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**Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC)
Prevention Center**

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Law & Justice

THE INFORMANT



Meth Watch Member e-Letter

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**Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC)
Prevention Center
Spokane County Meth Action Team (MAT)**



Prescription Drugs Devastating Hollywood



Authorities have recovered four prescription drug bottles bearing the name of actor Cory Haim but found nothing illegal while investigating his death, officials said. Assistant chief coroner Ed Winter declined to identify the drugs. Haim was battling flu-like symptoms in the days before his death.

Mr Winter says an autopsy was completed on Thursday, but his office is awaiting the results of toxicology tests which could take two months before determining a cause of death. Haim died on Wednesday in Burbank, Los Angeles, after collapsing at his mother's apartment. The 38-year-old former child star had battled drug addiction for years.

He filed for bankruptcy protection in July 1997 and went to rehab over 15 times, including a stint in 2000. A year later, the troubled teen actor was hospitalized for a drug-induced stroke. He's admitted to using hard drugs and prescription pills. "I did cocaine for about a year and a half, then it led to crack," he said.

"I started on the downers which were a hell of a lot better than the uppers because I was a nervous wreck," he said. "But one led to two, two led to four, four led to eight, until at the end it was about 85 a day — the doctors could not believe I was taking that much. And that was just the Valium — I'm not talking about the other pills I went through."

He earned fame for roles in the 1980s films *Lucas* and *The Lost Boys*. He had recently completed several film projects. *(The Press Association)*

Tri-City Pot Trade Spikes - Meth Still Biggest Problem

Methamphetamine continues to be the biggest drug problem in the Tri-Cities, but last year marijuana topped the list of seizures by the Tri-City Metro Drug Task Force. Detectives seized 25,918 plants -- more than double what they saw in 2008 -- along with more than 47 pounds of processed pot, according to Metro's year-end statistics.

"We hit a tremendous amount during eradication season -- we saw more plants than we had in years," said Kennewick police Sgt. Trevor White, who leads the multi-agency undercover unit. "... Washington is one of the top five in marijuana eradication in the country." White attributes the success of finding large grow operations last year to partnerships with other agencies, training and funding through state grants.

During eradication season -- which starts in the summer and runs through October in the Tri-Cities -- a team of detectives led by the Washington State Patrol moved throughout the region searching for marijuana hidden in orchards, tree farms, vineyards and other remote outdoor areas. Most of the grow areas being found are planted and run by Mexican drug cartels, officials said. "I think the cartels are just a step ahead of us every time," White said. "Once we adjust our technique, they adjust their technique. This (past) year we caught up with them, but the stuff we found is just the tip of the iceberg." Overall last year, Metro detectives took about \$39 million worth of drugs of the streets.

In addition to marijuana, they seized nearly 9 pounds of meth, 4.2 pounds of cocaine, about 12 ounces of hallucinogenic mushrooms and 5 ounces of heroin. There also were 132 doses of ecstasy, 1,072 prescription pills, 22 vehicles, 10 firearms, \$25,000 worth of property and about \$39,000 in cash seized. Detectives also conducted 286 controlled drug buys, served 52 search warrants and made 113 drug arrests. Metro is an undercover unit that targets mid- and upper-level drug dealers. The task force is run by the Kennewick Police Department, but is made up of detectives from the Tri-Cities' police agencies. The numbers show Metro's focus on eradicating drugs in the region, but they don't tell the whole story about the task force's impact on the drug trade. "The numbers don't show what's truly here," White said. "The numbers do show what we get into based on who's working with us."

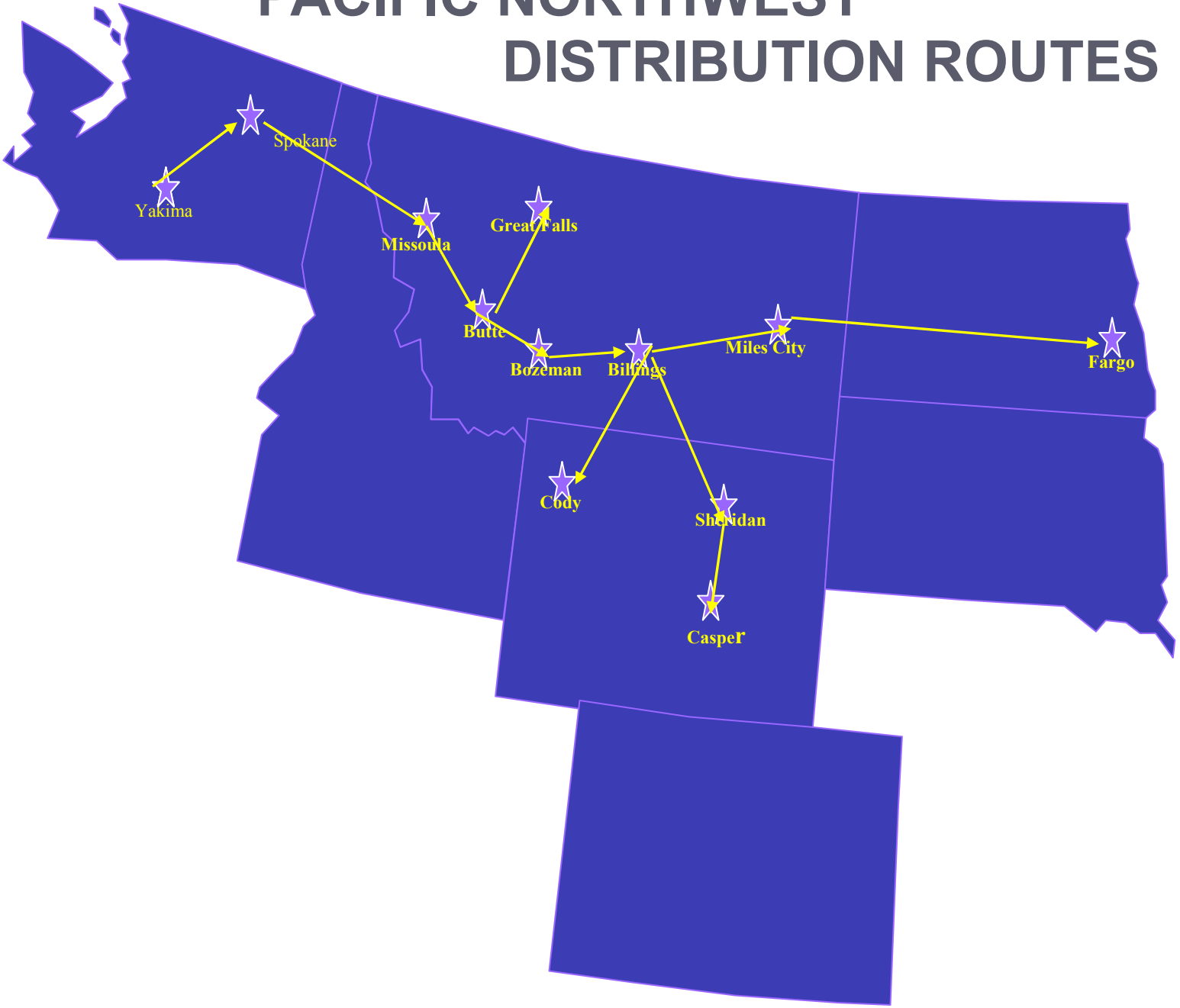
Prescription drug fraud is becoming increasingly common, but what may not be known to many people is that there's a tie between prescription drugs and heroin. "There's a lot of heroin in the area," White said. Heroin produces the same high people seek when abusing prescription drugs, but it's cheaper to get than the prescription painkillers, he said.

And though reports about methamphetamine use seems to have fallen out of the news, it still is "the overwhelming problem," White said. "Meth is everywhere," he said, noting that most of it continues to be brought in from Mexico. Drug detectives are finding that "the Tri-Cities is a huge hub for dope" that comes from the southern border and goes up to Canada or heads east to Idaho, Montana and the Dakotas, White said. For 2010, Metro officials will continue seeking grants to help keep targeting the drug dealers and making it harder for them to do business in the Tri-Cities.

BY PAULA HORTON, HERALD STAFF WRITER (THE NEWS TRIBUNE)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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Presents:



The State of Substance Abuse in Spokane County **UNITING** Law Enforcement, Treatment & Prevention FORUM

June 8, 2010
Spokane Arena
Champions Meeting Room
720 West Mallon Avenue,
Spokane WA

- PANEL DISCUSSION WITH LOCAL LEADERS FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT, TREATMENT & PREVENTION
- TRAINING IS FREE OF COST
- CEU'S AVAILABLE

The Real Cost of Substance Abuse

- 10 million Americans have cancer, 23 million Americans suffer from substance abuse addiction
- 60% of teens who try Marijuana before age 15 go on to try Cocaine
- 95% of people with a lifetime dependence on alcohol or other drugs started using as adolescents
- Cancer costs society \$172 billion per year, substance abuse costs \$484 per year

Science and Management of Addictions Foundation (SAMA)

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