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Local dispensary's sales down from last year

DAVID SHOWERS
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

The state revenue agency reported a record pace for medical marijuana sales through August despite the sales leader reporting year-over-year declines in sales by weight.

Sales of 705.27 pounds and 714.31 pounds that Suite 443 reported for July and August, respectively, led all of the more than 30 dispensaries statewide but trailed its previous July and August by 3.6% and 7.5%.

The report the state Department of Finance and

Administration released last week provided the first year-over-year comparison with only one dispensary in Garland County. The state revoked Green Springs Medical's license in mid June of last year, leaving Suite 443 as the county's lone outlet for medical marijuana.

The revocation grew Suite 443's market share and helped it post a 25% increase in sales by weight last year. Sales of more than 5,500 pounds it reported through this August put it 12.5% ahead of the same period of last year and accounted for more than

10% of the 52,292 pounds sold statewide.

Sales of close to 4,800 pounds that second-place Natural Relief reported through August beat its first eight months of last year by 9%. The Sherwood location reported year-over-year gains in July and August.

Harvest in Conway reported the most growth through the first two-thirds of the year. Its more than 3,100 pounds in sales outpaced last year by 51%. Custom Cannabis in Alexander outperformed its first eight months of last

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Suite 443 on Malvern Avenue continues to be the state's leading dispensary in medical marijuana sales. (The Sentinel-Record/Donald Cross)



George Maxey, a National Park College professor and president of the Hot Springs Geology Club, holds up a crystal. (The Sentinel-Record/Thomas Buckman)

Maxey, Hot Springs Geology Club to host GeoJam Sept. 20 at National Park College

JACOB MILLER
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

National Park College's George Maxey, in collaboration with the Hot Springs Geology Club, will host GeoJam on Sept. 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the NPC Student Commons.

The event, which will be

held in rooms 122 and 123, will be an identification expo for rocks, minerals, fossils, meteorites and anything else students of the college bring to be scientifically identified.

Maxey, an environmental geologist and president of the Hot Springs Geology Club, who has been at NPC for 10

years, said the event is an official promotion of the many requests students make for him to scientifically identify different specimens that they bring him.

He originally taught at the University of North Texas for 26 years before retiring to Hot Springs Village.

After recruiting students to help him with research on the lakes in the village, Maxey joined NPC's faculty after realizing the college did not have a geologist.

"When I was in Texas and now that I'm here, I'm usually the one they come to if

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An undated handout photo of Laurie Holden, who will be headlining this year's Spa-Con comics and pop culture convention. (Courtesy Visit Hot Springs)

'Walking Dead' actor Holden eager to explore during Spa-Con

JAMES LEIGH
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

Spa-Con headliner Laurie Holden is looking forward to more than just getting to spend some time with her fans this weekend while she is in Hot Springs.

An athlete who enjoys being outdoors, Holden said she hopes to take in a few of the sights in the Spa City while she is here.

"I'm an athlete, so I am always in the pool," she said. "I love hiking. One of the reasons I'm so excited to come to Hot Springs is that I'm just so excited to go to Garvan Woodland Gardens. I love museums, so I'm intrigued to go to the Gangster Museum of America. I love my spa, so I'm excited to go to Bathhouse Row and book myself and visit with the mineral waters."

Holden said she is "excited to come to this convention."

"I've always wanted to come to that part of the world. And there's a lot of wonderful sponsors, and I look forward to meeting all the fans and a lot of the other talented artists," she said.

The draw of acting for Holden came from both her family and the desire to tell stories.

"I come from a family of writers, directors, actors, artists, so it's always been — it was a huge part of my upbringing," she said. "I think, at the end of the day,

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Lopez: Mystic Ozark is the latest chapter of historic bath house

JAMES LEIGH
THE SENTINEL-RECORD

Over the last century and a half, the Ozark Bath House has undergone many changes, the director of Mystic Ozark told Hot Springs National Park Rotary Wednesday.

The Weir and George Bath House was first built at the

site in 1870, but it was destroyed by a fire in 1878, Romeo Lopez said.

"The name Ozark comes from the Ouachita Mountains, which at the time were referred to as the Ozark Range," he said. "Now fast forward to 1922, that's a building that

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Mystic Ozark Director Romeo Lopez discusses the history and the future of the Ozark Bath House at a Hot Springs National Park Rotary meeting Wednesday. (The Sentinel-Record/James Leigh)

Rubio in Israel in wake of Qatar attack as Gaza strikes intensify

MATTHEW LEE AND SAMY MAGDY
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio was in Israel on Sunday as its military intensified attacks on northern Gaza, flattening multiple high-rise building and killing at least 13 Palestinians.

Rubio said before the trip that he would seek answers from Israeli officials about their view of a path

forward in Gaza, following Israel's attack on Hamas leaders in Qatar last week that upended efforts to broker an end to the conflict.

His two-day visit also represents a show of support for the increasingly isolated Israel as the United Nations holds what is expected to be a contentious debate next week on commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state. Israeli Prime Min-

ister Benjamin Netanyahu strongly opposes the recognition of a Palestinian state.

QATAR FALLOUT

Rubio's visit proceeded despite U.S. President Donald Trump's anger at Netanyahu over the Israeli strike in Doha, which he said the United States wasn't notified of beforehand.

On Sunday, Netanyahu, Rubio

and their wives, along with U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee and his wife, toured the Western Wall and the excavated tunnels near it.

"I think his (Rubio's) visit here is a testament to the durability, the strength of the Israeli-American alliance. It's as strong and as durable as the stones of the Western Wall we just touched," Netanyahu said.

On Friday, Rubio and Trump met with Qatar's prime minister about the fallout from the Israeli operation. The back-to-back meetings with Israel and Qatar illustrate how the Trump administration is trying to balance relations between key Middle East allies despite widespread international condemnation of the attack.

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