as Adam Eiding, communications director of

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Georgia Lawmaker Calls For Caning, Executing Marijuana Offenders

Atlanta, GA, USA: State Republican lawmaker Tommy Benton (31st House District) favors "caning" minor marijuana offenders and "executing" those who sell the drug, according to recent correspondences sent by the representative to two of his constituents.

In a July 29, 2009 e-mail to a constituent, Rep. Benton wrote: "Thanks for the email. We will have to agree to disagree on this and whether or not money is wasted (by mandating the state to prosecute minor marijuana offenders). I am opposed to the legalization of marijuana. ***I think we should go to caning for people caught using and maybe execute dealers.*** [emphasis NORML's] That would solve the problem as well. That is what they do in Singapore and they don't have a drug problem."

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Argentina: No Prison For Pot Possession, Supreme Court Rules

Buenos Aires, Argentina: Imprisoning adults who possess small amounts of cannabis is unconstitutional, the Argentinean Supreme Court ruled this week.

The Court unanimously determined that pot possession is private behavior and does not "constitute a clear danger" to others.

The ruling strikes down the government's longstanding anti-marijuana law, which allowed for minor pot offenders to be sentenced for up to two years in prison.

"Each individual adult is responsible for making decisions freely about their desired lifestyle without state interference," the Court determined. "Private conduct is allowed unless it constitutes a real danger or causes damage to property or the rights of others."

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The Willamette Valley NORML News Report

is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about cannabis law reform.

The W-V-NORML News Report is produced by the Eugene, OREGON chapter of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

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Check 'em out on-line! *visit:*

WillametteValleyNORML.org

A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly. During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local [NORML Chapters](#) across the country. Check 'em out, and find the one nearest you!

The NORML mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use. **NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws – is located at 1600 K Street, NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20006-2832. Phone (202) 483-5500, Fax: (202) 483-0057 or visit: www.norml.org**

Today Willamette Valley NORML joins the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. W-V-NORML will serve as an informational resource to media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the [anti-marijuana propaganda](#) from the government; lobby state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publish a regular [newsletter](#); host an informative web site; and serve as the umbrella group for a regional network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Along with their parent organization, W-V-NORML will sponsor public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provide legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and promote relevant research.

W-V-NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for [medical](#) or [personal](#) purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. W-V-NORML also advocates the legalization of [hemp](#) (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit our website. You'll be glad you did!**

<continued from SEATTLE HEMPFEST, page 1 > Vote hemp; Rob Kampa, executive director of the Marijuana Policy Project, and Mason Tvert, executive director of SAFER and co-author of the book *Marijuana Is Safer: So Why Are We Driving People to Drink?* (with NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano and MPP's Steve Fox).

Seattle Hempfest "seeks to advance the cause of cannabis policy reform through education, while advancing the public image of the cannabis advocate or enthusiast through example."

A complete schedule for this year's Seattle Hempfest is available online at: <http://hempfest.org/drupal/node>.

<continued from GEORGIA LAWMAKER, page 1 > Caning is a form of corporal punishment consisting of up to 24 violent lashes with a long rattan cane that has been soaked in water. The procedure inflicts intense pain and deep, bloody lacerations that can take several months to heal.

Rep. Benton followed up his remarks in a separate e-mail to another constituent on August 11, 2009, in which he threatened to turn over the names of citizens who disagreed with his political viewpoints to local law enforcement.

He wrote: "You and your cronies want it (marijuana) legalized so you can get a hit anytime without having to worry about getting arrested. ***I have forwarded your email to the Lowndes County sheriffs [sic] office so that they can be on the lookout for you.*** [emphasis NORML's] Consider this my last correspondence on the the [sic] subject to you or anyone else who shares your similar "conservative views'."

Benton was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 2005.

Commenting on Rep. Benton's statements, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said: "It is shocking that an elected official would endorse such tortuous tactics against the tens of millions of Americans who engage in the responsible use of marijuana. But it is even

more reprehensible that an elected official would use his political power to try to intimidate those who disagree with him. Such behavior is an affront to the very principles of democracy."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director at: (202) 483-5500, or David Clark, Executive Director of Georgia NORML at: dclark@clarktowntne.com.

<continued from ARGENTINA RULES, page 1 > Commenting on the decision, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said, "Cultural norms governing the possession and use of marijuana are rapidly shifting around the world, as well as here in America. Forcibly taking away someone's liberty for the use of cannabis is no longer seen as a practical or acceptable public policy."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.

Mexico: Government Decriminalizes Possession Of Five Grams Of Pot

Mexico City, Mexico: Mexican President Felipe Calderon signed legislation last week decriminalizing the personal possession of small quantities of cannabis and other controlled substances.

The legislation, passed by Congress in May, eliminates criminal penalties for the personal possession of up to five grams of marijuana. The possession of small amounts of other illicit substances, including heroin and cocaine, will also no longer be prosecutable.

Under the new law, anyone caught by law enforcement with small amounts of illicit drugs will be encouraged to seek treatment. Drug treatment will be mandatory for third-time offenders.

The new legislation authorizes state and local police to enforce drug trafficking laws. Previously, only federal police (about five percent of Mexico's law enforcement

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In 2006, Mexico's Congress passed a virtually identical measure, only to have it vetoed by former President Vicente Fox. Fox's veto came after political pressure from members of the US State Department, who alleged that enacting such a law would promote "drug tourism."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.

Santa Monica: No More Pot Prosecutions Following Passage Of Marijuana 'Deprioritization' Measure

Santa Monica, CA, USA: Santa Monica law enforcement officials are no longer prosecuting adults who possess marijuana in their homes, according to police data reviewed by the *Santa Monica Daily Press*. The moratorium on pot possession busts follows the enactment of a local initiative 'deprioritizing' the enforcement of such offenses.

In November 2006, 65 percent of city voters approved Measure Y, which directs municipal police to make all law enforcement activities related to the investigation, citation, and/or arrest of adult cannabis users their lowest priority. The ordinance took effect in July 2007.

Since that time, proponents of the measure report that police are abiding by the local law. Over the past two years, municipal police have not charged any adults for marijuana possession inside a private residence, the *Daily Press* reported Friday.

Voters have enacted similar 'deprioritization' measures in Oakland, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and West Hollywood, California, as well as in Denver and Seattle.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500.

Rhode Island: Guidelines Proposed For State Licensed Marijuana Dispensaries

Providence, RI, USA: The Rhode Island Department of Health has promulgated guidelines to oversee the state-licensed production and distribution of medicinal cannabis under state law.

The proposed guidelines stipulate that licensed 'compassion centers' "may acquire, possess, cultivate, manufacture, deliver, transfer, transport, supply, or dispense marijuana, or related supplies and educational materials, to registered qualifying patients and their registered primary caregivers." According to the guidelines, all centers must operate on a "not-for-profit" basis, must possess a "fully operational security alarm system," and may not be located within 500 feet of a school.

This past June, Rhode Island lawmakers overwhelmingly approved legislation mandating the state to license non-profit facilities to dispense marijuana to authorized patients. Approximately 700 patients are registered with the Department of Health to use cannabis in accordance with state law.

New Mexico state health officials enacted similar regulations in January governing the state-licensed distribution of medicinal marijuana.

The Department of Health's proposed guidelines are available online at: <http://webapps01.sec.state.ri.us/omfiling/pdffiles/notices/3845/2009/77635.pdf>

Marijuana Compounds May Offset Alcohol-Induced Toxicity, Study Says

San Diego, CA, USA: Compounds in cannabis may protect the human brain against alcohol-induced damage, according to clinical trial data

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Investigators at the University of California at San Diego examined white matter integrity in adolescents with histories of binge drinking and marijuana use.

They reported that binge drinkers (defined as boys who consumed five or more drinks in one sitting, or girls who consumed four or more drinks at one time) showed signs of white matter damage in eight separate regions of the brain.

By contrast, the binge drinkers who also used marijuana experienced less damage in seven out of the eight brain regions.

"Binge drinkers who also use marijuana did not show as consistent a divergence from non-users as did the binge drink-only group," authors concluded. "[It is] possible that marijuana may have some neuroprotective properties in mitigating alcohol-related oxidative stress or excitotoxic cell death."

In 2005, researchers at the National Institutes of Mental Health reported that the administration of the non-psychoactive cannabinoid cannabidiol (CBD) reduced alcohol-induced cell death in the hippocampus and etorhinal cortex of the brain in a dose-dependent manner by up to 60 percent. "This study provides the first demonstration of CBD as an *in vivo* neuroprotectant ... in preventing binge ethanol-induced brain injury," investigators concluded in *The Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*.

Commenting on the findings, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said, "Alcohol and cannabis appear to have contrasting effects on the body," he said. "Ethanol is clearly toxic to healthy and developing cells whereas cannabinoids appear to be relatively non-toxic and possibly even neuroprotective."

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at:

paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "White matter integrity in adolescents with histories of marijuana use and binge drinking," will appear in the journal *Neurotoxicology and Teratology*.

Pot-Like Compounds Halt Prostate Cancer Growth

Madrid, Spain: The administration of selective cannabinoid agonists halt the proliferation of human prostate cancer cells *in vitro* (in a Petri dish) and *in vivo* (in laboratory animals), according to preclinical findings published online this week in the *British Journal of Cancer* and reported by *Reuters News Wire*.

Investigators at the University of Alcala School of Medicine in Spain assessed the anti-proliferative and anti-tumor properties of two synthetic CB2 agonists. The agonists, which bind selectively to the CB2 receptors in a manner similar to the active components in cannabis, induced prostate cell death and inhibited tumor cell growth in animals.

"This study defines the involvement of CB2-mediated signaling in the *in vivo* and *in vitro* growth inhibition of prostate cancer cells, and suggests that CB2 agonists have potential therapeutic interest and deserve to be explored in the management of prostate cancer," authors concluded.

Speaking to *Reuters*, researchers stressed that their research was still exploratory and that "it absolutely isn't the case that men might be able to fight prostate cancer by smoking cannabis."

Commenting on the study NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said, "While I am pleased to see scientists' and the mainstream media's interest in the anti-cancer properties of cannabis, the untold story is that researchers have been well aware of these effects for 35 years. The real question is: 'Why,

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For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Inhibition of tumour prostate PC-3 cell growth by cannabinoids R(+)-Methanandamide and JWH-015: Involvement of CB2," will appear in the British Journal of Cancer.

Smoke Has Contrasting Effects On Lung Function Compared To Tobacco, Study Says

Dunedin, New Zealand: Inhaling cannabis has contrasting effects on lung function compared to smoking tobacco, according to the results of a population-based study published online in the *European Respiratory Journal*.

Investigators at the University of Otago in New Zealand compared the effects of cannabis and tobacco smoke on lung function in over 1,000 adults.

Researchers reported, "Cumulative cannabis use was associated with higher forced vital capacity [the volume of air that can forcibly be blown out after full inspiration], total lung capacity, functional residual capacity [the volume of air present in the lungs at the end of passive expiration], and residual volume. Cannabis was also associated with higher airways resistance but not with forced expiratory volume in 1 second [the maximum volume of air that can be forcibly blown out in the first second during the FVC test], forced expiratory ratio, or transfer factor. These findings were similar amongst those who did not smoke tobacco."

Authors further reported, "By contrast, tobacco use was associated with lower forced expiratory volume in 1 second, lower forced expiratory

ratio, lower transfer factor, and higher static lung volumes, but not with airways resistance."

They concluded, "Cannabis appears to have different effects on lung function to those of tobacco."

A previous study conducted by the University of California at Los Angeles and published in the *American Journal of Respiratory & Critical Care Medicine* reported that long-term, habitual marijuana use was not associated with a decline in lung function compared to non-smokers.

Most recently, investigators at the University of British Columbia reported in April in the journal of the Canadian Medical Association that marijuana inhalation "was not associated with an increased risk of respiratory symptoms or COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)."

In 2007, a meta-analysis published by researchers at Yale University reported that the smoking of cannabis, even long-term, was not associated with a decline in pulmonary function.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "Effects of cannabis on lung function: a population-based cohort study," will appear in the European Respiratory Journal.

Marijuana Detection Times Influenced By Stress, Dieting

Sydney, Australia: The elimination of the marijuana metabolite carboxy THC is influenced by the body's reaction to stress or dieting, according to a forthcoming study in the *British Journal of Pharmacology*.

Investigators at the University of Sydney in Australia reported that rats exposed to the
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Authors of the study said that their findings provide a physiological explanation for why some former users of the drug continue to test positive for it even after long periods of abstinence.

Carboxy THC, the primary inactive marijuana metabolite identified in urine drug screens, accumulates in body fat and similar storage sites. It is released gradually and intermittently over time, with trace levels having been documented in the urine of chronic users for several weeks or even months after past use.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.

drinking), 10 to 20 years of marijuana use was associated with a significantly reduced risk of head and neck squamous cell carcinoma ... [as was] moderate weekly use."

Subjects who smoked marijuana and consumed alcohol and tobacco (two known high risk factors for head and neck cancers) also experienced a reduced risk of cancer, the study found.

"Our study suggests that moderate marijuana use is associated with reduced risk of HNSCC," investigators concluded. "This association was consistent across different measures of marijuana use (marijuana use status, duration, and frequency of use). ... Further, we observed that marijuana use modified the interaction between alcohol and cigarette smoking, resulting in a decreased HNSCC risk among moderate smokers and light drinkers, and attenuated risk among the heaviest smokers and drinkers. ... Despite our results being consistent with the point estimates from other studies, there remains a need for this inverse association to be confirmed by further work, especially in studies with large sample sizes."

A separate 2006 population case-control study also reported that lifetime use of cannabis was not positively associated with cancers of the lung or aerodigestive tract, and noted that certain moderate users of the drug experienced a reduced cancer risk compared to non-using controls.

By contrast, a study published earlier this week in the journal *Cancer Epidemiology* reports that even the moderate use of alcohol (six drinks or less per week) is associated with an elevated risk of various cancers – including stomach cancer, rectal cancer, and bladder cancer.

For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "A population-based case control study of marijuana use and head and neck squamous cell carcinoma," will appear in Cancer Prevention Research.

Moderate Lifetime Marijuana Use Associated With Reduced Risk Of Head And Neck Cancer, Study Says

Providence, RI, USA: The moderate long-term use of marijuana is associated with a reduced risk of head and neck cancers, according to the results of a population-based case-control study published online by the journal *Cancer Prevention Research*.

Investigators at Rhode Island's Brown University, along with researchers at Boston University, Louisiana State University, and the University of Minnesota assessed the lifetime marijuana use habits of 434 cases (patients diagnosed with head and neck squamous cell carcinoma from nine medical facilities) compared to 547 matched controls.

Authors reported, "After adjusting for potential confounders (including smoking and alcohol



News From *your* local affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws



Oregon: Legislation To Regulate Commercial Hemp Production Becomes Law

Salem, OR, USA: Democrat Gov. Ted Kulongoski signed legislation into law this week that seeks to license farmers to cultivate hemp as an agricultural commodity. Hemp is a distinct variety of the plant species *cannabis sativa* that contains only trace (less than one percent) amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the primary psychoactive compound in marijuana.

As approved by the legislature, Senate Bill 676 authorizes the state Department of Agriculture to regulate the commercial production of cannabis containing levels of THC under 0.3 percent THC.

Similar legislation was also signed into law in June in Maine.

A handful of states – including North Dakota, Montana, and Vermont – have

*** NOTE! The Willamette Valley NORML Public meeting * Happens every 4th Sat. of the month and will be at h'ERb'S Toasted Subs, 1210 Willamette St, Eugene call: 541.517-0957 -or- visit: <http://WillametteValleyNORML.org>**



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enacted regulations to allow for the licensing of industrial hemp production under state law.

However, such production remains criminally prohibited under federal law, which defines all varieties of cannabis as illegal under the Controlled Substances Act.

Legislation pending in Congress, HR 1866, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2009, seeks to amend federal law to allow for the state-licensed production of hemp, free from federal interference.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500, or visit: <http://www.votehemp.com>

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