

NEW FIGS ON THE BLOCK

Bricks and Minifigs brings Lego resale to Eugene's Whiteaker district

Bins piled high with brightly colored Lego bricks are the focal point of Bricks and Minifigs, a recent addition to Eugene's Whiteaker district. Brian Aljian, the owner of the store, says Lego-lovers — of all ages — see this as a destination store. Children spend hours here, just playing.

"I love the expression on people's faces," Aljian says. "Their jaws just drop."

This Lego store is unique — it's a resale shop, giving customers the chance to sell old Legos and buy the plastic bricks and sets that they want, new and used. The store is also home to a large variety of minifigures (minifigs), collectable Lego action figures that usually come as part of larger sets.

Aljian says that he saw this selective, unique approach to Lego shopping in a Bricks and Minifigs stores in Beaverton, and figured Eugene could use a store like that. When he discovered that the store was a franchise, he decided to open one here himself.

Aljian played with Legos when he was a kid, saying that he had to carve a path in the bricks on his childhood bedroom floor to get from the bed to the door.

"It's a toy that doesn't go away. You can come back to it over and over and build something new," he says. "It's not like video games that you can play for 10 hours and be done with it."

Bricks and Minifigs might also appeal to the Eugene's Adult Fan of Lego (AFOL) community. Trent Coddington, a sales associate at Bricks and Minifigs who identifies as an AFOL and has extensive Lego expertise, says he hopes the store will give AFOLs like himself a place to convene — something they haven't had previously.

"I'm sure that there are other people in Eugene that are into Legos like we are and would like to share their creations but just don't really have a place to share them," Coddington says. "If we can provide that kind of place for them that would be really great."

The store has hosted an AFOL night where like-minded Lego lovers showcased their work, and Coddington says they plan to host more in the future.

He loves Legos, Coddington says, because they allow people to express creativity.

"When I first started being able to interact with things with my hands I started playing with Legos," he says. "I've been building since I was a child and I still am building even at 21. You can take something so simple and turn it into something so complex."

The Bricks and Minifigs team say they have been having a great time since opening the store, and they want it to show.

"It's been fun and challenging and rewarding," Aljian says, adding that he hopes Eugeneans — whether they're kids, AFOLs or new fans of Lego — will come check it out.

Eugene's Bricks and Minifigs is open 10 am to 6 pm Monday through Saturday and 11 am to 5 pm Sunday at 780 Blair Boulevard. The store also hosts birthday parties. More information at bricksandminifigs.com.

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