

From: Clerk of the Board Office
To: COBSupport@mendocinocounty.org
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>>> John Sakowicz <sako4@comcast.net> 02/25/20 13:00 >>>

Recently, my candidacy for Mendocino County 1st District Supervisor was endorsed by two legacy farmers, Eddy Lepp and Tim Blake.

With the legacy of Eddy Lepp and Tim Blake in mind, I enthusiastically support this agenda item which will establish a Local Cannabis Equity Program.

Going forward, Mendocino County's Local Cannabis Equity Program should be designed to lower barriers to cannabis licensing for those hardest hit by the War on Drugs. The Equity Program should do this by enabling verified Equity Applicants to apply for a cannabis permit, hopefully by the end of 2020.

Equity Applicants should not have to pay the permit fees. They should also benefit from an incubator partnership that I hope Mendocino County will create that will provide rent free space for 3 years or technical assistance to operate the businesses of Equity Applicants.

EDDY LEPP

Eddy Lepp, born Charles Edward Lepp, is a Vietnam War veteran, California-based medical marijuana activist, world-renowned cultivator, author, poet, and artist born in 1952. After gathering signatures to get California's original medical marijuana bill (prop 215) on the ballot with Jack Herer and Dennis Peron, he was the first American to be arrested, tried, and acquitted in 1997 for growing medical cannabis under California's Prop 215. After refusing to back down from allowing patients and members of the ministry to produce cannabis on his property, providing care to his wife (Linda Senti, who was ill with cancer) and 2,700 other patients who needed safe access to medical cannabis in California, he was raided and faced 4 consecutive life sentences, plus 40 years in federal penitentiary, and \$17,000,000 in fines. Eddy ended up sentenced to federal prison in 2008 for conspiracy to manufacture marijuana, as well as conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance, and served 8.5 years of a 10 year sentence – the absolute minimum of time required, and no fines as the judge presiding over the case saw his original charges unjust. He was finally released in 2016. His wife lost her tumultuous battle with cancer just prior to Eddy leaving for his prison sentence.

Eddy's Medicinal Gardens – the now famous Lake County, California site where Eddy oversaw the planting and growing of more than 32,524 medicinal cannabis plants for the thousands of members of his Multi-Denominational Ministry of Cannabis and Rastafari – sadly no longer exists. However, Eddy is a true hero to everyone who now enjoys safe access to cannabis as medicine and sacrament. Before prison, he was known to never deny a patient access to the healing plant based on income or lack thereof. He made a space for everyone to take their health under their own control in a world where access to medicine is blockaded by one's own income and social status. Throughout his journey, he has given away millions of dollars worth of medicine.

TIM BLAKE

Tim Blake founded the world-famous Emerald Cup in 2003 in Mendocino County. For many years, he served as the event's president and promoter. The Emerald Cup is the longest running organic outdoor growing competition in the world. The Emerald Cup grew dramatically in Mendocino County for ten years, and continued its expansion by moving a bigger, more accessible location. Starting in 2013, the event was held at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds.

Tim is also the owner of Healing Harvest Farms and the Area 101 dispensary in Laytonville.

In the following interview at "The Cannabis Connection" on SoundCloud, Tim Blake shares his story going back to Soquel High in Santa Cruz in the 70's and the 12-15 shipments of 100,000 pounds coming in from Thailand and abroad that continued until the mid 80's until it all changed. The War on Drugs changed the way of life for so many.

In the interview, Tim chronicles the progression of smuggling cannabis in through the San Francisco Bay to stewarding the plant in the early gardens to the world class farms showcased today at the Emerald Cup.

Tim Blake is a hero and role model to many of us. He is one of the Emerald Triangle's most outspoken cannabis growers.

Link to SoundCloud interview: <https://soundcloud.com/the-cannabis-connection/tim-blake-emerald-cup-healing-harvest-farms-area-101-12117>

Thank you.

John Sakowicz, Candidate, Mendocino County, 1st District Supervisor and proud member of the Mendocino Cannabis Alliance

