



Inhale knowledge young grasshopper

BY **NGAIO BEALUM** / ask420@newsreview.com

How do I become a “marijuana expert”?

How does anyone become an expert at anything? Education and practice. I will assume that you have already practiced smoking weed. But what have you learned? My first suggestion would be: Read books. Start with *The Emperor Wears No Clothes* by Jack Herer. Then maybe some books about how to grow weed. Ed Rosenthal and Jorge Cervantes are two good growers who happen to be good writers. Find a grower in your area and politely pester them with questions. You can even take classes. Oaksterdam University has schools in the Bay Area and Michigan. Leafly.com has a bunch of “cannabis 101” educational videos online. Learn everything you can about cannabis, then relearn a bunch of stuff as new knowledge is discovered. When I first started, no one knew what a terpene was and CBD didn’t exist. I mean, it did, but no one really knew about it. Just keep learning. They say it takes 10,000 hours to truly master something. It probably takes longer when you’re stoned. Good luck.

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Any news about federal legalization efforts?

Yeah. But it’s not good. President Donald Trump just released his 2021 budget proposal. In addition to cutting billions from Medicare and other social safety net programs, this proposal would remove the provisions that protect state regulated cannabis businesses from federal interference. If this budget is allowed to pass (it probably won’t since House Democrats and millionaires trying to monopolize the cannabis industry will most likely stop it.), the DEA would once again be able to raid and arrest perfectly legal cannabis growers and storefront operators. No

one should be sent to jail for cannabis. Ever. Call your reps and remind them to support legalization. And don’t forget to vote. The California primary is March 3 and the presidential election is nine months away. Get involved.

What’s with all the cannabis companies going out of business?

I am doing my best to avoid gloating or cackling with glee. People are losing jobs and I feel for all of the employees that have been let go, but most of these multimillion-dollar weed start-ups had no clue about how to thrive in the cannabis industry. Recklessly spending gobs of money in an attempt to monopolize one of the greatest decentralized industries of all time is not a recipe for success. Thumbing your nose at the very people that made it possible is never a good business move. Looking at you, MedMen, with your \$2 million “not a stoner” ad campaign. It was the “stoners” who legalized weed and made it so you could burn through all of your investor money and not pay your suppliers. OK, stoners did the first part. The rest is on you. But all is not lost. According to the recently released cannabis jobs report from Leafly, there are about 243,000 jobs in the cannabis industry, and that number is growing every day. □



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