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MARCH 13, 2024
VOLUME 05 | ISSUE 11

The Paper.

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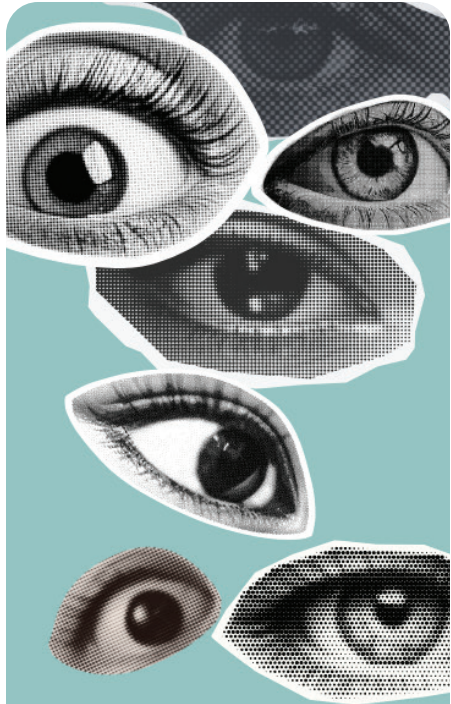
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The Paper. is published by Good Trouble, LLLP.
The Paper. is printed by the Santa Fe New Mexican in Santa Fe, NM.
Our mailing address is:
317 Commercial St NE #201 ABQ, 87102

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ALBUQUERQUE'S INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWS



By City Desk ABQ Staff

New Mexico is now part of a \$500 million effort to rebuild and revitalize local news around the country.

The state is joining 10 other new Press Forward chapters, bringing the total to 17. Press Forward is a coalition of some of the nation’s largest nonprofit organizations and the New Mexico chapter will be co-lead by the Santa Fe-based Thornburg Foundation and the University of New Mexico’s longtime partner, the New Mexico Local News Fund.

“Bringing Press Forward to New Mexico will be transformative to our local news ecosystem,” Local News Fund Executive Director Rashad Mahmood said in a statement. “The chance to collaborate with top foundations and funders in our state to support local news is a game-changer for our underserved communities who often struggle to get the news and information they need.”

The Thornburg Foundation has supported UNM’s journalism efforts including the People, Power and Democracy Project, which was a partnership between UNM student journalists, KUNM, KNME and *New Mexico in Depth*.

“The Thornburg Foundation strongly believes in the power of local journalism and its power to inform and educate the public, increase government accountability, and strengthen our democracy,” Thornburg Foundation Executive Director Allan Oliver said in a statement. “We are excited to participate in a coalition of New Mexico funders in Press Forward, which will help bring national investment and help strengthen trusted news in communities around our state.”

Other Press Forward New Mexico partners include the Albuquerque Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, McCune Charitable Foundation, New Mexico Foundation and Santa Fe

Community Foundation.

Press Forward New Mexico aims to raise \$3 million over five years, which would be matched by the national team. The goal is for philanthropic leaders, civic-minded individuals and regional foundations to pool their dollars to support the network of independent news outlets serving New Mexico’s diverse communities.

The chapter also now has the chance to apply for up to \$250,000 in Catalyst Funds to accelerate its work, as well as access to tech assistance, a network of supportive journalists and professional development and training.

It will also be another way for budding journalists in UNM’s communications and journalism program to build their careers in their home state.

“Local news is facing an existential crisis but New Mexico has been a leader in working on solutions to the problems that threaten our industry and its ability to support a robust democracy,” said C&J Professor of Practice Gwyneth Doland. “I’m thrilled that some of our state’s largest and most effective charitable organizations are committed to raising money for innovative solutions to this crisis.”

Since 2019, UNM and the New Mexico Local News Fund have placed graduates from UNM, New Mexico State University and Eastern New Mexico University into newsrooms around the state, helping to build a pipeline of diverse journalists—from interns to full-timers.

In 2023, New Mexico’s Department of Workforce Solutions invested \$125,000 in fellowship or internship programs and Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham subsequently approved a two-year, \$200,000 appropriation to the Department of Workforce Solutions to continue the effort.

This story was originally published at citydesk.org.

Weak in Review: March 13

Quick hits on this week’s news bits

The Academy Awards created buzz, as always.
And as always, it was very white

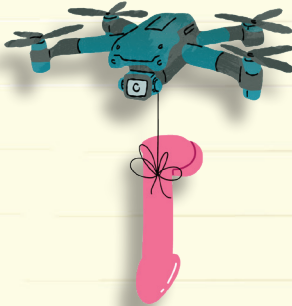


The City of Albuquerque is trying out a new micro transit program akin to free Uber rides.
Hopefully the awkward conversations are also micro

Bernalillo County announced that it’s helping some businesses recruit and pay for high school interns.
That sounds fleek, or whatever the phrase is.

Local candidates filed for office this week.
What a cruel joke to jump straight from allergy season to primary season.

Democrat turned Republican Manny Gonzales is again running for office.
Please, please, say his nemesis the Dong Copter is finally returning.



St. Patrick’s Day is on a Sunday this year.
Which means on Monday we’ll probably have the bug that’s been going around

Second gentleman Doug Emhoff was all smiles as he visited the International Sunport.
The smiles prove he didn’t have to buy lunch on the other side of security

The state’s Medical Cannabis Advisory Board might consider adding female orgasmic disorder to its list of qualifying conditions for medical-use weed.
Does this sound counterintuitive to anyone else?



The city is considering building cricket pitches at the Balloon Fiesta Park.
Between that and a soccer stadium, it’s safe to say those limey buggers are taking over.

'We Are Familia'

Lowrider culture
in Burque



Members of the lowriding community stand along Fourth Street in the Baretas neighborhood as they watch other lowrider enthusiasts arrive for a get together. (Roberto E. Rosales/The City Desk ABQ)

By Roberto Rosales and Tierna Unruh-Enos,
City Desk ABQ

Lorenzo Otero has been spending his weekends with the lowriding community in Albuquerque since the '80s. Back then lowriders would cruise near Tingley Beach and on the Westside, he says.

"I grew up in the Baretas neighborhood and lowriders were what we grew up with," he says.

In the past 10 years, that movement has migrated to Downtown.

"Downtown is the heartbeat of Albuquerque," says Otero about why cruising on Central Ave. is so important. "Think of Albuquerque as a human body. The blood starts flowing from Downtown, and without it, the city dies." Otero says lowriders were cruising Central Ave. every Sunday before the pandemic. They were a loud and proud family. "Tourists would look at the works of art we built," he says. "They could feel the sense of love we had for each other and our cars."

In 2005 the city made lowrider cruising illegal due to reports of street racing, fights and clogged streets. Otero says he went to City Councilor Klarissa Peña and asked for help. Peña owns a 1959 light pink Cadillac in which she is known to throw a cruise down Central Avenue.

"She understood the culture, what it was about and why it was so important to us. She did everything she could to help us get back to the streets," says Otero.

In 2017 the city created a task force

to make recommendations to promote responsible lowriding.

Then on Nov. 2018, the city repealed the anti-lowrider ordinance and created a new ordinance promoting special interest vehicle recognition.

"I've raised my kids in this culture. We are familia," Otero says.

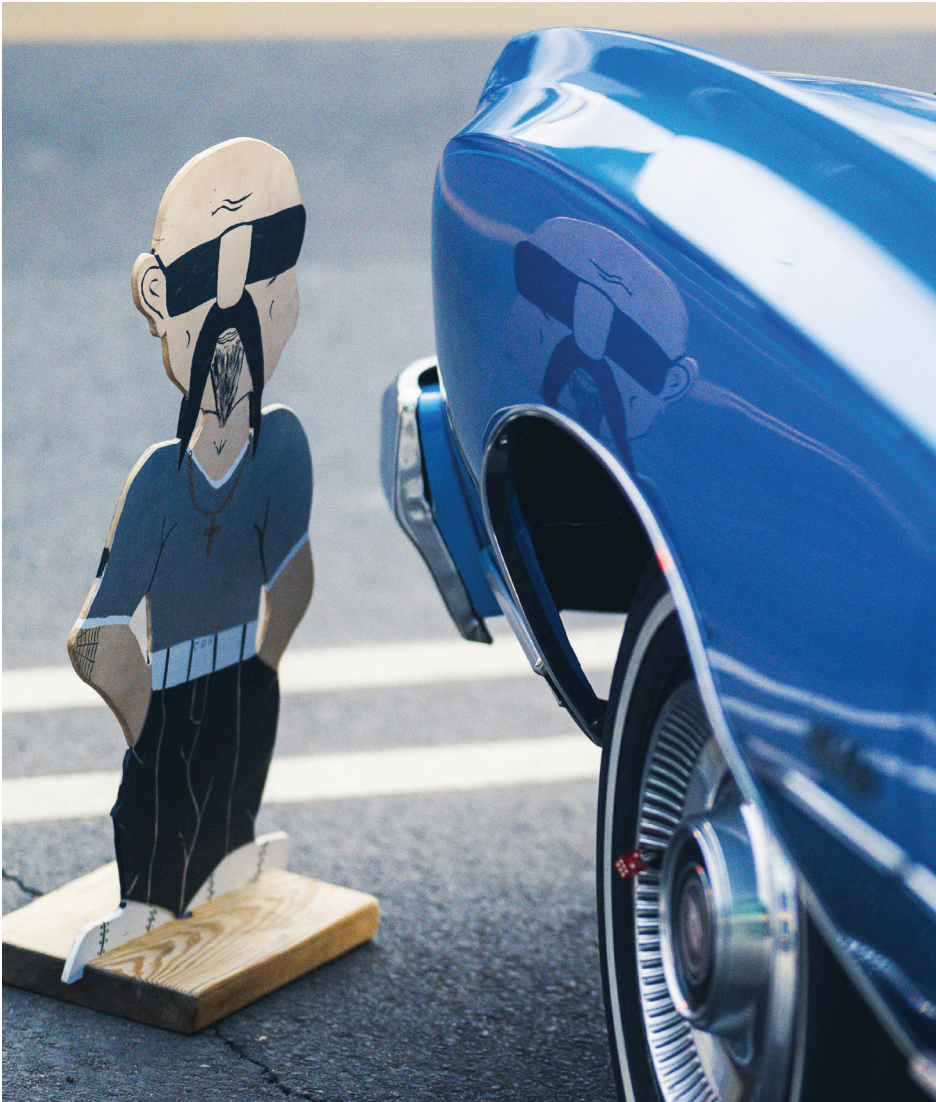
City Desk ABQ photographer Roberto

Rosales hung out Downtown on a Sunday to capture the scene as the warm weather arrives and the lowrider cruising community shows off their creations and custom rides along Central Avenue and in the Baretas neighborhood.

This story was originally published at citydesk.org.



Poncho Chavez is the president of the Duke's Car Club. Here he is photographed by his 1959 El Camino lowrider he rebuilt. (Roberto E. Rosales/The City Desk ABQ)



A Homie woodcut placed near a lowrider along Central Avenue (Roberto E. Rosales/The City Desk ABQ)



Frutoso Lovato's '65 Impala sitting near Robinson Park in Downtown Albuquerque (Roberto E. Rosales/The City Desk ABQ)



Filimon Pino of Albuquerque hangs out by his '87 Oldsmobile lowrider. (Roberto E. Rosales/The City Desk ABQ)

Don Choche Offers Authentic Mexican Menu

Originally a food truck, this Los Ranchos gem offers a deep salsa bar and a plethora of tacos

By Kevin Hopper, The Paper.

If you love Mexican food, Albuquerque is arguably as good as it gets stateside. We live in a virtual sea of different styles of food inspired by chile peppers, corn, beans, rice, onion, avocado, et al. But if you are the owner of a Mexican restaurant, there's an obvious issue: differentiation.

With hundreds of restaurants all serving similar menu items, how does one stand out? Quality? Authenticity? Atmosphere? Location? Well, all of the above, but even then, you are one of dozens. Tex-Mex? Just jivin' you.

As a Duke City native, I have eaten at all of these places (I wish that was true). I have, however, been to quite a few local Mexican spots. Those visits have allowed me to pick up on subtle variations that make each one a favorite for different reasons—great green chile or decor here, perfect carne adovada or lively patio there.

However, one restaurant in particular, Don Choche Tacos y Cerveza, has revealed a new layer to my local Mexican eatery onion. The bright-blue basket-adorned walls, authentic Mexican soundtrack, *charrería* on the TV, and an extra-deep salsa bar will truly make diners feel like they are sipping cerveza on the south side of the border. I can't say that there are too many joints in town that make me feel this way.

Don Choche originally started as a food truck in 2007. You would (and still can) regularly find a Don Choche truck parked at Marble Brewery downtown. Yet, it is the Los Ranchos brick-and-mortar location—an old adobe that makes it seem like this place dates back multiple generations—where I and a dining partner visited recently to find an authentic Mexican menu featuring tacos, enchiladas, flautas, tostadas, shrimp cocktail and menudo. My eyes focused on the tacos (four substantial-sized tacos for \$15), where I then had to choose from a long list of fillings, including al pastor, carnitas, adovada, fish, shrimp, birria and tripas among others. I chose chicharrón and green chile brisket. The former gets a choice between crispy and soft. I made the wrong choice with soft. Though the flavor was nice and rich, it felt a little too slimy on the palate for my tastes. I missed that savory chicharrón crispiness. The green chile brisket on the other hand was insanely good, exuding an element not found in a lot



The combo plate at Don Choche, does not disappoint. (Kevin Hopper/The Paper)

of tacos: Smoke! If you go here soon, get a couple of these beauties, or go big with the green chile brisket burger.

My dining partner got what she always orders: the combo plate. However, I was glad she did, as it allowed us to taste the enchiladas, tamales, rice, beans and relleno, which were all pretty standard in taste. Nothing stuck out too much and neither the green nor red blew our minds. Though it did make for a dang tasty breakfast the next day topped with a fried egg.

Return visits will be many for us, as we didn't get to try the birria tacos (my current fave dish), the molcajete plate for two, caldo or green chile stew, or anything from the breakfast menu; I have my eyes particularly focused on the chilaquiles torta.

I tend to avoid crowds, but because this spot seemed lively even with fewer than 12 people in the room, I would like to hit peak time here. Most likely, that is on Friday or Saturday, when they ask a mere \$12 for two tacos and beer or margarita. The south of the border feel would certainly be intensified with lots of chatter, loud music and a buzzing patio. It would then cease being just dinner and instead blossom into a full-on cultural event.

Don Choche Tacos y Cerveza

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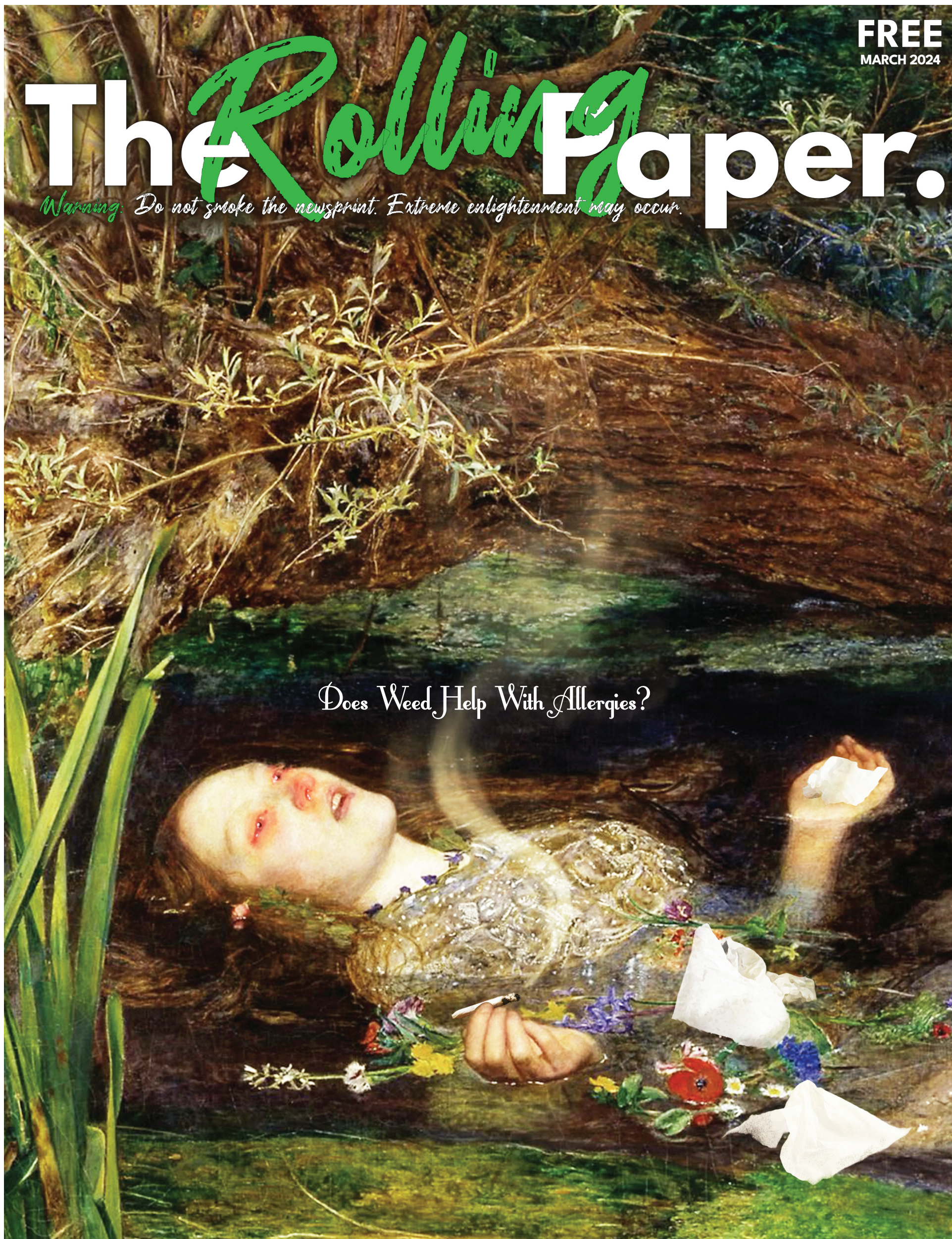
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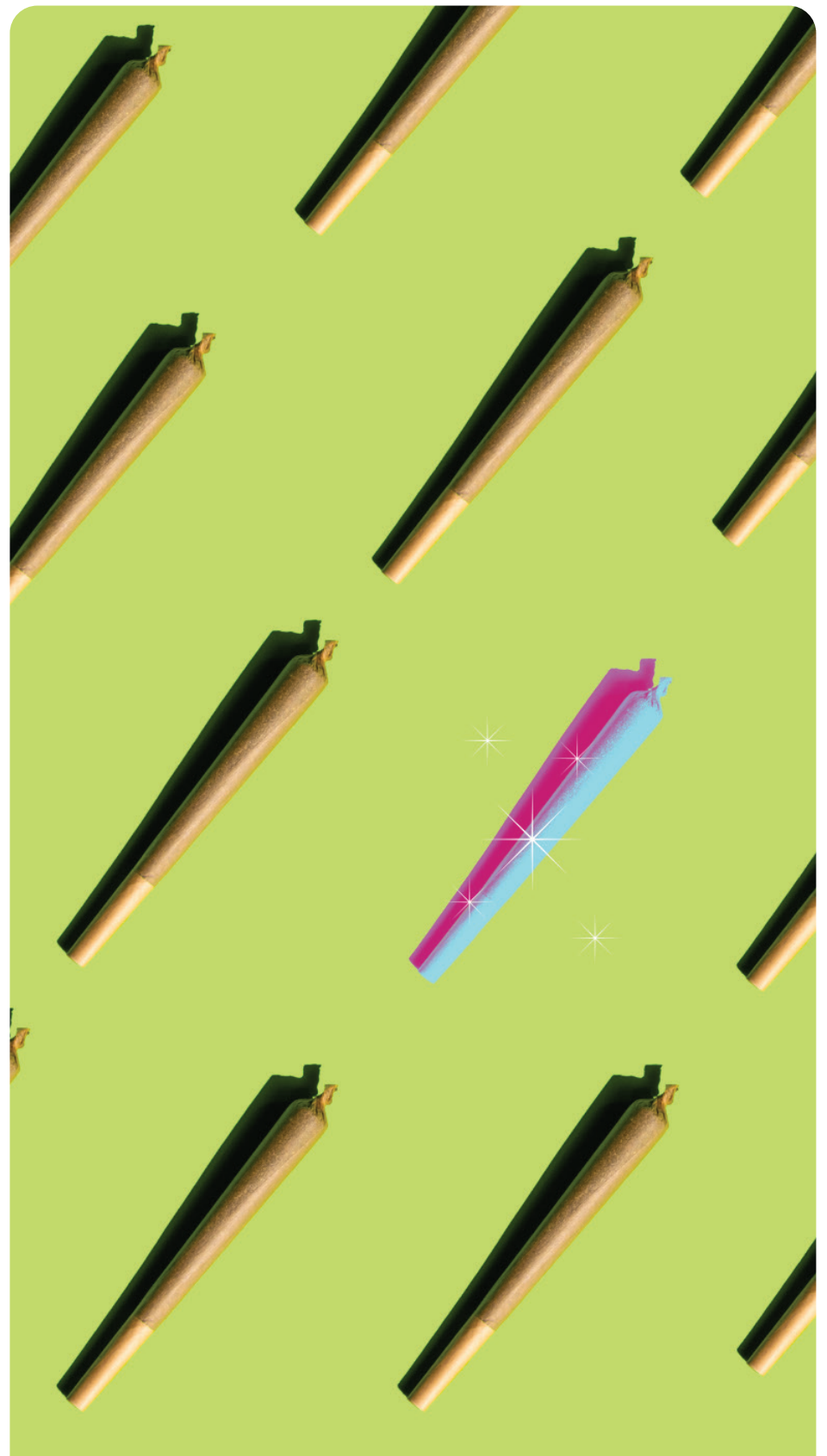
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Women In Cannabis

Outlaw Extracts' Adriana Tapia-Olmos rolls it up

By Josh Lee

There's more to the cannabis industry than budtending. Many sectors come together to create the weed industry we all know and love. We sat down with Adriana Tapia-Olmos of Outlaw Extracts, a company that manufactures products for High Desert Relief, to talk about her day job rolling joints.

The Rolling Paper: What's your job at Outlaw Extracts?

Tapia-Olmos: I am the lead on the pre-roll team. We make all the pre-rolls. Everything that gets sent out to the stores we work with goes through us. We run all of our machines and handle all the quality control.



Is it a fun job?

Oh yeah. Playing with pounds of weed at a time is super fun.

Is it difficult for women to find jobs in your sector of the industry?

Yes, definitely. I feel like cannabis is a very male-dominated industry. Working with Outlaw Extracts and with High Desert Relief, we do have a lot of women on our team. So it's been great getting to, you know, get my name out there with some of the great people who already work for our company.

But it's difficult with other companies?

Definitely. There are a lot of other bigger names in town that don't have a lot of women on their staff. I know how difficult that can be to break into that role.

Why is it so hard for women to break through?

Honestly, I'm not 100 percent sure. I've seen a lot of men do really awesome jobs, but I've also seen a lot of women who were just as capable. I'm not sure where that all stems from, but I really do hope we overcome it someday.

Is there a way that businesses could attract more women applicants?

Doing some more women in cannabis industry events and just getting the word out there and making it known that cannabis is becoming a more women-friendly industry.

What advice would you give a woman that's looking for a job in the industry?

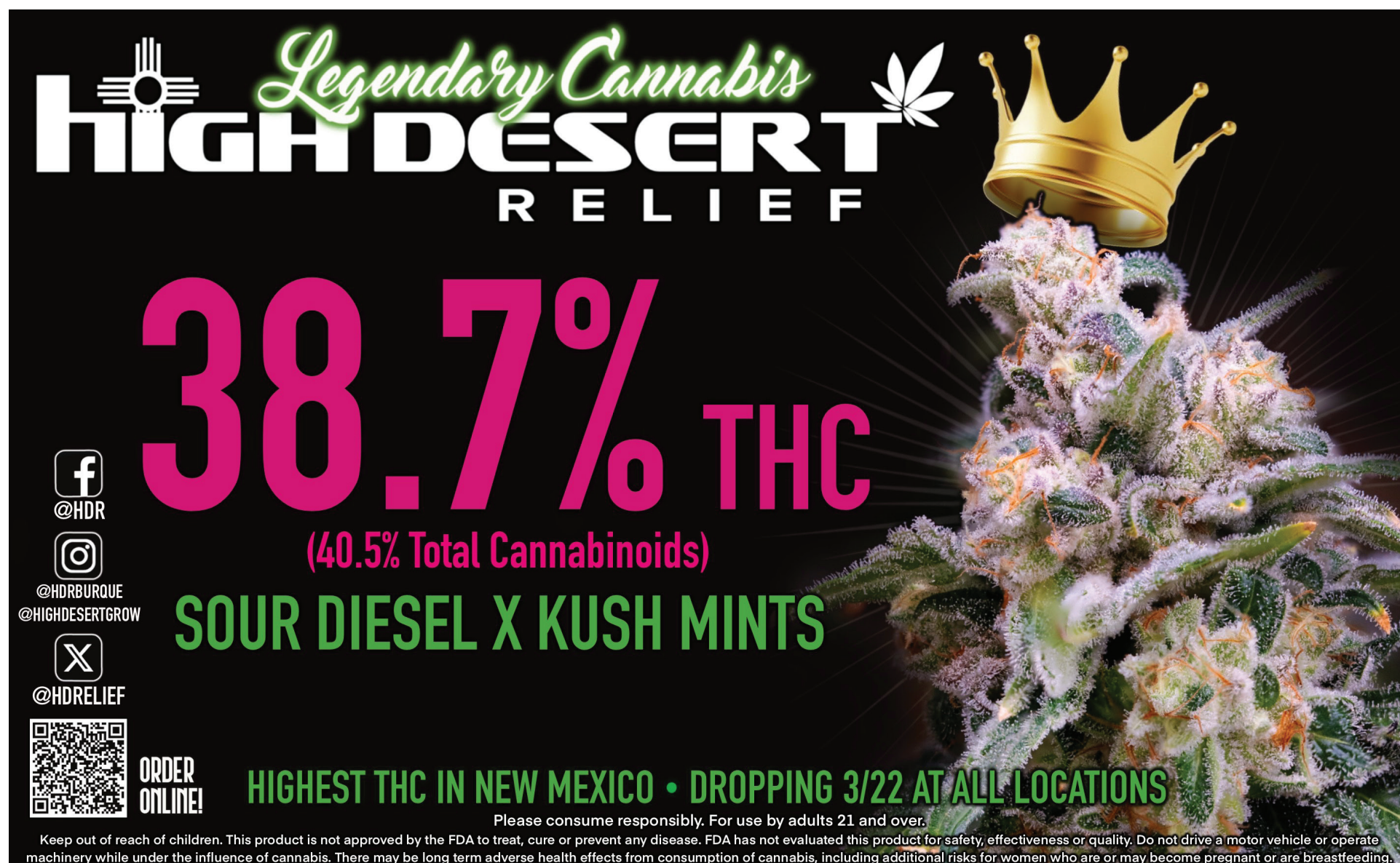
Just stick to your guns and use your voice. It's easy to get drowned out by a lot of the other people and a lot of the males that work in this industry. Having a voice and using it is honestly one

of the most important things a woman can do.

Have you noticed any unaddressed issues with the current laws and regulations for the cannabis industry?

It's such a fluid industry that it's hard to pinpoint where you want things to be and where you want them to stay. But I think for now, especially with the [recreational-use] industry being so new, it's kind of still moving, but I think it's going in a good direction.

I think one of the biggest things for consumers and retailers is shopping local. I know that there are a lot of places that get their products from other towns in the state. And they may not say where they're getting everything that they have in their stores. But shopping locally and knowing where all your products come from—sticking with the places in town that you know and that are reputable—that's really important to me.



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UN Board Says Legalization Breaks Treaties

Officials bemoan cannabis reform efforts

(Dendodge at Wikimedia Commons)

By Josh Lee

Germany's recent move to legalize marijuana has really stirred the pot in Europe. Now the United Nations (UN) says that legalizing cannabis for recreational use violates international treaties.

Last week, the UN's International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) published its 2023 annual report, in which it voiced concerns over efforts to reform cannabis and psychedelics laws in the U.S. and marijuana legalization in Germany.

The board's finger-wagging highlighted three Single Convention drug treaties that it said were being violated.

"In its interactions with the Government of Germany," wrote the INCB, "the Board has reiterated that measures to permit the use of cannabis for non-medical purposes are inconsistent" with the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1988 Convention and the 1971 Convention.

Last month the government of Germany legalized marijuana possession but refused to set up a regulated market. Instead, consumers will have to purchase weed at non-commercial marijuana clubs that are limited to 500 members.

The government originally floated the idea of creating a market in which marijuana could be sold in dispensaries and pharmacies, but concerns over violating European Union drug policies killed the plan.

The INCB report notes the course change and applauds it.

"The Board has had ongoing discussions with the authorities in Germany and has taken note of the evolution of the originally planned control measures following concerns expressed by the European Commission," it said.

However, the INCB says the new law violates the treaties by failing to limit the use of narcotic drugs exclusively to medical and scientific purposes; by failing to criminalize the production, manufacture, sale and distribution of psychotropic substances and by failing to criminalize marijuana cultivation for illicit purposes.

Regarding legalization efforts in the U.S., the INCB brought up an analysis from 2022 that found the U.S. might already be in violation of international drug treaties by allowing state-level legalization of recreational marijuana.

"The apparent tension between these provisions and the trend towards legalization must be addressed by the signatories to the three drug control conventions," it wrote.

The report noted that states are continuing to legalize marijuana at a growing rate.

"The Board has repeatedly expressed its concern that these developments may be inconsistent with the country's legal obligations as a party to the three international drug conventions," it said.

It also highlighted President Joe Biden's decision to pardon federal convictions of simple marijuana possession.

"While the presidential

pardon does not expunge the existing conviction, it removes civil or legal restrictions, such as on the rights to vote, hold office or sit on a jury, and lifts barriers to housing, employment and educational opportunities," the report notes, presumably with disapproval from the board.

Oddly, the report failed to mention the Biden administration's recent efforts to reschedule marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act. This failure may not bode well for those efforts, since the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has been deliberating the shift for several months, and analysts have pointed out that it may choose to keep things as they are in light of it being a violation of the international drug treaties.

In recent years, there has been some indication that the UN is willing to move past the failed War On Some Drugs, although last week's report makes reform in the near future seem unlikely.

However, the UN did reclassify marijuana in 2020, removing it from the Schedule IV category of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs—classified as having limited medical use—following a World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation. The removal didn't affect the drug's legal status, but it is still listed under Schedule I of the international drug control system, meaning it's considered addictive with a high risk of abuse.

The move was supported by the U.S. delegation, which

made a statement following the vote: "The vote of the United States ... is consistent with the science demonstrating that while a safe and effective cannabis-derived therapeutic has been developed, cannabis itself continues to pose significant risks to public health and should continue to be controlled under the international drug control conventions."

Germany's decision to legalize weed—no matter how limited—could be the necessary push that encourages other influential European countries to reform their cannabis policies. If the U.S. follows Canada's lead and legalizes marijuana at the federal level, and more European countries follow Germany's lead, at a certain point, the UN will be forced to rethink and possibly revisit those international drug treaties.

The INCB report did not fail to recognize the speed at which psychedelic reform seems to be storming through the U.S. According to the report, growing interest in psychedelics as therapeutic drugs coupled with unregulated markets poses a risk to "vulnerable populations."

"While clinical studies on the use of psychedelics are conducted in some countries," wrote the board, "most of the health, wellness and tourism businesses involving the use of psychedelics have been operating without much regulatory oversight. Unsupervised and experimental use of those substances, even in microdoses as self-medication, may put some vulnerable populations at risk."

The report never explained what those risks are, and they are anything but clear, considering most psychedelics like psilocybin mushrooms and LSD don't carry the danger of overdose.

The board highlighted state-level psychedelics legalization and decriminalization that has happened in Washington, Colorado and Oregon. It also noted psychedelic policy reform being enacted in Canada.

On a positive note, previous INCB reports have also raised concerns over the evolution of U.S. drug policies, and while "breaking an international treaty" sounds ominous to the layman's ear, the UN has never mentioned taking any action against the U.S., meaning the board may be nothing more than a barking dog. And dogs that constantly bark tend to lose their voices and become easily ignored.



Spring Fever

Does weed help with allergies?

(cenzi7at Wikimedia Commons)

By Josh Lee

Bees are singing. Birds are buzzing. The world is waking up like a slow and angry teenager. It's spring in New Mexico, and that means allergy season is here.

Allergies are the result of an overactive immune response to a benign element in the environment. When an allergen like pollen or pet dander triggers the response, the body produces antibodies that bind to a type of white blood cell known as a mast cell. When enough of these antibodies are produced, they force the mast cells to release histamines and cytokines. The histamines and cytokines cause itchy eyes and runny noses as a means to force the perceived invader out.

The Good News

While most of it is anecdotal, there is some evidence that weed can help with allergy symptoms like these.

There haven't been a ton of studies examining marijuana as a specific allergy treatment, but the drug has been shown to reduce histamine and cytokine production and its anti-inflammatory properties are well-known.

Weed has also been shown to help treat asthma attacks by opening the body's airways, making breathing easier—an issue that many who suffer from

allergies endure. It can also suppress the immune system, weakening the inappropriate immune response.

Certain terpenes found in weed may also help. Terpenes are chemicals found in many plants and fruit, including cannabis, which produce scents and flavors. These chemicals are also known to have various therapeutic effects. The terpenes limonene, linalool, terpinolene and borneol have all been associated with anti-inflammatory and immune-regulating effects.

When it comes to skin allergies, there has been some research on the subject. Scientists from the University of Bonn in Germany accidentally found that THC had an anti-inflammatory effect while conducting a brain study on mice in 2007.

As part of a study published in the journal *Science*, researchers created mutant mice that were missing two proteins that respond to THC and the equivalent endocannabinoid produced by the body.

After a while, the mice began scratching at the metal tags the scientists used to identify them, causing skin irritation and sores. The mice that still had their cannabinoid-recognizing proteins didn't have the same reaction.

When the scientists switched tag brands, the sores went away and the mice stopped scratching. The researchers looked into it and realized that the first set of tags contained nickel while the

second set was made of non-allergic brass. This meant that the genetically-modified mice were allergic to nickel while the unmodified mice were not.

The researchers had discovered that endogenous THC played some role in preventing allergic reactions.

To test the theory out, the researchers applied THC externally to the skin of some of the mice before exposing them to a chemical that's known to cause an allergic response on the skin. The mice that were treated with THC had a diminished allergic response, with about 50 percent less swelling, compared to the control group.

In 2013, a study published in the journal *Allergy* found similar results when researchers tested topically applied THC on mice suffering from allergic contact dermatitis. The THC reduced swelling even in mice that were engineered to have a cannabinoid receptor deficiency (meaning it was harder for their bodies to process THC).

And if THC has this powerful of an effect when used topically, it likely has a similar effect when used internally, meaning weed treatments for inflammation and allergic responses is more than a hopeful theory.

This is all good news, but weed still won't completely cure your allergies—just help make symptoms more bearable. And there are a few caveats.

The Bad News

One big problem with using weed to treat allergies is that smoking or vaping can actually irritate the throat and nose, possibly making allergic reactions even worse.

And some people are actually allergic to weed itself—no matter what time of year. Symptoms of cannabis allergies are similar to hay fever: Runny nose, itchy eyes, congestion, sneezing and sinus pressure. According to a 2015 paper published in *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*, these are reactions to cannabis pollen.

And before you ask, red eyes and coughing are normal reactions to weed and not a sign that you have an allergy.

In extremely rare cases, cross-reactivity with other allergens can occur. Proteins from marijuana plants can sometimes *resemble* those of an allergen to certain immune systems. When that happens, those immune systems will react to the proteins the same way that they would if they were allergens.

People who are allergic to foods like almonds, chestnuts, hazelnuts, apples, bananas, eggplant, grapefruit, peaches and tomatoes or suffer from hay fever may encounter this problem.

But before you start panicking, this reaction is incredibly rare.

Meanwhile, there's an even rarer condition called cannabis hyperemesis, which is associated with excessive vomiting and persistent nausea from heavy weed use. While it's not an allergic reaction (there's no histamine response to a foreign invader), anyone who suffers from this awful condition has to stay away from weed or risk severe pain and discomfort.

For anyone with an honest-to-goodness weed allergy, one workaround is using as pure a hash oil as you can get your hands on. The negative reaction is a response to the plant proteins in weed smoke, and the process of making cannabis oil removes those proteins, leaving just the cannabinoids.

The Ugly News

So maybe weed can ease some of the woes of allergy season. The jury is still out. At the very least, it doesn't look like it will hurt the vast majority of users, so you can get high on your pile of tissues while you ride out the sniffing, sneezing, stuffy head months.



(Luigi Bechiat Wikimedia Commons)

By Josh Lee

At this point in the game, any school child could tell you all about THC and CBD: The darlings of the cannabis industry. But there are hundreds of cannabinoids in marijuana that are still complete mysteries to scientists.

Researchers have been looking at cannabis compounds like CBG (which may treat depression and a number of inflammatory diseases), CBN (may treat insomnia), delta-8

THC and a handful of others as they try to unravel the riddle of how cannabis works on the human body.

In recent months, there's been some buzz around THC-V, the so-called "diet" weed—largely because it reportedly suppresses appetite while increasing focus and energy.

This might sound strange, considering weed's reputation for kickstarting the munchies, but users report that strains with higher-than-average THC-V

concentrations are less likely to send them on snack binges.

There are also a number of strains designated as sativas that have higher levels of THC-V, which may have a lot to do with the idea that sativas produce a more euphoric and focused high than indicas.

According to the little research that has been done, THC-V is theorized to suppress appetite in animal test subjects by blocking CB1 receptors in the endocannabinoid system, which are known to stimulate appetite.

In a 2009 study published in the *British Journal of Pharmacology*, mice were given acute doses of THC-V, and they stopped eating. The effect lasted for up to eight hours, but was continuous when the drug was administered for four consecutive days.

A 2015 study published in the *International Journal of Neuropsychopharmacology* revealed that the relationship between THC-V and appetite is complicated. This study used human participants and fMRI to analyze reward and aversion responses.

According to the researchers, participants dosed with THC-V had an increase in aversion to rotten strawberries, but they

also had an increase in reward response to chocolate. These stimuli allowed the scientists to see how those areas of participants' brains responded. It meant that the part of the brain that made them averse to food was more active than usual, but their reward systems were still functioning—even more than usual.

So the jury's still out on whether THC-V will help users fight the urge to eat another piece of cake. But signs are good that high THC-V strains won't likely cause the munchies.

Meanwhile, there are a few other potential health benefits that researchers have tied to the cannabinoid. It seems to play a role in cannabis' treatment for Parkinson's disease, psychosis, inflammation, pain and epilepsy. And there are tons of anecdotal claims out there pointing to THC-V as a key cannabinoid in treating panic attacks, Alzheimer's disease and diabetes among other conditions.

But while we wait for more research to come in, it's easy enough to find strains that contain higher levels of THC-V and set up our own experiments at home.



(Elsa Olofssonat Wikimedia Commons)

By Josh Lee

A federal drug agency is taking another stab at regulating CBD. A Food and Drug Administration (FDA) official recently said the officials plan to make CBD and kratom regulation a top priority this year.

During an Alliance for a Strong FDA webinar held last month, FDA Deputy Commissioner for Policy,

Legislation, and International Affairs Kimberlee Trzeciak said the agency is working to find an "appropriate regulatory framework for CBD."

Although CBD sourced from hemp is technically legal, thanks to the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, federal law prohibits companies from selling over-the-counter supplements and foods containing any active ingredients

found in FDA-approved pharmaceutical drugs. Since CBD is the active ingredient of Epidiolex, a drug that treats rare forms of epilepsy in children, companies aren't allowed to make products with it that are meant for human consumption.

The only reason consumers can still purchase CBD is because the FDA decided to allow its sale as long as producers don't print any health claims on their labels. And this leniency was only decided upon following public outcry over the legality revelation.

Nevertheless, consumers and federal legislators have been putting pressure on the agency to fast track special regulations for the cannabinoid since hemp was first legalized. The FDA even said it would be expediting the process way back in 2019, although it has repeatedly noted that the agency is concerned that CBD could be harmful to children and may cause liver damage.

Now, a mere five years later (and notably following a significant decrease in consumer interest), it looks like the agency is finally ready to pull the trigger and set up some regulations.

Trzeciak said CBD products

sold in corner stores and gas stations probably don't meet safety standards set by the FDA for food and dietary supplements. She said without a proper regulatory framework for CBD, authorities are unable to inform the public about the ingredients that are in products and ensure that kids don't get a hold of them.

"How can we ensure that the Agency knows if there are adverse events that are being reported—so we can identify those trends?" she said.

Trzeciak said the agency has a lot of experience setting regulatory boundaries for food products and it needs to collaborate with industry stakeholders and federal legislators to determine "where those lines need to be drawn in terms of the safety of the products."

That means the agency might be considering a much more stringent framework than anticipated. It also means these might be the final days of the Wild West for CBD. Depending on how harshly the agency chooses to regulate, buying CBD over-the-counter might be a thing of the past soon.

Town Uses Cannabis Funds to Clean Up Run-Down Properties



Edgewood property cleaned up with cannabis funds. (Courtesy Town of Edgewood)

By The Independent News

Abandoned and dilapidated properties are being cleaned up in the Town of Edgewood at a faster pace than other New Mexico communities thanks to a town ordinance set up by the commission in 2023 and from cannabis sales

within town limits.

The Cannabis Regulation Act /Nuisance Abatement Fund ordinance has made progress bringing dilapidated properties into compliance, and in several cases, has made way for new residential properties to take their place.

The new approach follows

a civil procedure rather than a criminal process for nuisance properties, defined as a property with excessive trash and debris, abandoned vehicles, dilapidated buildings or any combination of those. In some cases, the buildings are abandoned or have gone into foreclosure.

Edgewood officials say the approach is less contentious and more cost effective for property owners and the town. Bringing blighted properties into compliance typically involves large-scale clean up or removal of vehicles or structures. Homeowners have the option to complete those tasks on their own in an agreed-upon time frame. Alternatively, the town can do the work using a fund from its cannabis gross receipts tax revenue and then put a lien on the property to recover clean-up costs. Upon sale of the property, the town is reimbursed for its clean-up expenses.

Under the ordinance, Edgewood requires vacant properties to be registered with the town. This provides a way for the town to contact property owners should a nuisance problem arise. Oftentimes, the property owners are long-distance and may be unaware of the property's condition.

"I was pleased to find that most of the property owners we were able to engage with were willing to work positively with the Town to resolve the nuisance concerns," said Brad Hill, Planning & Zoning Manager. "Most of the property owners fully understood why these

issues needed to be addressed and worked with staff to find an agreeable solution."

Edgewood's new approach is proving effective, in part because it is less contentious and more cost effective for property owners and the town. Bringing blighted properties into compliance typically involves large-scale clean up or removal of vehicles or structures. Homeowners have the option to complete those tasks on their own in an agreed-upon time frame. Alternatively, the town can do the work using a fund from its cannabis gross receipts tax revenue and then put a lien on the property to recover clean-up costs. Upon sale of the property, the town is reimbursed for its clean-up expenses.

"Planning & Zoning Manager Hill is doing a great job of working with the community while preserving their property rights, protecting the character of our neighborhoods, and preventing them from being degraded," said Town Commissioner Jerry Powers.

Since adopting the new ordinance, in less than a year, 13 nuisance properties have been successfully abated. Of those, eleven voluntarily complied and two went to adjudication. The level of success Edgewood has raised interest from other municipalities in New Mexico where getting nuisance properties cleaned up typically takes years and numerous criminal court filings and appearances.



New Tests Needed for Drugged Driving

Federal researcher calls for better impairment policies

By Josh Lee

Weed regulators in states where the drug is legal are on the hunt for ways to catch drugged drivers. Many of them have latched onto tests that determine the THC concentration in a driver's blood or urine. But a researcher with the Department of Justice (DOJ) says testing THC levels in a person's body is an inaccurate way of determining whether they are intoxicated.

During an episode of the DOJ podcast, *Justice Today*, Frances Scott, a researcher for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences, said the popular model for determining weed impairment by testing THC concentration is flawed in a number of major ways.

Scott said that scientists understand the effects and chemical interactions of alcohol consumption and determining intoxication based on the concentration of alcohol in the blood is "relatively easy."

But with marijuana, there are too many complicating factors involved to find reliably universal THC markers for intoxication.

Scott points out that there's a big difference in intoxication levels when someone consumes edibles compared to smoking flower. Smoking produces a high that quickly escalates to a peak and then quickly recedes. Edibles produce a high that gradually

builds and gradually recedes over many hours.

Edibles are also much more potent by volume because some of the Delta-9 THC that makes smokers high converts into the much stronger 11-hydroxy-THC in the liver. A driver who ate their weed instead of smoking it will be much more intoxicated than one who smoked the equivalent amount.

Scott says another issue is tolerance. Regular cannabis users—especially daily users—are able to consume large amounts of weed without experiencing the same level of effects as infrequent users.

In New Mexico, DWI law forbids driving while under the influence of marijuana "to a degree that renders [the driver] incapable of safely driving a vehicle." Implied consent law makes it so that every driver must give their consent to be tested for drugs, but the law doesn't specify a legal driving limit for THC or any other weed compound like it does with alcohol.

State police are left to their own devices to determine whether someone is high or not. Officers are trained to recognize signs that a person is under the influence of pot (like glassy eyes, impaired speech, inability to focus, dilated pupils and slow pupil reaction) through the Drug Recognition Expert certification program, but there's no way to conduct any sort of roadside

pothead test.

There have been a few attempts to invent an industry-standardized THC breathalyzer in recent years, but none of them have really panned out. There are even some products on the market that claim to accurately determine recent cannabis use.

One problem with these devices is that weed and alcohol do not interact with the body in the same way. It's easy to test for the presence of ethanol vapors in breath (the way alcohol breathalyzers work). But marijuana smoke just doesn't produce vapors like alcohol. Weed breathalyzers instead look for aerosol particles and those aren't as easy to detect.

According to researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) at CU Boulder, people exhale a million times more ethanol in a single breath than cannabis users exhale THC in 12 breaths.

The researchers were looking for a way to produce a standardized marijuana breathalyzer, but they said they were running into problems. Not only is it tough to detect the physical evidence of cannabis in breath, initial research showed that all that evidence disappears within an hour of weed use.

As for blood and urine tests, the results are next to useless for determining if someone is currently high. The body stores

THC in fatty tissues, where it can stay for days in infrequent users. For people who use cannabis regularly, THC can stay detectable for weeks or even months.

That means that someone can smoke weed in March and test positive for it in April. It would be ridiculous to claim that the drug's effects last that long, and it would be really tough to convince anyone that the presence of THC in blood or urine was an indication that a driver was high while operating a vehicle.

Scott told the DOJ podcast that state regulators should stop trying to determine marijuana impairment by measuring THC in breath or body fluids. She noted that scientists aren't even sure if THC is the right cannabinoid to be used as a metric when it comes to measuring impairing effects.

Scott also noted that current standardized field sobriety tests might not be the greatest metric to determine whether someone is impaired. These tests are designed to detect if someone is impaired by alcohol—not whether the skills needed to drive are impaired.

Standardized sobriety tests aren't designed to detect the specific impairments that differentiate drugged driving from drunk driving. According to Scott, alcohol tends to negatively affect equilibrium and balance and alters the information that's being received. Cannabis, on the other hand, tends to make users hyper-focused on specific aspects of their experience while losing focus on others.

New Mexico police are being trained to recognize signs of marijuana impairment that differ from signs of alcohol impairment. It's a smart move, considering the vast differences between the two. But does it take into consideration the unique effects that weed has on perception?

Leading researchers say that currently there are no tests that appropriately measure those effects. But they are working on it. Scott highlighted the NIST work on the weed breathalyzer and a recently-completed DOJ-funded study that had participants smoke marijuana and take various field sobriety tests.

Scott said researchers were also taking a completely different tack by testing weed's effect on peripheral vision.

Blunts. cannabis news shorts

Every week, we round up our favorite cannabis-related news stories in bite-sized edible pieces. Here's some of our favorites!

NM Weed Sales Top \$1 Billion

By Josh Lee

Combined sales of medical cannabis and adult-use marijuana in New Mexico have surpassed \$1 billion since New Mexico opened the doors on its recreational-use market in 2022.

State sales have reached a whopping \$1,010,122,718 according to the latest sales data from the Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD). Adult-use sales totaled more than \$678 million and medical sales totaled more than \$331 million.

According to a news release from Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, the state has collected \$75 million in cannabis excise taxes since April 2022, when recreational sales began.

Albuquerque remains the top city in the state for cannabis sales with more than \$202 million in sales since legalization. Sunland Park, located near the Texas border, made \$57.4 million in adult-use sales.

“Nearly two years after beginning sales, New Mexico is on the map as a premier hub for legal and safe cannabis and the thriving business community that comes with it,” said Lujan Grisham in a statement.



(420 Tours at Wikimedia Commons)

NM to Consider MMJ For Female Orgasm Disorder

The New Mexico Medical Cannabis Advisory Board will reportedly consider adding female orgasm disorder (FOD) to the list of qualifying medical conditions to participate in the state's Medical Cannabis Program.

Last month the Ohio State Medical Board announced it would be analyzing expert opinion and public comment to decide whether FOD should be a qualifying condition for medical marijuana.

According to Marijuana Moment, the nonprofit Female Orgasm Research Institute provided most of the push to discuss FOD. The organization's founder told reporters that the New Mexico Medical Cannabis Advisory Board will be

considering the issue in May, when the board's next meeting is scheduled.

The board has not published the meeting's agenda yet and has not confirmed whether it will be considering FOD as a qualifying condition. Recommendations made by the board are considered by the Department of Health, but the agency has the final say in the matter. The DOH has rejected qualifying condition recommendations from the board before.

Majority of Americans Live Near Legal Weed

A recent analysis from the Pew Research Center found that 79 percent of Americans live in a county where there is at least one cannabis dispensary.

The researchers discovered that 54 percent of Americans live in a state where recreational marijuana is legal. They also found that there are nearly 15,000 dispensaries across the country.

California took the prize for having the most dispensaries of any state (3,659 stores). Los Angeles County alone has more dispensaries (1,481) than any state other than California.

Oklahoma had the most dispensaries per capita with 36 dispensaries for every 100,000 residents.

The Pew Research Center used data collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws and marijuana dispensary locations from SafeGraph.

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March 10–16 is Sunshine Week, a nationwide effort to remind us all of the importance of your right to know.

At the New Mexico Foundation for Open Government, we believe government that lets the sunlight in is good government—good for business, good for people and good for our state.

NMFOG is here for anyone having issues trying to access public information; information that belongs to you and is essential to a working democracy. During Sunshine Week, join us in being vigilant as lawmakers consider changes to our strong public access laws. This is not a partisan issue. When government does its business behind closed doors, everyone suffers.

So catch some sunlight this week, and together we can bring 365 days of sunshine to New Mexico.

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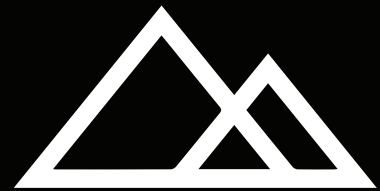
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Side Effects May Vary NM Premiere

Direct-to-video horror movie legend J.R. Bookwalter (The Dead Next Door, Robot Ninja, Ozone) drops into Albuquerque for the roadshow premiere of his latest gore-soaked outing, *Side Effects May Vary*. Set during a global pandemic (hmm, that sounds familiar), this "body horror" flick follows a science denier who turns to an experimental treatment for protection and finds out that sometimes the cure is worse than the disease! The notorious filmmaker has worked with the likes of Sam Raimi, Bruce Campbell, Scott Spiegel, Linnea Quigley and Charles Band and founded the iconic Tempe Video distribution label. He'll be there to introduce his new film and to answer all of your burning questions about the indie horror industry. It all goes down at **Guild Cinema (3405 Central Ave. NE)** on **Friday, March 15 at 10:30pm**. Tickets are \$10 each.

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

Comedy
La India Yuridia – Porque Asi Soy \$45-\$115 8-9:30 pm Kiva Auditorium 2nd St & Marquette Northeast

Samuel J Comroe \$25-\$30 7-8:30 pm Quezada's Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo, Santa Ana Pueblo, 004

Samuel J Comroe \$25-\$30 9-10:30 pm Quezada's Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo, Santa Ana Pueblo, 004

The Show - Live Comedy Improv \$12 8-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Dance
Friday Night Square Dancing 7 - 9 PM Fridays Albuquerque Square Dance Center 4915 Hawkins St NE

Exhibit
Nikesha Breeze and Alex Ponca Stock Thursday-Saturday 11-4 Richard Levy Gallery 514 Central Ave SW

Opening Reception for Reflective Presence: The Art of Jesse Littlebird & Jonathan Loretto 6-8 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Film
California Northern BDR Expedition Documentary 6-8 pm Sandia BMW Motorcycles 6001 Pan American Fwy.

Dan Savage's Hump! Film Fest Tour 2024 \$20 6-7:30 pm Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE

GUILDcinema
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HUMP! Amateur Erotic Film Festival
Fri-Sat March 15-16 6:00, 8:15

Plague horror **SIDE EFFECTS MAY VARY**
Friday March 15 10:30pm

A Queer Land Defense fundraiser:
Palestinian **5 BROKEN CAMERAS (2011)**
Saturday March 16 1:00pm

The 1964 Giallo horror landmark!
Mario Bava's **BLOOD & BLACK LACE**
Saturday March 16 10:30pm

Local film **WHERE IS THE "I" IN INFINITE?**
Sunday March 17 12:30pm

Cannes prize winner **HOW TO HAVE SEX**
Sun-Thu March 17-21 3:30, 7:30

Mexico's official Oscar entry **TÔTEM**
Sun-Thu March 17-21 5:30

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Dan Savage’s Hump! Film Fest Tour 2024 \$20 8-9:30 pm Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE

Side Effects May Vary Premiere with Director J.R. Bookwalter \$10 10:30 pm-12:30 am Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE

Miscellaneous

Albuquerque Antiquarian Book Fair \$2-\$7 3-8 pm Sid Cutter Pilot’s Pavilion 4900 Balloon Fiesta Pkwy NE

Anime New Mexico 2024 \$29-\$99 3-10 pm Crowne Plaza Albuquerque 1901 University Blvd NE

Music

Bodega Tings, a club night by Ryan Demond \$5-\$20 9 pm-12 am JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

Dirt Monkey \$24-\$29 9:30 pm-2 am Electric Playhouse 5201 Ouray Rd. NW

Green Jelly \$15 8-11 pm Moonlight Lounge 120 Central Ave SW

Hockey Dad \$20 8-11 pm Launchpad 618 Central Avenue Southwest

Hype or Die Fest \$25-\$40 9 pm-2 am Historic El Rey Theatre 622 Central Ave SW

Joseph General and High Vibration \$15 7 pm-12 am Sister 407 Central Ave. NW

Madison Rose and Kai Warrior \$10 7:30-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

MercyMe Always Only Jesus \$30-\$82 7-10 pm Rio Rancho Events Center 3001 Civic Center Cir NE, Rio Rancho

New Mexico Performing Arts Society Presents: The Doox of Yale Spring Tour \$20-\$40 7-9 pm St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church 601 Montano NW, 87107

North American Co-Headline Tour with Mugshot, Kaonashi, Mouth For War & More \$15-\$20 7-11:30 pm Ren’s Den 900 Fourth St. SW

The Get Down on the El Rey Mezzanine 8 pm-1 am Historic El Rey Theatre 622 Central Ave SW

Music - Classical

NM Philharmonic Coffee Concert 3 - A Spring Thaw \$27-\$48 10:30 am-12:30 pm First United Methodist Church 420 N. Nevada Ave, Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Performance

Dinosaur World Live! \$20-\$55 7:30-9 pm Popejoy Hall 203 Cornell Dr

Magic & Burlesque Night w/ Dave Grimm \$10-\$15 8-10 pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

THE ODD COUPLE (FEMALE VERSION) \$10-\$24 7:30-9:45 pm Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

Tacos Ricos: A Culinary Comedy! 7:30 pm National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

Class / Workshop

Osuna Universtity: Container Gardening 11 am-12 pm Osuna Nursery 501 Osuna Rd. NE

Comedy

Fill & Wes Improv \$10 7-8 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Ralph Barbosa: The Super Cool Ass Tour \$39-\$59 7-9 pm Revel Entertainment Center 4720 Alexander Blvd NE

Samuel J Comroe \$25-\$30 7-8:30 pm Quezada’s Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo, Santa Ana Pueblo, 004

Samuel J Comroe \$25-\$30 9-10:30 pm Quezada’s Comedy Club at Santa Ana Star 54 Jemez Canyon Dam Road, Santa Ana Pueblo, Santa Ana Pueblo, 004

The Show - Live Comedy Improv \$12 8-9 pm The Box Performance Space 114 Gold Ave SW

Community

The Official Lucky’s St Patrick’s Day Bar Crawl - Albuquerque \$10 4-11:45 pm Bourbon & Boots 325 Central Ave NW

Dance

Kaltonaka Dance Group (Chichimeca Mexica Azteca) 12-1 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

St. Patrick’s Day Adult Swing Dance \$10 8-11 pm Escape in Time 1100 San Mateo Blvd NE, Unit 21

Film

Dan Savage’s Hump! Film Fest Tour 2024 \$20 6-7:30 pm Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE

Dan Savage’s Hump! Film Fest Tour 2024 \$20 8-9:30 pm Guild Cinema 3405 Central Ave NE

Games

St. Paddy’s Drag Queen Bingo 7-9 pm Tractor Brewing Wells Park 1800 Fourth St. NW

Uno Tournament \$10 12-4 pm Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

Markets

El Vado’s Lucky Market 12-5 pm El Vado 2500 Central Ave SW

Miscellaneous

Albuquerque Antiquarian Book Fair \$2-\$7 10 am-4 pm Sid Cutter Pilot’s Pavilion 4900 Balloon Fiesta Pkwy NE

Anime New Mexico 2024 \$29-\$99 10 am-10 pm Crowne Plaza Albuquerque 1901 University Blvd NE

Music

Celtic Music Performance 1-2 pm International District Library 7601 Central Ave NE

Descendents & Circle Jerks \$39-\$89 8-11 pm Historic El Rey Theatre 622 Central Ave SW

Grupo Super Verza with Ave. 69 \$15-\$40 9 pm-12:30 am JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

Kansas: Another Fork in the Road – 50th Anniversary Tour \$45-\$120 7:30-9:30 pm Kiva Auditorium 2nd St & Marquette Northeast

Lakedub \$10 8:30 pm-12:30 am Launchpad 618 Central Avenue Southwest

Lil Wayne \$64-\$174 8-11:30 pm Rio Rancho Events Center 3001 Civic Center Cir NE, Rio Rancho

Sparks Night - Ides of March Blacklight Toga Party 8 pm-12 am Lizard Tail Brewing Nob Hill 3417 Central Ave. NE Suite C

St. Patty’s Jam \$15-\$20 7-11 pm The Historic Lobo Theater - Lounge & Event Venue 3013 Central Ave NE

The Schizophonics \$12 7-11:30 pm Sister 407 Central Ave. NW

Music - Classical

New Mexico Philharmonic: Hooray For Hollywood \$35-\$95 6-8 pm Popejoy Hall 203 Cornell Dr

Performance

Nerdlesque! A Nerdy Burlesque Revue \$15-\$75 7-9 pm Revel Entertainment Center 4720 Alexander Blvd NE

THE ODD COUPLE (FEMALE VERSION) \$10-\$24 7:30-9:45 pm Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

Tacos Ricos: A Culinary Comedy! 7:30 pm National Hispanic Cultural Center 1701 4th Street Southwest

The Monologists \$10-\$15 4-9:30 pm Orpheum Arts Space 500 Second St. SW Apt 21

Sports

Monster Jam \$25-\$60 1-3 pm Tingley Coliseum 300 San Pedro Dr. NE

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

Dance

Kaltonaka Dance Group (Chichimeca Mexica Azteca) 12-1 pm Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th Street NW

Food

St. Patrick’s Day Sunday Funday 2-6 pm Revel Entertainment Center 4720 Alexander Blvd NE

Games

Brain Gang Trivia 2-4 pm Lizard Tail Brewing 9800 Montgomery Blvd NE STE 7

Brain Gang Trivia 5-7 pm Lizard Tail Industrial 3351 Columbia Dr. NE

Literature/Poetry

J.L. Greger Book Signing 12-3 pm Treasure House Books & Gifts 2012 S Plaza St NW A

Miscellaneous

Anime New Mexico 2024 \$29-\$99 10 am-3 pm Crowne Plaza Albuquerque 1901 University Blvd NE

Music

Blot Xenia with WaterDogs \$5 7-10 pm JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

International Folk Dance with Live Music by Parson Sisters 2:30-5 pm JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

Music on the Patio: The Reelers 4-7 pm Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

St. Patrick’s Day Karaoke 6-9 pm Canteen Brewhouse 2381 Aztec Road Northeast

St. Punktrick’s Day 6-11:30 pm Launchpad 618 Central Avenue Southwest

The Heart is Awake Presents TEMPLE OF SOUND \$25 6-7:30 pm FUSION | 708 708 1st St NW

Performance

Omnium Circus \$25-\$69 3-5 pm Popejoy Hall 203 Cornell Dr

Sandia Performing Arts Company: Tacos Ricos \$15-\$20 2-4 pm South Broadway Cultural Center 1025 Broadway Blvd SE

THE ODD COUPLE (FEMALE VERSION) \$10-\$24 2-4:15 pm Adobe Theater 9813 4th St NW

Sports

OCB Albuquerque Natural \$50-\$80 10 am-3:30 pm Revel Entertainment Center 4720 Alexander Blvd NE

MONDAY, MARCH 18

Food

(Wine) Tour de France \$130 6-9 pm Farm & Table 8917 4th St NW

Games

Brain Gang Trivia 6-8 pm Canteen Taproom 417 Tramway Blvd NE

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm M’tucci’s Bar Roma Restaurant 3222 Central Ave. SE

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm Santa Fe Brewing (Tin Can Alley) 6110 Alameda Blvd NE Suite #1

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm Bow & Arrow Brewing Co. 608 McKnight Ave NW

Music

Early Moods \$10 8-11 pm Sister 407 Central Ave. NW

Nick Shoulders 8-11 pm Launchpad 618 Central Avenue Southwest

Performance

Open Mic: Karaoke, Original Music, Comedy, Poetry hosted by Queneesha “Q” 8-10 pm JUNO brewery + cafe + art 1501 1st Street Northwest

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

Games

Brain Gang Trivia 7-9 pm Lizard Tail Industrial 3351 Columbia Dr. NE

Geeks Who Drink 7-9 pm 505 Central Food Hall 505 Central Ave NW

Music

Dancing Plague \$10 8-11 pm Sunshine Theater 120 Central Ave SW

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

Week of March 13

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ARIES (March 21-April 19): I will never advise you to dim the flame of your ambition or be shy about radiating your enthusiasm. For the next few weeks, though, I urge you to find ways to add sap, juice, and nectar to your fiery energy. See if you can be less like a furnace and more like a sauna; less like a rumbling volcano and more like a tropical river. Practically speaking, this might mean being blithely tender and unpredictably heartfelt as you emanate your dazzling glow.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Some spiritual traditions tell us that the path to enlightenment and awakening is excruciatingly difficult. One teaching compares it to crossing a bridge that's sharper than a sword, thinner than a hair, and hotter than fire. Ideas like these have no place in my personal philosophy. I believe enlightenment and awakening are available to anyone who conscientiously practices kindness and compassion. A seeker who consistently asks, "What is the most loving thing I can do?" will be rewarded with life-enhancing transformations. Now I invite you to do what I just did, Taurus. That is, re-evaluate a task or process that everyone (maybe even you) assumes is hard and complicated. Perform whatever tweaks are necessary to understand it as fun, natural, and engaging.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Do you have a relative your parents never told you about? If so, you may find out about them soon. Do you have a secret you want to keep secret? If so, take extra caution to ensure it stays hidden. Is there a person you have had a covert crush on for a while? If so, they may discover your true feelings any minute now. Have you ever wondered if any secrets are being concealed from you? If so, probe gently for their revelation, and they just may leak out. Is there a lost treasure you have almost given up on finding? If so, revive your hopes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Cancerian poet Pablo Neruda wrote this to a lover: "I want to do with you what spring does with the cherry trees." That sounds very romantic. What does it mean? Well, the arrival of spring brings warmer soil and air, longer hours of sunlight, and nurturing precipitation. The flowers of some cherry trees respond by blooming with explosive vigor. Some trees sprout upwards of 4,000 blossoms. Maybe Neruda was exaggerating for poetic effect, but if he truly wanted to rouse his lover to be like a burgeoning cherry tree, he'd have to deal with an overwhelming outpouring of lush beauty and rampant fertility. Could he have handled it? If I'm reading the upcoming astrological omens correctly, you Cancerians now have the power to inspire and welcome such lavishness. And yes, you can definitely handle it.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Speaking on behalf of all non-Leos, I want to express our gratitude for the experiments you have been conducting. Your willingness to dig further than ever before into the mysterious depths is exciting. Please don't be glum just because the results are still inconclusive and you feel a bit vulnerable. I'm confident you will ultimately generate fascinating outcomes that are valuable to us as well as you. Here's a helpful tip: Give yourself permission to be even more daring and curious. Dig even deeper.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Unexpected mixtures are desirable, though they may initially feel odd. Unplanned and unheralded alliances will be lucky wild cards if you are willing to set aside your expectations. Best of all, I believe you will be extra adept at creating new forms of synergy and symbiosis, even as you enhance existing forms. Please capitalize on these marvelous openings, dear Virgo. Are there parts of your life that have been divided, and you would like to harmonize them? Now is a good time to try. Bridge-building will be your specialty for the foreseeable future.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Many of you Libras have a special talent for tuning into the needs and moods of other people. This

potentially gives you the power to massage situations to serve the good of all. Are you using that power to its fullest? Could you do anything more to harness it? Here's a related issue: Your talent for tuning into the needs and moods of others can give you the capacity to massage situations in service to your personal aims. Are you using that capacity to its fullest? Could you do anything more to harness it? Here's one more variation on the theme: How adept are you at coordinating your service to the general good and your service to your personal aims? Can you do anything to enhance this skill? Now is an excellent time to try.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Psychologist Carl Jung said, "One of the most difficult tasks people can perform is the invention of good games. And this cannot be done by people out of touch with their instinctive selves." According to my astrological assessment, you will thrive in the coming weeks when you are playing good, interesting games. If you dream them up and instigate them yourself, so much the better. And what exactly do I mean by "games"? I'm referring to any organized form of play that rouses fun, entertainment, and education. Playing should be one of your prime modes, Scorpio! As Jung notes, that will happen best if you are in close touch with your instinctual self—also known as your animal intelligence.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Can Sagittarians ever really find a home they are utterly satisfied with? Are they ever at peace with exactly who they are and content to be exactly where they are? Some astrologers suggest these are difficult luxuries for you Centaurs to accomplish. But I think differently. In my view, it's your birthright to create sanctuaries for yourself that incorporate so much variety and expansiveness that you can feel like an adventurous explorer without necessarily having to wander all over the earth. Now is an excellent time to work on this noble project.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You picked Door #2 a while back. Was that the best choice? I'm not sure. Evidence is still ambiguous. As we await more conclusive information, I want you to know that Door #1 and Door #3 will soon be available for your consideration again. The fun fact is that you can try either of those doors without abandoning your activities in the area where Door #2 has led you. But it's important to note that you can't try *both* Door #1 and Door #3. You must choose one or the other. Proceed with care and nuance, Capricorn, but not with excessive caution. Your passwords are *daring sensitivity* and "discerning audacity."

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): My second cousin has the same name as me and lives in Kosice, Slovakia. He's a Slovakian-speaking chemical engineer who attended the Slovak University of Technology. Do we have anything in common besides our DNA and names? Well, we both love to tell stories. He and I are both big fans of the band Rising Appalachia. We have the same mischievous brand of humor. He has designed equipment and processes to manufacture products that use chemicals in creative ways, and I design oracles to arouse inspirations that change people's brain chemistry. Now I invite you, Aquarius, to celebrate allies with whom you share key qualities despite being quite different. It's a fine time to get maximum enjoyment and value from your connections with such people.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): My Piscean friend Jeff Greenwald wrote the humorous but serious book *Shopping for Buddhas*. It's the story of his adventures in Nepal as he traveled in quest of a statue to serve as a potent symbol for his spiritual yearning. I'm reminded of his search as I ruminate on your near future. I suspect you would benefit from an intense search for divine inspiration—either in the form of an iconic object, a pilgrimage to a holy sanctuary, or an inner journey to the source of your truth and love.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Basil, e.g.
- 5 "Dark Angel" star Jessica
- 9 Brilliant display
- 14 Say it's so
- 15 Lumber defect
- 16 River by the Louvre
- 17 Dairy-farm equipment
- 19 Singer profiled in "Sweet Dreams"
- 20 Get a rise out of
- 21 Naples native
- 23 Wheel on a spur
- 24 Partners of gowns
- 25 Autumn mo.
- 27 Sheryl Crow song, "Can't Cry _____"
- 29 "Just as I thought!"
- 32 Fuss over oneself
- 34 Showed up for
- 36 Gives a hand
- 37 Not quite right
- 39 In the thick of
- 40 Turned loose
- 42 Stand for
- 43 Give it a whirl
- 44 Hoover competitor
- 47 Elton John, for one
- 48 Root beer brand
- 49 Watermelon waste
- 51 Ms. magazine co-founder
- 54 Running back's stat
- 57 Long-_____

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- 58 Versatile, as a tool
- 60 Insect stage
- 61 Grimm story
- 62 Spanish custard
- 63 Mortise's mate
- 64 Regarded
- 65 Mobile home?

DOWN

- 1 Door securer
- 2 Anon's partner
- 3 Supposedly
- 4 Shout of approval
- 5 Greet the day
- 6 Johnny-come-_____
- 7 Certain sib
- 8 Peachlike fruits
- 9 Coop flier

- 10 Prison units
- 11 Ovid's 53
- 12 "_____ and the King" (Foster film)
- 13 Arcade patron
- 18 Martin's partner of old TV
- 22 Bakery treats
- 25 Eyeball benders
- 26 News source of yore
- 28 Eight a-milking, in song
- 29 Like some evidence
- 30 Klum of "Project Runway"
- 31 Viper
- 33 Oahu-to-Maui dir.
- 35 Get the drop on
- 37 Parenthetical comment
- 38 Chow-hall friend
- 41 Leave in the lurch
- 42 Ready
- 45 Musical run with four sharps
- 46 Did an axel, say
- 48 Muralist Rivera
- 50 "Rough" writing
- 51 Opening
- 52 Cell phone display
- 53 Welsh form of John
- 55 Lean anagram
- 56 Shipped
- 59 Calendar box

The Paper.

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Solution to Crossword:



"I'M SO GRATEFUL I NEVER STOPPED SEARCHING!"

Bernalillo resident Maria R had been experiencing the debilitating side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy.

"I was beginning to have other health issues due to the lack of sleep. I needed help just standing up and when I was standing I was afraid I would fall because I had no feeling in my feet. My life felt like a nightmare."

Then she met Albuquerque's very own Dr. Andrea Brogdon

"I was so desperate to the point of giving up" exclaimed Maria R. from Bernalillo. "I was in so much discomfort due to the numbness, tingling, and burning on the back of both legs and in my feet."

Maria R had been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy and had seen a neurologist with no relief. To complicate things further, Maria had been diagnosed with two fractured discs in her back that were causing her severe pain. "I was no longer able to do surgery and all other treatments didn't work. I was starting to feel hopeless."

Maria is one of 3 million people in the United States suffering from peripheral neuropathy, a degenerative disease of the peripheral nervous system. "Those with peripheral neuropathy experience numbness, tingling, burning and even severe cramping due to the dying off of the peripheral nerves," explains Dr. Andrea Brogdon of Albuquerque Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine. "These nerves continue to die off until they have completely expired leaving sufferers with numbness and debilitating balance issues. Patients come to see me after having seen many other doctors with no relief. They have been told that there is nothing they can do or that they just have to live with it."

"I was beginning to have other health issues due to the lack of sleep. I needed help just standing up and when I was standing I was afraid I would fall because I had no feeling in my feet. My life felt like a nightmare," says Maria.

"I learned about Dr. Andrea Brogdon from an article I read and learned that she helped others like me, experiencing the same symptoms.

I made an appointment hoping she was going to be able to help me. It was my last resort."

Dr. Andrea Brogdon has helped thousands of patients get their life back after being diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy and living with the debilitating effects of the disease. How does she get such amazing results? "Acupuncture has been used for centuries to improve circulation but the real magic happens when I integrate ATP Resonance BioTherapy™." By using modern technological advancements alongside the time tested science of acupuncture, Dr. Brogdon is able to reverse the effects of this degenerative disease, regardless of its origin.

"Early detection is key when it comes to improving your chances of a full recovery," explains Dr. Brogdon. Which is why she starts every patient with an initial consultation during which a sensory exam is performed. "This helps to determine just how much nerve damage has occurred," tells the doctor. "This is important because if the patient has suffered more than 95% sensory loss there is very little I can do at that point."

"After several treatments, I experienced tremendous relief. Life is good! I have seen a huge improvement in my walking, I sleep better, even my mood is better! I am so grateful I never stopped searching!"
exclaims Maria.

If you or a loved one are living a life of suffering due to peripheral neuropathy and your pain has prevented you from doing the things you love with the people you love, it's time to call Dr. Brogdon and the staff at AAIM.

Call (505) 355-1984 today to schedule an initial consultation or visit AAIM-ABQ.com to read more incredible success stories.



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