

arrested Paschal for "possession of hypodermic needles" —holding them up dramatically and announcing "is this what you want downtown?" to those nearby. Paschal is diabetic and uses the needles for injecting insulin, and had his diabetic charm necklace on him at the time. Baker also arrested Paschal for marijuana possession —though he uses it medically with a doctor's letter.

While no charges were filed for that arrest, Paschal, fearing a New Hampshire warrant would be discovered, gave a false name. He pled guilty to that charge and served 10 days in jail. In all, Baker and the SCPD arrested or cited Paschal seven times in less than a year.

A VICTIM OF THE DRUG WARS

The New Hampshire warrant was issued in a 1996 case in which Paschal was convicted of selling a half-ounce of marijuana to an undercover officer. He has already served two-and-one-half years in New Hampshire for felony sale of a controlled substance. That heavy sentence for a small amount of marijuana marks Paschal as a victim of the drug wars.

New Hampshire has no medical marijuana law. Paschal has been a brittle diabetic since the age of 18 months, an epileptic, and is bi-polar. All three conditions are helped by marijuana.

Following the latest arrests in Santa Cruz, Judge Arthur Danner III ordered Paschal held for 30 to 90 days in the Santa Cruz County jail to see if the New Hampshire authorities could be persuaded to extradite the homeless tarot reader. Danner, to his credit, had repeated opportunities to put people in prison for two or three years, and did not.

Assistant District Attorney Paul Mariconda, however, was champing at the

bit, looking like Rick Moranis' evil twin in suit and tie, eager to fill up the jails with more men and women. Danner ordered that all local charges (the milk crate display, tarot reading and panhandling) be dropped to facilitate Paschal's speedy departure to New Hampshire.

When considering the public expense for 90 days in jail, the police and court costs of several arrests for trivial infractions, the transportation of a prisoner in custody from Santa Cruz to New Hampshire, and then possibly eight more months in prison there, the costs to the public could pay for four years in college for someone like Jason. And this at a time when all state and local budgets are severely impacted.

A MOTHER FIGHTS FOR HER SON

Jan Paschal, Jason's mother, is a former Clinton appointee to the federal Department of Education. She has continued to support her son. In a telephone interview, she described her son as intelligent and talented.

"But he decided to go a different way than I had hoped," Jan Paschal said. "I used to have a cookie-cutter approach for what I wanted for him... And the part that sort of amazes me as someone who doesn't believe in the legalization of drugs, but Jason is really helped by using marijuana. He is much better off when he uses it. I can see that."

Although it may not be what she had wanted for her son, she described Jason's life as a traveling teacher, preacher, and tarot card reader as "harmless and what he wants to do with his life." In Redfern's *Sentinel* article, Jan Paschal said of her son, "He is a son of America. He's not a throwaway person. But someone like

would face, and when they arrest somebody for having a milk crate, you have to wonder what the issues really are."

Paschal's mother says her son does not belong in prison; that his mental health problems are exacerbated there. During his stint in the Santa Cruz County Jail, Paschal was held in the psychiatric unit, in spite of the fact that his jailing had nothing to do with mental illness.

Paschal's three brief hunger strikes (undertaken for short periods of time because of the delicacy of his medical condition) were dismissed as "manipulative, acting out" behavior. He was kept in solitary confinement for 23 out of 24 hours each day.

Paschal, a Sufi Muslim, claimed the jail staff continually fed him pork, which is outlawed by his religion. Paschal's unashamed cultural response has been to throw the pork against the wall, and greet deputies with loud shouts and kicks to the bulletproof glass of his cell. While this may give authorities more rope to hang the "mental case" label around his neck, Paschal sees it differently.

"This is my resistance," he told activists recently at a jailhouse visit. "And if they try to transport me to New Hampshire, I will go on a longer hunger strike. They will have to transport me with my precarious medical condition and in an uncooperative manner as well."

SANTA CRUZ OFFICIALS SUPPORT LAWSUIT FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA

On April 23, Valerie and Mike Corral of Wo/men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana (WAMM) filed suit against the DEA for seizing their pot plants in a raid on September 5, 2002. Both Santa Cruz Mayor Emily Reilly and County Board of

portively at a press conference on the courthouse steps to announce the suit by WAMM, the City of Santa Cruz, and the County of Santa Cruz against the DEA to allow Californians to use medical marijuana for sick and dying people.

Supervisor Wormhoudt passionately spoke at the press conference, saying, "Now I may say parenthetically, ~~although~~ perhaps not as relevantly, that at this time, while we face an enormous deficit because of what some of us consider adventurous policies, is this a time when the DEA has nothing better to do with its resources than to chase ill people around the County of Santa Cruz? I would plead with President Bush to create better priorities."

Meanwhile, literally across the street, in the Santa Cruz County Jail, Jason Paschal awaited the arrival of the New Hampshire authorities to transport him 3000 miles to a state that does not recognize the use of medical marijuana to treat illness, and to serve an additional eight months in jail for half an ounce of marijuana in 1996, all at public expense.

SGT. BAKER'S SCPD CUTS A SWATH

Sgt. Baker is renowned for overseeing and participating in three years of unchecked gentrification thuggery on the mall. His targets have included bicyclists, homeless panhandlers, musicians, a man dropping breadcrumbs for the pigeons, activists chalking peace signs on the sidewalk, and youth of all shapes and sizes. That his behavior is tolerated reveals that selective enforcement is City policy, endorsed at a far higher level.

Paschal reports he has been the victim of racist hate-crime assaults on the mall for his ethnicity ("they spit on me and called me 'nigger'"). Police, he said, refused to cite those he accused of the violence.

Instead, Paschal himself was arrested by Jackson's Shoes "No hackey sacking on the mall" petitioner Candi Jackson,