

# FLORIDA WEEKLY<sup>®</sup>

## KEY WEST EDITION

WEEK OF OCTOBER 11-17, 2018

www.FloridaWeekly.com

Vol. 3, No. 28 • FREE

**INSIDE:** How and where do you get medical marijuana? **A10** ▶ | Experts Q&As. **A10, 15** ▶ | Quotables – where some stand. **A11** ▶

# FLORIDA & MARIJUANA

THE BASICS OF GETTING LEGAL CANNABIS IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

BY ERIC RADDATZ  
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AND EVAN WILLIAMS  
ewilliams@floridaweekly.com

**L**OOKING FOR SOME MARIJUANA? While to many this question seems shady, the reality is you live in Florida, a state that now legally allows use of medicinal cannabis. If your answer is yes, you may have some questions about how to get it. You are not alone.

Since 71 percent of Floridians voted in favor of legalizing medical marijuana in 2016, and Amendment 2 became law, a few things are sure.

You can get marijuana legally in numerous locations across the state. In order to get it, you have to go to a doctor to authorize you to use it, one who has been certified by a two-hour course approved by the Department of Health. There

SEE WEED, **A10** ▶

### INSIDE



#### Bartender of week

It's Parrots and Eagles for Valerie Hines Grohol. **A6** ▶



#### Top Picks

The ultimate Michael Jackson experience. **A8-9** ▶



#### Real Estate

A two-bedroom Key West Golf Club townhome for \$524,000. **A18** ▶



#### Local focus

Larry for Fantasy Fest King. **A6** ▶

## Tuning up for the Key West Barbershop Music Fest

BY LAURA RICHARDSON  
Florida Weekly Correspondent

Thanks to movies like “Pitch Perfect” and TV shows like Fox’s “The Sing-Off,” a cappella music, once just a hobby for music-loving nerds with too much time on their hands, is cooler than ever. But way before Anna Kendrick ever picked up a red Solo

cup and even before college a cappella groups started recording epic mash-ups of Top 40 pop songs, the barbershop tradition had the four-part harmony game on lock. As early as the 1800s, American barbershop groups (in the form we recognize today) started to arrange classic songs for vocal performance —



without the crutch of background music to bolster their sound. But it wasn't until the spring of 1938, when the Barbershop Harmony Society's first meeting took place at the Tulsa Club, that the barbershop sound was defined and standardized and a true genre was created.

SEE BARBERSHOP, **A14** ▶

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# OFF OFF DUVAL

The most traveled and visible street in Key West is only the beginning, the surface, of what the town has to offer. Ask the locals about their favorite spots, stroll through quiet neighborhoods or down alleyways off Duval and you'll begin to dive deeper into the quieter, more diverse and less readily apparent offerings. Here are eight spots you might not see at first glance.

**Better than Sex, 926 Simonton St. 305-296-8102; www.betterthanssexkeywest.com.** A great place for couples. Swing by this dessert-only, adults-only restaurant late in the evening. Indulge your senses with chocolate dipped wine glasses and cheeky, homemade desserts and beverages such as an Ephemere Apple Spiced Ale in a tall beer glass with a signature caramel rim-job. Lick it good.

**Mellow Café and Gastro Pub, 1605 Roosevelt Blvd. 305-745-3874; www.mellowventureskeywest.com.** Near the water in Old Town Key West, the café is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner and offers unique island fare with a mellow atmosphere to match. The menu items are crafted with fresh, locally sourced ingredients and include a fresh catch, Havana roasted pork, romaine leaf plates and caramelized banana chocolate tacos. Drink options include a large selection of craft beers, 11 rotating tap beers, wine, house-made sangria and champagne cocktails. They have a great happy hour daily from 5-7 p.m., and delivery is available.

**Cuban Coffee Queen, 284 Marga-**



COURTESY PHOTO

**The Mellow Café and Gastro Pub is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.**

**ret St. 305-292-4747; www.cuban-coffeequeen.com.** The strong Cuban coffee at this hole in the wall is also rich in Key West heritage. A café con leche paired with a classic Cuban sandwich or some Havana rice and beans will keep you going long into a Key West night.

**Firefly, 223 Petronia St. 305-849-0104; www.fireflykeywest.com.** Being that Key West is home to the southernmost point of the continental United States, it's fitting that the island is home to a Southern-inspired restaurant. Firefly's plantation-style look and its menu give it the most down-home feel of any culinary experience on the island. The shrimp and grits, fried chicken and bacon-wrapped meatloaf are a few fan favorites.

**Key West Island Bookstore, 513 Fleming St. www.Keywestisland-**

**books.com; 305-294-2904.** This decades-old boutique bookstore offers a surprisingly varied wealth of current and used titles, from bestsellers to rare titles. Often open late, it's an inviting place to browse the crowded stacks.

**La Rubia Fine Hats, 510 Fleming St. 305-296-6059; www.larubiakeywest.com.** This is the Florida Keys' only importer of authentic Panama hats. The owners developed the boutique to carry on the centuries-old tradition of hand weaving hats (which come from Ecuador, not Panama, by the way). There are styles for men and women in a wide array of colors and weaves. There's also a nice selection of wearable fair trade crafts such as jewelry, ikat wraps and shigra bags.

**Little Pearl, 632 Olivia St. 305-204-4762; www.littlepearlkeywest.com.** Nestled in the heart of Old Town Key West and away from the bustling downtown streets sits this excellent spot for fresh local catch and innovative cuisine with a tropical twist. It's new and it's hot. Reservations are required.

**Nancy Forrester's Secret Garden, 518 Elizabeth St. 305-294-0015; www.nancyforrester.com.** Ms. Forrester has a secret, and it's not her garden, per se: It's what she keeps there. The longtime environmentalist has been caring for orphaned parrots for more than 30 years. She invites the public to meet them, take pictures, hold them and listen as she educates the community about her fine feathered friends. ■

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# MAP IT OUT



## Getting around Key West

**1. Southernmost Point**  
The corner of South and Whitehead streets  
[www.southernmostpointwebcam.com](http://www.southernmostpointwebcam.com)  
The city of Key West erected this concrete buoy in 1983 to denote the southernmost point in the continental United States.

**2. Conch Tour Train**  
303 Front St.  
305-294-5161 or 888-916-8687  
[www.conchtourtrain.com](http://www.conchtourtrain.com)  
The iconic train has been winding its way through the streets of Key West since 1958.

**3. Sloppy Joe's**  
201 Duval St.  
305-294-5717  
[www.sloppyjoes.com](http://www.sloppyjoes.com)  
A Key West tradition since 1933, this bar's famous patrons include Ernest Hemingway and rum runner Habana Joe.

**4. Mallory Square Sunset Celebration**  
1 Whitehead St.  
786-565-7448  
[www.sunsetcelebration.org](http://www.sunsetcelebration.org)  
This nightly festival begins at water's edge an hour or two before sunset and includes street performers, local artisans, food carts, palmists and psychics.

**5. Truman Little White House**  
111 Front St.  
[www.trumanlittlewhitehouse.com](http://www.trumanlittlewhitehouse.com)  
The Little White House adds a presidential luster to the Conch Republic. Originally built for Naval officers in 1890 and used as a command headquarters in three wars, the Little White House later served as lodging for President Harry S. Truman's winter retreats from 1946 to 1952.

**6. The Ernest Hemingway Home & Museum**  
907 Whitehead St.  
305-294-1136  
[www.hemingwayhome.com](http://www.hemingwayhome.com)  
Take the tour and say hello to one of the 40-50 six-toed cats, all descendants of Hemingway's cat, Snowball.

**7. The Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory**  
1316 Duval St.  
305-296-2988 or 800-839-4647  
[www.keywestbutterfly.com](http://www.keywestbutterfly.com)  
More than 50 butterfly species from around the world and 20 exotic bird species coexist in this climate-controlled, glass-enclosed habitat that includes waterfalls, flowering plants and trees.

**8. Mel Fisher Maritime Museum**  
200 Greene St.  
305-294-2633

[www.melfisher.org](http://www.melfisher.org)  
Exhibits include treasures from the Spanish galleons of 1622 discovered by Mel Fisher and his crew.

**9. Mile Marker 0 Sign**  
490 Whitehead St. (corner of Fleming Street)  
U.S. 1 begins here in Key West and continues 2,369 miles north up the East Coast before ending in Fort Kent, Me. Stop here to commemorate your visit to Key West with a photo next to the iconic Mile Marker 0 sign.

**10. Key West Express Ferry Terminal**  
100 Grinnell St.  
239-463-5733  
[www.Keywestexpress.net](http://www.Keywestexpress.net)  
Traveling via the Express is truly the best way to get between Key West, Fort Myers Beach or Marco Island. You'll enjoy air-conditioned interiors, exterior sun decks, couches, tables and even reclining airline-style seating. There's a full-service galley, full-service bar and flat-screen TVs with satellite television.

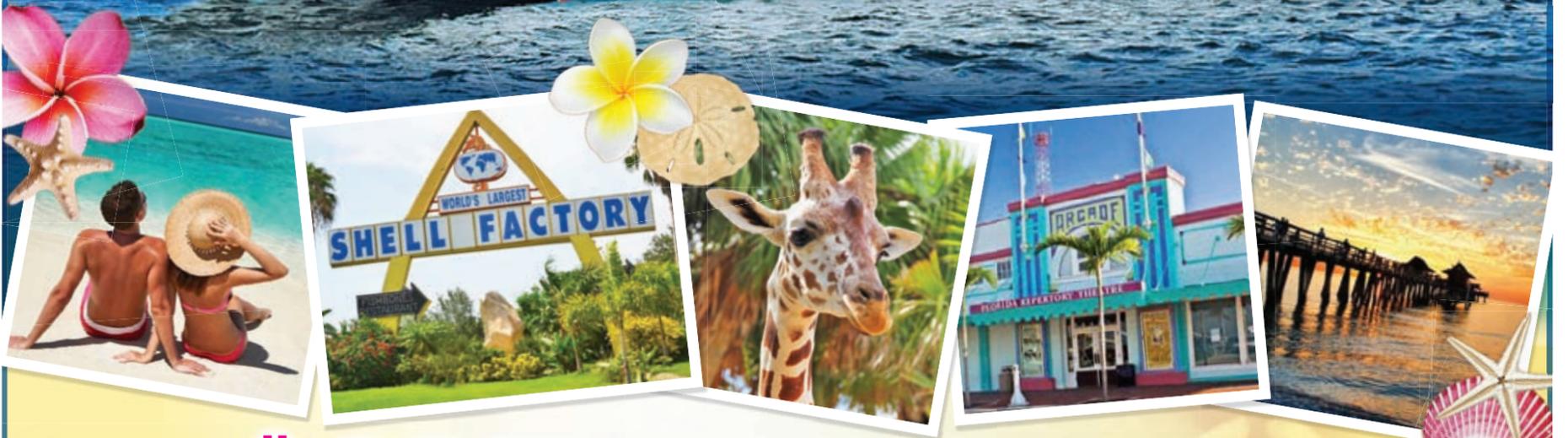
**11. Audubon House and Garden**  
205 Whitehead St.  
305-294-2116  
[www.Audubonhouse.com](http://www.Audubonhouse.com)  
Original lithographs by John James

Audubon are on display in this former home of shipwreck salvager Capt. John Geiger.

**12. Key West City Cemetery**  
Bordered by Angela, Frances and Olivia streets and Windsor Lane  
305-292-6718  
[www.Friendsofthekeywestcemetery.com](http://www.Friendsofthekeywestcemetery.com)  
Stop by the sexton's office near the entrance at Passover and Windsor lanes and pick up a map that includes a free walking tour.

**13. Fort Zachary Taylor State Park and Beach**  
At the ocean end of Southard Street and bordering the Naval Reservation.  
305-295-0037  
[www.Fortzacharytaylor.com](http://www.Fortzacharytaylor.com)  
"Fort Zach" is known to locals and tourists alike as one of Key West's best beaches. In addition to the expansive beach, the 54-acre park has nature trails, bike paths, picnic tables and grills and Historic Fort Zachary Taylor. Enjoy the beautiful view of the Atlantic Ocean and the Key West Shipping Channel. ■

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# Larry for Fantasy Fest King

BY JENNIFER WHITE  
Florida Weekly Correspondent

It is hard not to miss Larry Blackburn. I had heard about and even seen the infamous Blackburn many times before we were ever introduced.



BLACKBURN

Towering over a crowd with a camera in hand is how I've always pictured him whenever his name came up in conversation. He seemed to me always larger than life, until I eventually got to sit down and talk to him and realize that he reflects all that is good about this community — kindness and compassion, among other things — and that he is in person just another human being trying to make things right.

"I fell in love with the Keys for the first time in 1975 and eventually work would bring me down about three to four times a year," he says.

"Over the years I came to love everything the Keys had to offer and I fell in love with the community, especially the LGBT community and the hetero community that is intertwined with it," he adds.

"The interaction and unity between the two communities made me feel like that's the way the world is supposed to be. We don't see color, age or sex. We just see people."

Following the dream of equality, Larry officially moved to Key West 10 years ago after retiring from the United States

Department of Navy. The extra time meant he could focus on his artistic talents as a professional photographer, and so that is what takes up a lot of his extra-curricular time these days. In fact, it has been for a long time.

He built his first pinhole camera when he was in the eighth grade. Eventually the pinholes morphed into generous gifts that include a 35mm his Dad brought him from Japan. He couldn't put it down. From there, his quite literally developed a passion.

"My passion grew, but it was still a hobby," he says. "I taught myself everything I could about photography."

Photography encompasses many things. In Larry's world, it means having his photographs published in local, national and international publications. It means shooting for The Miami Herald, The Washington Post and The New York Times.

And when it comes back to Key West, it means capturing the moments that are just as important to everyone else as they are to him.

"Couples come in to Key West to get married in the LGBT community and I am able to put together some nice memories for them" he says.

Larry is also a candidate for Fantasy Fest King. Contestants donate their time to organize events to raise money for AIDS Help. The two who raise the most money are crowned King and Queen.

It doesn't mean that a monumental turn is needed or that they need to change the world. It is just a small step at a time.

Larry wants to be Fantasy Fest King because, as he says, "I just couldn't find



a reason to say no anymore."

So there's that.

When I interview Larry he is working at La Rubia on Fleming Street, the hat shop his wife, Stephanie Hellstrom, owns, while she is visiting family in Ecuador. He speaks the world of her and her mother and how incredible these two women are in his life. I think they may have an influence on his decisions.

You can catch Larry at one of his upcoming events by following @larry4king on Facebook or visiting [www.larry4king.com](http://www.larry4king.com).

"You can support a candidate of your choice," he says.

And of course, support AIDS Help. ■

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# BARTENDER OF THE WEEK

## Valerie Hines Grohol: Parrots and Eagles all the way

BY JENNIFER WHITE  
Florida Weekly Correspondent

If you were to look at Valerie “Val” Hines Grohol’s Facebook page at some point on a Sunday evening, there’s a good chance you’ll see a post about the Philadelphia Eagles. Sunday also means Val will be watching the game one way or another, whether during a shift at Shots and Giggles or the Green Parrot, or from the comfort of her home — because, well, the Philadelphia Eagles.

“I’m a very, very big Eagles fan,” she tells me more than once when I meet up with her right before the start of one of her shifts at the Green Parrot.

She’s one of the resident bartenders at the Green Parrot, which is one of, if not THE place for live music on the island. The iconic bar is known for bringing in underground jam bands from all over the world and for pouring “beer and (fill in the blank with Jameson, Jägermeister or the bar’s signature root beer barrels).”

When I ask her to describe the types of adult beverages the Green Parrot serves, she simply says: “We like to say we are a beer and bar — it’s a beer and this or a beer and that.”

A vibrating energy in the air mixes with the chatter of friends and the smell of freshly made popcorn coming from the vintage carnival king across from the stage. It only takes a few minutes of speaking with Val to feel like I am somewhere friendly with someone familiar.

This is one of those bars that would be insanely popular even without trying.

It takes a certain kind of bartender to make working at one of the coolest places on the island seem like all they are doing is bartending for their closest peers. It’s that every-one-is-a-friend, nobody’s-a-stranger mentality — kind of like an episode of “Cheers” every time you walk in.

And Val fits right into the scene. She’s known around town for her sense of humor, easygoing vibe and genuinely happy state of being.

“You’re able to be yourself where I work and have your own personality,” she says about why she enjoys her Green Parrot gig so much. “I love meeting people from all over and finding a connection. You never know who is going to walk in.”

It might be one of the many regulars who pop in to see her. Or it might just be Jon Stewart, who Val served while working her first hospitality job at the historical Holiday Snack Bar — “home of the homemade snacks” — in Beach Haven, N.J.

Growing up between the suburbs of Philly and on the shores of Jersey, she understandably preferred to spend her summers closer to the water. It’s no wonder that Key West would eventually appeal to the recent early childhood development graduate when she was considering the biggest move of her life, trying to decide between St. Thomas in the



JENNIFER WHITE / FLORIDA WEEKLY

U.S. Virgin Islands and Key West.

She ended up choosing Key West because she didn’t want to fly her dog. She left the day after Thanksgiving and only meant to stay six months. That was 13 years ago.

“I wanted to make a move before I woke up and realized I was 60 and had never gone anywhere,” she says of the spontaneous decision to chase the elusive dream of escape.

She met her would-be husband Mark while they were both working at the fine dining establishment Bagatelle. Together they decided to leave their paradise and try life in Charleston, S.C. Two years in, while “driving home from work in a 15-minute drive that turned into 1 1/2 hours,” they asked themselves: “What are we doing?”

As so many of us do, the pair came right back to Key West and haven’t left since.

“There’s a strong sense of community here,” she says of her established island home. “Even though I’m away from my family, I feel like I have a family. There is a lot of love here, and in this day in age we need more of that.”

You might be familiar with a couple of the places where Val has previously worked such as the late (and still-talked-about) Finnegan’s Wake Irish Pub and the

Sunset Tiki Bar & Grille at the Galleon Resort.

Or you may be more familiar with her other place of work, Shots & Giggles, a place that she compares to “hanging out in someone’s living room.”

When I ask how she ever managed to score one of the most coveted jobs in the neighborhood at the Green Parrot, she says, “A good friend was having a baby and they needed the shift covered.” The rest is history.

“I love that when I go to work I get to hear killer music,” she says as we wrap up so she can start her Thursday 3-7 p.m. shift at the Green Parrot. You can also find her there during soundcheck on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

She’s at Shots & Giggles from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. Wednesday.

But it’s the Green Parrot where you can find her the most.

“It’s a well-oiled machine,” she says about the bar. “It’s a family. Everyone works hard to be part of the team here. I’m not a fancy bartender, but 99 percent of the time I’ll come up with what the people are looking for even if they don’t know what to call it.”

(Oh, and just in case I haven’t told you enough, she’s a very, very big fan of the Philadelphia Eagles.) ■

Green Parrot  
601 Whitehead St.

Shots and Giggles  
201 Ann St.





# COMEDY KEY WEST

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This Week...

THURSDAY

October 10th

FRIDAY

October 11th



MIKE BALDWIN

Mike Baldwin simply went out night after night and delivered top-notch comedy. His style is instantly likable, entirely personal and it highlights his attention to detail. His material is crisp and perfectly efficient and he supplements that material with subtle but perfect facial expressions and vocal inflections.

John Novosad and Mike Baldwin will perform with local Key West comedians at the Downward Dog Comedy Showcase at...




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Come See

TOM DUSTIN

October 18th and October 19th

Edgy, original and hilarious; That’s the consensus of his comedy. Bostonian Tom Dustin is the only American to ever win the \$25,000 Yuk Yuk’s Great Canadian Laugh-off, (resulting in future contests being closed to American comics) USA! USA! USA! He’s done Comedy Central, The Comedy Channel (Canada), local & national radio, podcasts, festivals, and roasts.

FOR MORE INFO VISIT [WWW.COMEDYKEYWEST.COM](http://WWW.COMEDYKEYWEST.COM)

# KEY WEST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### 10th annual Remarcable Pumpkin Patch

Oct. 11, 9 a.m.  
MARC House  
1401 Seminary St.  
www.marchouse.org

### Florida Keys SPCA Charity Happy Hour

Oct. 12, 5 p.m.  
Sidebar at Aqua  
504 Angela St.  
www.sidebarkeywest.com

### 2018 Stand up paddleboard invitational

Oct. 12, 4 p.m.  
Smathers Beach  
2601 South Roosevelt Blvd.  
www.specialolympicsflorida.org

### Who's Bad? The ultimate Michael Jackson experience

Oct. 14, 8 p.m.  
The Key West Theater  
512 Eaton St.  
www.thekeywesttheater.com

## MUSIC

### Green Parrot Bar

601 Whitehead St.  
Live music nightly  
Check the schedule at  
www.greenparrot.com

### Irish Kevin's

211 Duval St.  
Live music nightly  
Check the schedule at  
www.irishkevins.com



COURTESY PHOTO

Christopher Peterson performs in the Cabaret at La Te Da and is billed as a master of impersonations. Audiences will be thrilled with his characterizations of Joan Rivers, Better Midler, Judy Garland, Liza Minelli, Marilyn Monroe and many more. Catch the show at 9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 11. La Te Da is at 1125 Duval St.

### Mary Ellen's

420 Appelrouth Lane  
• Open Mic with Comedy Key West, Mondays, 9 p.m.  
• Drunken Spelling Bee, First Monday of each month, 9 p.m.  
• Trivia, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.  
• SIN Night (Service Industry Night), Wednesdays 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.

### Mellow Café and Gastropub

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1605 North Roosevelt Blvd.  
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### Smoking Tuna

4 Charles St.  
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www.smokingtunasaloon.com

### Sloppy Joe's

201 Duval St.  
Live Music Nightly  
Check the schedule at  
www.sloppyjoes.com

## PHOTOGRAPHY

### Photographs by Jorge de la Torriente

Ongoing  
De La Gallery  
419 Duval St.  
www.delagallery.com  
305-395-2210

### Homegrown

Photographs by Michael Marrero  
Ongoing  
Gallery on Greene  
606 Greene St.  
www.galleryongreene.com

## CINEMA

### Tropic Cinema

416 Eaton St.  
www.tropiccinema.com  
Check the website for ongoing films

## LGBT

### Aqua Nightclub

711 Duval St.  
• Aqua Idol for Fantasy Fest King and Queen  
Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.  
• Drag Shows  
Nightly, 7 and 9 p.m.  
• Karaoke  
Monday through Thursday, 11 p.m.  
www.Aquakeywest.com

### Bobby's Monkey Bar

900 Simonton St.  
Karaoke, nightly, 9:30 p.m.  
Bobby's Monkey Bar on Facebook

# RAMS HEAD PRESENTS



**MICHAEL FRANTI & SPEARHEAD**  
STAY HUMAN TOUR  
OCTOBER 22 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN



**LYLE LOVETT & ROBERT EARL KEEN**  
NOVEMBER 3 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN

WWW.KEYWESTCONCERTSERIES.COM

# KEY WEST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Bourbon St. Pub

724 Duval St.  
 • Just Jeff (Moss), Thursday-Sunday, 8-10 p.m.  
 • Ronnie, Monday-Wednesday, 3-8 p.m.  
 • The Men of Bourbon, nightly  
[www.BourbonSt.pub.com](http://www.BourbonSt.pub.com)

## 801 Bourbon Bar

801 Duval St.  
 • Drag Shows, nightly, 9 and 11 p.m.  
 • Happy Hour Drag, 5 p.m. Saturday  
 • Drag Karaoke, 4 p.m. Sunday  
 • Messy Mondays with Mulya, 1 a.m. Monday  
 • Fierce and Fabulous/Dragalicious, 1 a.m. Wednesday  
[www.801bourbon.com](http://www.801bourbon.com)

## Sidebar at Aqua

504 Angela St.  
 Kristen McNamara, Wednesday and Saturday, 6:30-9:30 p.m.  
[www.sidebarkeywest.com](http://www.sidebarkeywest.com)

## La Te Da

1125 Duval St.  
 • Christopher Peterson, Oct. 11, 9 p.m.  
 • Randy Roberts, Oct. 13 and 16, 9 p.m.  
 • 3Sum, Oct. 11, 12, 13 and 14, 8:30 p.m.  
 • Ronnie Lively, Oct. 15, 8:30 p.m.  
 • The Fabulous Spectrelles, Oct. 16 and 17, 8:30 p.m.  
 • Tea Dance, Sundays 4 to 6:30 p.m.  
[www.Lateda.com](http://www.Lateda.com)

## AROUND KEY WEST



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 Mellow Café and Gastropub  
 1605 North Roosevelt Blvd.

## Ghost Tours and Ghost Hunts

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 301 Whitehead St. and 1102 Duval St.  
 305-395-1435  
[www.hauntedkeywest.com](http://www.hauntedkeywest.com)

## Free Nutrition Sessions

Wednesdays through October, 5-7 p.m.  
 Monroe County Library- Key West  
 700 Fleming St. ■

# #KW TOP PICKS

■ **Who's Bad? The ultimate Michael Jackson experience.** Watch and see why fans agree this is the number one tribute to the King of Pop. Oct. 14, 8 p.m., The Key West Theater  
 512 Eaton St.

— [www.thekeywesttheater.com](http://www.thekeywesttheater.com)

# 10.14

# 10.12

■ **At Florida Keys SPCA Charity Happy Hour,** donations will directly benefit the animals of the Florida Keys SPCA. Oct. 12, 5 p.m., Sidebar at Aqua, 504 Angela St.  
 — [www.sidebarkeywest.com](http://www.sidebarkeywest.com)

# 10.11

■ **10th annual Remarcable Pumpkin Patch,** Oct. 11, 9 a.m., MARC House, 1401 Seminary St.  
 — [www.marchouse.org](http://www.marchouse.org)

# 10.12

■ **2018 Stand up paddleboard invitational.** An inclusive paddle event for Special Olympics athletes and Stand Up Paddlers nationwide! Oct. 12, 4 p.m., Smathers Beach, 2601 South Roosevelt Blvd.  
 — [www.specialolympicsflorida.org](http://www.specialolympicsflorida.org)

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\*Must present coupon before ordering. Must purchase a beverage. Not valid with any other discounts or offers including Kids Eat Free. - FW EXPIRES 10/28/18

# WEED

From page 1

are now more than 1,700 physicians in Florida for you to choose from.

Via doctor's orders, patients who suffer from various ailments such as chronic pain, migraines, PTSD, anxiety and life-threatening illnesses are entered into a state registry and apply for a medical marijuana identification card. As of press time, there were close to 130,000 active state ID card holders.

Once you have your card, which the state says takes about a week, you can go to a dispensary and purchase marijuana. There are only 14 companies approved by the Department of Health called Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers that operate 55 retail storefront dispensaries throughout Florida. MMTCs are the only businesses allowed to grow, process and sell the product in the state.

"So you have to do everything from seed to sale," said Michael Costa, regional dispensary operations manager for Curaleaf, an MMTC that runs 11 dispensaries in Florida, including in Fort Myers and Lake Worth.

Curaleaf's marijuana plants are grown and processed in Miami-Dade County. The state limited MMTCs to 25 dispensaries each in Florida, so you'll probably see new ones popping up.

Since Florida does not allow smoking marijuana, vaping is the thing closest to it. Curaleaf's most popular products are vape cartridges that are either filled with oil infused with marijuana compounds or the dried flower or bud itself sealed inside a pod.

Notably, cannabis with significant amounts of THC is much more popular than the "low-THC" varieties. In just the week of Sept. 14 to 21, retail stores dispensed 40.1 million milligrams (or 1,446 ounces) of medical cannabis, including 1.9 million milligrams of the low-THC variety, the DOH says.

It's still illegal to own or grow the flower, or roll and smoke a joint, though this state rule is being challenged in court, one of many areas of litigation over Florida's implementation of Amendment 2. Right now you can pretty much just buy edibles and oils, and you can vape. Depending on your doctor's recommendation, there are different varieties and strengths. While CBD (cannabidiol) oils provide benefits without getting you high, others with more THC do cause those effects. Usually doctors suggest a combination of the two.

Pretty easy, right?

So where do you start? What doctor should you see? Are there dispensaries near you? Check our updated cannabis guide and dispensary map on the following pages to get to the bottom of it all.

The amount of marijuana consumed in the United States is roughly estimated as a \$10 billion to \$20 billion business. These numbers are far from perfectly accurate as for the most part, transactions for product are mostly off the books because sales and consumption are still federally prohibited.

States such as Colorado, Washington, California, Oregon, Maine, New Hampshire and Alaska, which have legalized recreational use, have seen increases in sales and tax proceeds in addition to population surges and rising median real estate values. In Florida, medical cannabis sales are currently not taxed.

In addition to getting the bottom of the basics a consumer may wonder about, there are a few weird questions we had to ask.

Can you overdose on marijuana? No. You cannot overdose and die from marijuana. But if you take way too much — which is especially easy to do with tasty edibles like brownies — it's not uncommon to spend a few very long, unpleasant hours riddled with anxiety.

Can you invest in marijuana companies? Yes. But first read Florida Weekly Money & Investing columnist Eric Bretan on why you should "hold off on buying marijuana stocks" in last week's edition.

How much will this industry be worth by 2020? Florida estimates a \$1.6 billion industry by then — not including the possibility that recreational pot will become legal.

In this edition you'll also find answers from medical marijuana experts.

That includes Fort Myers physician Dr. Gregory R. Sonn, who runs Iona Cannabis Clinic. He is one of a growing number of doctors certified to approve patients for an official Florida medical marijuana ID card and order a variety of products for them.

Dr. Sonn's Iona Cannabis Clinic has opened offices in Key West, Islamorada, and last month in Port Charlotte where Dr. Tucker Greene, who worked in emergency medicine and medical toxicology in Southwest Florida, including for 15 years at Cape Coral Hospital, will preside over exams.

"We're trying to broaden our patient base and provide more service to people in other areas," said Jodi Hahn, regional manager and executive assistant for Iona Cannabis Clinic.

## Why shouldn't you continue to buy illicit weed from your dealer and CBD oil from gas stations?

For many marijuana smokers, it is relatively easy to get it from their local, albeit illicit, dealer. A quarter ounce baggie of fairly potent dried buds costs about \$100 "on the street."

Dr. Sonn in Fort Myers estimates many patients spend \$45 to \$100 per month on product, though it could cost much more. A marijuana patch can cost \$300 per month. And it costs \$225 for an initial visit to Dr. Sonn, plus the cost of applying for a Florida ID card and renewing it every seven months. None of that is covered by insurance.

So why not go to a dealer — besides the obvious fact that it is illegal (possession of less than 20 grams is a first-degree misdemeanor in Florida)?

"When you're buying cannabis off the street you don't know what you're getting, it's not tested, you don't know what potency it has, you don't know if there are contaminants in it," Mr. Costa of Curaleaf said. "Us being regulated by the Department of Health, we have to test everything for safety before it goes out our door. We also test for potency."

And there is medical expertise. "Lastly, there is the piece of the physician. Patients are typically working with physicians to allow physicians to manage their (use) in coordination with any other medications they're taking."

When it comes to CBD oil, Mr. Costa argues again that the approved medical variety is safer and more reliable in its production and dosing.

"So if you have a patient with seizures or various other conditions they will know that you are getting exactly what you're getting and you can rely on it," he said. "Everything is tracked. It's very similar to a pharmaceutical or food manufacture that would have that same certification."

## Cannabis culture fest

Interest in medical marijuana has become widespread even among some who have never used it in the past in any form.

On Sept. 21, Dr. Sonn and his staff held an after-work Cannabis Culture Fest social seminar at the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre. A huge marijuana-leaf ice sculpture greeted guests, who ranged in age from their 20s to the 80s. Most appeared to be aging baby boomers.

Afterwards about 60 people, nearly half of the 125-person limit on the invitation, signed up for a visit to potentially become a Florida marijuana ID cardholder, said Iona Clinic regional manager Ms. Hahn.

People mingled outside the auditorium, where Florida's Medical Marijuana Treatment Center businesses, which operate dispensaries, including Curaleaf and Trulieve, had displays and answered questions.

At another table, Jaime Renee Cruz of Cruz Cannabis Cooking, and associate Ashleigh Rankin, showed attendees how to make marijuana candies.

Fort Myers native Stephanie Sumasky, 27, is one of Dr. Sonn's patients. She vapes (a cartridge filled with marijuana oil is fitted into a vape pen) as well as makes edibles to control pain and anxiety, and as a form of stress relief.

"It's awesome how many people it's helping," she said. "I just think it's taken off. It's an awesome thing that a plant can help so many people."

The fading, rearranging, but still prevalent stigma of marijuana culture was a theme underlying the event.

One 81-year-old Fort Myers man who got a prescription to use CBD infused marijuana oil to control the pain and nausea associated with radiation treatment for prostate cancer declined to give his name. He puts six to 10 drops of CBD oil in his coffee each morning.

"I think there still is a stigma," he said. A Lee County high school teacher, Cape Coral resident Stephanie Peace, 44, said she wants to be honest with her students

about marijuana and how it helped her after she was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. But she treads carefully.

"In my profession I have to be super careful," she said.

After her cancer diagnosis in 2015, the illness metastasized to other parts of her body. Although she had not previously been a recreational or medicinal user and didn't especially want the drug in her house, her loved ones had used it with success.

"It's worked for people close to me on arthritis and Alzheimer's (symptoms)," she said, "and I thought, what do I have to lose?"

In 2016 she started taking marijuana, often by making her own edibles, and adjusting her own dose. The first time she tried it, she simply got high. But she also found it helped her cope with anxiety during a difficult time, boosted her energy level, helped her sleep and eased inflammation from her chemotherapy medication. Thanks to surgery and other treatment, her cancer is now in remission.

She also believes marijuana may have increased the effectiveness of her chemotherapy, a claim that can't be proven for lack of research, though Dr. Sonn suggested in his presentation that cannabis could amplify the effect of other medications.

"No doctor can tell me," she said, "how did the chemo and the cannabis affect each other?"

Dr. Sonn made his way around the room before attendees filed into an auditorium and munched on some provided snacks as he lectured and took questions for about 45 minutes. A physician who practiced hospice and palliative medicine for 18 years before starting his own health and wellness practice four years ago, Dr. Sonn has a passion for the potential medicinal effects of cannabis.

"I am a true believer in cannabis as medicine," he said. "I believe it's a natural source."

Most of his patients are age 50 to 80, he said, and suffer from inflammatory conditions such as arthritis, that cannabis can help relieve.

One man in the room called out, "A lot of us, I think, are dying to decrease the opioids." Could marijuana help do that?

## More marijuana, fewer opioids?

Dr. Sonn explained that it depends on each individual's level of commitment and situation but that marijuana can be used to wean patients off opioids.

One of Dr. Sonn's patients, a 49-year-old Cape Coral man named Scott, said marijuana helped him mostly stop taking opioid pain medication. He declined to give his last name because of the still-lingering stigma of impropriety around pot smoking, while almost no one would hide from being an occasional drinker.

"There's definitely still a stigma to it, but it's going the other way, man, it really is," he said. "But there's still that — and people don't believe it's medicine."

Around 2013, Scott started buying weed from a dealer and infused it with coconut oil using a countertop Magical Butter herb extractor. At the time he had been on prescribed opioids including Percocet and morphine for more than three years. The marijuana allowed him to wean himself off regular use of those harsher drugs, he claims, and by the time he went to Dr. Sonn in 2017 he was only taking one pill every now and then.

The medical marijuana experience has allowed him more variety and control over his use of the drug, and allows him to experiment with new products.

"There's a lot of variety and they're coming out with new things," he said. "I use 'em all. I vape. I usually take the (CBD oil) three times a day."

Depending on his pain level, he adjusts how much CBD and THC he takes to find a balance that works for him.

"The last four days I slowed down on my nighttime THC," he said.

He also has a choice between strains that include more Sativa marijuana, which

## Dr. Greg Sonn Q&A

>> **What dangers, if any, do you feel you have to remind patients of the most?** You cannot be impaired. And pregnancy information, which is mandatory by state regulations.

>> **How would recreational legalization change things for you?** I think it would hurt marijuana as medicine because it would allow the casual user any product, which means the idea and prescription would be minimized. Plus, my elderly or marijuana naive patient, which is 60 percent of my patients, would be reliant on a bud tender. (Same goes for flower.) Which if you were any other doctor in the area, would be a good thing. Most have minimum knowledge, but I know the medical and I teach and educate.

>> **What are the biggest obstacles to your business operating here in Florida?** The other big companies in Florida were non-physicians. They came in to Florida from Nevada, Colorado and Arizona, advertised for a doctor and got started. I know; they hit me up early in the process.

>> **What are the biggest misconceptions you are seeing in our community when it comes to medicinal marijuana?** They think they will be "stoned" all the time, or "I don't want to give up my guns."

>> **Does insurance cover this?** No. I doubt it ever will. I also think this is why it won't be "legal" at the federal level. Too much money to lose. Insurance companies, VA drug plans, Medicare Part D, the list goes on. Plus I don't think the government really wants the population as a whole to be healthy.

>> **What varieties of marijuana would you recommend?** Depends on condition and patient and wanted outcomes. "The entourage effect" and "micro dosing" are ... (important considerations for me and my patients).

>> **What is the difference from those who self-medicate and the product that you offer?** You mean illegal marijuana? One form is legal, consistent, available in all type of strength percentages. Completely reproducible. The other is illegal and you could go to jail. ■



SONN

Quotables ... what some are saying

“Medical marijuana is a crucial alternative to deadly and addictive opioids. People suffering from terrible conditions have found relief, and we’ve seen a 25 percent reduction in deaths by opioid overdoses in states which have allowed medical marijuana. This growing industry strengthens our economy while ensuring access to medicine that people need badly. As commissioner of agriculture, I will work to expand patient access and champion new economic opportunities that come along with the growth of medical marijuana in Florida.”



FRIED

— **Nikki Fried**, Democratic nominee for agriculture commissioner

“@FLGovScott has done everything in his power to block the will of the people. I had to sue and win. Now he’s appealing. @RonDeSantisFL is more of the same. @AndrewGillum would drop the appeal day one and backs my effort to legalize it!”



MORGAN

— **John Morgan**, Morgan & Morgan; forthepeople.com



MOLLOY

“I think medical marijuana was long overdue for use as an effective tool to overcome opioid addiction. I believed that as a prosecutor and I believe it now. I have seen evidence of those benefits, with close, beloved friends or colleagues using medical marijuana to ease heart-wrenching suffering and life-damaging addiction.”

— **Douglas Molloy**, defense attorney with over 30 years in the criminal justice system

typically leaves patients more awake, and Indica, which is more likely to cause drowsiness.

“It’s all trial and error, what works for you and what makes your whole body sync up,” he said. “You have to figure out where you get loopy and where you don’t so you can function.”

The marijuana is less powerful than the opioids in its level and immediacy of pain relief, he has found.

“The opiates, like you could take a pain med, a couple hours you feel total relief,” he said. “(Medical marijuana) will make things better but it doesn’t make it totally go away. Another thing, you don’t feel like a zombie either. (With opiates), you’re in a daze. That doesn’t happen now.”

A survey on cannabis research by the

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found insufficient evidence to either support or refute the success of cannabis users achieving abstinence from other addictive substances.

But a more recent study published in the American Journal of Public Health in November 2017 found that the legalization of recreational cannabis resulted in a modest short-term reduction in opioid-related deaths. Another study published in JAMA in May found that there was a reduction in opioids prescribed in the Medicare Part D population in states with medical marijuana policies.

**FDA UN-approved**

Dr. Gene D. Mahaney, president and

medical director of Pain Management Consultants in Fort Myers, is a specialist in anesthesiology, pain management and addiction medicine.

Dr. Mahaney is hesitant to write orders for medical marijuana for patients because the drug’s ongoing illegal status at the federal level could put his practice at risk of being prosecuted, even if that’s unlikely.

“So it puts us in a bit of a quandary in that patients we think would be appropriate, there is a concern of the DEA coming in and taking away your license for doing that,” he said, noting that that has happened in California and Oregon.

“...(And) anyone who receives federal funding would be at risk.”

The federal Drug Enforcement Administration still classifies marijuana along

with heroin and other hard drugs as a schedule I controlled substance with “no currently accepted medical use” — a definition denied by states including Florida, by patients, doctors, and researchers across the world.

While there has never been an overdose death attributed to marijuana and many doctors call it safer than alcohol, the DEA lists morphine, oxycodone, and even fentanyl, drugs which continue to cause thousands of overdose deaths each year, as having a lower potential for abuse than cannabis.

The Rohrabacher-Farr amendment passed in 2014 prevented the U.S. Department of Justice from using federal funds

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www.Keywest.lucysretiredsurfers.com
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www.Tattoosandscarssaloon.com
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www.Williets.com
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www.Laconchakeywest.com
- Yellowfin Bar and Grill**  
Oceans Edge Resort and Marina  
5950 Peninsular Ave.  
4:30-6:30 p.m.  
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www.oceansedgekeywest.com/hotel/yellowfin-bar-and-grill ■



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## Key West dancer and New Orleans pianist team up to light up the Studios of Key West stage

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In 2013, New Orleans singer-songwriter/pianist Keith Burnstein met Key West dancer/choreographer Kyla Piscopink. The duo decided that together, they had a story to tell. At 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 13, the two with light up The Studios of Key West stage with “True-et,” a fresh creative compilation with a nod to classical jazz and back lounge R&B.

“As I walked into the NOLA bar Three Muses, this incredible music filled the room and I was instantly inspired,” Piscopink says. “I said, ‘I have to collaborate with this guy. He’s brilliant.’ His music moves me, and so here we are.”

Burnstein pulls inspiration as much from Tin Pan Alley as he does from modern geniuses like Jeff Tweedy. With a rich harmonic palette of jazz and R&B, topped by soulful and clever lyrics, he’s made a name for himself the New Orleans music scene. He has toured with funk legends including The Headhunters, as well as Louisiana songwriter Kristin Diabile, and released three records as a leader.

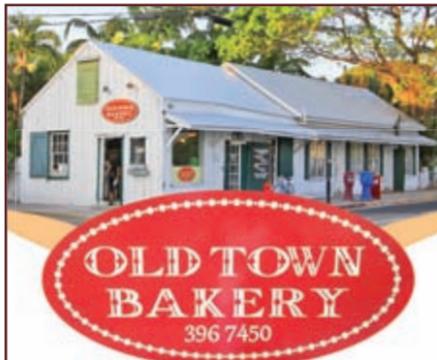
“It all begins with Keith,” Piscopink continues. “He writes the music that inspires me, and then I go into the studio and just move. I set the outline of my movement, then Keith and I put our heads together to integrate

the movement and music even further. We don’t stop working on ideas until the moment the show begins, and even during the performance we are, in a way, creating new bits and ideas all the time.”

Piscopink, the founder and artistic director of Dance Key West, has a style that’s deeply rooted in classical jazz laced with contemporary undertones. She’s a storyteller by way of movement, with an innate ability to physicalize music and express narrative through dance.

“One of my favorite lyrics by Keith is ‘Reveal your heart; it’s essential. Reveal your heart in a bind,’ she says. “Every time I hear it, it actually makes me take a nice deep breath and think, ‘Really, what more could you ask for in a lyric?’”

Tickets for “True-et” are \$30 (\$25 for members) and can be purchased at [www.tskw.org](http://www.tskw.org), or by calling 305-296-0458. The Studios of Key West is at 533 Eaton St. ■



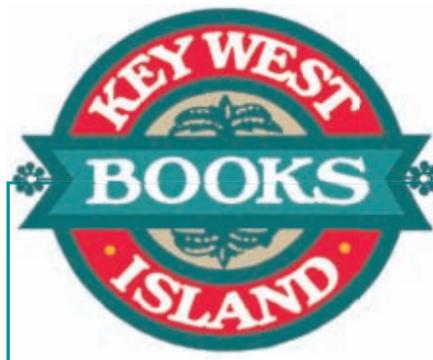
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COURTESY PHOTO

Barbershop Music Fest headliners, The Miamians.

## BARBERSHOP

From page 1

According to the Barbershop Harmony Society (whose members number in the tens of thousands across the world), “Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic (the same word sounds at the same time) texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead (second tenor), with the tenor (first tenor) harmonizing above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonizing notes, and the baritone completing the chord.”

All that to say that barbershop harmonies are tighter than your Great Aunt Bernice’s yoga pants after Thanksgiving dinner. Not only must barbershop singers have beautiful voices, they must also be able to blend with their ensemble to create a full, expansive sound. Toss in striped jackets, straw hats and oversized mustaches and you’ve got a bona fide sonic phenomenon on your hands. (OK, the outfits are optional, but they are pretty darn cute.)

And this Saturday, Key West is hosting its very own barbershop music festival. Largely a result of the efforts of Joe Tripp, a lieutenant in the Key West Police Department and all-around good guy who also happens to have an affinity for synchronized singing, the Key West Barbershop Music Fest takes place at 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 13, at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church on Duval Street.

Headlining the fest are The Miamians, a euphonious South Florida outfit dedicated to the promotion, performance and perpetuation of a cappella four-part barbershop harmony music.

Founded in 1948, The Miamians are the official chorus of the Miami Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. By 1951, the Miami chapter was the second largest in the country and in 1965, the Miamians Chorus won the gold medal at the International Championships in Boston. In 2013, the Miamians merged with the Broward-based Sunshine Chordsmen, creating the region’s largest barbershop performing ensemble, now serving South Florida from Palm Beach County to the Florida Keys.

“About four or five years ago, I was working on Duval Street during Fantasy Fest and I heard the sound of barbershop in the distance,” Joe begins. “I had been involved in barbershop singing in Tampa before I moved to Key West, so I followed my ears. I had to find these guys! It turned out that it was an ensemble from Fort Lauderdale called The Beetlejuicers. They were all dressed up in matching Beetlejuice outfits and everything. I asked them to sing a song



Joe Tripp was instrumental in bringing the festival to Key West.

with me, so we sang together and I’ve seen them down here during Fantasy Fest every year since.”

The Miamians are donating the proceeds of Saturday’s concert to two local charities that have a massive impact on the Florida Keys’ neediest residents — the Sister Season Fund and Star of the Sea Outreach.

“When The Miamians decided they wanted to put on an event here, I was a good contact to help them decide which charities to donate to,” Joe says. “I haven’t done any barbershop singing myself since I lived in Tampa. There isn’t any here, so I think this will be a real treat for Key West residents. And who knows? I may even pop on stage for a song or two.”

Though the Barbershop Harmony Society was created to preserve the music of the age, barbershop choruses of today aren’t limited to American standards and songs that are older than your grandma’s dusty rotary phone. We can’t promise anything, but Saturday night’s show could hold tunes from artists as diverse as Sam Cooke and Wham.

“All the songs used in competition used to have to be old songs,” Joe says. “All that has changed. Although arrangements still have to meet barbershop standards in their chord structure, you can hear modern songs in competition. Groups have also seen a lot more younger people coming in, possibly because of different music being sung.”

I don’t know about you, but my fingers are crossed for a barbershop version of “Despacito.”

Tickets to the show run \$30 and can be purchased at the door. And if you’re rabid for all the a cappella your ears can handle (and down to do a little stalking), you could be in luck.

“Keep your eyes out and ears open on Friday and Saturday,” Joe hints. “Some of The Miamians may divide up and walk around in small groups for impromptu pop-up concerts along Duval Street.

“And you didn’t hear it from me, but they might even end up on a Conch Train on Saturday afternoon.” ■

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# WEED

From page 11

to “interfere” with states’ medical marijuana laws, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

“So there is some protection for doctors, patients and providers at the state level,” Mr. Costa of Curaleaf said.

But early this year, Attorney General Jeff Sessions appeared to reverse or weaken that rule in a memo giving U.S. Attorneys permission to once again prosecute in any state based on the old Controlled Substances Act of 1970, which prohibits cultivation, distribution, and possession of pot.

Dr. Mahaney and other physicians are against the federal ban because it has effectively made impossible — at least in the United States — the gold standard, randomized controlled studies that could potentially provide definitive evidence of some of the claims patients have made about marijuana’s effectiveness and vastly expand its use and effectiveness as medicine.

“There’s so much we don’t know with it,” Dr. Mahaney said. “It’s very hard to quantify its exact potential, to be honest.”

The lack of research and the federal ban has also led to a medical marijuana market where mainstream providers may be left out of the loop and patients often don’t get accurate information, Dr. Mahaney said. They may get directions for use from a clerk at a dispensary rather than a highly trained pharmacist, for instance.

“I think unfortunately the process for obtaining medical marijuana has been problematic for patients.”

That’s not to say there hasn’t been substantive research. Dr. Mahaney points out robust studies in Israel and the Netherlands, and is convinced of marijuana’s effectiveness in treating some ailments: nausea (related to chemotherapy), sei-

zures, as a sedative, and for mild pain relief. He believes marijuana could help patients reduce though not replace opioids and other prescription drugs.

“As a pure analgesic, it’s not much stronger than Tylenol No. 3,” he said, a pain reliever that includes acetaminophen and codeine.

“I think (medical marijuana) would be a good adjunct for pain management if it could be used in the context of replacing some of the benzodiazepines (Xanax, for example) and may be used in reducing the amount of narcotics people take.”

## Survey of cannabis research finds more research needed

In contradiction to the DEA’s severe stance on weed, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in 2017 published a comprehensive survey of marijuana research, recommending that “steps be taken to overcome regulatory barriers that may make it difficult to do research on marijuana’s health effects.”

The report details about 100 reports on cannabis since 1999 and concludes based on the quality of the research how conclusive the results are. For instance, it found “conclusive or substantial evidence” that cannabis or cannabinoids are effective in treating chronic pain in adults, chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, and improving patient-reported symptoms of multiple sclerosis.

Maybe the most conclusive research of all is that more research is needed. The list of conditions for which there is limited or insufficient evidence to support claims associated with marijuana, include, to name just a few: as a treatment for cancers, epilepsy, the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, curing addictions, improving symptoms of dementia, of post-traumatic stress syndrome, and better outcomes after a traumatic brain injury.

There is also substantial evidence of cannabis use and increased risk of car crashes, as well as the development of schizophrenia and other psychoses, especially among frequent users.

A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services web page notes that cannabis has been used “for a variety of health conditions for at least 3,000 years.”

Dr. Mahaney sees the federal government backing off approach eventually, if and when more states legalize the drug. In spite of federal rules, that’s clearly not stopping the medical marijuana industry from rolling ahead in Florida, at least as far as possible within the state’s own limits.

## Like weeds

Michigan-based Liberate Physician Centers employs doctors and staff at clinics there and in Illinois, Colorado and Florida. After officially opening its first Sunshine State office in West Palm Beach in 2015 — in anticipation of the 2016 vote — Liberate has opened clinics both by corporate expansion and franchising in Jacksonville, Port Charlotte, Fort Myers and Naples.

“We’re working on rolling out 10 new offices across the state,” said the company’s chief operating officer, Mark Turgeon, who oversees the Palm Beach office.

Potential areas of expansion include all sides of Florida. Mr. Turgeon mentioned Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Tampa, Lakeland, Jacksonville and Orlando as possible locations.

Sensitive to the perception of the medical side of business catering to recreational users, he pointed out, “this is not about pot heads and kids getting stoned or anything like that.” Liberate patients’ average age in Florida is mid-50s.

“So our whole belief is, our physician centers are basically like wellness centers and we’re helping people with pain management in a holistic method, not writing prescriptions but making recommendations to people who qualify for medical marijuana cards,” he said. “We feel that and we know that we have changed people’s lives and we have testimonials from patients who got off the opioids and

don’t have all those side effects anymore. You can’t get addicted to marijuana. And nobody’s ever died (of an overdose) from marijuana. And there are people dying every day from opioid addiction and overdose.”

But he also suggests that there is a significant amount of crossover between medical and recreational use. When Florida legalizes recreational marijuana, which some predict will happen in perhaps five to 10 years, that could change the market, he said.

“Recreational kind of changes the playing field a little bit because everybody can just walk in to a dispensary and get what they need, they don’t need to go through getting a medical marijuana card anymore.” ■

## Cole Peacock Q&A

Mr. Peacock is a consultant for Apothecary Services, which advises those interested in beginning a medical marijuana business.

### >> How big do you see this getting in Florida?

Based on industry projections and the steady growth over the last year, this industry is set to be one of the largest industries in the state of Florida. Arcview Market Research, the leading publisher of cannabis market research, in partnership with New Frontier Data, the cannabis Big Data and analytics authority, has released its Florida Legal Cannabis Market State Profile, which shows the potential growth of the medical market after Florida voters overwhelmingly chose to legalize medical marijuana with more than 70 percent of the vote. The official Arcview Market Research projection for the Florida market is \$1.6 billion by 2020 at a compound annual growth rate of 140 percent. ■



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- 2. Register with the state** to get your medical marijuana identification card. You can do this on your own or your doctor can help you with this. There is a \$75 registration fee.
- 3. Go to a dispensary** called a medical marijuana treatment center. Show your medical marijuana identification card. You can then purchase a variety of cannabis products.
- 4. That's it.**

\* Be sure to consult with your doctor and attorney regarding usage, dosage and all concerns before trying at home.

## Physicians

Physician List (licensed and trained to recommend cannabis / medical marijuana in Florida):

[www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/office-of-compassionate-use/\\_documents/completed-cme.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/office-of-compassionate-use/_documents/completed-cme.pdf)



# KEY WEST GALLERY GUIDE

## The Key West Art & Historical Society celebrates Fantasy Fest's history of revelry, royalty and altruism

**SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY**

The Key West Art & Historical Society presents its third annual "A Royal Retrospective" exhibit Oct. 11-29 in the lobby of the Custom House Museum.

A look back at decades of Key West Fantasy Fest revelry, royalty and altruism via memorabilia, keepsakes, photographs and posters, the exhibit is co-curated by Tennessee Williams Museum curator Dennis Beaver and Society curator Cori Convertito, Ph.D.

And one night only — 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 18, — the exhibit becomes the site for an all-candidate "Royal Retrospective" party open to the public (cash bar and light appetizer fare), with 100 percent of the \$10 admission benefiting AIDS Help of Monroe County. Former Fantasy Fest Kings and Queens are encouraged to attend.

Fantasy Fest events are sponsored in part by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council and the Florida Keys Council of the Arts. For more information, contact curator Cori Convertito, Ph.D., at [cconvertitofarrar@kwahs.org](mailto:cconvertitofarrar@kwahs.org) 305-295-6616, ext. 112. ■

*The Key West Art & Historical Society  
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