

Dunafon At 420 Rally

by Mark Smiley

As the only mayor in Colorado to endorse Amendment 64, the amendment to legalize the sale and use of recreational marijuana, it stands to reason that Glendale Mayor Mike Dunafon would have a presence at the 420 Rally held Easter weekend at Civic Center Park. In fact, Mayor Dunafon did have a presence, including closing remarks on both Saturday, April 19 and Sunday, April 20. Dunafon told an enthusiastic crowd that attendees should demand and expect their individual liberties to be preserved. He voiced his issues and invited supporters of liberty to vote for him in his run for governor of Colorado. Dunafon is running as an Independent in the 2014 race.

Tens of thousands of people of all ages and walks of life showed up to listen to music, eat food, and partake in the formerly forbidden fruit that is marijuana. Miguel Lopez, the founder of Denver's 420 Rally, said that the celebration is about freedom of marijuana culture and to protest federal prohibition, but it is also about creating a positive atmosphere for people to learn and generate informed opinions of the issues that still exist.

Live musical acts at this year's event included Wyclef Jean, B.O.B., DJ Whoo Kid, and many other entertainers and special guest speakers. Jean, a popular hip hop recording artist, musician, actor, and politician, met Mayor Mike Dunafon at the rally. The two immediately bonded and Jean promised the crowd he would write a song about gubernatorial hopeful Mike Dunafon. Jean had his own brush with politics as he ran for President of Haiti in 2010. He was deemed not eligible to run for president of the country because he was not legally a resident there.

Marijuana was legalized in Colorado for



Mike & Wyclef: Mike Dunafon meets Wyclef Jean, American hip hop recording artist, musician, actor, and politician, at the 420 Rally at Civic Center Park. Jean promised to write a song about Dunafon.

recreational use by Amendment 64, which was passed last year and allowed the first ever non-medical cannabis stores as of January 1, 2014. One problem event organizers and local police have is that while marijuana is legal for recreational use, it is still illegal to use in public areas. On Saturday, April 19, Denver Police issued 25 citations or arrests — 17 of which were for smoking marijuana in public. At 4:20 p.m. on April 20, most attendees lit up a smoke so it was virtually impossible for police to arrest everyone.

The 420 Rally was only one of many weed events of the weekend, including the Cannabis Cup hosted by High Times Magazine and special events held across the state. While Colorado and Washington are the only states to have legalized marijuana for recreational use, there are currently 21 states and the District of Columbia that have legalized — the still federally illegal drug — for medical use. There are another 12 states pending legislation.

In one of only a handful of addresses over the weekend, Dunafon spoke to the crowd by referring to Samuel Caldwell, the first person convicted of selling marijuana under the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937. "Here we are, 77 years later in their memory, fixing this problem," said Dunafon.



Campaign Enthusiasts: Tens of thousands of people attended the 420 Rally in Denver over the April 20 weekend. Dunafon for Governor signs could be seen scattered among the crowd and the billow of smoke.

He encouraged everyone to vote for him in the 2014 election. "This is the beginning. I call it the American Spring. The beginning

of the return of liberty to our state and to our lives and we will leave it to our children — Hail 420!"



Meet And Greet: Gubernatorial hopeful, Mike Dunafon, meets park rangers at his booth at the 420 Rally in Denver. Dunafon was the only candidate with a presence at the festival.

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