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**Everything you need to know about
Tyendinaga's Indigenous Cannabis Cup**

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CANNABIS SURVEY RESULTS**

**MUKWA BOTANICALS: "YOU DON'T
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WORKSHOPS

Welcome to the 2018 Smoke Signals Indigenous Cannabis Cup. The intent of this workshop series is to empower people with knowledge and skills from leading experts and practitioners to strengthen their understanding and relationship with Cannabis.

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2018

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM	<p>"You don't have to be high to heal"</p> <p><i>Mukwa Botanicals Demonstration with Chance Anderson</i></p>	<p>Cultivating Cannabis and Organic Fertility</p> <p><i>Dr. Av Singh and Randy Flemming</i></p>
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	DINNER	
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	<p>Traditional and Medicinal – Indigenous rights and responsibilities and Cannabis as a healing medicine</p> <p><i>Stacy Huff, Jamie Kunkel, Antoinette Marley, Clifton Ariwakehte Nicholas, and Tom Sarazin</i></p>	

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2018


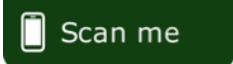
10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	<p>Cannabis and the Human Spirit</p> <p><i>Aaron Sault</i></p>	<p>The First Nations Medicinal experience in Wahnapiatae</p> <p><i>Chadwick McGregor and Eliot Gautier</i></p>
11:30 AM - 12:30 AM	<p>How to become an LP</p> <p><i>Georges Routhier CEO of Pipedreemz</i></p>	<p>Why your cannabinoids and terpenes are all about your soil</p> <p><i>Dr. Av Singh and Randy Flemming</i></p>
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM	<p>Hemplands not Tarsands!</p> <p><i>Kanahus Manuel</i></p>	<p>The Medicine Wheel Story</p> <p><i>Owner Rob Stevenson</i></p>
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM	COFFEE BREAK	

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	An overview of the history and growth of the Indigenous Cannabis Industry <i>Kanenhariyo Seth Lefort</i>	The Roots and Evolution of the Rastafari as an Indigenous Culture <i>Donisha Prendergast</i>
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Indigenous Women in Cannabis <i>Antoinette Cruz , TBA</i>	

SUNDAY, MAY 20, 2018

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Smoke Signals Franchise <i>Jamie Kunkel</i>	Quality control in Cannabis production <i>Georges Routhier, CEO of Pipedreemz</i>
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Basic Short Path Distillation with Hemp and Cannabis <i>Dan McIntosh</i>	Cannabis to curb opioid usage <i>Tyler Eden</i>
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	LUNCH BREAK	
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM	Yoga, Mindfulness Meditation & Breathing Techniques to Combat Addiction, Stress & Depression <i>Jackie Hitchcock, Certified Yoga Teacher & Trainer, Aerial Yoga Teacher & Plant-Based Raw Chef</i>	Cannabis in Northern Ontario <i>Gary Wassaykeesic, Darlene Necan and Niisha Dupuis</i>
3:30 PM - 4:00 PM	COFFEE BREAK	
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Self organized space for people to discuss what they want.	Demonstration: Cloning Cannabis Plants <i>Dr. Av Singh and Randy Flemming</i>
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	DINNER BREAK	
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Standing together against repression <i>Speakers to be announced due to legal issues</i>	

MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Opportunities for First Nations in the Cannabis Industry <i>Georges Routhier CEO of Pipedreemz</i>	Demonstration: Cannabis testing 101	 
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	How we organized the largest survey on Indigenous use and perspectives on cannabis <i>Aaron Sault</i>		



PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE



JUNO NOMINATED



New Tradition

JUNO AWARD WINNER



Derek Miller

EVENT MC



Will E Skandalz



Nataanii Means



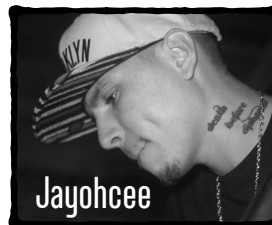
DJ Rhetorik



River City Junction



Dustin Hollings



Jayohcee



Hunter White



Hungerford Station

The Aboriginal Outlaws



Billy Jackson



Dirty Doc



Cottreezy



John Bigtree

Jojo Lazore

Wil Bear Sunday

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SATURDAY MAY 19

Nataanii Means | DJ Rhetoric
Cottreezy | Billy Jackson | Derek Miller
Comedian: Dustin Hollings

SUNDAY MAY 20

Nataanii Means | DJ Rhetorick | Cottreezy
River City Junction | Hungerford Station
Comedians: The Aboriginal Outlaws

MONDAY MAY 21

New Tradition | Jayohcee
& Hunter White
Dirty Doc



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A WORD FROM QUALITY CONTROL



Jeff Hawk, Stacy Huff, Jamie Kunkel, Kanenhariyo, Antoinette Marley, Clifton Nicolas, Chadwick McGregor, Rob Stevenson.

Smoke Signals Media is a collaboration between independent Indigenous cannabis entrepreneurs and a team of freelance media creators living in Iroquoia (Southern Ontario and Quebec). The goal of Smoke Signals Media is to create and share news and knowledge from those on the front lines of the Indigenous cannabis industry.

Specifically, Smoke Signals Media promotes all participants in the cannabis industry who support “traditional” (matrilineal clan based) forms of Indigenous governance and who provide cannabis for medicinal purposes.

Smoke Signals Media upholds the inalienable right of all people to access cannabis for their personal medicinal use, and seeks to uphold the original Indigenous systems of governance in this land – the Two Row Wampum, the Dish with one Spoon, and the Kayenerekowa or Great Peace.

Smoke Signals Media consults with, reports upon, and creates media relating to Indigenous issues and matters of concern to the cannabis industry, but does not sell cannabis or cannabis products.

The Smoke Signals Advisory Board consists of Jeff Hawk of Green Health for 6, Stacy Huff of Smoke Sig-

nals Akwesasne, Jamie Kunkel of Smoke Signals Tyendinaga, Kanenhariyo Seth Lefort of Mohawk Medicine and the Pot Shoppe in Tyendinaga, Antoinette Marley of the Indigenous Cannabis Association of British Columbia, Chadwick McGregor of First Nations Medicinal in Wahnapitae First Nation, Clifton Nicolas of Smoke Signals Kanehsatake, and Rob Stevenson of Mukwa Botanicals and Medicine Wheel Natural Healing in Alderville First Nation. Together and individually, they offer feedback, advice and content suggestions on the media created by Smoke Signals Media.

The Smoke Signals Media team are the people who make the media that goes into Smoke Signals Magazine. They are:

Fernando Arce – Writer and Journalist.

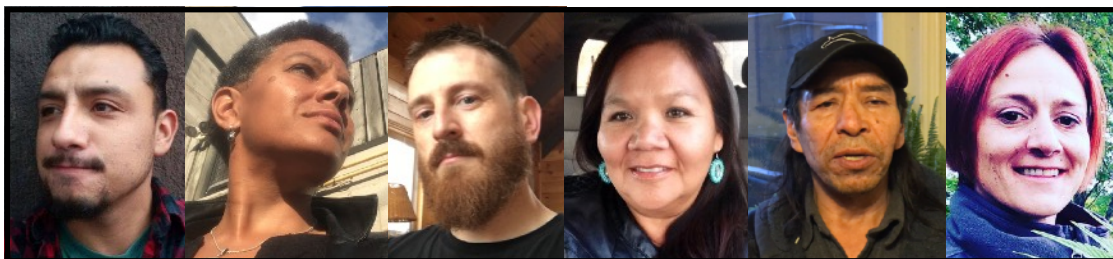
datejie cheko green – Director of Operations.

Tom Keefer – Editor and General Manager.

Rhonda Martin – Promotion and video.

Gary Wassaykeesic – Photos and video.

Mel Wilhelm – Advertising and Promotion.



Fernando Arce, datejie cheko green, Tom Keefer, Rhonda Martin, Gary Wassaykeesic, Mel Wilhelm.

Smoke Signals Magazine • Issue 2

Advisory Board – Jeff Hawk, Stacy Huff, Jamie Kunkel, Kanenhariyo Seth Lefort, Antoinette Marley, Chadwick McGregor, Clifton Nicolas and Rob Stevenson.

Media Team – Fernando Arce, datejie cheko green, Tom Keefer, Rhonda Martin, Gary Wassaykeesic, Mel Wilhelm.

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Issue 2 – May 2018

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– email info@smokesignals.media

We are always looking for articles, images and content ideas. Please get in touch!

www.smokesignals.media

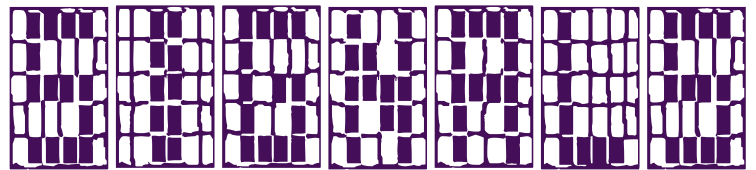
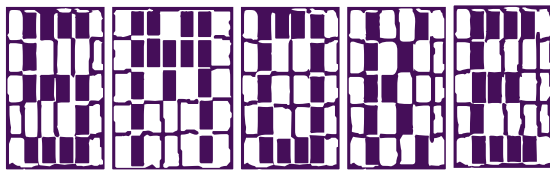


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Stacy Huff



Six Nations Police Dept.



Audrey Hill.



Francis Boots

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Providing Onkwehon:we Medicines for the People

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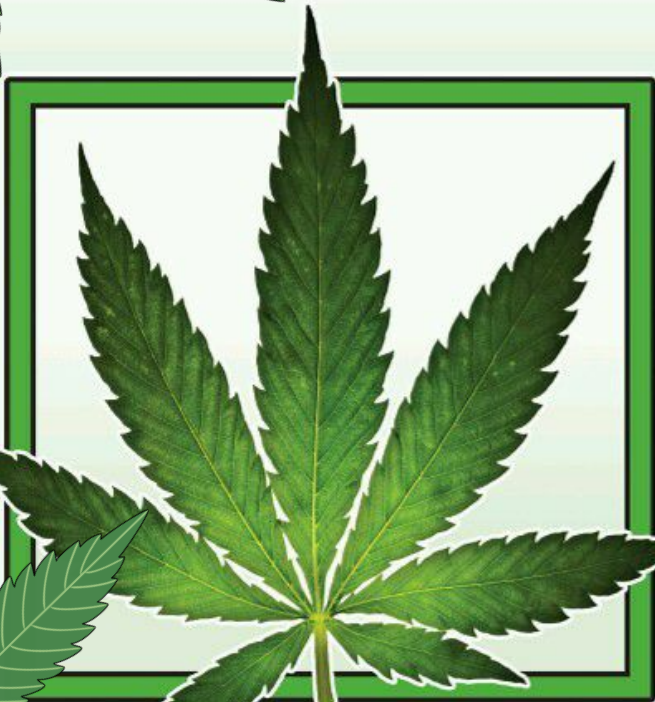


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About our cover

The cover art of this issue, a sculpture entitled "MMA Warrior" was created by Tehaneia'kwe:tarons (Cutter of Stone) David Robert Maracle, Bear Clan of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. The following is his artists statement.

"I believe the cannabis plant, if used responsibly, can be a gift to our society, and help to heal many elements that may occur in this day and age we live in. This "Original in Stone" conveys the message of healing of nations and knowledge of our plant life and acknowledging the power that they give to us. The wampum belt that encircles the warrior/elder conveys the

message that we are a strong nation and can move forward in sovereignty with this plant. It's well known in history that our Mohawk people were always very knowledgeable in cultivating and planting with the traditional foods; corn beans and squash and many other plants that we still to this day harvest for our communities. That same knowledge and wisdom of our ancestral heritage is still being used today to cultivate this medicinal plant.

With the use of this plant in a responsible manner it can help to eliminate much of the Western medicine and prescription drugs that big pharma

uses today as they are well documented to cause many harmful side effects and even death.

Building industry with this plant builds economical freedom for our people. The warrior/elder in the middle of this carving signifies the wisdom that we must use when moving forward with this industry, so that it does not harm our way of life, or our Youth and educates our people in using this medicine responsibly and in a good way."

For more information about Tehaneia'kwe:tarons/David Robert Maracle, please visit his website at www.davidrmaracle.com.

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Free the land, free the people, free the plant!

Welcome to the second issue of Smoke Signals Magazine, a publication of www.smokesignals.media. We've expanded the size, print run, and advisory board of the magazine, and now, we're happy to welcome you on board as a reader too!

Smoke Signals Media is a collaboration between independent Indigenous cannabis entrepreneurs and a team of freelance media creators living in Iroquoia (Southern Ontario and Quebec). The goal of Smoke Signals Media is to create and share news and knowledge from those on the front lines of the Indigenous cannabis industry.

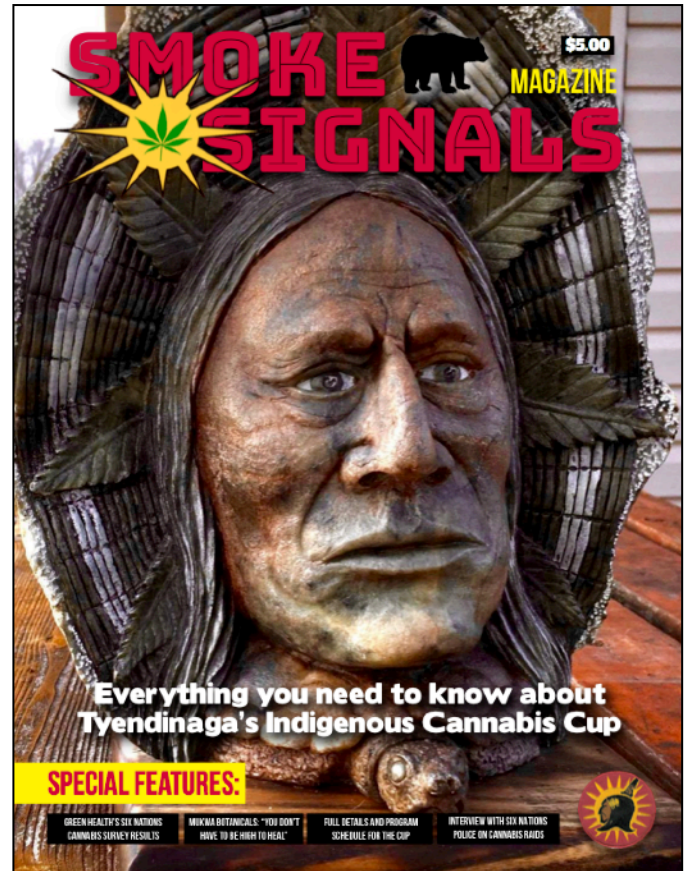
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Smoke Signals Media upholds the inalienable right of all people to access cannabis for their personal medicinal use as well as the original (and still existing!) Indigenous systems of governance in this land – the Two Row Wampum, the Dish with one Spoon, and the Kayenerekowa or Great Peace.

As is becoming increasingly clear, we live at a watershed moment. There is no denying that a crisis of global proportions awaits our children.

On the one hand that crisis – global warming, war, pollution – seems so overwhelming. But on the micro level, the point at which we exist on the day to day, cannabis is a plant that can play a big part in helping us through that crisis, both individually and collectively. In the day to day reality of our lives, cannabis is an industry that provides health and wellbeing for our families.

Cannabis is a medicine, a building material, and has oil and fiber with many wonderful uses and properties. Indigenous people are in a state of resurgence across the globe, and on Turtle Island, this resurgence includes the cannabis plant.



This is a magazine about making connections. We are raising awareness and sharing knowledge across the many boundaries that divide us.

We invite you to join us on this journey of learning and observing. Letters, articles, and correspondence can be sent to us at info@smokesignals-media.

We look forwards to walking this path with you on a journey to free the land, free the people, and free the cannabis plant.

Smoke Signals offering a free franchise opportunity



Smoke Signals in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory is offering a free franchise opportunity to Indigenous people who are seeking to open up medicinal cannabis dispensaries on Indigenous lands. Franchises include access to medicines, printed materials, multimedia support, signage, and assistance with business related issues. Contact Jamie at 613-403-4864 or email dragginghorns@gmail.com for details.



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Smoke Signals in the Sky

Want to meet and network with the people running the booming Indigenous cannabis industry in Tyendinaga? To be among thousands of like-minded, peace-loving people who share a love and respect for the cannabis plant? To be front row for four days of cutting-edge workshops where you'll learn more than you ever imagined about the Indigenous connection to cannabis and hemp?

Then come join hundreds of vendors selling every cannabis product under the sun, May 18-21, at the inaugural Smoke Signals Indigenous Cannabis Cup, in Tyendinaga, Mohawk Territory. Anyone 19 years or older is welcome to join thousands of cannabis experts, connoisseurs and enthusiasts during four glorious days of everything cannabis-related.

HISTORIC GATHERING

This historic, one-of-a-kind gathering will chart a whole new way for coming together, planting seeds, and celebrating, the likes of which Victoria Day Weekends have never seen.

"It's all about networking," says Jamie Kunkel, a Mohawk of the Bear Clan, owner of Smoke Signals dispensary and founder of the Cup. "My goal is to create a forum or a device for Indigenous people in the cannabis industry to network with the rest of the world. We have a lot to offer."

Conceived as a way to connect the who's who of the cannabis world and to determine who's got the best product, the Cup is bringing in talent from across Turtle Island and abroad to create awareness of the powers of

the cannabis plant – from its many healing properties to its potential as an economic powerhouse for those who embrace it.

The Cup will take place on land stretching out behind Kunkel's Smoke Signals shop, just off of Highway 49. The weekend will include overnight camping, bonfires, music and enter-



A view of the cup venue in early spring.

tainment, and dozens of workshops ranging from practical lessons (like how and why your cannabinoids and terpenes are linked to your soil) to historical teachings.

For the affordable price of \$420, vendors can get their own 10 by 10 piece of ground, where they'll be free to display all of their cannabis and cannabis-related products. We're talking oils, salves, flower, tinctures, edibles, pipes, bongs, papers, etc. If it involves cannabis, you'll find it here!

Those who want to put their expertise to the test can become judges, also for the price of \$420, which, in the end, will be more than compensated for in the VIP bag of cannabis products every judge will receive.

And, of course, if you want to attend and see what the fuss is all about – and perhaps put a few Smoke Signals in the air yourself – you can do so for the price of \$42 bucks per day. Or you can do it right and get yourself a weekend-pass and camping spot for all four days for \$120.

All in all, let's just say there will be something for everybody!

INDIGENOUS CUP HELD ON INDIGENOUS LAND

"It's an Indigenous Cup that is being held on Indigenous land," Kunkel, a man of few words but much impact, told Smoke Signals Media. "But other than that, it's open to everybody. Everybody is more than welcome. Have fun. Enjoy the weekend!"

Evan Johnston, a non-native vendor and general manager at Greengo, a smoking accessories company sponsoring the event, is looking forward to doing just that... and he's bringing friends.

"I've always been an all-inclusive kind of person...so I'm trying to get as many non-native people to come as I can," Johnston says, laughing. "I think there is so much potential for a place like this. It's going to be huge!"

Greengo primarily produces smoking papers that are chemical-free, good for the environment and easy on your lungs. Their paper is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council – a non-for-profit organization that sets the standards for ethi-

cally-sourced forest products, including wood for paper.

That's why at the Cup, Johnston will be showcasing Greengo's latest – biodegradable hemp-based plastic designed to combat the destructive and pervasive plastic industry.

"They already saw garbage cans overflowing with plastic joint tubes in the 1980s," Johnston explains. "So we've developed these tubes made with biodegradable hemp plastic. So after a couple of years in the landfill, it just turns into dirt."

"To me, cannabis has been a very important part of my life – medicinally, spiritually and recreationally," Johnston continues. "And I feel that Indigenous people know how to get around the corporate interests" that are currently threatening the industry.

With the cannabis industry booming and Canada's Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau looking to legalize it later this year – albeit under rigidly restrictive measures – Indigenous people are poised to benefit.

This Cup is only the beginning.

Organizers are hoping the event will not only happen annually, but will grow into a massive hub of information and support for all those looking either to get into the industry for themselves or simply for the best possible product to cure their ailments.

Kunkel sees this as not only possible but necessary. In fact, he says, he sees the event as a vehicle that will help take the cannabis industry much further than the tobacco industry.

"I think cannabis has the potential to be five times the size of tobacco," he says, beaming with confidence. "Tobacco has spent its entire history killing people. Cannabis is quite the opposite."

CUP GIVING BACK TO THE PEOPLE

All surplus generated from the Cup will go towards bettering the people of Tyendinaga. This includes building a cultural centre/longhouse for community-based decisions; financial support for the Tyendinaga Midwifery program; support for the Mohawk Language immersion program; and the creation of a community hardship fund to help those in financial need.

Smoke Signals is located at 255 Hwy 49, Deseronto, Ontario. O

For more information on how to buy tickets, get a vendor's table, propose a workshop or musical act, please visit: www.indigenouscannabiscup.com



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The Cannabis Cup, hemp and farming for the people

On March 20, 2018, Tyendinaga Mohawk and cannabis dispensary owner Jamie Kunkel travelled to Toronto to speak with insiders within Toronto's dispensary circuit. They discussed the upcoming Indigenous Cannabis Cup, the forty dispensaries at Tyendinaga, and what Cup-goers can expect.

WHO IS WELCOME AT THE CUP?

Setting race aside, there is room for everybody in this industry. There's room for growth, there's room for everybody to learn, or if you know something, there's room for everybody to educate. So for me the biggest reason for the Cup is to network. And everybody is welcome. Like I said, race doesn't matter. We are calling it the Indigenous Cup, because we as Indigenous people are the ones who are hosting the Cup. It doesn't really matter what it is that you have to offer as long as it's within the Cannabis industry: cannabis, hemp, gardening, anything and everything is a go.

WHAT ABOUT SUBMITTING ENTRIES TO THE CUP?

The fact that there are 40 stores (at Tyendinaga), if you're a manufacturer or if you have a product – common sense right? There's forty stores. Why go look for customers? Show up for the one weekend, and you are going to have the owners of 40 different stores, who are looking for product: Edibles, tinctures, pills, presses, screens, it doesn't matter. They all need it, and they also need it wholesale – or retail, maybe if you don't want to sell wholesale. I think it would be a great weekend for everybody, and I think it just has the potential to get bigger and bigger and bigger.

WHAT ABOUT THE ELECTED SYSTEM AND LP'S?

The elected system is pretty much exactly that, it's the elected system. So at the end of the day they have to listen to the people. The Tyendinaga Chief of Police, he tried to push it. Myself and my store I guess is where that confrontation began, and that's also where it ended, and he's applied for early retirement, so.... There's a lot more obviously – personal and community politics there.

We're not really interested in the LPs, but we're also not completely against them. If they're there, you know what, keep to yourself, do your thing and run about it but that doesn't mean because you're here, we're gone. Because at the end of the day it's going to be the complete opposite. It is what it is. It's just business, and our people will come first. So even if there is an LP, if it's not beneficial to people, they'll just be asked to leave.

WHAT IS THE LEGAL SITUATION WITH YOUR LAND AND THE GOVERNMENT?

My land is my land. Tyendinaga has long been a hub, and we have been a hub. So any of the weed that comes on a 400 highway into Toronto, comes through us, just like the tobacco and alcohol, and everything else. We are a central hub for Ontario.

We also have our own airport, so we are looking into all kinds of be-

yond-Cup adventures. I'm setting up warehouses for both storage and grow-op, and there are contracts that I've already set in place with people from British Columbia. So there's growers that are going to come here to grow on our land, because it's absolutely hassle free. You can grow whatever you want, depending on the size of the warehouse. You want to grow more? You know what, add a hundred feet on the the warehouse.

THERE'S NO REQUIREMENT FOR LICENSING?

No requirement for licensing, whatsoever. That being said, when it comes to edibles, and all of the other products, that may be at stake or in jeopardy come the green light being turned on, a lot of them are looking for warehouse. Now a lot of them are looking for warehouse on a reservation, because that is the safest place for their over stock of product at this point. Once it gets to us, until you give us a mailing address, it's safe.

If you're smart, you find the right, trustworthy person on that weekend of the Indigenous Cannabis Cup (May 18-21, 2018), and you start some sort of business relationship together.

WHAT ABOUT HEMP GROWING?

At this point there are a couple of places that are looking into hempcrete, so they are just looking to import massive amounts of hemp at this point.



Jamie Kunkel, cup founder.

DO YOU HAVE LAND TO CULTIVATE?

Oh yes. Thousands of acres. My uncle owns 800 hectares of farmable land, of which the guy in the next county over, just comes in and says, "I give you 40 bucks an acre." So you offer him \$41 dollars an hectare and plant 800 hundred dollars worth of hemp. Look at it from a business aspect. The government has put so many restrictions and guidelines on the outside world where the super-stores or grocery stores, are. Now nobody grows corn, tomatoes, potatoes. The fields are just open and vacant, and the neighbouring communities now rent at forty bucks an acre, to grow hops, peas, and other cash crops.

It actually works against the community, because all those companies are massive corporations, so they can come in and spray with all their fertilizers and pesticides. So even if you match the price, but guaranteed the farmer you weren't going to spray all those chemicals, he'd probably go with you. And hemp cleans the soil. The sky's the limit. It's all there and it's all fresh, and so all those fresh minds and eager people, that's what we're looking for. It's the answer to a lot.

TELL US ABOUT THE JUDGES' KITS

Without being rude, but I got a call two weeks ago, the guy was worried about the seven hundred unit entry. As politely as I could I said, if you're worried about seven hundred units, then you are not big enough. And he says, "What do you mean?" And like I told you 20 minutes ago, there's 40 different stores at Tyendinaga, so if you acquire first place, are you going to be able to handle a wholesale from 40 stores on that day? And if not, why enter the Cup?

I mean I get there's Cups, and I get that some Cups are just parties, and some Cups are just bragging rights, but for us our judges' passes are actually going to the people that pay the 420 bucks. We are not going to pick the biggest sponsor as first place. So when those five hundred people come back with their five hundred forms from their swag bags, they would be going into the ballot box, they will be judged over night, they will all be counted and the winners would be picked by the people. That way we can order the proper stuff that the people want.

So strictly business, strictly networking. We're giving out the judge's bags on site on the Friday, when you show up to pick up your ticket. Then you have that weekend to test product and make your decisions. Winners will be announced Monday evening.

ARE THERE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE JUDGES?

We didn't set anything in place. For us it's the first year so there are also learning curves involved. We are from an Indian reservation, so most people would not even have had the funds to attend a cup. I mean in the beginning, I made it pretty good off cigarettes. So I tried to retire at twenty-five. And I went to Spain, went to the Cannabis Cup in Amsterdam, travelling around. But for the majority, 95% of reservations can't afford to do that. So 80% of them probably haven't even left the reservation. So there is not very much of that "out and about

in the world," and "we've done this a hundred times." Like I said, it's very much about learning, educating, sharing.

IS THE CUP LINKED WITH OTHER FIRST NATIONS?

Not directly, indirectly. It's open to everybody, and we got people coming from different Indian reservations in British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec, multiples in Ontario, whether or not they're franchises of other stores.

On top of the Cup we offer an opportunity for a franchise, so our second just opened in Tyendinaga, which is in Pikwakanagan which is near Golden Lake. That was our second location, and within the next week or two, our third location is opening in Kanehsatake, Quebec. We are also slowly growing at the exact same time. Like I said, it's beating them, we have to be there, operating and established. And if we are there operating and established before they even notice? Like I said, there's forty stores.

The next community over, which is Akwesasne, which is Cornwall, their Chief-and-Council have come in and said, "There is now an LP, the LP pays into the community, it's beneficial to the whole community. No private shops!"

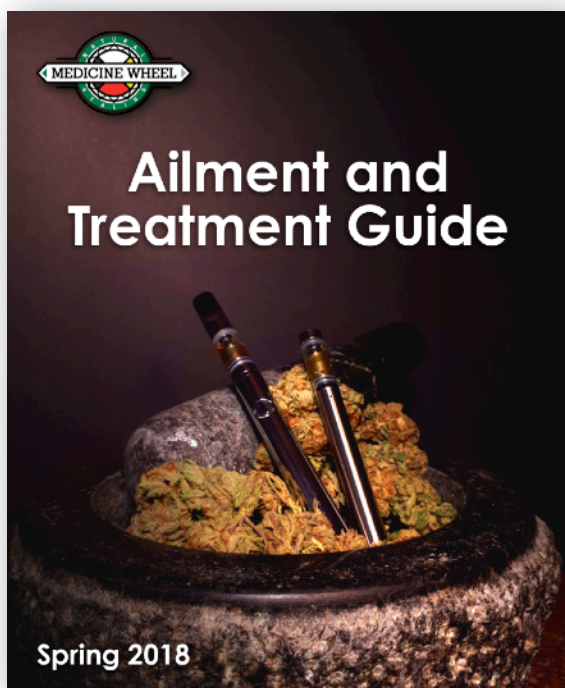
In Tyendinaga, we kind of beat them to the punch. We did know our Chief and our Council had interests in the industry. They were acquiring land and warehouses, and while they were acquiring land and warehouses, everybody went, "Open!" And so it just happened, and now it's to the point where if they try and close all of those stores, the very first thing that it's going to be is a conflict of interest. And then our community just wouldn't just allow it to happen. Chief, Council and our Chief of Police, have all stated that, if this is what the people choose, there's absolutely nothing they can do about it, and they've publicly stated that. If it's what the people want, there is absolutely nothing they can do. 0



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That's why you'll want Greengo products for your next smoking session – the #1 brand of natural cannabis smoking products in Amsterdam, now also available in Canada.

“(Greengo) is environmentally friendly, chooses Forest Stewardship Council-certified pulp, recycled materials for their packaging and organic ink for all the printing,” general manager and co-owner of Canada's branch Evan Johnston recently told Smoke Signals Media.

Since it was introduced to the Canadian market two years ago, Greengo has quickly gained recognition, particularly among Indigenous cannabis dispensary owners, given their shared environmental and social-ly-oriented values.

That's because for Indigenous business owners interested in furthering traditional medicines and environmentally sustainable practices, Greengo promises top-of-the-line, chemically-free products subjected to the strictest levels of testing and certification. It is, as Johnston says, a family company interested in sustainability and health rather than profit.

“Greengo isn't about mass producing something for nothing and making gigantic markups,” he says. “It's about social responsibility and respect for your customers: it's good for the environment, less harmful for you, and a natural product.”

THE GREENGO FAMILY

Johnson first discovered the company during a trip to the Netherlands a few years back. There, he saw how popular the company and its products

were among the country's more cannabis-friendly culture.

One of the first products to catch his attention was the tobacco-substitute herbs – a mixture of eucalyptus, mint, papaya and hazel leaves – which people were using to mix in their joints. Soon, Johnston realized the herbs were also helping cigarette smokers cut down due to its complete lack of nicotine and its “less sticky and tarry” composition in comparison to cigarettes, which was revealed after being exposed to filtration and burn tests.

“Smoking is still technically not good for you,” Johnston readily admits. “But (this product) can be less harmful for you, specially if you're trying to stop polluting your body with things like nicotine.”

That has since become Greengo's self-appointed mandate: keeping you and your body safe.

After realizing “Canada needs Greengo,” Johnston set out to learn all he could about paper, plastic and hemp, trying to find the best formulas for the most natural products. His first – and to date – most popular items were (surprise, surprise!) rolling papers.

“Good rolling papers are not all created equally,” he says, adding that although hemp is a great fibre, he's “never been a fan of its taste or rollability.”

That's why Greengo's rolling papers are “made out of FSC-certified unbleached wood pulp – the most natural paper they can make.”

The papers are even gummed with all-natural Arabic Gum, the hardened sap of the Acacia tree, which makes them extra thin and naturally slow-burning. They're also practically odorless and flavorless, so all you can taste are the herbs you're smoking.

QUALITY PRODUCTS

Other products include grinders and rolling trays made from recycled plastic cannabis containers collected from cafes throughout the Netherlands. All the plastic-production facilities are in Europe, he says, so nothing is getting mass produced in China.

Even the aluminum grinders Greengo carries are made with the “best aircraft-grade material” so “you don't end up with aluminum shavings in your smokables,” he says. These also come in four sizes – from tiny discreet ones to carry in your pocket to the larger, 2.5-inch ones for more packed sessions.

Another top-seller is Greengo's Hemplyne, a biodegradable hemp fibre also used in many of the aforementioned products. “Stronger and more rigid than conventional plastic, it will last indefinitely unless it comes in contact with air, water and microorganisms in which case it will disintegrate in less than 2 years,” Greengo's website explains.

One of their most unique products is also one of their most basic ones: filter tips made from recycled, unbleached cardboard. “So if you're smoking it all the way to the end and you happen to kill a little of the filter, you're not smoking waxy bleach paper.”

Simply put, with 65 retailers carrying its unique, environmentally sustainable products across Ontario and growing, and with the overwhelming support it is receiving from Indian Country, Greengo is poised to become Canada's leading producer of cannabis-related products. Though most of its stores are concentrated in Ontario – with many in the GTA – Greengo's line can be found in head-shops and dispensaries across the country, including in British Columbia, Quebec and Nova Scotia. o

Self-sustaining with cannabis

Stacy Huff is a midwife trained in the healing powers of cannabis and other plant-based traditional medicines. A Seneca woman living in Akwesasne Mohawk Territory, she's a grandmother on the front lines of land and water protection with connections across Turtle Island. Stacy is a co-organizer of the Indigenous Cannabis Cup.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CANNABIS

For me it started way before I was born. This has been a traditional medicine for us for years and throughout time we came to use it for different medicines. And it's been used in ways that heal the people. I've been a midwife. I come from a long line of midwives. We also use it to slow down premature labour, deal with different illnesses, and learn what tinctures, what medicines, what different strains are good for.

For our people there's a lot of depression, anxiety, PTSD and this medicine works for the mind. Because I truly believe that when you heal the mind the body follows and that's what we're trying to promote with this Indigenous Cannabis Cup. We're healing the people and letting them know and understand that cannabis is a medicine and teach them how to use it. Then we're going to have the educational workshops, informational workshops on just exactly that – different ways to heal different illnesses.

I've been making medicine for years. Lately it's been for cancer patients. Different kinds of cancer, different strains that we use and it works, even within my own family. I have two daughters, and one had breast cancer. She beat it. It's gone. Another one had MS. It's in remission. It's gone. Hopefully to never come back again. So even personally, my own family, we use this, we believe in this. We know that it works.

For myself, I've been using it for years. I have degenerative disc disease. It's gone into my hips, my hands. I use it daily and I am walking



Stacy Huff at Standing Rock.

proof that it works. They had told me years ago that I had one year to walk and... being the way that I am, I said, "No, this isn't happening." And I got even more into the medicine and actually started using it, changed my lifestyle, changed the way I eat, and exercised more. So, I'm walking proof that this works.

I'm not bad for being 54 years old. I feel good and I want others to feel good. I want others to heal. For me that's what this is about, is actually healing the people.

HOW IMPORTANT IS EDUCATION?

A lot of it is about education, because cannabis has been stigmatized and criminalized and they think that it's a bad thing. A lot of this work is to educate people to let them know that this is a good medicine. For some they've been using it for years and there's going to be a lot of people here that are going to educate for action. So I'm looking forward to that. The different workshops that we're planning for the cup have a lot of informational and educational content and I'm really looking forward to it.

We need to know what medicines that the people need, to know what medicines that the women need, because there's also others that you start at certain times within the pregnancy and about six weeks before we start, we use Slippery Elm and that helps too. We get the women, get them happening. There's medicines that we use once a day first to help to clean them out, to make sure everything's clear and clear the blood to keep them healthy, keep that milk going. Yeah, we've been doing this since the beginning of time.

What's important is to be able to self-sustain, to be able to heal yourself to know the process of what to do with the growing of it, the drying of it and then to turn it into a medicinal property whether it's the tinctures or the edibles. There's different ways of consuming it. There's different ways of getting it into your body. There's different dosages for different illnesses and that's what I'm hoping people are going to learn: that much



Kanahus Manuel and Stacy Huff together at Standing Rock.

we were told isn't true. They have to realize it for themselves and experience it themselves.

And they come back and they have these ideas, these business ideas – whatever the businesses that they decide to go into; if it does good the government will put a stop to it or try to control it. Like for a while there it was cigarettes, gasoline, and they wanted to control that too. It depends on whether the people are ready to stand up and defend their rights, or if they just accept the status quo and go along with it. Each community is different. So a lot of it is the leaders, the leadership.

Within the Great Law, all laws, all decisions are put before the people. That's the way it's designed. We had the clan system and each clan decides on a matter, and then they come together and they discuss it and then something is passed, or it's denied. And even more to this day, even within our traditional government, that process has been overlooked. The ones that have these titles seem to think that they have the power to make decisions without the people.

The people's input isn't there, the process hasn't been followed through. So that's the sad part too... that you see these ones that are supposedly title holders, and different ones are saying "No...no...no," but now the people are even questioning them like

"Why are you saying no?" "Why didn't you ask the people?" "Who did you consult with?"

So even within our system, not even the outside government, within our own government, processes are not being followed. Laws are not being followed. So the people are stepping up, the people are questioning and they're questioning certain ones. They want clarification, they want information on everything... everything that these so-called title holders are doing, because a lot of it is wrong. It's wrong for the people. The decisions aren't helping the people, but that's slowly changing too.

IS THERE A GROWING INDIGENOUS CANNABIS MOVEMENT?

Well the Cup is a start. This is the first Indigenous Cannabis Cup. So this is the starting point here. For native territories all across this continent, this is a start. I'm encouraging everyone to come here and network, find out who has the same thinking, who has the like minds. That's how we are going to do this. Because everyone has faced different legal battles in different provinces, different territories, and lot of them are going to be here and do the workshops and inform others what they went through. You

know, politically, just to see... just to come together.

My sister Kanahus is going to come down and she is going to be doing a workshop. Right now she's at one of these small towns... See, when a pipeline wants to go through, the easiest place to start is usually the smallest, poorest, economically deficient town. So what she's doing now is, instead of that thousand and one miles of pipeline, to do a thousand and one miles of hemp as a resource for this community. So by the time May 18th comes, she's going to have a world of knowledge to give us. And I'm looking forward to that.

Now, even with the hemp, they're still facing the same restrictions. It can be used for so much, and there's so much potential in it, the potential is overwhelming. But again the government will hinder it. They put restrictions on it, because they don't want us to be self-sustaining.

WHAT DO WE NEED FOR A HEALED TURTLE ISLAND?

We need for cannabis to be accepted. To know the medicinal properties, to accept the medicinal properties, to use the medicinal properties, to start the healing. The healing of the people, because it is real. It does work. And for that to be available to everyone, everywhere.... that would be the healing. The healing that I can envision. The healing that I want everywhere.

Because when you go through it yourself, or your children go through it, you want and you ask the universe for help and then it comes. It's there and then you have to accept it. Once you believe it and you accept it and you use it, it can work for you. It will work. Like I said my own children, myself, have used it and I've seen it. It's a reality and I want others to know that too.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND?

I come from a long line of activists. Starting back at Ganienkeh my family

was one of the 300 families that we needed to cover the land and start a new community, and community was based on the Great Law. Everything about it – the way they handle situations was all based on the Great Law. Living it, truly living it, as a community working together.

The three basics of the Great Law are Peace, Power, Righteousness. The first and main concept of the Great Law is Peace, maintaining peace within the whole Confederacy and the process is that we take when something happens. We have the Warrior Society, but that's the very last ones that we call in. We don't call them in until all peaceful avenues have been exhausted. Through everything that we do, the burden of peace is heavy. It's not an easy thing. It's not an easy way of thinking, because you don't just react to something. It's the responsibility; the ability to respond and to be able to handle the situation in a peaceful manner. The end result of all the steps and procedures within the Great Law is to obtain and maintain peace throughout the lands.

HOW HAS THE GREAT LAW GUIDED YOUR ACTIVISM?

For myself I've been involved in many conflicts throughout the years. Some of them didn't always end peacefully. For example, Oka. Someone was shot, someone was killed and that was a sad thing. Last year I was at Standing Rock and I was there for five months. And that started peaceful. It started out of prayer. It brought the people together, brought thousands of people together, and we tried nonviolent direct actions.

We were met with aggression and it escalated to a point where a lot of people got hurt. The military came right after us and there was nothing peaceful about it. In the end, the army came in and forcibly removed everyone. A lot of people were arrested. A lot of people got hurt, but that was a hard one because so many people came together that we couldn't teach and maintain a peaceful way because there were just too many

people. Too many all at once and it was hard to educate the ones that came. Some of them grasped it and some understood, some came knowing it already, but it was hard. It was just so many people, so many factions and then even within, there were people that had their own agenda, and that was to stop us. It was really hard. The divide and conquer tactic worked very well, and that's an age-old tactic – divide and conquer. It was used there and... it worked.

Again it comes to having a good mind, to have a strong mind in everything that we do. And even this whole gathering that's coming up. I look at it as bringing together a network of people that think the same. We want peace. We want healing. And, as far as the Great Law, it all comes together as peace in your mind, a peaceful way of thinking, a good mind. And even this gathering that's coming, everyone that's coming and participating, they want to teach, they want to inform people. They want to help the people and again, to heal the people, because if you heal the mind, the body follows.

IS CANNABIS A MIND CHANGER?

That's what many of our old people were raised to believe. They can't help it. Because, as the older generation, that's what they were taught – that it was a drug, that it was a bad thing and they can't help that. Their mind is set that way. But, hopefully, as time goes on, they'll realize that it is a medicine and they'll accept it. I know that they do know, but for some reason... they go against it.

I would encourage those opposed to cannabis to open their mind, to come with an open mind, to leave the stigma behind when they come through those gates. And to open their minds and really look and really listen to see what is going on, to understand that it is a medicine. For many of them it's not their fault. They were raised like that between the residential schools, the damage that was done, the mindset that they had, the influence of the churches

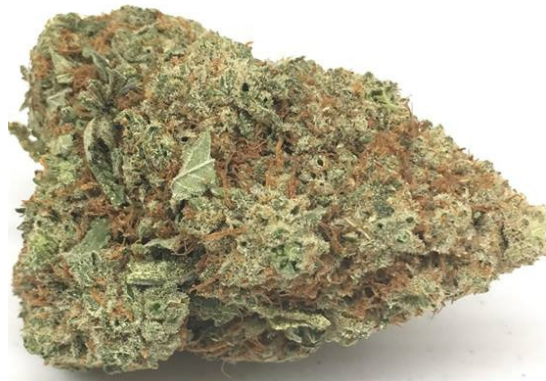
and... they were made to be docile. There are generations that can't help but accept what the government or priests say. They were made to think like that. It's not their fault. And then they pass that thinking on to their children. Their minds were formed to what the government and what the outside world wanted them to be.

You've got to remember at one time their objective was to kill the Indian... to kill the Indian inside those children and they did for many, for a lot of them. When they came out of the residential schools they passed on that way of thinking, you know, to accept it, their docile way of just accepting it. And that's what they passed on. But now the younger ones, this generation is knowing that it's not a bad thing. That cannabis is a medicine and they are accepting it. So for the older ones I don't blame them, because they were raised to think like that. They couldn't help it, but it's changing. It's evolving as the younger ones are learning and accepting and knowing that it is a good thing, that it is a medicine, that it can help you, that it does cure.

WHAT WILL THE GOVERNMENT DO?

Well, put it this way: the government has always controlled any way that we can make money. They've always had control of it. If it happened to be bubblegum, teddy bears... anything that we were able to financially sustain ourselves with, they want control of it. They've always wanted control of it.

Doesn't matter if it's corn, beavers, baskets or fish, they want control of everything. Years ago, even the basket makers would have to sneak across the river just to be able to trade, to do their trading for other products. And they had to sneak for that. The government wanted to control even the baskets. It doesn't matter what it is, the government wants control. O



med'i'cine

[/'medəsən/]

any substance or substances used in treating disease or illness; medicament; remedy.



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Two Ounces and Self-Determination

Chadwick McGregor discusses how he built First Nations Medicinal

It all started with determination and two ounces bought with a disability cheque. That and a determination to help others wrestle control over their personal health out of colonial hands is what has made Chadwick McGregor, from Wahnapiatae First Nation, the successful cannabis dispensary owner he is today.

McGregor has 17 years of firsthand knowledge growing quality cannabis, and he believes that it is high time that Indigenous people gain control of the cannabis industry on their territory.

"Indigenous people have got to unite and take this away from Health Canada," McGregor told Smoke Signals Media, referring to the Liberal Government's legalization scheme to be unveiled this summer.

"We've got to make our own regulations, do our own testing and be better than they are. We already have the systems in place... the knowledge, the growers and the people that have been involved in this industry most of their lives."

When McGregor invested that disability cheque back in 2016 on two ounces of cannabis bought from a friend, he was in the midst of kicking an opioid addiction. He had no income and was in a "tough position" in his life. But, he figured that, "armed with the right knowledge" of the cannabis plant and a desire for a healthier future for himself and his community, opening a cannabis dispensary was the logical way to turn his life around.

Less than two years later, McGregor is the owner of the thriving First Nations Medicinal storefront in Wahnapiatae, just north of Sudbury, Ontario. And he's in the midst of opening another shop across the country in Victoria, British Columbia.

"I started this business to help others with addictions who aren't finding other avenues out," he said. "I want to help people and want to get the message out there that we can do this as First Nations people, and that this is a good business to get into."

Indeed, from almost any vantage point, the cannabis industry is providing for communities that embrace it. In addition to urgently needed, sovereign avenues to reclaim personal

Every month, for instance, the dispensary runs different campaigns including fundraising drives, donation events and contests, all for various charitable causes.

"Next month we're doing something on depression," McGregor said. "So there's always stuff to be constantly working and expanding on."

Unfortunately, there are also constant roadblocks.

'HAULED OFF'

Back on January 26, 2018, First Nations Medicinal was raided. This setback came less than two weeks after CBC Sudbury reported on McGregor's business. A group of Anishinabek Police Services and Ontario Provincial Police officers burst into the shop, guns fully drawn on the unsuspecting patients and staff members, "scaring them pretty good," McGregor said.

The cops took nearly everything, including CBD products, which are entirely legal as they contain no psychoactive substances. They also confiscated the tools of his trade – the scales, packing equipment and even security licenses in his shop. A nameless search and seizure warrant appeared on the door of the shop later that day declaring that all remaining products were to be seized.

To McGregor, this all seemed more than "a little bit weird," so he shut down operations for three weeks.

Around that same time, elected council had organized a community meeting to discuss cannabis dispensaries, among other things.

McGregor, who showed up late to the community meeting, was immediately arrested by APS officers, who advised him that there was a warrant out for his arrest. Despite calmly asking to be given until the end of the



FNM owner Chadwick McGregor.

health, much-needed economic leverage is helping people to carve out their own futures, whether elected band councils and Canadian governments like it or not.

To the point, earlier this year, McGregor told CBC News that First Nations Medicinal was making between \$5,000 and \$10,000 in daily sales. This translates into regular support to hundreds of patients and, most importantly, resources from which the community can benefit.

meeting to surrender himself, McGregor was “hailed off immediately.”

“I understand what happened had to happen,” McGregor admitted. “But it didn’t need to happen in that way, as we were having an open discussion with the community.”

Curiously, another cannabis dispensary, Creator’s Choice, opened two days after McGregor’s dispensary was raided and remained operational through the time of the community meeting. This is no surprise to McGregor, who claims the store is run with the support and financial backing of the elected chief and his family.

COMMUNAL HEALTH

McGregor said that he remains undeterred by the possibility of more raids, citing the community’s support as a main source of strength.

“They like having that service, they like having that education, they like coming in and being able to get the medication they need,” he said. Mc-

Gregor added that, when First Nations Medicinal was shut down, patients were forced back into the Health Canada mail-order system. “So we had a lot of people upset that we were closed.”

As McGregor sees the cannabis industry grow and many more people eager to join it, he says “educating yourself and building networks” is “one of the most important things to do.”

But, he emphatically cautioned against getting involved for the “wrong reasons.”

“This kind of business is about trying to help people,” he said. “Yes we get into it for financial help, too, but also to try to help and educate people on medicine.”

For those trying to kick opioids or even the methadone that’s beginning to flood Indigenous reserves, for instance, McGregor recommends

edibles. “They’re more effective and last longer,” he said, mentioning Mukwa Botanicals products in particular. “Everyone’s raving about them.”

McGregor argues that Indigenous people are best suited to be the ones who lead the way towards healthier living, with or without the approval of band councils and governments.

“I see that Indigenous people are right for this industry because it’s a medicine,” he said. “And we’re a medicine people and we’re a sharing culture. We like to share knowledge, and I feel we’re best suited for this industry.” O



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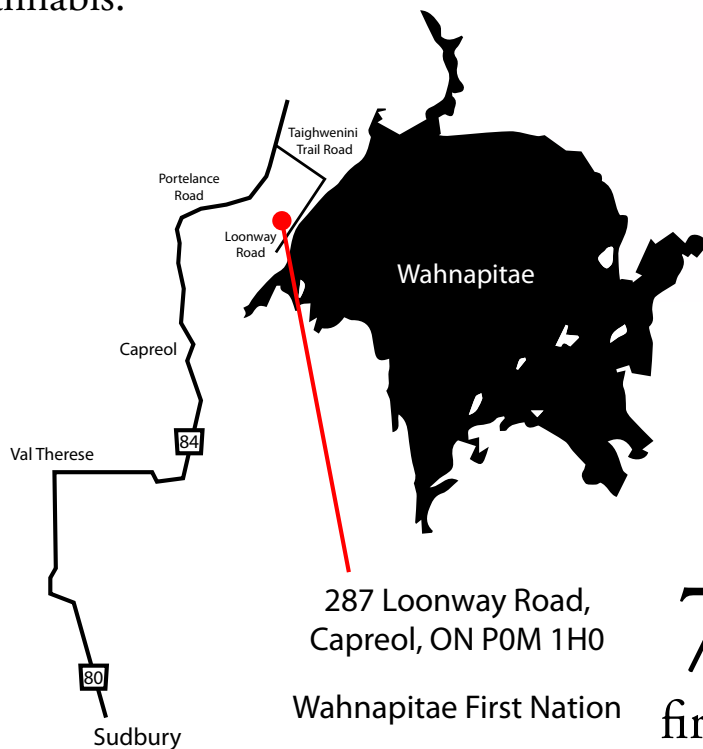
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First Nations Medicinal gives back to family in need



Eliot Gauthier and Chadwick McGregor of FNM.

The parents and family of baby Autumn McCulligh.

Dispensary helps Indigenous family in crisis with Christmas meal and support.

TORONTO – For many Indigenous communities, medicinal cannabis has become an important economic asset, bringing prosperity to many of those entering the industry. In Wahnapiatae First Nation, dispensary owner Chadwick McGregor is determined to share some of that wealth with his community.

“In December we ran a contest called Bringing you Christmas, where we got people to submit video submissions of families that needed help,” said McGregor at Toronto’s Sick Children’s Hospital as he introduced the winners.

The chosen family was that of Autumn McCulligh, a young child from Garden River First Nation who was born with Ebstein’s Anomaly, a rare heart condition that has worsened since April 2017, when she was first taken to the hospital. According to her mother Maggie, complications stemming from surgery led to a severe brain injury which left Autumn fully disabled.

“We are really appreciative,” said Maggie, barely able to hold back tears. “This is very important. This is the hardest year ever. She doesn’t deserve to go through this. Thank you!”

The support from First Nations Medicinal has enabled the family to get through Christmas without having to worry about their immediate financial situation. Christmas gifts were provided for the whole family, and McGregor even provided mom and dad with tickets to a Leaf’s game so they could get a much-needed break.

“Because of being out here in Toronto, they haven’t been able to continue to pay for living expenses,” explained Eliot Gauthier, McGregor’s business partner and girlfriend. “So we’re going to help them do that. Every week all the proceeds from the donations we raise are going to go to their landlord.”

The Christmas dinner provided by First Nations Medicinal included a full catered turkey dinner for the family – “mash potatoes, turkey, stuffing, a pie, the whole nine yards,” said McGregor.

McGregor’s contribution is coming at a time when debates over who should control the cannabis industry in Indigenous lands rages across the nation as the Federal government unveils their legalization scheme for next year.

For McGregor, who swears by the healing properties of the cannabis plant, an Indigenous-controlled industry will mean the difference between one anchored in profit-making and one anchored in community-building.

“The dispensary should be out there to help people, and that’s what we’re trying to do,” he said. “Money has to come in, but it should also go back out there to help people, not just sit in someone’s pocket. And I believe cannabis is here to do that.”

To this end, McGregor said he is working to make First Nations Medicinal, which opened in September of last year, much more than just a dispensary. Having himself battled with addictions, McGregor said he wants to turn the place into a centre to help those with opiate and alcohol addictions, and to help “get people off medications in general.”

“I suffered addictions in the past, and cannabis helped me,” he said. “And I’m now off of all medications and living a very healthy life, and I know that I owe it all to cannabis.”

First Nations Medicinal, is located at 287 Loonway Road, in Wahnapiatae First Nation.

SNEC locks out the people to stall cannabis discussion



The Six Nations Band Council will not allow community buildings to be used as a place for public dialogue on matters relating to cannabis until after July 2018, when the Federal Canadian government has “legalized” the cannabis plant.

SIX NATIONS, October 2017

Dayle Bomberry, Senior Administrative Officer of the Six Nations Elected Band Council (SNEC) – the arm of the Canadian federal government which has been administering the Indian Act at Six Nations since its forcible imposition in 1924 – has personally decided to cancel the booking of a public meeting to discuss the Indigenous cannabis industry. Bomberry said: “I made the decision in relation to a resolution that was already made [by Band Council] that they’re not supporting it because of the public perception of it, and until it’s finalized with the province in relation as to how they’re going to do their legislation and enforce their legislation.”

The Band Council “resolution” that Bomberry appears to be referencing is a July 7th, 2017 SNEC media statement that restates Canadian law concerning medical cannabis. According to Bomberry, SNEC will not allow community buildings to be used as a place for public dialogue on matters relating to cannabis until *after* July 2018, when the Federal Canadian government has “legalized” the cannabis plant.

The meeting, “Cannabis: an Indigenous perspective” was put together by a consortium of like-minded traditional healers, stakeholders in

Indigenous knowledge, and individuals who are interested in the potential of an Indigenous cannabis industry.

According to a flyer produced for the meeting and mailed to every home at Six Nations and New Credit, the meeting is being held to have an open discussion about whether or not “the cannabis plant is a medicine and whether it is a medicine compatible with Indigenous values and teachings.” A related topic concerns the question as to whether cannabis can build a viable and independent Indigenous economy in the same way that tobacco has done, or if this is something that Indigenous peoples should forego.

Although Indigenous peoples have long had a relationship with cannabis, the relationship of cannabis to Indigenous medicine is becoming increasingly relevant given the recent move to legalize the plant.

The Federal government has left it up to provinces and municipalities to come up with the specifics of how cannabis will be made available to the public. Neither the Federal Government nor the Province have undertaken consultation with Indigenous peoples on the cannabis issue as required by the “duty to consult” with Indigenous peoples on matters concerning their interests and treaty rights.

The Ontario government recently announced that it plans to run a monopoly and distribute cannabis through the LCBO. The Province has also indicated its determination to clamp down on all dispensaries and has threatened continued raids and police action.

This leaves a blank spot on the map when it comes to Indigenous territories and cannabis. Furthermore, as the Federal government accepts the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and seeks “reconciliation” with Indigenous peoples, it is becoming more apparent that the Federal government and its elected Indian Act Band Council system has no legitimate jurisdiction over Indigenous peoples, lands and rights.

Despite the venue being cancelled, the local organizers of the event are undeterred. According to Jeff Hawk, of the Six Nations based Green Health for 6, “this meeting is going ahead. Even if we have to have it in the parking lot or on the grass outside of the Community Hall.” Added Hawk: “As Onkwehon:we people we have every right to gather on our lands, use our buildings, and to talk about our matters and our concerns. That’s what we’re going to do this Saturday, so come join us.” O

6N Cannabis Timeline

Since Prime Minister Justin Trudeau came to office in 2015 and pledged to legalize recreational cannabis by July 2018, several Indigenous dispensaries have opened up shop on Six Nations Territory, with differing levels of openness to the public. Below is a timeline of events.

Spring 2017 – Medixinal Dispensary opens on Brant County Hwy 54, but does not openly publicize its existence.

June 2017 – Paradise Gardens Hydroponics addresses the Six Nations Elected Council (SNEC). Members of the National Indigenous Medical Cannabis Association come to speak but are barred from addressing Council and treated rudely.

July 4, 2017 – SNEC releases an official Statement declaring cannabis sales illegal at Six Nations, unless issued under an Ontario government licence, and received with a doctor issued prescription.

July 2017 – Six Nations Police raids Medixinal Dispensary. The owners cease operation.

August 2017 – Mohawk Medicine, a health and wellness centre on Sour Spring Road opens, including cannabis among their medicinal herbs.

August 2017 – Jeff Hawk opens Green Health for Six at the same location as Medixinal on Hwy 54.

August 2017 – SNEC releases the results of its community survey (339 respondents). 62.69% said they were against Methadone Clinics on Six Nations and 37.31% were in favour. 51% agreed that Six Nations should get involved in medical cannabis, 24.5% say no.

October 2017 – Jeff Hawk meets with the New Directions Group, the SNEC Health Agency providing addictions services and responsible for wellness promotion. NDG agreed to a second meeting to foster education but failed to follow up.

October 2017 – Ontario Government-funded Methadone Treatment Clinic opens at Six Nations offering addictions services and pharmacy.

October 21, 2017 – A public meeting, “Cannabis: an Indigenous



Over 50 Six Nations seniors came out to Green Health's and Mukuwa Botanicals event on Seniors and Medicinal cannabis on March 23rd, 2018.

Perspective” is booked to take place at the Six Nations Bingo Hall. SNEC bars organizers and participants from using the hall, and forces the people to meet in the parking lot. Senior Administrative Officer Dale Bomberly says that community buildings are off limits to any discussion about cannabis until legalization in the summer of 2018.

November 16, 2017 – Six Nations Police raid Mohawk Medicine, arresting and charging four people. They confiscate cash and cannabis.

December 4-31, 2017 – Green Health for 6 launches a Six Nations Medicinal Cannabis Survey, mailing 2300 copies to households, running the survey in both local papers, and making the survey available online.

January 13, 2018 – Initial results of the Six Nations Cannabis Survey (731 respondents) are published online, on the Green Health for Six website. 96.5% of respondents support Six Nations charting its own course on cannabis. Respondents are also overwhelmingly in favour of recreational and medical cannabis dispensaries.

January 16, 2018 – Six Nations Police raid Green Health for Six Dispensary, arresting and charging owner Jeff Hawk and four patrons, seizing cash and confiscating cannabis.

January 28, 2018 – Green Health holds a Community Meeting at Yogi's Barn from 1 to 4pm to discuss the survey results

February 28, 2018 – Six Nations Council begins holding community consultation meetings on the topic of cannabis, using community buildings to do so.

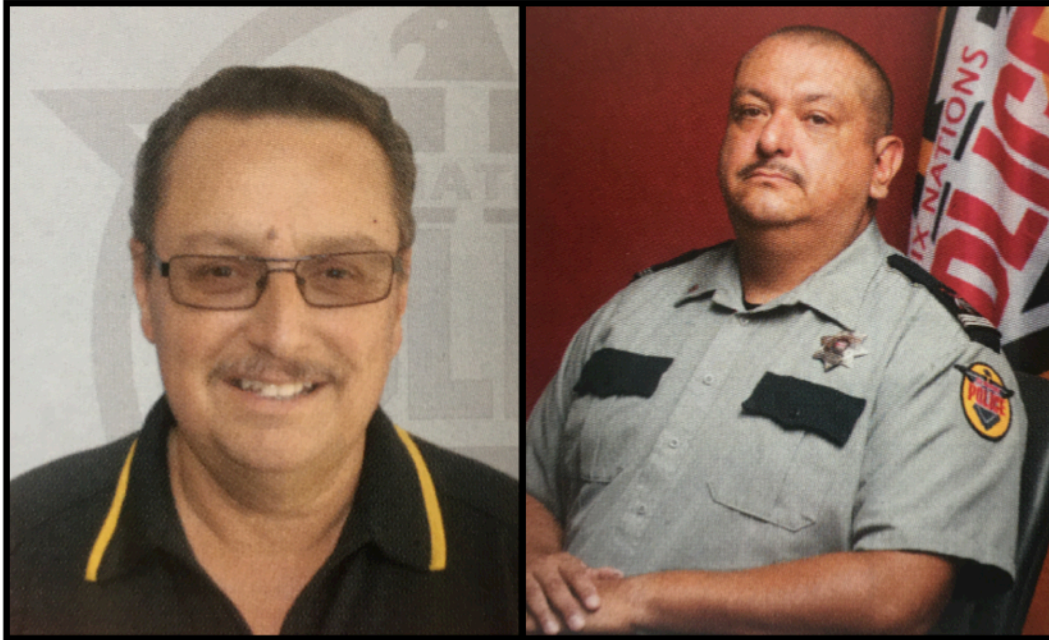
March 2nd, 2018 – Green Health sends a letter to SNEC outlining their position. The letter (published elsewhere in this magazine) receives no response from SNEC a month after it is received.

March 23rd, 2018 – Green Health holds an informational session about Medicinal Cannabis and Seniors Healthcare. The Six Nations Tourism building is booked, but SNEC again cancels the booking. The event takes place at Yogi's Barn, and over 50 seniors from the community come out to the event. Event organizers ask for SNEC to provide a written response

March, 2018 – The final charges against all charged in the July 2017 Medixinal dispensary raid are dismissed. After 18 months, the Crown had still not provided disclosure.

April, 2018 – The SNPD raids King Leaf dispensary five times in one week. **o**

Six Nations Police explain cannabis raids



Steve Williams

Six Nations Police Commission Chairperson

Dave Smoke

Six Nations Police Department Staff Sergeant

SIX NATIONS – Last Thursday, April 5, and Friday, April 6th, the Six Nations Police Department conducted back-to-back police raids on the medicinal cannabis dispensary, King Leaf. On Monday, Smoke Signals Media spoke with representatives of the Six Nations Police Department (SNPD) and the Six Nations Police Commission, to hear their explanations for the raids.

We spoke on the phone first with SNPD Staff Sergeant Dave Smoke. Smoke has served on the force since 1992 in a variety of positions including Patrol Constable, Community Services Officer, Detective Constable, Patrol Sergeant, Media Relations Officer, and A/S/Sgt in charge of Operations.

We followed up with Steve Williams, a former Six Nations elected Chief who now sits as both the Chair of the Six Nations Police Commission, and the President of Grand River Enterprises International, the largest

First Nations' owned private business in the world.

UNDERSTANDING SNPD JURISDICTION

Both Sergeant Smoke and Chair Williams explained the autonomy of the SNPD, stressing their full independence from Ontario and Canadian police forces. As Smoke put it, “we’re not part of the OPP, we are our own stand-alone First Nations Police Service. What that means is that we have our own Police Commission that we operate under, that looks after us, and we operate as our own Police Service ourselves.”

Smoke added, that while the SNPD does cooperate with other Police Services and Federal agencies, “we are our own autonomous First Nations stand-alone Police Service; the OPP has no influence or directive towards us.”

Williams explained that Six Nations’ “stand-alone commission” provides independent governance for the SNPD. When vacancies occur, they are advertised and new members are added at the discretion of the existing commission members. The Six Nations Elected Council approves board members once a year and also has a representative on the commission.

The funding for the SNPD comes from both the federal and provincial governments, but that doesn’t mean that the SNPD enforces all Canadian laws equally – or at all. According to Williams:

“Six Nations and all First Nations in Ontario are unique because the province of Ontario doesn’t have authority over any of the Federal lands where the First Nations are. Secondly, it’s up to the community what they want us to police.”

THE ISSUE OF “CONTRABAND” TOBACCO

According to Williams, this issue of not enforcing Canadian laws comes down to Six Nations having a “sovereign right” and special relationship with the Crown.

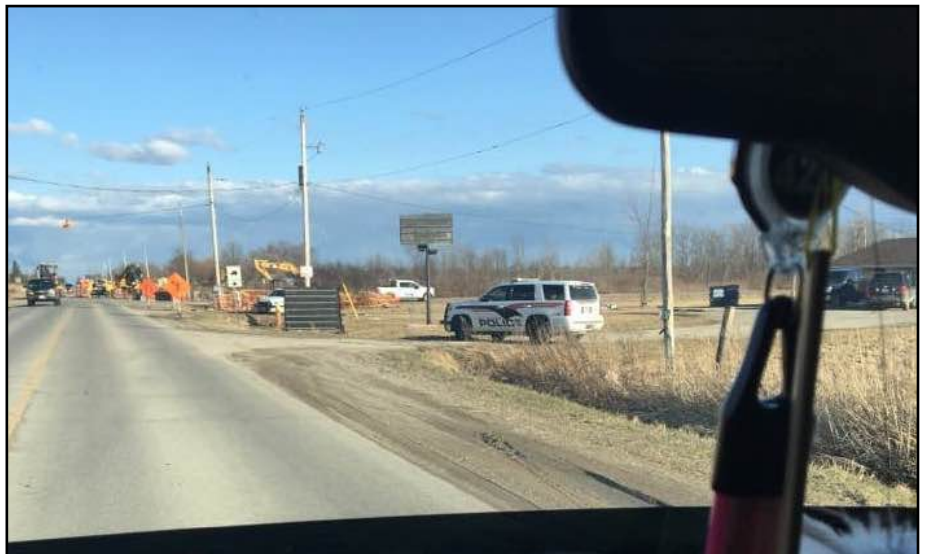
Speaking of tobacco enforcement, Williams noted “You call it ‘contraband,’ we don’t. That’s just the government position to say everything is illegal. Well that’s not true. For us it’s our own sovereign right to do what we want to do. If we want to make any kind of business, that’s our business.”

Williams continued. “Government shouldn’t be telling us what to do. We have an agreement with the Queen, with the King, when we first got here and it says neither one will bother each other. We don’t bother the government, and they don’t bother us. We do what we want to do.... Right now, we don’t feel that we have any counterfeit or contraband tobacco on the reserve. If people want to make cigarettes or distribute cigarettes, as long as they’re selling to their own people, there should be no issue.”

Sergeant Smoke further clarified the matter. “Our police service has taken the issue that because we are a First Nations territory, we do support, obviously, tobacco trade between First Nations communities. So our Police Chief has taken the position that we do not, and will not, enforce the tobacco issue on the territory. Once they leave the territory, if other agencies off the territory enforce it, that’s out of our hands, but on the territory we do not enforce the contraband tobacco issue.”

THE DIFFERENCES IN ENFORCING CANNABIS AND TOBACCO LAWS

Once SNPD comes to know the wishes of the people of Six Nations regarding which Canadian laws they want enforced, and which ones they consider a violation of their sovereignty, they are obliged to enforce those



Six Nations police raiding King Leaf dispensary in Six Nations

wishes, both policemen confirmed. Both Smoke and Williams said the direction that they take comes exclusively from the Six Nations community.

When it comes to cannabis, both Williams and Smoke believe that the Six Nations community has spoken out loud and clear.

“Our community has been very outspoken, with saying we do not want any type of drugs or mind-changing substances like cannabis on the territory,” says Smoke. “Our community has made it very clear that they don’t want anything to do with cannabis on the territory.... So that’s where we’re taking our ideas from, is that the community doesn’t want illegal or illicit drugs here, and that’s our mandate for enforcing it.”

For his part, Williams placed the community’s view on cannabis squarely in the frame of the Canadian government’s plan to make Bill C-45 the law by July 1st.

“Right now, the community’s position is, it’s illegal until July. In July we’ll have to figure out what we’re going to do, because the community out here has been saying that they want zero drugs in our community. So I don’t know, until the regulations come out in July, we’ll have to come back to the community and see what their position is going to be.”

“Right now the position of the Six Nations Council, and the Police Commission and the Police Services, and I don’t know about the Confederacy because they never came to a position, but our position has always been zero drugs.”

For now, both Smoke and Williams explain that the SNPD mandate is to enforce Ontario and Canadian laws on cannabis.

When asked what would need to happen to stop the police raids on dispensaries, Smoke was clear. “It would have to become clear to the Police Service that this is what the community wants.”

“Right now with the surveys that we’ve seen and the community meetings that we’ve seen, there was one a year ago that was well attended,” Smoke continued. “The community made it clear to the police and we felt that that was what the message was, that they did not support any kind of cannabis activity on the territory, and that’s where we’re taking our enforcement and mandate from to continue to enforce against these illegal dispensaries. Now if the tide changes, and cannabis becomes legal within the country and the Province, that may change things. I can’t speak for that right now. Until it becomes legal, unfortunately it is illegal, and we will have to keep enforcing, raiding these dispensaries.”



SNPD raiding Mohawk Medicine in Six Nations at gunpoint.

SENDING MIXED MESSAGES

Ultimately, the issue is what kind of cannabis regulatory system is appropriate for Six Nations.

"I think our Police Service would adopt whatever the Canadian regulations are across the Province, across the country rather, as far as enforcement for cannabis. Because we couldn't just let these dispensaries pop up, we have to make sure they are regulated," Smoke added.

"I think that's the position Band Council may be looking at, but I can't speak for them. If it does become legal there may be some changes made, but until then unfortunately cannabis is illegal, and that is the position we are taking," he said.

When asked how it would be possible to change the minds of the police as to the position of the community on cannabis, Williams indicated that the Band Council could organize public meetings on the matter.

According to Williams, "At this point we haven't had any public meetings for that. Every time we have a public meeting, nobody shows up. The interest ain't there. Once it comes in July that's probably when we're going to get all these people screaming at us, 'like what are you doing about this?' Right now, a few weeks ago, the com-

munity said that they want zero tolerance on drugs."

Williams's account doesn't include the multiple public community meetings on cannabis that have happened since last October. For two of these meetings, where Six Nations people have attempted to gather at Six Nations meeting halls to discuss cannabis regulation, medicinal use and sovereignty, their bookings were cancelled and the people were locked out of their own community buildings by the Six Nations Elected Council. Either way, whether in the parking lot outside the Community Hall or in Yogi's barn, those meetings went ahead—and expressed a strongly pro-cannabis feeling.

While they say the SNPD is awaiting the will of the people on self-regulation, Smoke and Williams had no comment on these meetings or SNEC actions, saying instead that comment should be sought from SNEC.

Pressed as to the basis for the community consensus on drugs that SNPD has been responding to, Police Commission Chief Williams indicated that he was speaking about a March 2018 incident with Brett Elliott, an alleged "drug dealer in the community. It took two weeks to arrest that gentleman, and at that time they [the community] were saying "zero tolerance".

When asked directly if he drew a distinction between Brett Elliott's alleged 'drug house' and the openly operating cannabis dispensaries like Bear Medicine, Green Health and King Leaf, Williams answered "No." He added, "It's not up to the commission to tell the police who to raid or who not to raid. That's the police's decision to do that. For us, our position is zero tolerance on drugs. I don't know what will happen in July. At that point, I guess we'll figure it out."

Pressed further to clarify if he sees a difference between "crack or cocaine or whatever and cannabis," Williams answered, "I just call drugs, drugs."

On cannabis he said, "at this point yes. It still is a drug. But if the community comes back and says we are okay with cannabis, than so be it. They told us they were okay with tobacco, so be it." When asked what word other than "drug" he would use to describe cannabis once it became legal, Williams was unsure.

IMPACT OF ARRESTS ON DISPENSARY WORKERS

Neither Smoke or Williams wished to make comment on the issue that the criminal charges being placed upon people arrested for operating "illegal" cannabis dispensaries, might bar them from "legitimate" participation in the same industry once it is legalized in a few months time.

Nearly a dozen Six Nations people have been arrested in the last year, many at gun point, and the resulting loss of freedom of movement, social stigma, trauma and more sit in stark contrast to the medical benefits they were dispensing to customers and community.

Staff Sergeant Smoke declined to explain why the SNPD carried out its raids using automatic rifles to detain dispensary workers at gunpoint, saying that he couldn't comment on specific police tactics or procedures, adding that "every search warrant has the potential for violence."

As a final note, Smoke confirmed that the SNPD does not drug test its officers. 0

Six Nations cannabis survey results

SIX NATIONS – The results are in. The people of Six Nations want no political interference – from inside or outside of their community – when it comes to the regulation of the cannabis industry in their territory.

The survey was undertaken by the on-reserve dispensary Green Health for 6. It was mailed to 2,300 households in Six Nations and New Credit. It asked 20 questions about people's use of medicinal and recreational cannabis, and gauged their attitudes towards its use in their territory.

"A total of 731 people completed the survey, with 626 respondents providing their Indian Status numbers," said Jeff Hawk—owner of Green Health—beaming with pride

as he held a hefty stack of completed surveys in his hands. The survey was carried out from December 4th to 31st, 2017. Surveys were filled out in hard printed copy and digitally online.

"The results appear to be a powerful expression of the people's will, suggesting cannabis is here to stay at Six Nations."

Status numbers were requested in order to prove the identities of respondents, in case someone chose to dispute the legitimacy of the participants or question the relevance of the results.

Survey numbers appear to demonstrate an unprecedented level

of popular engagement on a matter of sovereignty in health and healing, economic opportunity, as well as the restoration of Onkwehon:we self-determination in medicine.

"It's my understanding that band council is not really a voice for the people, but they were put here [by the Canadian government] as administration," said Hawk. "I felt that they were doing nothing at all to get the people's voice heard. So we put the survey to the community to get answers to what we felt was valuable information."

Full-page ads with the survey were taken out in both of the community's weekly newspapers, the *Two Row Times* and the *Turtle Island News*. Surveys were returned in person, sent by post, texted in as a photograph, or filled out as an online form.

Of the 731 respondents, 75% identified as being Onkwehon:we and belonging to a clan and nation of the Haudenosaunee/Iroquois people. 31.9% identified themselves as being Status Indians, while 7.4% defined themselves as Canadian, with another 3.1% identifying as non-native, and 0.8% selecting "other."

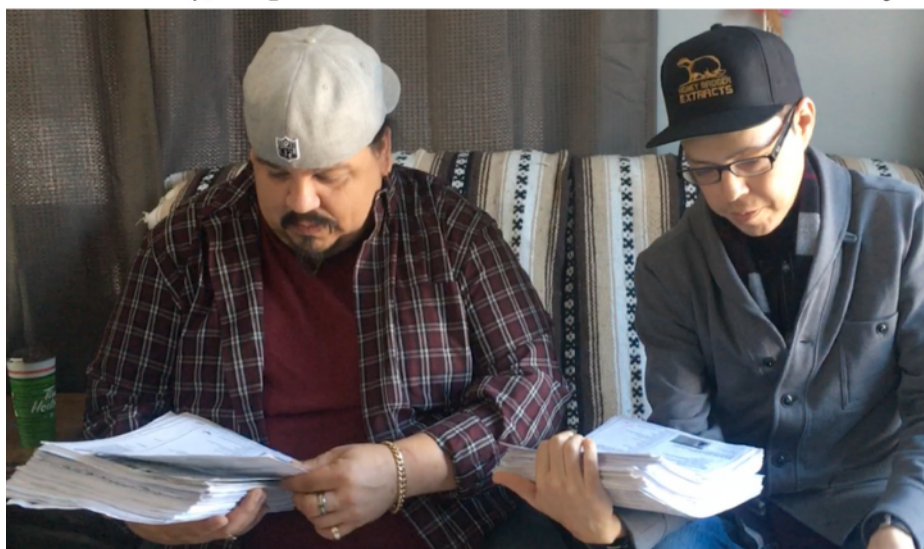
The results appear to be a powerful expression of the people's will, suggesting cannabis is here to stay at Six Nations, and that it should be kept in the hands of the people.

53.8% agreed that the industry should be "regulated" by traditional medicine people and run according to Haudenosaunee custom. And 28.3% said they believed that an association of Indigenous cannabis retailers should regulate the industry, with many respondents suggesting combining both options together.

Only 4.4% of the respondents felt that the Six Nations Confederacy Council should have a hand in regu-

The people have spoken.

We received 731 responses to our Six Nations Medical Cannabis survey.



Come and hear the results.

Community Meeting

Sunday, January 28th, 1-4pm

Yogi's Barn, 2318 Chiefswood Rd., Ohsweken



lating the cannabis industry. An even smaller fraction, 3.1%, thought the Elected Council should have a role in regulating cannabis, and only 1.6% wanted to follow the regulatory system of the Province of Ontario and Canada.

However, there was a large minority of 21.1% that indicated that they weren't sure how the industry should be regulated. 77% of respondents wanted more information and to get involved in the ongoing discussion around cannabis on the territory.

Perhaps the area of greatest consensus was with the question of whether Six Nations should have the sovereign right to determine their own path and choices regarding cannabis. The answer was a resounding "Yes" coming from 96.5% of respondents.

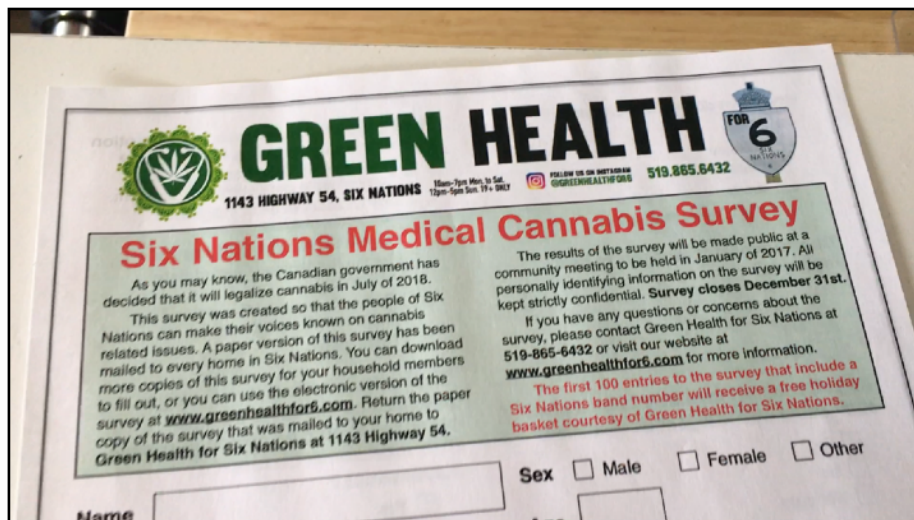
Respondents further rallied around the idea that adults wishing to purchase medicinal cannabis should be able to do so at on-reserve dispensaries, with 94.9% of them agreeing. A slightly smaller percentage – 86.4% – held that cannabis for recreation purposes should also be available on reserve in the same manner.

BAND COUNCIL INTERFERENCE

The owners of Green Health for 6 consider sharing these results with the public a duty and a service, and hope that by doing so, Indigenous people will realize that their industry is a legitimate one. The point, Hawk says, is to show council that they work for the people, not the other way around.

"The voice lies with the people. Band council has no more power than the people," he said. "The chief who sits over there in that position has no more power than you or I. This survey...means the people have made a decision, so...how are (Elected Council) going to challenge this, when we have the majority that they don't have?"

Though council has released statements claiming they are open to dialogue, Hawk says they have re-



ceived no response to their multiple requests. That is what has pushed people like Hawk to take matters into their own hands. "I think this is a big margin in our history, a big step forward to our sovereign right as a nation," he said. "I think everybody should attend and ask questions and be involved."

By comparison, when a recent survey was carried out by the Six Nations Elected Band Council in August 2017, it received 339 responses, and it did not require status card numbers to verify the respondents. It only asked one vaguely worded question concerning cannabis, "Should Six Nations get involved in medical cannabis?" The results were 51% in favour and an even split of 24.5% saying no, and 24.5% expressing uncertainty or requiring more information.

In the 2016 Band Council election, Chief Ava Hill won with a total of 620 votes, while none of the elected councilors received more than 137 votes.

The full results of the survey will be presented to a community meeting held at Yogi's Barn, from 1-4pm at 2318 Chiefswood Rd. in Oshweken, on January 28, 2018.

"I believe people will come there and leave inspired," says Aaron Sault. "They will leave there feeling proud of being First Nations...proud that their community has a bright future. And proud knowing that the future generations are not forgotten and that the cannabis industry is going to greatly help them." O



Green Health patient testimonials are online at www.greenhealthfor6.com.

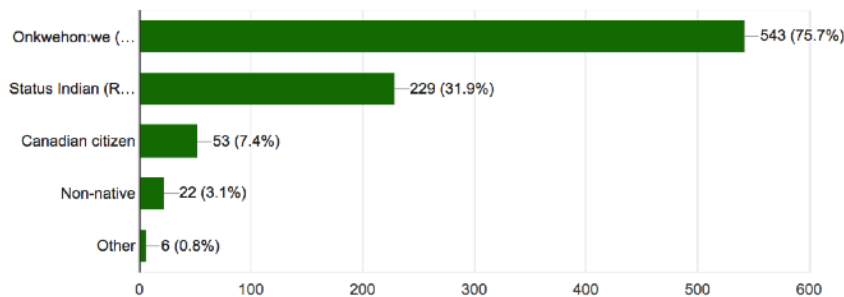
Results of the Six Nations medical cannabis survey

In December of 2017, the dispensary Green Health for 6 carried out an unprecedented survey of the people of Six Nations concerning their views of the cannabis plant. 731 respondents answered the survey – filling out their responses online, in the mail, through the newspapers, and in person.

The following graphs were generated based on the data received from 731 respondents to the survey. Please note that because not all respondents answered all questions, the number of responses to each question varies.

How do you identify yourself? (Check all that apply)

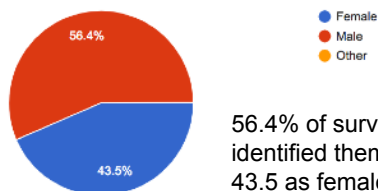
717 responses



75.7% of respondents stated that they identified as Onkwehon:we (Belonging to a clan and nation of the Haudenosaunee/Iroquois people). 31.9% indicated that they identify themselves as Status Indians (Recognized by the Government of Canada as an Indian). 7.4% identify themselves as Canadian citizens, 3.1% as non-native, and 0.8% defined themselves as "other."

What is your sex?

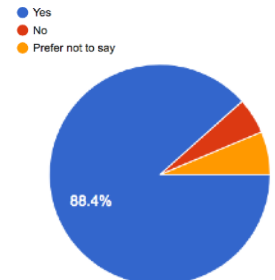
729 responses



56.4% of survey respondents identified themselves as male, 43.5 as female, and 0.1% as other.

Have you ever consumed cannabis?

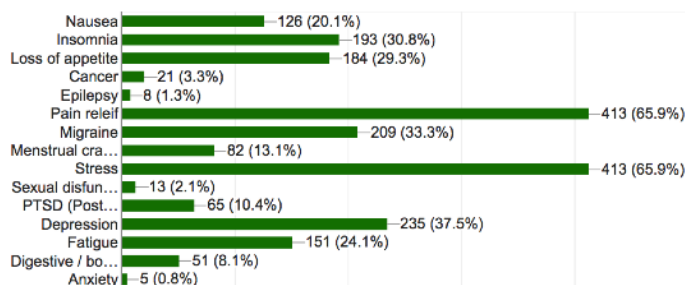
725 responses



88.4% of respondents indicated that they have previously consumed cannabis. 5.2% of respondents indicated that they have never consumed cannabis. 6.3% of respondents preferred not to say.

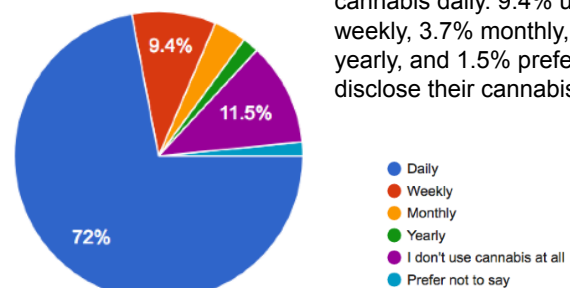
If you have used cannabis as a medicine, what condition(s) do you use it for? Check all that apply.

627 responses



How often do you use cannabis?

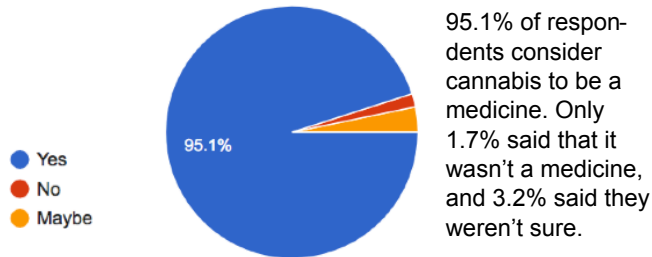
711 responses



72% of respondents use cannabis daily. 9.4% use it weekly, 3.7% monthly, 1.8% yearly, and 1.5% prefer not to disclose their cannabis use.

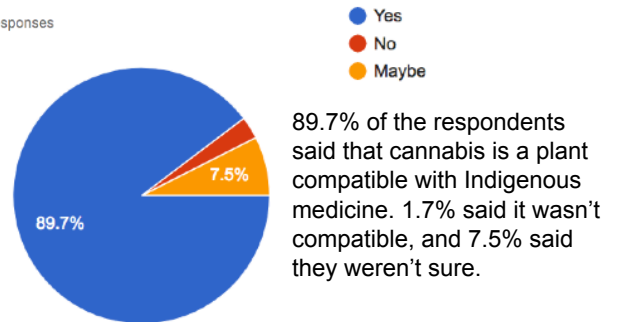
Do you consider cannabis to be a medicine?

709 responses



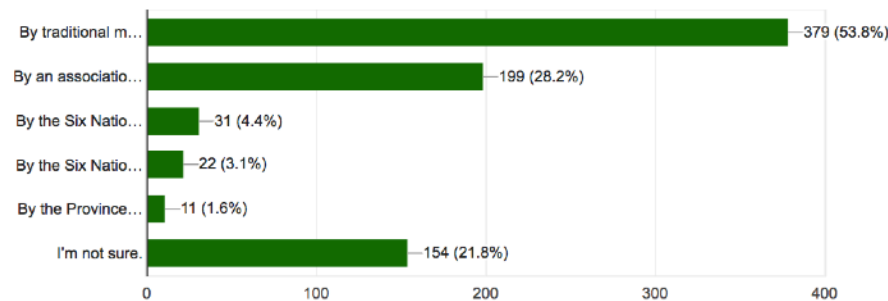
Do you consider cannabis to be a plant compatible with indigenous medicine?

709 responses



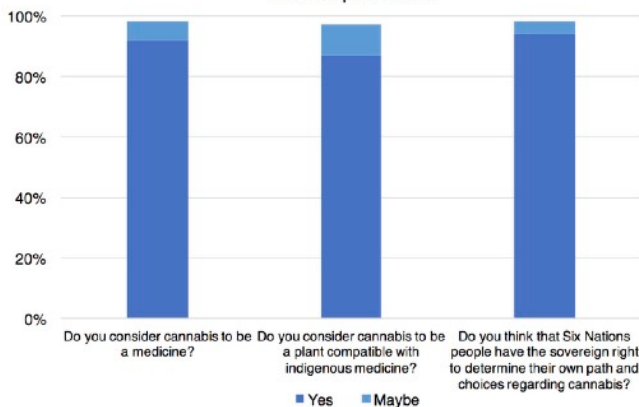
How do you think cannabis consumption at Six Nations should be "regulated"?

705 responses

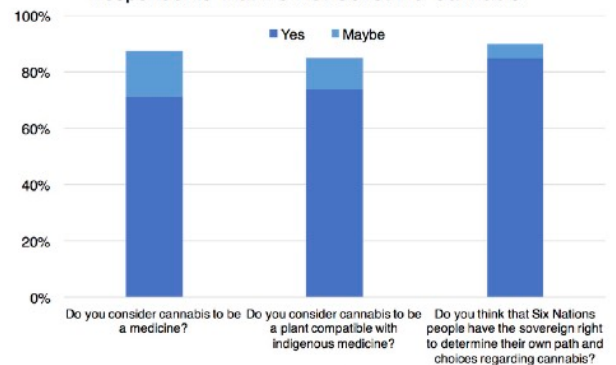


A majority of respondents – 53.6% – think that cannabis consumption should be “regulated” by traditional medicine people and according to Haudenosaunee custom. 28.2% said the industry should be regulated by an association of Indigenous cannabis retailers. Only 4.4% said they thought cannabis consumption should be regulated by the Six Nations Confederacy Council, and an even smaller number – 3.1% – thought that the Six Nations elected council should have a say. The smallest number of respondents – 1.6% – felt that cannabis at Six Nations should be regulated by the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada. A comparatively large number of people – 21.8% – weren't sure how it should be regulated. Many respondents indicated on their surveys that they wanted a combination of medicine people and retailers to regulate the industry.

All Respondents



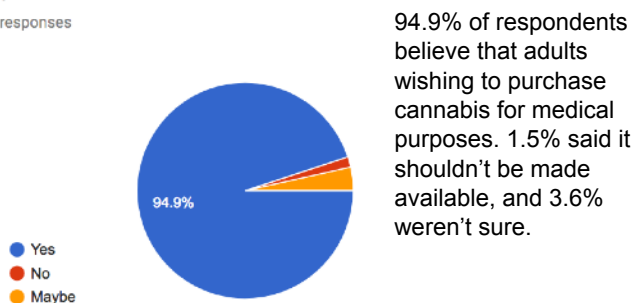
Respondents that Do Not Consume Cannabis



NOTE: (n=80). Fifty of the respondents that do not consume cannabis identified as Onkwehonwe females. 'Maybe' includes responses left blank.

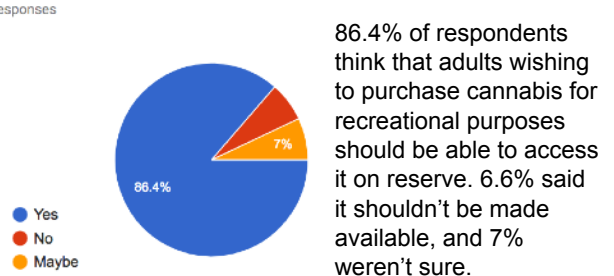
Do you think that adults wishing to purchase cannabis for medical purposes should be able to purchase their medicine at on reserve dispensaries?

712 responses

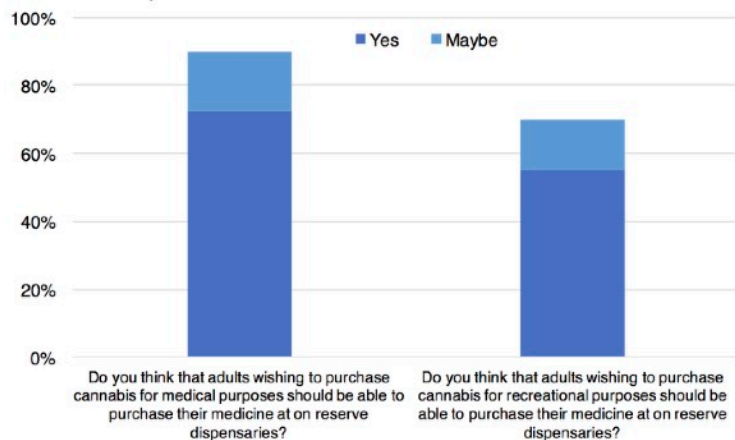


Do you think that adults wishing to purchase cannabis for recreational purposes should be able to purchase their medicine at on reserve dispensaries?

712 responses

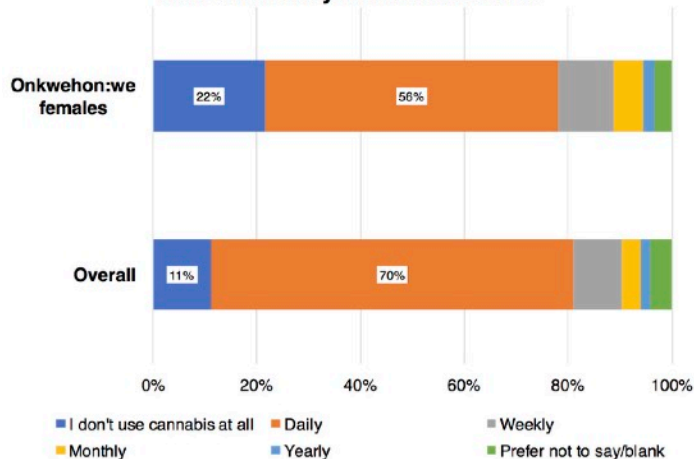


Respondents that Do Not Consume Cannabis

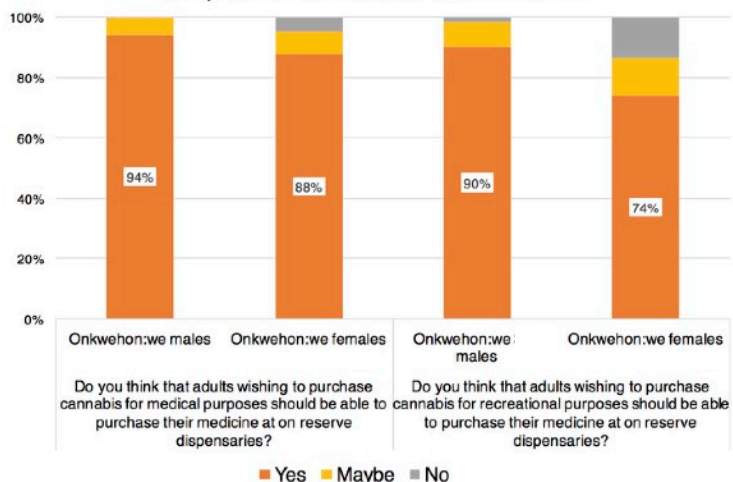


NOTE: (n=80). Fifty of the respondents that do not consume cannabis identified as Onkweh:we females. 'Maybe' includes responses left blank.

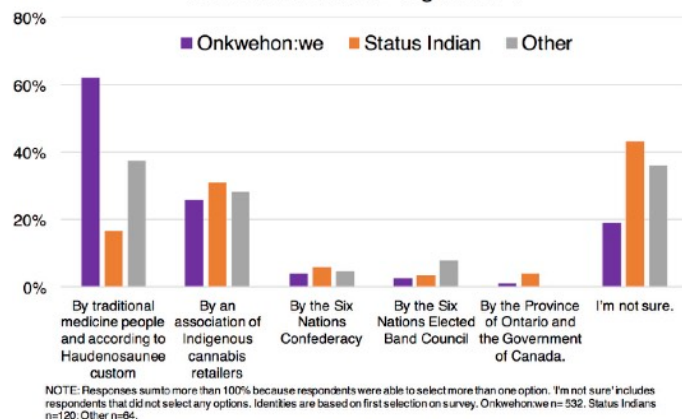
How often do you use cannabis?



Responses of Onkweh:we over 30

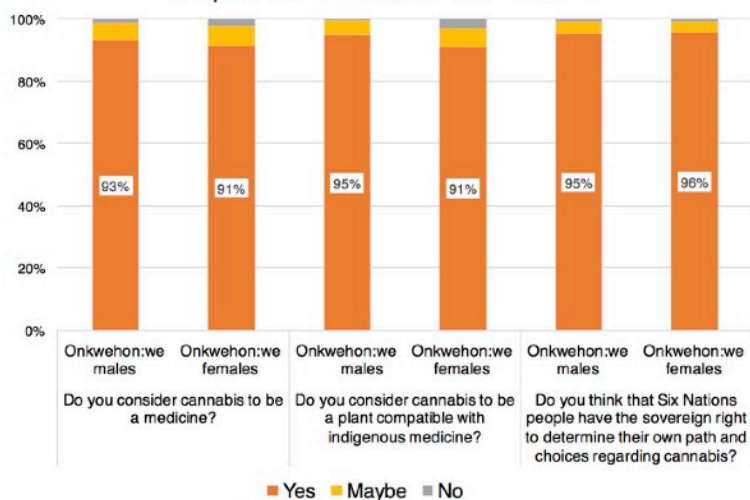


How do you think cannabis consumption at Six Nations should be "regulated"?



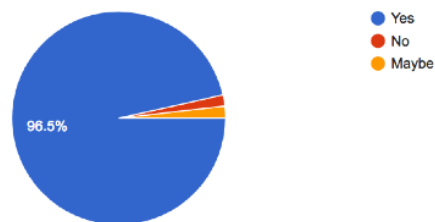
NOTE: Responses sum to more than 100% because respondents were able to select more than one option. 'I'm not sure' includes respondents that did not select any options. Identities are based on first selection on survey. Onkweh:we n= 532, Status Indians n=120, Other n=64.

Responses of Onkweh:we over 30



Do you think that Six Nations people have the sovereign right to determine their own path and choices regarding cannabis?

712 responses



96.5% of respondents indicated that they believe that Six Nations people have the sovereign right to determine their own path and choices regarding cannabis. 1.8% said maybe, and 1.7% said no.

Survey results are available at
www.greenhealthfor6.com and www.smokesignal.media



INTERVIEW

Audrey Hill on Cannabis: “A plant for the people”

SIX NATIONS – Cannabis could be a game-changer for Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island, but only if the plant – and the industry around it – remains in the hands of the people, says Audrey Hill, a Mo-hawk woman and psychologist from the Turtle Clan living in Six Nations.

“It has to be something that can be done collectively for the community....For the people, by the people,” she told Smoke Signals Media. “Something that can contribute to the health of our people, and at the same time become a mechanism for creating an economy.”

But Hill didn't always support cannabis. It wasn't until about five or six years ago, she says, when her niece was undergoing chemotherapy at Toronto's Sick Kids hospital, that she began to understand the power of the plant. Unable to withstand the devastating effects the chemo was having on her niece, the family opted for natural-based treatments at a health institute in Florida.

“It was a world-changer...to the value of healthy exercise and the use of the green plant,” she says.

Aided by her sons, whom she says are regular users of medicinal cannabis, Hill then underwent an awakening and re-education of sorts.

“I understood it as a spiritual journey,” she says. “That I am changing, and that the world is changing, and it's opening up to different facets of healing in medicine.”

Hill has since become an ardent supporter of the Indigenous cannabis industry as both an economic opportunity and a holistic medicine. If done properly, she says, cannabis is poised to become a true alternative to the big pharmaceutical companies and the deadly opiates they have pushed on society.

While she acknowledges that both Elected Band Council and the Confederacy of Elected Chiefs are wary of the plant, Hill says the final decision should rest in the hands of the people themselves. And unlike the tobacco industry, which only helped enrich a few, she says,

cannabis has the potential to lift the entire community up as long as it remains under the grassroots people's control.

“We need to know more about the benefits that we're entitled to, and I think we need to come together as a people,” she says. “We have more of a sovereign right and we have more of a vested interest in making this into something that will work for the people. We have collective rights – let's use them.”

Hill admits cannabis alone is not going to rid Indigenous peoples of the social ills created and perpetuated by a colonial state and the capitalist economic system that serves as its backbone.

But the Indigenous cannabis industry is a vital tool in the effort to break the chains of economic dependence and drug addiction.

“I think the cannabis industry can help,” she said. “It's not a cure-all. It's not going to cure us. But it's a mechanism that we can use to pursue that journey.”

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Kendra's Journey

Beating Cancer, two CBD squirts at a time

Cancer doesn't discriminate. Fortunately, neither does cannabis.

That's what Kendra Lisso has learned after being diagnosed with terminal stage-four cancer and using CBD products to fight it. Lisso, a Brantford resident, receives her medicine from Jeff Hawk, owner of the Green Health for 6 cannabis dispensary, located in Six Nations. To Kendra, Hawk has been an "angel" who's helped her on every step of her healing journey.

"He doesn't know me from a hole in the ground, and he just gave me this medication free, and he's been supporting me throughout my treatment," Kendra told Smoke Signals Media last November in an emotional testimonial. "That random act of kindness just shows the true spirit of people....He's not thinking about money. He's thinking of my health, and I believe that's what his store is about – the well-being of people."

Lisso was first diagnosed last September and had her first chemotherapy session on October, Friday 13. As a Personal Support Worker, she said she's dealt "with sick people" all her life. "But never did I think at the age of 53, that I would be diagnosed with terminal cancer," she added, fighting back tears.

Regaining composure, she firmly stated "I am going to beat this. I'm a survivor. I believe in natural pathology along with chemo and modern medicine. I believe that I will beat this."

Her first CBD doses came from a friend with access through a medical marijuana license. Lisso began feeling the positive effects of the medicine almost immediately, but her friend was unable to continue supplying her.

That's when Lisso found out about Green Health For 6 at Six Nations.

Now, she consumes a bottle of CBD extract every two weeks – two daily squirts under the tongue.

The medicine helps calm her down and take her mind off the pain to focus instead on more enjoyable activities. It has helped her regain her appetite, which she lost after under-



going aggressive chemo sessions. Food has started to "taste like food again," she said, and she's slowly been able to regain some of the 55 pounds she lost within a month and a half from when she was first diagnosed.

"I feel like I'm almost taking a shot of goodness," she said, beaming. "I have this better outlook. I'm taking something that is beating my cancer. It's given me a life."

Her husband, Leslie Lisso, agreed that the CBD has infinitely helped his wife.

"Before she was taking her CBD, she was content staying in her pyjamas," he said. "Now she gets the makeup on, gets dressed, goes out. It's been since she's started taking that medicine."

Like with any other medicine, Kendra believes the industry should be regulated. "I think it needs to be monitored. I don't think a 10 year old should be smoking a joint," she said.

"But medically, it should be more easily available for people."

"The chemical drugs that they give these kids who have seizures are killing them," her husband added. "But (medicinal cannabis) is not going to kill anybody. It helps them."

Kendra also wants the medical field to remove its "blinders." Learning about medicinal cannabis and its various applications for different ailments is essential and, if given the attention and funding it deserves, could very possibly replace many of the opioid-based, synthetic medicines currently being prescribed by the mainstream western medical establishment. For that to happen, she said, "more education and more awareness" first needs to occur.

Medicinal cannabis is not a magic bullet – it does not erase her pain. "But nothing truly takes the pain away completely," she explained – not even the morphine pills she also takes. Instead, cannabis is a natural remedy that allows her to manage the pain herself in order to live a life with dignity and autonomy. For Kendra, the control she's regained over her own life and health, and about the medicine she puts into her body, have all been eye-opening experiences which she and her husband have wholeheartedly embraced.

"Whether we use it as hemp for clothing, rope or however else we use it," she said, "I think there's a lot of positivity around (cannabis). I have a will for life. And knowing that this is helping me have a life – psychologically, I needed that. Thank you to Green Health for 6 for everything that you've done for me."



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Check out our strains on



OUR LOCATION!

Introducing Mukwa Botanicals

ALDERVILLE FN – From salves and lip balms to tinctures and vape pens, Mukwa Botanicals now offers a wide range of Indigenous-sourced and Indigenous-made cannabis products.

Mukwa means bear in the Ojibway language. In Anishinaabe culture, the bear represents courage, strength, and leadership and the bear clan is traditionally tasked with providing medicines for the people. Mukwa Botanicals was created by Rob Stevenson, an Anishinaabe man of the Bear Clan, who owns Medicine Wheel Natural Healing in Alderville First Nation. Stevenson identified the need for an Indigenous brand of cannabis products that would uphold the Seven Grandfather Teachings that underpin the core philosophy of Medicine Wheel Natural Healing.

“We’re community-focused,” says Stevenson. “I’m trying to put us in a position to develop the Indigenous cannabis industry as a whole, not just for myself but for all the different communities that want to take this path.”

The Mukwa Botanical brand is “developed by Indigenous people, for Indigenous people,” Stevenson emphasizes, indicating that ‘Mukwa’ is a reference to his own identity in belonging to the bear clan. “It encompasses all of what we’re trying to do: using products that are made by Indigenous people, majority-sourced from Indigenous people, and we are putting a portion of the profits back in to the community.”

Some of the products that Mukwa Botanicals will feature at the launch include rechargeable vape pens that vary in CBD and THC content, from all CBD, to mixed, to mostly THC. Other products include tinctures and essential oils, and soon or-



ganic edibles will be added to the product line.

Essential to the Mukwa brand is the way the medicine is extracted, a method that favours using the entire plant’s spectrum rather than employing isolates or distillates to separate its various psycho and non-psychoactive contents. The idea, Stevenson explains, is to maintain the plant’s full terpene profile, which then creates an “entourage effect” that works much better on the body.

“So we’re trying to create a more holistic environment, because it’s not just about money,” Stevenson said. “We’re really trying to educate people. Again, it’s not just the THC numbers and products; there’s a heck of a lot more to the plant than just the THC – and that’s what we want to focus on.”

As the medicinal cannabis industry grows, more people are beginning

to see the true potential of the plant. Its medicinal value is rapidly coming to be accepted even by the western health system. But it will be a while longer before all the stigma is removed from the plant and those that choose to use it are able to do so freely. Stevenson hopes that what he is doing at Medicine Wheel and with Mukwa Botanicals will help bridge that gap and, in doing so, give Indian Country a much

needed economic boost.

And that cannot be understated. As Stevenson explained, economic independence – whether it’s from medicinal cannabis or any other industry – is essential for political independence.

Medicinal cannabis “is an opportunity for us to get off the coattails of the government and to become self sustaining again,” he said. “What I’d like to see is non-interference. I understand there will be some kind of need to work with the government, but I think it should be up to each individual community to decide how to proceed. Now there’s the opportunity to get on board and make something of this opportunity.”



Seniors and Medicinal Cannabis

Seniors are increasingly using cannabis medically. Indeed, some studies suggest that seniors may in fact be the fastest growing demographic to use medical cannabis.

As access and information become more open, many elders are increasingly choosing cannabis over pharmaceuticals.

However, seniors are perhaps the most underserved group when it comes to medical cannabis. Until recently, cannabis and cannabis-derived products have been difficult to access for seniors, in part because of the deep stigma around cannabis that most seniors have grown up with.

In urban spaces, dispensaries are geared towards a younger crowd. Often, the emphasis is on products with higher concentrations of THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the part of the plant that is psychoactive and produces the “high” or feeling of euphoria. To complicate matters, medical cannabis strains are named in a way that reveals little about their medical properties. In these loud and small contexts, getting adequate and accessible information can be a challenge for many seniors.

Cannabis is a plant that has the potential to not only treat, but cure illness. The potential lies in the fact that medical cannabis users can become their own healers. This is because cannabis is perhaps the most powerful healing plant and simultaneously among the safest plant therapies. It is impossible to overdose on cannabis.

For seniors wishing to take charge of their own healthcare, gaining freedom from the pharmaceutical industry is possible, and can be relatively simple, with access to medical cannabis.

First, seniors require clear information about the active elements of the plant and what they treat. Taking a

whole plant therapy approach, seniors should have access to a comprehensive set of information about CBD (cannabidiol) and THC, emphasizing the importance of CBD as the key medicinal chemical compound found in cannabis.

Second, seniors should be given the option to use THC in a way that is

insomnia, eating edibles before bed has long lasting effects that will help produce restful sleep through the night.

Fourthly, seniors would benefit from learning about the role of terpenes. Terpenes are essential to the treatment of illness through self-medication. Terpenes release the unique aroma identity of any cannabis plant.

This means that learning to identify the dominant terpenes by becoming familiar with each strain’s aroma will help users identify the best therapeutic strain of cannabis.

Research suggests that seniors use medical cannabis primarily to treat chronic pain, insomnia and arthritis. There are particular, easy to identify, terpenes that treat these conditions effectively. The terpene Pinene, which smells like pine trees, treats chronic pain. Linalool, which smells like hops, treats arthritis. Myrcene, which smells fruity or sweet, treats insomnia.

Using this information, seniors can be supported to identify the dominant terpene by smell and be able to access medical cannabis to treat their conditions. Through education, seniors can become empowered to obtain the terpene-specific strains of cannabis flower or concentrates to treat and heal their common conditions. This approach recognizes that it is ultimately the patient who is aware of their own bodily needs. By empowering patients with information, cannabis educators can support the self-healing of seniors and emancipate them from the pharmaceutical industry.



Rob Stevenson speaking at a seniors meeting on cannabis.

comfortable for them. For seniors suffering from arthritis, particularly in their hands – or seniors with any respiratory issues – opting for non-smoking options for THC use is ideal. Cannabis educators should take into account challenges with rolling joints and provide alternative options for use such as pre-roll joints, bongs, pipes, vaporizers, edibles, tinctures, and more.

Third, cannabis educators need to be sensitive to the fact that many seniors do not want to ‘get high’. Instead, seniors could be introduced to the uses, effects and side effects of edibles. In small amounts, THC edibles can minimize the experience of feeling ‘high’ and achieve the necessary medical benefits. For seniors dealing with

Don't panic!

What to do when the police raid.

PREPARE: All staff should have recording devices. Store-wide surveillance cameras that save to an off-site server are ideal. Police often object to being recorded. You are allowed to record everything they do as long as you don't get in their way.

PREPARE: Have a list of lawyers to call.

BEWARE: Do not assume the police are being truthful. Police are allowed and known to lie as an investigative tool to pressure suspects into incriminating themselves.

POLICE ARRIVAL AND ENTRY

Police should announce themselves (unless there is a safety concern), advise that they have a warrant, and request permission to enter the premises. They have a right to use reasonable force if you refuse entry. They may also use force to enter if no one is present at the time of the raid.

ACTION: ask to see the warrant. Review the search warrant carefully for:

- Address and premises covered
- Date and time specified for the search. (You may refuse entry if the warrant is expired.)
- Documents and items to be searched for
- Alleged offence(s) to which the items to be searched for relate
- Make sure the warrant is signed by a justice. The warrant must show who signed it, the place, date and time it was signed.

BEWARE:

- Do not agree to let the police search any areas not listed in the warrant
- Do not assist police with the search, this is part of your right to silence

ACTION: Send employees home, if possible. Police have no special authority over the persons found in

the premises being searched. In practice, individuals will be segregated, detained or arrested.

Ask if you can leave

- If no, ask if you are detained or under arrest
- If no: you can leave, or roam and record

If arrested or detained:

- Ask why
- Demand to speak to a lawyer immediately. Police must tell you that you have a right to call a lawyer.
 - You must be allowed to speak to the lawyer in private
- Provide your name, date of birth and address.

BEWARE: Do not waive your right to contact a lawyer because it weakens any future claims you may have on the admissibility of statements made to police.

SEARCH OF PERSONS

Police can and will pat you down in a search for weapons (or items that may be a threat) but this doesn't mean they can make you empty your pockets. Police can only search persons if they are under arrest. A search warrant does not authorize the search of a person. However, if they have reasonable grounds to believe you to have evidence related to the warrant on your person, they may search for it. They can also search for items that may facilitate escape or act as evidence against you.

AFTERMATH

If you could not record during the search, take photographs of the premises after the search. Write a detailed account of everything you remember happening.

This is an abbreviated version of our guidance document for dealing with police raids on Indigenous cannabis dispensaries. Contact our office for more details.

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Why Whole Plant Medicine Matters

THE NATURE OF THE PLANT

Take a close look at your cannabis buds. They're covered in a sticky dusting of crystal resin, which contains hundreds of therapeutic compounds known as cannabinoids and terpenoids. We assume you're well acquainted with THC and CBD, but these are just two among many important players working together to produce specific effects. This interactive synergy between marijuana compounds has been coined the "entourage effect," and once you know what this is, you'll see why medicines containing only THC or CBD aren't sufficient for many medical conditions.

THC-only medicines primarily refer to synthetic renderings of THC, the two most popular being Marinol (dronabinol) and Cesamet (nabilone). These are legal pharmaceuticals primarily prescribed to treat cancer-related nausea, but their efficacy is questionable. A 2011 survey on forms of consumption found only 1.8% of 953 patients prefer synthetic THC pharmaceuticals over inhaled or infused methods. Furthermore, it can take hours for a THC-only pill to deliver relief whereas inhaled methods take effect immediately.

CBD-only medicines have been gaining momentum in recent years following the media frenzy around Charlotte's Web, a non-psychoactive



cannabis strain that was processed into a CBD-rich oil for an epileptic child. This miraculous remedy prompted several states to adopt CBD-only laws under which THC-rich medicines remain illegal.

That is not to say that synthetic, hemp-based, and CBD-only medicines aren't effective options for many patients, especially as laws limit access to alternatives. These types of products have served a monumental role both as medicine and as a legislative stepping stone. But what else can patients get from whole plant medicine?

APPLICATIONS OF THE CANNABINOID RATIO

The most recent research into THC:CBD ratios comes out of the pharmaceutical industry, specifically around the GW Pharmaceuticals Sativex, which has a 1:1 ratio of THC and CBD. In the clinical trials phase of drug development, researchers examined the effects of THC, CBD, and combination extracts on sleep, pain control, and muscle spasms. They found that 1:1 THC-CBD extracts provided the most therapeutic relief across all categories.

In cancer, cannabis has long been credited with helping people combat the nausea associated with chemotherapy. Furthermore, THC and CBD each possess cytotoxic (cell destroying) and anti-angiogenic (prevention of development of new blood vessels) properties. These two properties are critical to combating the spread of cancer within the body, making whole-plant cannabis extracts a viable medical option.

"While cannabinoid ratios in most cannabis may be about the same, it is the terpene content which typically creates the different qualities that we have parsed as the difference between Indicas and Sativas for some time. It is highly likely that terpenes may very well alter the properties of the cannabinoids. Standardized testing is essential to the advancement of our understanding of this issue."

2:1 THC TO CBD RATIOS

Contrary to popular misconception, so-called indica varieties are no more likely to have CBD than sativas. Lab studies by the WercShop, co-sponsored by California NORML, found no relation between chemical profiles, as measured by cannabinoid and terpene content, and varietal types, whether indica or sativa. Breeders have developed special high-CBD hybrids from various genetic stock. Some have virtually pure CBD, while others typically have THC to CBD ratios ranging from 2:1 to 1:2.

The optimal dosage levels of CBD are uncertain due to a lack of human studies. Chronic high doses of up to 1500 mg per day are well tolerated and produce no noticeable physiological effects. However, there is evidence to suggest that the medical benefits of CBD disappear when dosages become excessive. For inhaled medical use, most users prefer varieties with THC to CBD ratios between 2:1 and 1:2. Extremely low-THC varieties are useful for making CBD extracts and tinctures. Unlike THC, CBD does not show up positive on standard drug tests for marijuana.

CANNABINOIDS AND TERPENES

The diverse chemical availability in whole plant medicines is remarkable in its own right, but research looking into how cannabinoids and terpenoids work together adds another level of intrigue.

Instrumental in this area of science is Ethan Russo, M.D., a neurologist who has long studied cannabis compounds and their role in the body. In his study "Taming THC: potential cannabis synergy and phytocannabinoid-terpenoid entourage effects," he details how cannabis compounds influence each other's mechanisms. We aren't just talking about the well-known THC-CBD tag team here – even small amounts of terpenes (fragrant oils that give cannabis its smell) can make a difference.

The terpene myrcene, for example, can reduce resistance in the blood-

brain barrier, enabling easier passage of other beneficial chemicals. Pinene helps counteract compromised cognition and memory caused by THC. A combination of terpenes pinene, myrcene, and caryophyllene help unravel anxiety. Mixing terpenes linalool and limonene with the cannabinoid CBG shows promise in the treatment of MRSA. THC plus CBN yields enhanced sedating effects. Linalool and limonene combined with CBD is being examined as an anti-acne treatment.

These examples only scratch the surface of all possible synergies made available to us by way of whole plant therapies. Think of all the medical possibilities waiting for us as the combinational potential of these compounds is unlocked. The thought of how many lives could be changed for the better by such discoveries is almost overwhelming.

WHAT IS CBD?

CBD or Cannabidiol is the principal non-psychoactive cannabinoid present largely in the Hemp plant. Along with not having psychoactive properties, CBD is a powerful anti-psychotic drug and valuable for anyone with psychosis or schizophrenia. CBD has been shown to be a better anti-inflammatory than THC and Ibuprofen, it is also effective treating pain and managing tumors. CBD can also help to relieve anxiety and depression. Due to the fact that it is non-psychoactive and strongly medicinal even in small doses, CBD is highly recommended for treatment of children, the elderly, and anyone who wants to remain clear headed yet medicated.

Scientific research has shown that CBD may be therapeutic for many conditions, including (but not limited to) chronic pain, cancer, anxiety, diabetes, epilepsy, rheumatoid arthritis, PTSD, sleep disorders, alcoholism, cardiovascular disease, antibiotic-resistant infections, and various neurological ailments.

CBD Hemp Oil Beauty Products provides unique skin protection. Cannabidiol-rich hemp oil comes as an exfoliant, cleanser, eye cream, gel masque, moisturizer and serum. It

turns out that it is the real deal – at least for dry skin. There is clinical research that cannabinoids have anti-aging and antioxidant – properties. There are findings confirming that cannabinoids are responsible for lipid production and, therefore, for regulating conditions such as dry skin or acne and have the potential for helping unspecified skin disease.

VAPORIZATION

Vaporization is the optimal delivery method for dried flower cannabis. Unlike smoking, vaporization is achieved by heating the cannabis to a temperature that vaporizes, but does not burn the cannabinoids, virtually eliminating the health risks associated with smoking. The effects of inhaled cannabis – whether smoked or vaporized – will be felt in a matter of minutes. It is recommended to pause between inhalations to let the dose be fully realized.

EDIBLE OILS

It is important to remember that cannabis taken orally has a slower onset time than when it is vaporized because it is absorbed through the digestive system. Wait at least four hours after the first dose before taking a second of cannabis oils.

Patients should follow extreme caution when dosing cannabis oils for the first time.

SUGGESTED DOSING

For casual users, people who don't have high tolerances, 10-20 milligrams should be more than enough to feel the effects. 10 milligrams is the recommended serving size for edibles, because you don't want to take too much at once. In one recent Canadian study, 25 mg of pharmaceutical-grade cannabis with a THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) content of 9.4% was effective in reducing intensity of pain, improving sleep and being well tolerated when smoked as a single inhalation 3x/day for five days at low tolerance to THC.

Indigenous self-regulation through Red Feather Certification

One of the biggest issues facing the Indigenous cannabis industry is the question of regulation. Even though cannabis is one of the safest plants – far less harmful to human health than mass produced corn, sugar cane, or wheat, for example – schools, churches, and the media have highly stigmatized the plant in the 95 years it has been illegal in Canada.

This stigmatization has created a context in which the Government of Corporations Canada is preparing to “legalize” cannabis according to some of the most stringent regulations ever applied to a plant. Of course, the most glaring omission in the Canadian cannabis regulation system is that it completely ignores the perspective and wishes of Indigenous peoples – when it comes to the presence and use of cannabis on their lands.

In drafting Bill C-45, the Cannabis Act, Canada breached its constitutionally required “duty to consult” with Indigenous peoples on matters relating to them. Indeed, the Canadian government has actually over-reached into Indigenous peoples’ jurisdiction to regulate their own use of natural medicines such as cannabis.

The Federal Cannabis Act delegates the practical matter of regulating consumer access to cannabis to the Provinces and Territories. Under the Canadian system, Provinces don’t have jurisdiction on reserves, which are considered Federal Territory by Canada, and as sovereign, unceded land by the Indigenous peoples who call them home. This state of affairs, and the fact that Indigenous peoples are allies, not subjects of the Crown, is why taxes are not collected on reserves.

So, in the matter of cannabis regulation, what is to be done?

A sovereign people govern themselves and take responsibility

for their actions. And as the Indigenous cannabis industry grows and matures, especially those operating dispensaries and producing and selling branded cannabis products, we should expect to see increasing efforts at Indigenous self-governance and self-regulation. This is especially because the alternative is for the Band Council system of the Canadian Government to claim jurisdiction and implement its own system of municipalization and taxation.



One clear example of Indigenous self-regulation is the Red Feather Certification process that has been launched by Rob Stevenson, owner of Medicine Wheel Natural Healing and Mukwa Botanicals in Alderville First Nation.

The Red Feather certification firstly guarantees that a given product has been made safely without the use of pesticides and herbicides, and that it has undergone a quality control process to be tested. Secondly the certification indicates that the majority of the ingredients of a given product were sourced and manufactured Indigenously, and that a portion of the proceeds are returned to the community through a voluntary donation program.

The full text of the Red Feather certification framework reads as follows:

“Products bearing a Red Feather certification are made and sourced in a pure, sustainable, responsible, and beneficial way for Mother Earth and Indigenous peoples. In Native culture, the feather symbolizes Strength, Honor, Wisdom, Trust, and Freedom. Red Feather Certification honours these qualities in the following ways:

Strength: The majority of the ingredients are Indigenously sourced, and the end product is Indigenously made.

Honour: A portion of the proceeds are returned to the community and local Indigenous organizations.

Wisdom: The product has been thoroughly tested, and quality control has been exercised throughout the production process.

Trust: The source matter is organic, and no harmful pesticides, herbicides, or chemicals were used in its production.

Freedom: The Indigenous cannabis movement is a tremendous opportunity for independence and autonomy for Native people.

The Medicine Wheel encompasses all aspects of life and nature. The circle shows that all things are interconnected and related. Each quadrant represents core aspects and teachings of life, comprising all the different outlooks and perspectives that guide and shape the world where we live. In the middle is where all peoples, all teachings, and all ways of life meet in harmony and unity. By placing the Red Feather at the centre of the Medicine Wheel, we are identifying the importance of all of us working together for the betterment of everyone and for the preservation and enrichment of life and Earth.”

Know your Cannabis product.



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REPRINT: MARIJUANA PLANTS FOUND ON RESERVE

CAUGHNAWAGA POLICE AT WORK ERADICATING DANGEROUS WEED **THE GAZETTE 1938**

TASK BEHIND SCHEDULE

Was to Have Been Finished Now, But Much Remains — Dope Is Most Feared of All Narcotics

Some 3,500 pounds of marijuana plants are being picked and burned every day under police supervision at Caughtnawaga, according to information obtained during the past week from reservation officers. The leaves and seeds of the marijuana plant contain a drug police fear more than any other narcotic.

The eradication, which has been going on for three weeks, is being carried out under orders of the Department of Indian Affairs. Estimates as to when the reservation will be completely cleared of the plant range from a few days to many weeks. A survey yesterday showed many patches of marijuana, even in sections supposed to have been cleaned out, and it appeared unlikely that at the present rate of progress the job would be finished before the snow flies.

Marijuana, because it is so easy to grow and prepare, and because of its terrible effects when smoked is considered by police to be a greater menace than opium, cocaine or any other narcotic. In Caughtnawaga, as in many sections of Montreal and throughout Canada as well as in the United States, it grows wild, resembling any other weed. On users, the weed has not only

the usual ill effects of drugs, but often brings on insanity.

Chief J.K. Jocks, Indian police officer of the reservation, said as far as he could learn no one on the reserve was using the drug. Several people knew of its properties, however, from visits to United States cities where it is widely used.

According to Chief Jocks, three men working under his direction are clearing the reservation at the rate of five carloads a day. Each cartload

“3,500 pounds of marijuana plants are being picked and burned every day under police supervision at Caughtnawaga”

means about 700 pounds of the weed, said the chief. Other information set the estimate of the amount cleared lower than this. An informant who has watched the work for some time said the wagon was making three trips a day, and estimated its peak capacity as much lower than 700 pounds. The weed is taken to a pit on the outskirts of the reserve and burned under supervision, according to Chief Jocks, but a visit to the pit yesterday showed a smoking pile about two feet high and four feet in diameter without a guard anywhere in the vicinity.

CLEAN-UP SET FOR YESTERDAY

The clean-up was supposed to have been finished yesterday. Chief Jocks and Francois Brisebois, Indian agent, said last week that there would be none left on the reserve by yesterday afternoon. Yesterday, however, Chief Jocks said the pulling of the weed had been suspended because of the wet weather. A quarter of a mile away from where the Chief made the statement, however, two men were loading the cart with the weed. They hurried it behind a house on the approach of a reporter and photographer.

The weed is being pulled upon private property and on vacant lots. The growth affects a wide area, although not in every lot.

Marijuana has been growing in Caughtnawaga as long as residents can remember. It was not until this summer, however, that people on the reserve got to know what it was. It is general knowledge, now, that the weed is “dope”.

Chief Jocks yesterday said he had been called to a nearby farm to investigate a report some horses had died without an obvious reason. He believed it likely they had eaten the weed.

Source: Reprinted from the Montreal Gazette, September 29, 1938. <https://bit.ly/>



Cannabis & the Onkwehon:we

**A report back from
the public meeting at
Six Nations**

Ateronhiata:kon Francis Boots addressing the meeting. Over 80 people were in attendance at the Six Nations gathering.

SIX NATIONS – Sovereignty begins and ends with the People. It needs approval neither from elected band councils, confederate bodies, or, much less, from Canada's governments. It must be asserted, not begged for.

That was the main message delivered last March at an event titled *Cannabis and the Onkwehon:we*, held in Six Nations, where a group of renowned Mohawk elders spoke to a group of 80 people about the cannabis industry's potential to help Indian Country reach economic independence.

"You want to be free? You want to be able to do something for seven generations away? Then start asserting yourself," said elder Paul Delaronde, one of the founders of the self-sustaining Ganienkeh Mohawk community in present-day New York state. "Never mind what their government passes. Never mind what their courts have to say. You tell them."

The event, held at Yogi's Barn, was one more in a string of workshops that continue to be organized by Indigenous cannabis dispensaries as a way to inform the public about the historic links between Onkwehonwe people and the cannabis plant. It was also an opportunity to discuss the challenges that lie ahead for Indian Country as a whole.

Aided by autobiographical parables that recalled times of personal struggle, the elders spoke about the importance of the cannabis plant not only as a medicine but as a symbol of resistance and an affirmation of Indigenous autonomy.

"Cannabis is our business, it's our medicine," said Loran Thompson, a Mohawk man of the Wolf clan from Akwesasne. "Their law does not reach us....Canada's law has no authority over Onkwehonwe."

SOVEREIGNTY ASSERTED

Since 1974, when Ganienkeh was first founded as it was repossessed

from the American Federal government, the territory has matured into a vibrant Mohawk community, growing from an original 612 acres to more than 10,000 and counting, according to Delaronde.

"We didn't ask for our land. We didn't beg for our land. We did not buy our land," he said, referring to himself and the group of Mohawk militants from Akwesasne and Kahnawake who took over Moss Lake, near Old Forge, New York, which was then a girl's summer camp.

"We took the land, and we're going to keep doing it....You have no sovereignty, if you don't assert sovereignty."

This was the lesson Delaronde wanted to impart to the audience, which was comprised of about 60 people from Six Nations. Old and young alike attended the event, and many people participated in the Q&A that followed – an indication of the level of interest the topic of cannabis is garnering across Indian Country.

Notably missing, however, were band council members, to whom the invitation had been extended.

Delaronde took a note of this to remind the audience that, whether it is with cannabis or any other decisions that have the potential to affect the community, band councils are no more than “representatives.” The true decision makers and leaders, Delaronde said, are the people.

“We have to believe in ourselves,” he said. “Don’t rely on what you all have come to believe are your leaders. They are not leaders. You, the people, are the leaders. The decision needs to come from you, and if those so-called representatives don’t carry your words and your spirit, get rid of them.”

As the cannabis industry grows – both in and outside of native reserves – the duty lies on band members themselves to figure out how it can best serve the communal good.

To do so, however, we must shed colonized modes of thinking and attitudes, including those about the plant, must be shed, Thompson said. He also reminded the audience that Canada’s justice system has never been about justice, and that its laws around cannabis have been designed as another tool of oppression.

“The law that they put in place is to oppress you, to keep you held down, to keep you convinced that you are his subject,” he said. “But we have an opportunity right now, if we do it right.”

A VIABLE ECONOMY

When the European so-called explorers arrived in Turtle Island, they came armed with more than just guns and smallpox. Included in their armament were destructive educational and religious dogmas they imposed on the Indigenous locals, in an attempt to divorce them from their culture.

“The oppressor, the ‘Explorer’ that came here originally, came here with a purpose,” said Thompson, an imposing man with a deep voice.

“And that’s to take our land, our rights, our freedoms.”

Indigenous peoples today are therefore fighting to reclaim not only the land that was physically stolen from them, but much of the traditional knowledge that was destroyed through 150 years of imposed western education, religion, and forms of upbringing. Rediscovering the relationship that many nations had with the cannabis plant is therefore in itself a form of cultural reclamation – one which both Thompson and Delaronde agreed is a duty to take seriously, and with the people’s benefit always in mind.

“There is a serious question in

“You, the people, are the leaders. The decision needs to come from you, and if those so-called representatives don’t carry your words and your spirit, get rid of them.”

front of us,” Thompson said. “And if we fight as a people in our own land, under our own law, then we have the right to use our medicines in the way we see fit.”

The reach and importance of the cannabis industry goes far beyond its medicinal benefits. Cannabis has the potential to affect Indigenous peoples in general, whether they use cannabis or not, given the economic independence it is providing. The reason for that is that if “done right,” as Thompson said, economic independence will mean Indian Country can get out from under the Canadian political establishment. It means not having to wait for federal funding to develop needed social services. It means the return of a truly viable economy, by and for Indigenous peoples.

“One of the things that makes us weak is that we don’t have much as far as an economy.

Right now we have a retail economy,” Delaronde said. “Everything we do have, we have to bring in from the outside. We have shops, we got gas stations, we got Tim Horton’s. But at the stroke of a pen from out there, they can take that all away from us....We (are) in their economic system.”

This knowledge, of course, is not lost on the colonial Canadian state, which is attempting to monopolize the cannabis industry under the pretext of the common good. Hordes of politicians and former law enforcement types who’ve spent decades criminalizing people and putting them behind

bars for using cannabis, are now some of the heaviest investors, owners and managers in the government-regulated dispensaries known as Licensed Producers.

That’s why, if navigated carefully and kept away from the greedy hands of the state and the corporations vying for control, the cannabis industry can do for Indigenous peoples what tobacco could have, were it not for the market interests that monopolized and corrupted that sacred plant.

“Tobacco was introduced to the world by our ancestors, and we’ve seen how the oppressor took it, ran with it, developed it and capitalized

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on it,” Thompson said. “This plant is bigger and better than that product. The corporations won’t be able to capitalize on it if it’s in our hands.”

STRENGTH IN UNITY

Though challenges lie ahead, not least of which are the band councils that have publicly come out against cannabis, they can be overcome with unity and determination, Delaronde insisted.

As for the Canadian state, it lacks any legitimate authority over the Onkwehon:we, though it’s spent 150 years trying to exert it through violence and land-theft. Contrary to what the history books say, it is not the Onkwehon:we who are at the mercy of the Canadian state; it’s the “weak” Canadian state that is at the mercy of the Onkwehon:we.

“We have the ability to bring them down if we have to. The white man was not very smart,” Delaronde asserted.

“He put every major highway, every railroad, he put the international sea way through our territories. He puts his power lines through our territories. Every nation is only as strong as its weakest link, and their weakest link is their people....They put all those things in our territories. They are at our mercy. We should never think that we are in a position of weakness.”

As the event came to a close, Delaronde also reminded the audience that one of the strongest forms of resistance in the face of constant oppression is the reclamation of knowledge and culture, and then spreading it far and wide, like seeds. “It’s like one kernel of corn,” he said. “You could start (entire) gardens with one kernel.”

Of course, it will take time and struggle, like any good harvest. But, Delaronde insisted, it will bear much fruit in the end.

“None of what we are talking about is going to be an overnight so-

lution. It’s going to take time. It’s going to take a lot of work and it’s going to take people getting involved,” he said.

“Participation – that’s what it’s going to take for our people to become strong again.”

For that to happen, he concluded, unity must be practiced beyond rhetoric. The People must stand as one against any and all obstacles, including band councils and Canadian laws, and even personal tiffs must be set aside.

“This is an issue that concerns all Onkwehon:we,” he said, speaking pointedly and pausing to enunciate his words.

“But we have to do this as a People. Not as a community. Not as a village. Not as a reservation. But as a People. We have to work together.” o

The meeting and event was sponsored and organized by Herbal ReLeaf CBD+, King Leaf, and Smoke Signals Media.

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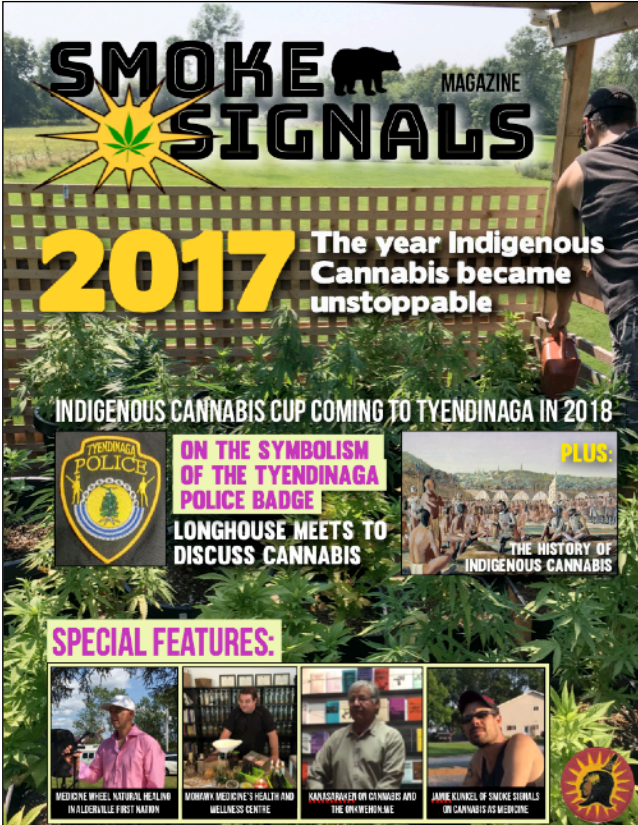
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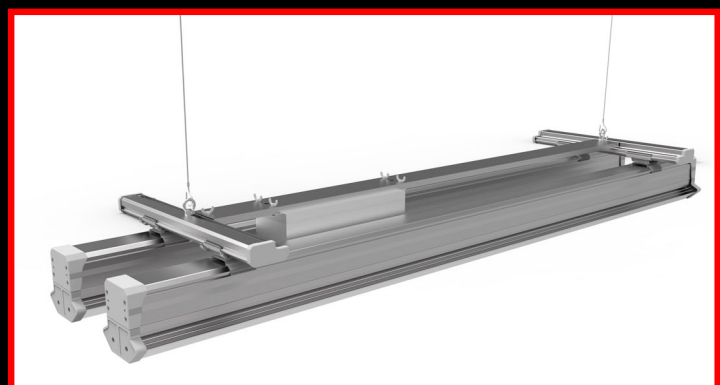


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