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Chef Boy-ar-Dave's
crowning achievement
see page 7

Dec. 10, 2010

Feds ban five chemicals used in synthetic marijuana

By Anna Asendorf

U. Wisconsin via UWIRE

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration issued an emergency ban on five chemicals used to produce synthetic marijuana, a decision that will make products like K2 and Spice illegal in less than thirty days.

For the next 12 months, sale or possession of these chemicals and the products that contain them is illegal as more research is conducted on the effects and dangers of the substances, DEA spokesperson Barbara Carreno said.

The products will remain legal until December 24, giving retailers an opportunity to decide how to sell or remove inventory from their stores, Carreno said.

The DEA's decision to issue the ban follows an increase in reported negative effects of synthetic marijuana, like seizures, that scientists do not understand, Carreno said.

These differ from the typical effects of regular marijuana use and are oftentimes more powerful, leading to increased visits to poison control centers and hospitals.

The synthetic chemicals used to make products like K2 originated from research labs studying cannabinoids, said John Huffman, a professor of organic chemistry at Clemson University and developer of multiple synthetic chemicals.

Cannabinoids are chemical compounds that include THC, the substance in marijuana that produces a "high" when used, Huffman said.

Since the development of these compounds, people outside research labs have created them, using them to make and sell synthetic marijuana products disguised as incense.

Huffman said the effects of these chemicals on humans have not been studied and people should not use them for consumption or recreation.

With little understanding of these substances, the DEA's ban allows time for more research while protecting the public, Carreno said.

Over the course of the ban, the Department of Health and Human Services will examine synthetic marijuana's effects on humans, including addictiveness and safety, she said.

After one year, they will offer recommendations to the DEA on whether the chemicals should be controlled, Carreno said. A decision on whether

to make synthetic marijuana permanently illegal will then be made.

While the DEA seeks to stop the use of synthetic marijuana, Gary Storck, a spokesperson for the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws Madison, said he foresees makers of products like K2 will create different substances that circumvent the DEA's five chemicals ban.

Storck said synthetic marijuana is a symptom of marijuana prohibition that would not have surfaced if marijuana was legal.

He added with little known about chemicals in synthetic marijuana, regular marijuana remains a safer choice because of knowledge of its effects and its longer history of use.

Storck said he disagreed with the DEA's decision to prohibit more substances and the decision may hurt small businesses who sell synthetic marijuana while also creating more work for law enforcement.

But, since small amounts of marijuana are already not a priority for the DEA or local law enforcement, synthetic marijuana will probably not become priority either.

In this issue...

CAMPUS NEWS:

Preview: Steep Canyon Rangers	2
Southern Secession Parties	2

NEWS:

Student Profile	3
'Whipohols' Becoming Popular	3

SPORTS:

Men's Basketball	4
Women's Basketball	5
Baseball Team In Action	5

OPINION:

These Hills: Skiing In WNC	6
A Farewell to BC	6

ARTS & LIFE

Chef Boy-ar-Dave	7
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ODDS AND ENDS:

Your Horoscope	8
Sign of the Times	8

Students make holiday plans

By Chantel Azevedo

Staff Writer

We are all waiting for that last day, that last exam, that last line, that last word, and that last moment, when the sound 'ahhh' comes out of all our mouths. The holidays, Christmas break, and for some, a month out of school is on the way. Dec. 14 is the last day of exams and, for some, the first day to an amazing holiday break.

All over the Brevard College campus, there are students that are from the world over: America, Canada, Brazil, Scotland, New Zealand, Australia, and many more. Where is everyone going this holiday season? What is everyone going to be doing? These are questions do not only reside in our minds because sometimes we ourselves do not even know what our plans are, never mind anybody else's.

This 2010 holiday break you will find that there are many things, varieties of things that students all over our campus are going to be doing. "I plan on making break as restorative as possible, with as little mental work as possible, and with a balance of spending time with my family and my friends," said sophomore Teresa Musick.

"This holiday break is going to be great," said sophomore Allie Hovis. "It is going to be a time of rest but at the same time celebration since my birthday lands a couple days before Christmas. Spending time with my family is going to be my number one priority besides hanging out with friends."

For many students, this holiday break is going to be one of rest and restoration. Some students will work when going back home to prior jobs and some will work out. Some will sleep and some will never sleep. "I plan on making this holiday break memorable," said sophomore Hannah Graham. "Being with my family is always my number one priority, but spending time with loved ones and taking some time for myself, is what is going to be prominent."

This year around campus, many students have pleaded guilty to the 'oh so restful' upcoming break. On the other hand, many have stated otherwise: working or partaking in recreational activities like skiing and snowboarding are in the playing cards for them. We'll see who had the most interesting break when we all reunite in 2011. Happy holidays everyone.