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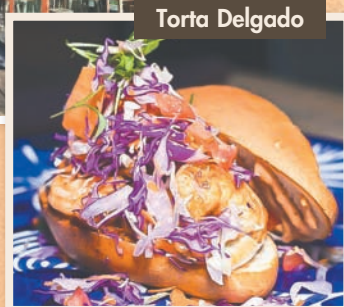
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15 MINUTES

BY MAXFIELD MORRIS

maxfieldm@newsreview.com



Sloane Read runs Refill Madness, and is wild for consumer advocacy, environmentalism and activism.

PHOTO BY MAXFIELD MORRIS

Refill, not landfill

I've got one word for you, dear reader: plastics.

The petroleum-based products pervade pretty much everything in consumer life: shampoos, dishwasher liquid, lotions. That's where Sloane Read comes in. Read is owner and operator of Refill Madness, a store that since February 2016 has specialized in taking single-use plastics out of the waste stream by refilling customers' containers with a smorgasbord of eco-friendly products for the home and the body. On Monday, January 28, Refill Madness hit 30,000 total refills since opening. SN&R chatted with Read about reusable bottles and the tricky business of consumer habits.

What's the goal of Refill Madness?

Our biggest goal is to change the consuming habits of people so that they're thinking about their waste. So when they come here to Refill Madness, we're removing plastic from the waste stream—even from recycling centers—so we're decreasing the needs for fossil fuels to go into the processes of land-filling and recycling. ... We really want to promote the reuse, reduce and refill—and skip the recycling to the very last alternative.

Aren't manufacturers going to keep producing all this plastic?

Yeah. That's kind of a tough question. I tell everyone that you vote with your dollar every day. ... When you go out there and you buy whatever's in the plastic container, you're telling them that you want more of that. ... Consumers have major power, I don't think they think they do.

Do you feel like you're fighting plastic?

I think we're more fighting the ubiquitousness of plastic, where it's everywhere all the time, and the problem with plastic is how it's manufactured, what it's made of that can harm human health and the environment.

How difficult is it competing with the convenience of throwaway culture?

It is so convenient for people to just grab it off a shelf at a normal grocery store and then toss it when they're done and get more. So we do fight with the convenience factor. We try to make it more convenient for people to come in and refill, and maybe they can drop off their bottles with us, and go run errands, go grocery shop, get coffee, maybe have a glass of wine, here on this corner. ... We get more and more customers that come in and say, "Where have you been? I hate plastic, and there should be more of these places."

How did the name Refill Madness come about?

Well, I wanted "refill" in the name. And my husband came up with the name, Refill Madness, kind of based off of the movie *Reefer Madness*. He thought it was pretty catchy. I didn't really like it at first, so I slept on it, and I couldn't think of anything better. ... It's kind of a play on words, but it is madness what's going on in our environment.

Do you get a lot of people who assume it's some kind of therapeutic alternative store?

Not a lot, but it does happen. Maybe once a month, we'll get somebody going, "Um, I thought you were a dispensary," and I tell them, "Well, we're a soap dispensary." □

Get your laundry detergent refilled at the shop, located at 1828 29th St., or visit refillmadnesssacramento.com for more details. Look out for a 30,000-refill celebration party at SacYard Tap House on February 21.