

## Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop opens third branch in Lafayette

By Nick Marnell

Given the opportunity to promote themselves, new businesses are usually excited to run down the list of products or services they provide the marketplace.

But Adam Abdallah, owner of Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop in Lafayette, launched directly into a description of what his new retail store is not.

"We are not a dispensary. And we do not sell any illegal product. No marijuana, no THC packets in any of our stores," Abdallah said. "We are a general retail store."

A general retail store that caters to smokers. Cigars, cigarettes, e-liquid, vape juice, vaporizers, tobacco and glass pipes, hookahs, and Middle Eastern tobacco flavorings line the walls of the spacious establishment, the third location for the company, with shops in Castro Valley and Livermore.

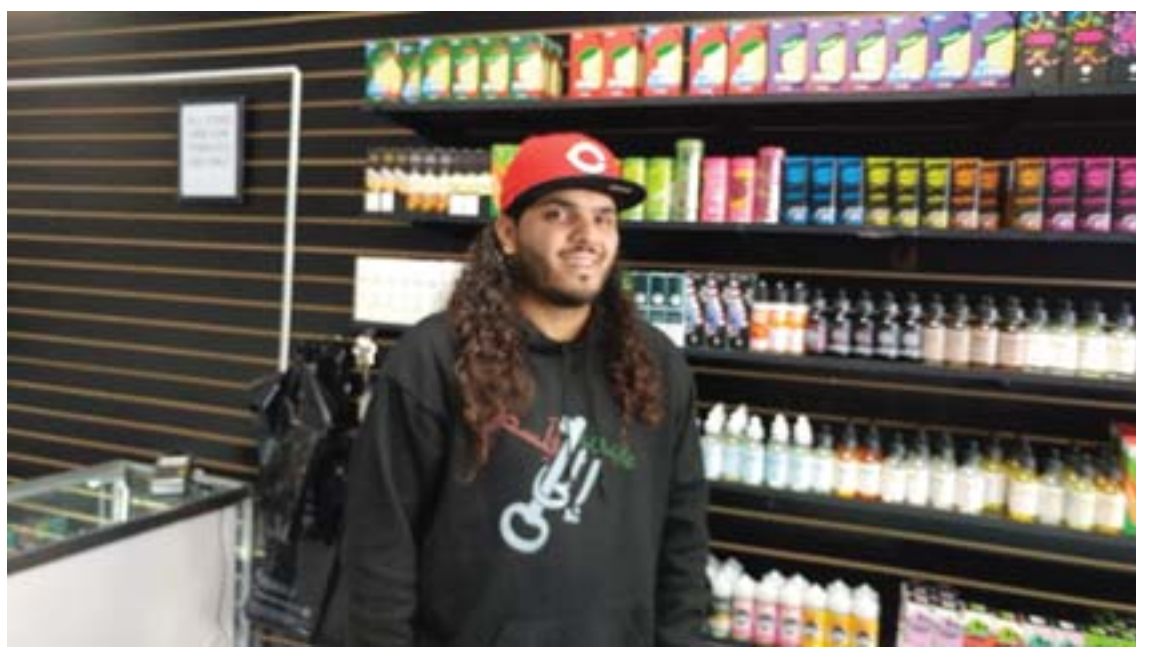
"There's no other store like ours around," Abdallah said, noting that as opposed to fighting heavy competition by opening in Walnut Creek, he feels he has the

Lamorinda market to himself in Lafayette.

"It's popular, crowded, lots of traffic. The Roundup is always active," he said. "And with the high income in the area, who wouldn't want to come to Lafayette to set up shop? My market is everyone in Moraga, Orinda and Lafayette."

Abdallah tried three or four other potential locations in Lafayette but they did not pan out. One evening, driving along Mt. Diablo Boulevard, he saw the For Lease sign at 3566. He went to the city offices, filled out paperwork, and within 10 minutes, Blazin' Jayz was in business in Lafayette.

The retail store opened March 27. Abdallah said he has had limited pushback from residents and the city, and none whatsoever from the police. A group of parents came to complain about kids smoking cigarettes and vape, and though Abdallah explained that his store could not be blamed for things that occurred prior to his opening, he did tint his storefront



Adam Abdallah, proprietor of Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop in Lafayette

windows after that discussion as a cooperative gesture. The city asked Abdallah to move the hookahs from the front of the shop to the rear, but that's been it, he said.

"We respect our neighbors. We want everyone to understand what our business is," Abdallah said. "We are a smoke shop for 21 and over, and for adults who are curious. We also carry jewelry, incense, accessories, and lots of gift items." He allows

no smoking in the store, and that means no smoking by the owners and managers.

Abdallah stressed that no one is permitted in the store unless they are 21. They must present ID, and he allows no exceptions. What about the teenage boy who wants to buy his mother sticks of incense for her birthday?

"He cannot enter this building," Abdallah said. "It's not always about the money. I have kids

Photo Nick Marnell myself and we take this very seriously. We do not sell to minors."

The new business owner emphasized that he intends to be a good neighbor. "You will never have to worry about your kids," Abdallah said. "We love Lafayette!"

Blazin' Jayz Smoke Shop is located at 3566 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette, and is open daily, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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## Las Trampas School recognized on 60th anniversary

By Sora O'Doherty



Las Trampas residential buildings for children prior to 1970. Photo courtesy Las Trampas

Orinda Mayor Amy Worth was delighted to present a proclamation recognizing the 60th anniversary of Las Trampas School at the city council meeting April 10. Mayor Worth called the school "one of the treasures of our community." The school was honored for its efforts on behalf of the developmentally disabled. The proclamation states that 60 years ago a group of committed parents and neighbors founded the Las Trampas School in Lafayette to provide a safe and nurturing place for their children with developmental disabilities. Currently intellectual and developmental disabilities affect more than 3,500 adults in Contra Costa County. Since its inception, the school has changed its focus to developmentally disabled adults.

The proclamation was accepted by Daniel Hoag, executive director, and Cathy Merchant, who has been involved with Las Trampas over many years. Hoag said that he could not be more pleased to be part of an organization that was here since well before the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act of 1968, the Rehabili-

tation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Hoag said that the purpose of the school is to serve and to provide dignity and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities. "It was this area of California" he said, "that was instrumental in moving people out of institutional settings and into the community."

Looking to the next 60 years, Hoag plans to be working toward people with disabilities being fully included in every aspect of the community.

Hoag thanked Inga Miller, who served on the Las Trampas board right before she was elected to the City Council. Miller said she learned how many Orinda residents were involved in the founding of Las Trampas, which was for their children. It is, she said, "a very, very special place, a really lovely organization."

Worth agreed that it really is true that Las Trampas preceded all the state and federal legislation on disabilities and that Contra Costa County still has a tremendous challenge to provide housing for adults with disabilities. She thanked Las Trampas for their fine work in making it happen.

Las Trampas' big fundraiser, "What's in Our Hat?" will be held at the Lafayette Park Hotel and Spa from 3 to 6:30 p.m. Sunday, April 29. Champagne, cocktails, premium wines, appetizers and a themed buffet will be served. Tickets are \$125 and can be purchased at [www.lastrampas.org](http://www.lastrampas.org). There will be a raffle and a silent auction, and entertainment will be provided by Generations in Jazz Combo.

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## Concern in the local recycling industry

... continued from page A1



Photo provided

In 2017, Republic collected 5,503 tons of recyclable materials in Lafayette, 3,437 tons in Moraga and 3,891 tons in Orinda. Those figures were virtually identical with the 2016 totals.

According to Ken Etherington, executive director of RecycleSmart, Mt. Diablo Recycling sold all of the 2016-17 Lamorinda recyclables to China, which now threatens to halt the import of much of that material. "These are the most severe import restrictions from China I have ever seen," Etherington said. "China still accepts recycling; however, the materials need to be very clean and free of contamination, like garbage and food waste." The contamination threshold China now permits is 0.5

percent.

Anderson noted that recent audits of recyclable materials show that the amount of contamination has increased from 5 percent to 8 percent. "Keeping these recyclables 'clean' is the number one way to keep the cost of recycling of these materials low and guarantees that there will be a market for them," he said.

"I think all agencies within the RecycleSmart Authority are concerned about the recent restrictions China has placed on recyclables," said Roger Wykle, Moraga representative on the authority board. Both he and Orinda RecycleSmart board member Amy Worth encourage the contractor to seek other markets for the sale of recyclables.

In 2017, Southeast Asia countries answered the bell, with Thailand increasing recyclable imports 400 percent, Malaysia 295 percent and Vietnam 105 percent over 2016. "But will there be enough capacity in those countries?" Marva Sheehan of HF&H Consultants asked the CCCSWA board in February.

"Collectively, we may also need to take a serious look at processing this material here in the U.S. The best thing for Moraga would be to find a viable market for our recyclables, put these materials to good use, and keep it out of our landfills," Wykle said. Worth and Anderson also oppose sending recyclables to landfills.

Creating new domestic plants to recycle the recyclables will take years, but consumer education can make a much quicker impact. Etherington said that the authority will soon run a program of heavy consumer outreach to stress keeping recyclables clean and free of contamination, making them easier to market. "Don't throw out your mayonnaise jar with half of the product left inside. Lightly wipe out or rinse each bottle you discard," he said. "And don't use the blue cans as garbage cans."

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