

# Go ahead, bust me

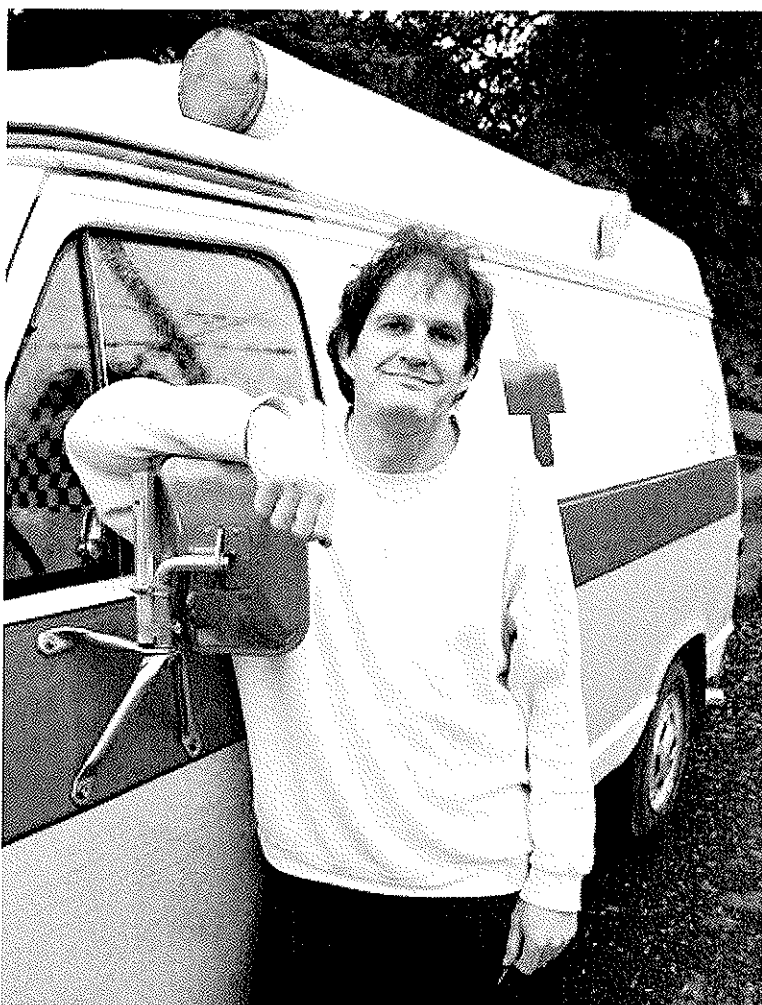
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**By David Johnson of the Tribune**

**Whitman County pot grower, user and supplier is just jonesing for his day in a courtroom**



Michael Adam Assenberg, of Colfax, who has a card allowing him to legally smoke medical marijuana, l...



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COLFAX - Less than two weeks after a drug raid at his home netted 82 marijuana plants, Michael Adam Assenberg vowed Monday to continue lighting up, growing pot plants in his basement and delivering medicinal cannabis products throughout Whitman County.

"I'm tired of all the ripoffs patients have to go through," said the 51-year-old Assenberg. "So I decided to open up Compassion 4 Patients, and it really is about the compassion."

For the past four months, Assenberg said he's been harvesting his cannabis crop, converting it into smokable and edible medicines and using a 35-year-old ambulance to deliver products to upward of nine patients.

"It's very easy to find out what I'm doing because I went on Craigslist and various newspapers and such," Assenberg said. "I have advertised that I'm out there to help patients."

In accordance with medical marijuana laws, Assenberg said he doesn't turn a profit and he makes sure those who buy his products have been cleared by a doctor.

"I'm tired of seeing patients like myself hurt," said Assenberg, explaining he suffers chronic pain after breaking his back in nine places 26 years ago. "I'm tired of seeing patients like myself being sold moldy medicine or medicine that's been sprayed down so it weighs more and people can make more money on it."

But authorities are apparently tired of Assenberg's overt actions. Members of the Quad Cities Drug Task Force recently served a warrant at Assenberg's home here and seized 82 pot plants as well as other evidence. Whitman County Sheriff Brett Myers confirmed felony charges of manufacturing and delivering marijuana will be filed, perhaps by the end of this week.

Assenberg said he's retained a Spokane attorney and he welcomes his day in court. "They know that if I ever get in front of a jury with my argument, I'm going to win hands down," he said, describing medical marijuana laws as vague at best and geared to perpetuate myths about cannabis use. "So let's go ahead and bring it to a criminal trial where I am forced to have a jury."

Myers said Assenberg may indeed get his wish. "I think the case speaks for itself," the sheriff said, adding medical marijuana laws have legal parameters and users must "go by the book." A spokesperson at the office of Whitman County Prosecutor Denis Tracy said the case is still under investigation.

Meanwhile, Assenberg said he's already received new marijuana plants from legal patients and his growing operation has resumed. "I'm going to really go after them in court on this. When they raided my house, they destroyed everything I had in my clone machine. I can no longer replicate the exact strains I was growing before. They killed everything in my vegetation room."

Assenberg said authorities left 15 plants for which his wife, Carla, 47, who has been medically cleared to use cannabis for treatment of fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, stress and arthritis. But all his personal medicinal cannabis was seized, he said.

"That's where the law needs to be clarified. How is it that we can have a law that you are allowed a medicine, but yet there is nothing in place where you're able to acquire that medicine without breaking the law."

Police, Assenberg said, arrested him prior to the raid while he was driving and asked him how many pounds of marijuana and how many thousands of dollars they were going find at his house. "When they did the raid, I had less than 4 ounces in the whole house of usable medicine," Assenberg said.

More important than the specifics of the raid, Assenberg said, is the debate about medical marijuana laws and how they are or are not enforced. "I'm daring them to take a look at what Congress said has to meet the guidelines for a schedule one narcotic," he said. "And

then I'm daring them to show how the FDA has lied to the public so the pharmaceutical industry and the law enforcement industry could keep making profits on this."

He said he welcomes becoming a test case so the courts can finally make corrective rulings. "The simple fact is the FDA and the DEA and police departments want to keep this a crime," he said, adding government continues to perpetrate lies about cannabis.

"That way they can go ahead and continue to make money off the pharmaceutical complex, and also off the prison industrial complex," Assenberg said. "What they're doing is creating a organization to where we now have criminals behind badges who can steal legally from you."

Assenberg insisted his biggest goal is to help patients in need. He has a website called Compassion 4 Patients and Adams Incredible Medables that advertises medical foods like Scooby Snacks, fudge and Gummy Bears. There are also flavored tinctures and smokables with names like Jack the Ripper, High Plains Drifter and Sweet Lavender Diesel.

"I have never been a dope dealer. I'm just making sure patients get their medicine," Assenberg said. "I'm replanting my garden and in four to five months I'll be back helping patients again. I want this argument to finally be made in a court of law so people don't have to suffer."

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