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Cannabis dispensary opens

KATHLEEN SAYLORS
Grand Forks Gazette

A new Grand Forks business serving the medicinal marijuana community took residence in the back room of Kokomo's café earlier this month.

Herbivore is a therapeutic cannabis dispensary on Second Avenue in Kokomo's Café. Owner Teresa Taylor opened the business Dec. 1 as a way to get in on the ground floor of the burgeoning cannabis industry - in her words, "before a chain comes in."

For Taylor, daughter of former Grand Forks mayor and well-known cannabis activist Brian Taylor, cannabis is a family business. Involved for most of her life in cannabis activism, Taylor said a dispensary was a natural choice for the opening of her first retail business. Taylor's background to this stage is in graphic design.

The dispensary operates on a club-based model, meaning that users must provide documentation from their doctor that states they can use cannabis as a treatment for a condition on the approved conditions list. Taylor said those conditions can be broadly sorted into groups: mood, sleep and pain. After proving they have a qualifying condition, members may purchase as necessary.

Right now, Taylor said edible cannabis products are popular as most medicinal users are not looking to smoke. She said her typical customer is usually over the age of 50.

Taylor said her business is inherently tied to the political climate, as last October the country elected a marijuana-friendly government.

"The Liberal party winning gave me more confidence in moving ahead," she said. "Those of us operating now are operating in advance of the law, but it was a business decision."

Like The Koote-nay's Medicine Tree,

• See DISPENSARY page 37

Car-theft suspects taken into custody

KATHLEEN SAYLORS
Grand Forks Gazette

Two suspects were taken into custody this week after a string of vehicle thefts along Highway 3 left motorists stranded and police warning drivers to be cautious about hitchhikers.

Cpl. Jason Bayda with the Osoyoos RCMP detachment confirmed that two individuals have been taken into custody on an unrelated matter but are suspects in the ongoing investigation of a vehicle theft in the Oliver area.

"[The suspects] got into an accident in our area on Highway 3 in a vehicle that had been stolen previous in the Rock Creek area," Bayda said. "A local female

and her children stopped to render assistance, at that point they were forcibly removed from their vehicle, and their vehicle stolen and later located in Oliver."

Bayda said the pair are believed to be from the Prince George area.

Last week, Corporal Philip Crack of the Midway RCMP outlined a string of calls dealing with vehicle theft issues, spanning three RCMP detachments and multiple vehicles.

"At approximately 6:30 a.m. [Wednesday morning] members from Grand Forks RCMP responded to a report of a vehicle collision in Christina Lake area. When they got there they found the vehicle had been reported stolen out of Cranbrook, and there was no one around,"

Crack said.

Shortly after at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, Crack said Midway RCMP responded to a vehicle theft in Rock Creek PetroCan station.

"The person had picked up hitchhikers from the collision scene in Christina Lake," Crack said. "When he went inside to pay they took his truck."

The investigation moved into the Osoyoos area, where the suspects were taken into custody on unrelated matters but are believed to be involved in the string of thefts. The male suspect was arrested on an outstanding warrant and the female suspect is being held on breach of conditions. More information will be forthcoming once charges are laid.



Perley concert draws crowd

The annual Dr. D.A. Perley Elementary School Christmas concert took over the school last week. The concert, which was open to parents, celebrated the holidays and gave the students a chance to show off their Christmas singing, dancing and acting skills.

See more photos on page 28.

Erin Perkins photo

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Dispensary

Continued from page 1

the other dispensary in Grand Forks, Herbivore operates in a legal grey area. The biggest advantage to Taylor's model is that there is nothing prohibiting it, although it is not strictly legal either. Under the Access to Cannabis for Medical Purposes Regulation, which came into effect on Aug. 24, this year, medical use of cannabis is permitted when authorized by a health care practitioner, although the cannabis must be supplied by one of 37 Health Canada licensed producers. Right now, dispensaries in most communities are left largely alone, providing they abide by a socially accepted status quo.

Considering the legal ramifications of her business, Taylor said she engaged with the RCMP before opening.

"When you open a dispensary in any community it is wise to engage with law enforcement, whether it is RCMP or civic police, so that is something we did right away, letting them know we would be opening," Taylor said. "We wanted to assure them we would follow the status quo. We didn't want it to be a surprise."

Taylor said she has applied for a general retail business license from the city, which does not have bylaws specific to dispensaries at this time.

Business has been good thus far, Taylor said, especially considering the low profile she has tried to keep for her business.

"When I opened people [said], 'good for you, it's about time,'" Taylor said. "It is going really well considering we have not advertised at all. The word of mouth has been great. I wanted to be gentle in my approach."

Teresa Taylor opened Herbivore, a cannabis dispensary, on Dec. 1 at Kokomo's Cafe.

Kathleen Saylor's photo



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