

## Cottage Grove Sentinel

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### MAMA makes stop in the Grove

Jack Thomas thought his 600-milligram dose of Ibuprofen was safe because his doctor had prescribed it to him.

He was wrong.

Thomas had been taking the medication for pain related to a motorcycle accident years ago, but it gave him terrible acid reflux and coughing fits. One particularly bad bout left him with an even more painful pinched nerve in his back.

Now his doctors want him to take a combination of Vicodin and Flexerol for the pain and stiffness.

"I don't want to touch that stuff," said Thomas.

It's stories like these that bring people to the drug education group Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse (MAMA), which, given Thomas' involvement, clearly isn't just about mothers anymore.

MAMA is currently making a statewide tour leading up to a conference in Portland. The circuit included a stop in Cottage Grove last week.

"Our message is that you are going to decide if and how to use a drug," said MAMA Executive Director Sandee Burbank, who noted that just because a drug is legal doesn't make it safe. "Basically, you're on your own."

According to Burbank, drug policy in the United States doesn't add up.

Burbank uses as an example the fact that Cannabis has faced major hurdles for medical legalization, and yet doctors regularly prescribe dangerous and addictive opiates like OxyContin and Methadone.

"We need to devise a new policy with a level playing field where all

drugs are judged by the same standard," said Burbank last week.  
"There's so much harm in our current drug policy."

MAMA will be holding a Conference and Banquet in Portland on  
Saturday, October 20. More information is available at  
[www.mamas.org](http://www.mamas.org) .