

Mary Jane lets the good times roll for young, and mostly old

Lindsey Treffry/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

Despite expectations, hundreds of college-aged students were not, in fact, lined up to buy legal marijuana Saturday when MJ's Pot Shop opened for business. There was no frenzy or disruption and, unlike Spokane's opening day, under 100 people showed, compared to the 700-plus that individual Spokane stores see on Saturdays. Instead, the line was a mix of all ages and types.

In a college town, mere miles away from another college town, pot critics assumed the line would be riddled with young bodies. In an unfair stereotype, 22-year-olds have become the face of the pot campaign, when in reality it should be the aching baby boomers.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, almost 6 percent of all adults between the ages of 50 and 59 reported smoking marijuana in the past year, a 3 percent increase from five years prior. The number of recent users over the age of 50 has climbed to a whopping 2.65 million nationwide, and that's just based on self-reported drug use, so we can only imagine the actual figures.

Shawn Paulson, 53, in an interview with the Daily News, said he finds marijuana especially beneficial now that he's in his 50s and dealing with "aches and pains." That's a much different picture from partying on the weekends and getting high for fun.

MJ's shop had a range of varieties and prices, but most were around \$30 per gram. And that's another factor in age-related pot purchases: Young people aren't going to pay big bucks for something they can pay less for down the street. As the legal supply increases, those prices should drop if there's to be any chance of getting marijuana distribution out of criminal hands.

Still, the first day's low turnout and aging patrons were a surprise for us, and surely nipped the smoking stereotype in the bud.