



Business is hatching

Offices serve entrepreneurs who want out of the house

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By [WAYNE HEILMAN](#)

THE GAZETTE

More than 20 years after moving Navsys Corp. out of her home, Alison Brown is trying to help other Tri-Lakes-area entrepreneurs do the same thing.

Brown is making 11 suites in a building she owns through Woodcarver Properties LLC available to entrepreneurs who want to move out of their homes into offices. The Tri-Lakes Business Incubator opened Nov. 12 with three businesses and has room for eight more. The suites start at \$250 a month.

The Tri-Lakes area is mostly a bedroom community. We have great housing and recreational opportunities, but lack work opportunities, said Brown, president of Navsys, which develops GPS technology, and chairwoman of the incubator's advisory board.

Brown began trying to open an incubator two years ago to help commercial engineering research work at the Air Force Academy. She switched to her new strategy of helping home-based businesses expand after the retirement of her backer at the academy.

I had to start over and realized I could end up in an endless loop with people retiring, Brown said. While I was disappointed it didn't happen, I think this grassroots effort will be more successful and help shape the business growth of the Trilakes area.

Brown said the incubator is targeting more than 1,400 home-based businesses believed to be operating in the Tri-Lakes area. Incubator tenants will have access to conference rooms, office equipment, administrative support and monthly training sessions.

The 2-hour sessions, which are free and open to the public, will cover subjects ranging from franchises, small-business retirement plans and getting grants through the U.S. Small Business Administration's Small Business Innovation Research program.

The incubator shares space with Navsys in a former woodcarving museum near Baptist Road and Interstate 25. Brown bought the building in 1992, two years after the museum went bankrupt, and moved Navsys there from a home she owned in the Woodmoor area.



Woodcarver Properties completed renovations this summer to turn some of the office space that was formerly used by Navsys into suites for incubator tenants, said Beverly Levine, who splits her time working for Navsys and running the incubator.

Tenants include Cindy's Dance Factory, which formerly subleased space in the building; Riverstone Search Ltd., an executive search firm specializing in the medical device industry, and New Iron Media LLC, a consulting firm for faith-based organizations.

Riverstone was started 11 years ago by Charlie Cunneff in his Monument home and moved into the incubator in July.

New Iron Media uses office space in Focus on the Family and was planning to move into the incubator before Christmas.

Woodcarver Properties now operates the incubator, but Brown said she would set up a nonprofit group to run it if it grows. Brown heads the incubator's advisory board, which also includes Terry Bouldt, a University of Colorado at Colorado Springs computer science professor.

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DETAILS

What: Tri-Lakes Business Incubator

Where: 14960 Woodcarver Road (southwest of Baptist Road and Interstate 25)

Who: Woodcarver Properties LLC owns the building

When: Training session on retirement plans for small business, 5:30-8 p.m., Jan. 9.

Contact information: 481-4877, ext. 100, or <http://trilakesbi.com/default.aspx>

Read more: <http://www.gazette.com/articles/incubator-31339-brown-business.html#ixzz1XTW8PzVU>