

## Judge delays probation hearing in marijuana case <sup>9-17-96</sup>

### WATERLOO

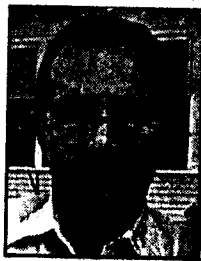
A probation-revocation hearing has been delayed for a Waterloo man who could go to prison for using marijuana for medicinal purposes.

Allen Helmers, 48, had been scheduled to be in Black Hawk County District Court Monday afternoon for a hearing that could have ended with him being sent to prison. The hearing, however, was delayed and is now rescheduled for Oct. 28.

Helmers has said his doctor believes marijuana is the only thing that can effectively relieve pain

caused by fibromyalgia syndrome, a disease that attacks the body's soft tissue. The cause is unknown and there is no cure.

Previously, Helmers was sentenced to two five-year suspended prison sentences and \$1,800 in fines stemming from a police search of his home that uncov-



Allen Helmers

ered about three ounces of marijuana he was using to ease the pain from his condition.

Helmers was placed on two to five years of supervised probation, including periodic urine tests. Because he continued using marijuana, the probation could be revoked and a prison term could be imposed.

There are only eight people in the United States allowed to smoke marijuana legally for medical reasons. All were given permission under a federal program that was shut down by the Bush administration in 1992.