

## News from A Sobering Choice

Volume 2 Issue 10

October

### Special Points of Interest

- Friday Night Live goes to the Youth Traffic Safety Summit
- Part One of the "Seven Great Myths of Marijuana"
- Red Ribbon Week is this Month
- Two months worth of VIP statistics

### Inside Edition

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### Cathy's Message:

A Sobering Choice has been busy this last month. Seems we were a little too busy to get our September newsletter out to you. We apologize and hope we make up for it in this issue.

Two volunteers from A Sobering Choice attended the *1<sup>st</sup> Annual Marijuana Policy and Strategy* meeting in Rancho Cucamonga. We had the opportunity to hear from a lot of speakers, had representatives from 37 different states in attendance, and a sold out crowd. We look forward to working with our local officials to develop and implement a policy and strategy that works for Shasta County.

A Sobering Choice also wants to take this time to congratulate Shasta

County Chemical People for being awarded a grant from Wake Forest University. As part of the project Chemical People and their volunteers will be developing an educational campaign focusing on the teen party problem and enforcement of underage drinking laws.

All schools are open and we all need to watch for those busses and drive carefully. Remember our youth are not just our future, but our present. Let's all work together to keep our youth safe and free from drugs and alcohol.

### Something Positive...

Last month ASC had the privilege to help sponsor the Shasta County Friday Night Live (FNL) group to go down to the annual Friday Night Live Traffic Safety Summit. The conference is focused on traffic safety and leadership. There were speakers and workshops with varying topics addressing these two themes.

Not only were attendees inspired and encouraged to be leaders in their communities they were also given a lot of information on how to prevent traffic collisions. The second in command at the California Highway Patrol gave the youth some facts about driving and driving safety. The second half of the day was filled with workshops. Our group split up and went to as many as possible so we could share what we

learned later in the day. Finally the evening came around and we got to go to Disneyland and play until the park closed.

Sunday we heard from more speakers and went through and exhibit of projects from all the Friday Night Live groups including our own county. We also sat down and the girls from each school worked on a plan for the year. Some of the goals

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# Marijuana Updates



## Did You know?

- Est. 16,251 emergency room visits in the U.S. related to pot use in 1991, more than 374,000 emergency visits/admissions in 2008.
- Surveys of drug treatment centers now find that more youth are in treatment for pot abuse or dependence than for the use of alcohol and all other drugs COMBINED.
- The American Lung Assoc. reports that pot smoke contains a greater amount of carcinogens than tobacco and pot users usually inhale more deeply and hold their breath longer, further increasing the lung's exposure to carcinogenic smoke increasing their risk of respiratory illnesses.

## Seven Great Myths about Marijuana Myth # 1 --- Marijuana is Harmless and Nonaddictive

*As we discuss the myths surrounding marijuana we need to give credit to Kevin A. Sabet, Ph. D. and his book Reefer Sanity Seven Great Myths about Marijuana. We will try to summarize his information and welcome anyone interested, to pick up the book for further studies and valuable information.*

The "Dumbing Down" drug grows stronger. By constantly experimenting with breeding practices and cultivation techniques over several decades, producers and growers steadily made progress in greatly elevating the levels of THC (the psychoactive ingredient) found in the oily resin of the marijuana plant's leaves and flowers.

This is no longer the same "natural plant" from the 60's and 70's when the THC levels averaged below 4% to a genetically modified super plant with THC levels reaching as high as 30 percent. If we were talking about alcohol, this would be like drinking a "lite" beer a day to consuming several shots of vodka a day.

Today's typical marijuana sample contains up to 500 chemical constituents. The resulting intoxication distorts the brain's natural chemical balance and produces distortions in thinking, problem-solving, memory, and learning, along with impaired coordination and perceptual abilities.

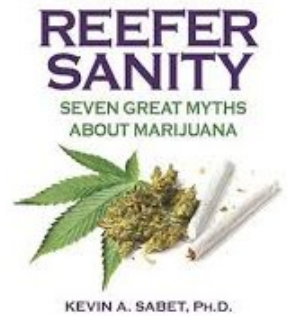
**HARMLESS?** The proof is in the plant. It's often said that marijuana is not addictive. Marijuana may not be as addictive as drugs like tobacco or heroin,

but its addiction rate of one in every eleven adults who have ever tried it --- or one in six adolescents who have ever used it --- should give us pause.

As with alcohol abuse, chronic marijuana users who attempt to go "cold turkey" will experience withdrawal symptoms that are classic signs of dependency. Within a day or so of initiating abstinence, the user may feel irritable, restless, anxious, or depressed; be unable to sleep; and be bothered by drug cravings. Within three days, these symptoms begin to peak, making quitting marijuana severely challenging to maintain.

There are more serious consequences for kids. As children's brain development is disrupted by chronic marijuana use, their risk for dependency accelerates. And, given the ever-increasing potency, marijuana becomes an expensive public health hazard with long-lasting effects. Even if adolescents or teenagers using marijuana don't become dependent -- and the majority don't --- their brains are still modified by the use of marijuana.

**ADDICTIVE?** This "natural" plant is in fact harmful and addictive and we should be fighting hard for the safety of our children and their futures.



**“Children are our most precious resource. We should shield them from harm, not expose them to it. If we truly want more positive outcomes for our nation, we must develop public drug policies from a new starting point: ‘What’s in the best interests of kids?’”**

**- Christian Thurstone, child and addictions psychiatrist and researcher, University of Colorado Denver**





## October 23rd through 31st is Red Ribbon Week

Red Ribbon Week serves as a vehicle for communities and individuals to take a stand for the hopes and dreams of children through a commitment to drug prevention and education and a personal commitment to live drug free lives with the ultimate goal being the creation of a drug free America.

And, perhaps more importantly, Red Ribbon Week commemorates the ultimate sacrifice made by DEA Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, who died at the hands of drug traffickers in Mexico while fighting the battle against illegal drugs. The DEA sent Camarena to work undercover in Mexico investigating a major drug cartel believed to include officers in the Mexican army, police and government. On Feb. 7, 1985, the 37-year-old Camarena left his office to meet his wife for lunch. Five men appeared at the agent's side and shoved him in a car. One month later, Camarena's body was found in a shallow grave. He had been tortured to death.

Within weeks of his death, in March of 1985, Camarena's Congressman, Duncan Hunter, and high school friend Henry Lozano, launched Camarena Clubs in Imperial Valley, California, Camarena's home. Hundreds of club members pledged

to lead drug-free lives to honor the sacrifices made by Camarena and others on behalf of all Americans. These coalitions began to wear red badges of satin ribbon in memory of Camarena. The Red Ribbon Week campaign emerged from the efforts of these clubs and coalitions.

Today, Red Ribbon Week is nationally recognized and celebrated, helping to preserve Special Agent Camarena's memory and further the cause for which he gave his life. The Red Ribbon Campaign also became a symbol of support for the DEA's efforts to reduce demand for drugs through prevention and education programs. By wearing a red ribbon during the last week in October, Americans demonstrate their ardent opposition to drugs. They pay homage not only to Special Agent Camarena, but to all men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in support of our nation's struggle against drug trafficking and abuse.

-Taken from [www.preventionpartners.com](http://www.preventionpartners.com)



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for the year included getting more membership in their clubs, getting speakers from Impact Teen Drivers to come to their schools, and planning activities for the schools that promote prevention of drug use and unsafe driving.

A message from the girls:

*The Youth Traffic Safety Summit was amazing! We took so much away from it! Learning things from how to plan projects and events to fun activities we can do with others in our community. The speakers were really awesome too! Their messages were inspiring as well as captivating. We came back ready to start our school wide FNL meeting and spread the word about what we learned at YTSS. It was also really fun how interactive the summit was, moving around talking to others and learning new things together. We can't wait for next year!*

-Abby, Kayla, Ali, Samantha, MaKayla, Raschelle. Haley, Paige, Natalie and Sarah

**Birthdays**

October

2nd Crystal

12th Peggy

**Up-coming events for October**

Oct.1st  
Marijuana Task Force Meeting

9th  
Victim Impact Panel

14th  
Columbus Day

17th  
Think Pink Day

31st  
Halloween

### Victim Impact Panel Statistics from August

50.7 % of participants said "yes" they had used alcohol and marijuana together

Along with alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs, heroin and meth were listed as substances for which participants were cited

12 participants were second time offenders and 1 was a third time offender

In the future, I will:

35.8% "never drink again"

64.2% "Drink, but not drive afterward"

77.6% say that driving under the influence laws in California are "fair"

### Victim Impact Panel Statistics from September

71.8% of Participants were first time offenders

34 cited for alcohol  
3 cited for prescription drugs  
1 for ambien  
1 for meth

6 participants were 2 time offenders  
3 participants were 3 time offenders

20.5% of participants said that "yes" they have used alcohol and marijuana together

56.8% said that on the night they received their DUI they did not stop and think about what could happen if they drove under the influence.

### Drug take back Event October 26th

10 am to 2 pm @ the Mt. Shasta Mall

This is your opportunity to safely dispose of your unused or unwanted prescription and over the counter drugs and help prevent prescription drug abuse.

The Redding Police Department, Shasta County Sheriff's Office, Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency- Public Health and the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will be hosting this event.



### A Sobering Choice

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Providing:

Education - Support - Prevention

asoberingchoice.org



### Other Community Resources

Shasta County FNL  
241-5958

Think Again Shasta  
Thinkagainshasta.info

Injury Prevention Coalition  
225-5458

### Executive Committee:

Charles Horner  
Chairman

Evie Van Veen  
Vice Chairman

Carol Grandbois  
Treasurer

Trisha Henningsen  
Secretary

### Mission Statement

A Sobering Choice is a community-based youth and adult led coalition dedicated to reducing incidents of driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs among the youth and adults of Shasta County.