

National Cannabis Patients Wall Attended the High Times Cannabis Cup 2015

Attending the 2015 High Times Cannabis Cup was truly a surreal experience for me. I have been an increasingly loud advocate for Medical Cannabis for well over 10 years now. All that time while living in Tennessee. I have had limited personal and family experience with the healing capabilities of Cannabis off and on for several years prior, including Iowa, Ohio, Florida and Georgia. None of course having a Medical Cannabis policy in place.



Like many of you, I sit back, watch, read the articles, view the news clips, and the occasional documentary. The anti cannabis rhetoric is sadly still alive and well. I hope to dispel some of that for exactly what it is. Utter B.S. One of the things that stuck me right away, happened before the event ever began. Clio Michigan is around 150 miles north of the state line. In all 150 plus miles, never once did I see a "pot crazed hippie." Nor did I see any

garish, flashing, neon, lights advertising "Come Get Your Cannabis Here" as a matter of fact I saw no advertising, no obvious dispensaries or collectives. I saw no difference at the time between their "medically legal" state and all the "illegal" states I have lived in over the years.

The big first day arrives! I am very much looking forward to talking with folks and making connections. Well, that was a bit difficult to do. While the website did explain there was a "Medicated Only" area, where one had to possess either a Medical Cannabis Card or a Dr's Recommendation for one. What they did not tell you, is that literally 99% of the event takes place in the "Medicated Area". Imagine my surprise upon arriving and realizing I could not even basically get into the main event, hmmm. I was not the only person surprised by this. Many walked away in disappointment. They did however have a Dr. there doing consultations. Since I was paying at the time to reside in Michigan. I gave the address of where I was staying, filled out their short form with basic info. Name, Address, Phone, Conditions and your signature, and handed them my ID. Then you waited, and waited. Finally you get called to see the Dr. Set up under a tent, surrounded by table and chairs. He was very nice, introduced himself and shook my hand. He then verified all the info on my sheet and asked me about my listed conditions. Inquired about my Cannabis use, if it helped, how it helped. He smiled, told me he would give me the recommendation, but I had to sign a form that stated if I suffered any adverse reactions that I would discontinue use immediately. I did that, he shook my hand again and wished me a good day. I was then told to sit and wait again, and I did..finally they called me into a Camper they had set up. There were three persons in lab coats. They have the Dr's rec, your ID, and another form. Now I had been told, the Dr's fee was 40.00. Then there was a 25.00 Photo ID available, and then for another 100.00 you could get a cultivation license I believe it was. Well she congratulates me, then asks for 300.00 something dollars and tells me it is cheaper to get my card for the year. I said no just one month please. She gets a bit snippy. I said look I have 43.00 dollars. I was not expecting this. Then she gave me a year, actually 13 months for the 40.00 one month fee. That enabled me to go get a red "Medication Bracelet" and FINALLY enter the main event. Time elapsed..an hour figuring out what I needed to do in the first place, and finding where to go to do it...then about 4+ hours, doing all of the above. So I have been there 5 hours and basically had seen nothing.



I finally walk through those pearly gates lol. It is literally walking into a different world. Someone lit up some wonderfully scented Cannabis and my first reaction was literally to quickly look all around me, not for who was partaking, but for Cops. Then I laughed at myself. This is LEGAL here! It was such an amazing revelation. I mean it truly is one thing to know it, but another to be living it. The first table I see has 7 - 1/2 gallon containers filled with 7 different varieties of Cannabis. The table next to theirs, had a "Dab Challenge" Booth after Booth of different strains of Cannabis. There was everything from CBD strains, to Indica's, to Sativa's, and of course



dozens of hybrids. There were booths giving away free Dabs, of course I had some I find it very effective for pain, and quite tasty. You could try most strains before purchase which was nice if you were so inclined. Prices were amazingly cheap. \$10.00-20.00 for most Cannabis, a few select strains as much as \$40.00 Dabs went from \$30.00-50.00 a Gram. There was CBD oil, RSO Oil, Tinctures, Cannabis Kool-Aid, which was very tasty, and yes I drank the kool-aid. There were cakes, Cookies, Suckers, Pastries, of course all kinds of Cannabis Swag, and equipment that is admittedly way beyond my limited knowledge. Clones were also available from 10.00-30.00 There was also wax and shatter. I learned a lot, but I also learned just how much I have yet

to learn!

One beautiful incident sticks out in my mind. I met a very nice gentleman through a friend and member Martin Wuest, Manager of Cannabis Family Seeds, Writer at collective Evolution, Manager at Parents for Pot, and a licensed caregiver in the state of Michigan. He was an obvious Cancer patient, as he had evident jaw surgery. We walked around for a bit and found a vendor offering CBD and RSO, tested. It was so wonderful to be able to see this man just walk up and purchase what he needed! No whispering, no looking about your shoulders behind you, no fear! And then I ask myself WHY? Why does this option not belong to every one of us? A state line is the difference between freedom and incarceration?

While I am speaking of Patients, it does remind me of what I see as an area that needs addressed by the staff of High Times. I of course, chose the first "parking area" I came to, which of course, ended up being truly the single furthest parking space from the event lol. Well, after five hours of getting my recommendation, and nothing to eat or drink, I walked back to my truck, where I had a cooler with Tea and sandwich fixings. I ate, cooled down a bit, then Martin called and I went to meet him. Upon the walk back, a nice man in a golf cart offered me a ride there. I gladly hopped on as well as two young men. On the way over he explained how I was parked in his lot. He rented 2 golf carts at his expense to help Patients with physical difficulties, and older folks get to the gate. He explained he was told by a HT Staff person not to do that. He then inquired from this person "Well, do you have handicapped parking for these people?" The reply was "Not all these people!" I have to say here, Michigan is NOT Colorado. They are a "Medical" State, so it would stand to reason, at least in my humble opinion, that they should have been prepared to cater to more of a "medical" then a "recreational" crowd.

So to High Times I would say they need to address parking for the Patients and/or transportation. Also, be a bit more forthcoming about how much of the event is in the "medicated area", and the related charges with the on site Dr. and licensing fees. Many thought that was a bit "dicey" For people who brought limited funds, such as myself it was a real dent I was not expecting. I brought my own food and drinks for Pete's sake to save money.

Now back to the event..I walked around and spoke to many people, talking about our group and handing out brochures and biz cards.. There were Lighting Booths, Ventilation Booths, Fertilizers, Pest Control, Grow Rooms, Evaporators and all manner of equipment, pipes, bongs, dab rigs. I would have to say if you did not find what you were looking for there I would be greatly surprised.

I decided to leave at sunset, before the awards, as there was also alcohol there and I was wary of Officers tagging out of state plates. I got back to the hotel, hot and tired, but happy I managed to get some work done

after such a difficult start to the day.

Day Two, RAIN...Because of the forecast, even though all booths were covered, many decided to pack up and leave early, much to my disappointment. I did manage to walk around in the rain for several hours. The good thing about the rain, the diehard participants, not packing and leaving had more time to really talk. The bad thing, being it was located in the greenway of a Race track, essentially a large bowl, and eventually flooded. Martin and I kept missing each other that day at well. But again, I got to actually talk with many and hand out the rest of our brochures. The water level had gotten to several inches deep around the edges when I left early that evening.

I went to the nearest gas station, basically across the street and purchased some fuel. Sure enough, I pull out and there is a Sheriff following me. He was waiting for cars leaving the event. He followed me for about a mile or so and finally turned into another gas stations lot. I personally saw no erratic driving either day and heard no reports of accidents credited to the event.

I decided to stay one more day and do a little "foot work" personally go and visit some dispensaries and collectives. What I found was a surprise. I went to five different places in three towns. The first was not a beacon of depravity. There were not pot crazed hippies or a gangs of rough looking youth hanging out. As a matter of fact it was one block of the towns main square, and kitty corner from a Rite Aid drug store and backed by a nice upper middle/middle class neighborhood. I sat there for 30 minutes watching. In that time I saw one patient, a woman in her mid 50's go in. She was inside maybe ten minutes and left. So there it is. The rhetoric is just that, bunk. Of course the owner could not let me in the back, but we had a nice chat, and he hung our Brochure in his lobby.



The second place was not the type of "cultivators" I was expecting. I was expecting a "grower" but it was a growers supply store, and oh my, they had everything! I wished I could have gotten some of those big black pots! Very reasonable, everything from soil, to food, to air circulation and lighting systems.

The next two places I went to were permanently closed. The last place I attempted to go was to a "head shop" that was not there, but turned out to be a Chiropractor/Compassionate Clinic, that was closed on Mondays

On the way home I was invited to stop by Martins home, which I found very charming and comforting. Their home is surrounded by goodies. Herbs and veggies. He was very kind and tried to set up a meeting for me with a dispensary, but sadly the Owner was not available at the time. However, Martin is a licensed Caregiver in MI, and was kind enough to share his work with me and allow me to take pics. What I found really interesting is, had he not told me, I would have never known. There was no "odor" about the house. No indication what so ever that it is a Caregivers home. Again, proves the rhetoric as just that. No hippies, no druggies, no broken down cars, nothing negative like you would be led to believe, just a nice residential neighborhood, clean and neat. NOTHING to indicate that Cannabis was being used there, let alone being grown there. Ringing through my head all weekend, why not us??

Do I want to go next year? You bet! I already have my medical recommendation if they have it the same time next year. I would say, take all the cash you can muster if you are truly intent on trying or obtaining really good Cannabis Strains at the cheapest prices I have ever seen. Wear good walking shoes. Check the weather and take a umbrella. I kept a cooler with drinks and food in my car, so I cannot really relate those costs to you, sorry. There was a lot of free water to be had, and VIP's had a special tent with chairs and tables, free water and chips

and such. First day I took a hobo bag. The VIP's got a gift bag, which cleverly turned into a lightweight backpack, I would suggest that, especially if you have shoulder, arm or back problems. It was much easier for me to manage that.

The entire trip truly opened my eyes. For the first time in my entire life I felt true freedom to partake in a medicine I truly believe in without fear of incarceration, and police seizure. It was truly liberating, a feeling I will never forget, never take for granted, and damned sure want again. In TN, in every state to which I may travel.

I of course have only one medical state as a comparison, but I highly doubt one is all that different from another in regards to the above. I saw nothing unseemly, nothing distasteful, nothing unsafe nor disrespectful, nor anything that would jeopardize our youth. So again, have to ask, WHAT ABOUT US? I saw absolutely nothing, no reason that Medical Cannabis should not be in place all across our nation.

For that glorious 2 days of true freedom, of real pain control, I will always be thankful to High Times for hosting the event and to each and every one that raised the funds to get me there, and to all of those that shared our fund raising project. To you all, you have my deepest gratitude, for that wonderful gift of freedom, sweet, yet too fleeting.



This experience has taught me much. It has taught me that growing Cannabis can indeed be a fine art. That the lowliest of incomes to those with money to burn can successfully grow their own medicine and threat their own health conditions, and that many do help others which truly lightens my heart to see. This experience has taught me that there is no reason on earth we should not all enjoy the same liberty, the same pursuit of health and happiness. This experience has deepened my conviction that no one should be incarcerated for this herb..ever. That no patient should ever be denied safe access. This experience has also verified my beliefs that the government has caused us all a great disservice, a great dishonor, in contributing to our needlessly suffering, dying, the loss of our medical care, the loss of our homes, imprisonment and taking the futures of our youth. The Government truly creates we Advocates and Activists. Most of us become involved through personal experience. After what I have seen, after the freedom I was blessed to experience, my resolve is even greater to do what is right, and that is to fight for the end of Prohibition all together. Let our sick heal. Give our Youth their futures back. Release those imprisoned for non violent Cannabis offenses and no parole, wipe their records clean. Guarantee that all Vets have full access to Medical Cannabis, as well as every other Patient across our nation. The experience has left me ever grateful and even more determined that we all feel that freedom, permanently! And we SHALL!!! Working together we can and will accomplish this!

Sincere thanks and much love to every person that made this wonderful experience possible.
Dana Arvidson, Executive Director of the National Cannabis Patients Wall
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