



# DOWNTOWN VIEW



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## UPSTAIRS AT NEONOPOLIS: Arts center opens

By AMANDA LLEWELLYN  
VIEW STAFF WRITER

An artistically linked community is a happy community.



That's Las Vegas resident Carl Corcoran's philosophy. Corcoran is the owner of the newly opened Southern Nevada Center for the Arts, an

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18,000-square-foot facility that features 30 studio spaces occupied by more than 45 painters, mixed media artists, sculptors, jewelers and art classes.

The facility, located on the second floor of the Neonopolis complex, 450 Fremont St., serves as both a studio and a

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gallery space, where artists can work and display finished pieces, and patrons can mingle with artists and take classes featuring almost every medium.

Corcoran, a trade show artist who makes small sculptures and custom jewelry, got the idea to open the center about eight months ago.

"I wanted to help create a mecca for the arts," he said.

Corcoran said he hopes the center will serve as a reminder for people from all over the world that Las Vegas has a vibrant arts scene, and while the city's culture may not be typical of Middle America by any means, it is distinct, and most certainly does exist.

Corcoran said his ultimate goal is to make art more accessible to the community, and to create a Las Vegas home for regional and local artists.

Artist Bonnie Kelso, a member of the Las Vegas Art Guild, took classes as a child at the highly regarded Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, Va., an all-inclusive arts center after which Corcoran modeled his property.

"The atmosphere, what he's trying to do here, I really get it," she said. "I've seen it before. It really worked at the Torpedo Factory."

Kelso has lived in Las Vegas for four years, and became involved with the center last year after Corcoran presented his idea to members of the art guild.

Kelso said she began showing her artwork at First Friday almost out of necessity after first arriving in town.

"The arts scene here is kind of spread out," she said. "I wasn't sure where to go. I always thought the scene should be more condensed. This is a step in that direction."

Kelso, an acrylic painter by trade, said she expects the center will become an arts and entertainment hot spot.

"The goal is to make art more available at large," she said. "How better to do that than with classes and outreach programs? Just being as open as this place is will be key to the success."

Kelso now is sharing a studio and gallery space with a ceramics artist, and said she likes the close quarters.

"It allows for collaboration, which I think many artists thrive from," she said.

Arts districts in many other cities have been a byproduct of artists setting up shop in abandoned buildings, according to Corcoran.

"They move into those spaces, and the community builds around them," he said. "That hasn't really happened here. But, we're trying to facilitate that osmosis anyway."

Corcoran said that when classes begin in mid-February, he expects that the community interaction will swiftly catapult the center to the heart of the arts scene.

For more information, visit [www.artcenteronline.com](http://www.artcenteronline.com) call 557-1754.

"We want to be a community resource," he said. "We hope that people will stop by and browse our gallery, talk with our artists in the studio setting, feel free to ask questions. We're planning outreach programs, and classes will be open to the public. We have a lot to offer, and we're here to stay."

Contact North Las Vegas and Downtown View reporter Amanda Llewellyn at [allewellyn@viewnews.com](mailto:allewellyn@viewnews.com) or 380-4535.

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