



Realtor John Renfrow, left, stands with Gigi Bechthold and Clay Patterson by the new Life Choices sign in front of their newly acquired building. (Monica Garcia/ Montrose Daily Press)

Faith-based family resource center moving to former Sunset Mesa Funeral Directors

- **Move finalized Monday**
- **Life Choices staff says larger space benefits patients**
- **Finding new owners took 6 months**

By ANDREW KISER
ANDREW@MONTROSEPRESS.COM

A local Christian family resource center finalized a deal Monday to acquire and move into the former Sunset Mesa Funeral Directors location, 155 Merchant Drive.

Life Choices Family Resource Center, a nonprofit that helps women and men who are in need of free services related to pregnancy and sexual health, currently located at 200 S. Fourth St., decided to change locations as a way to expand resources to new parents and provide more room for staff, said executive director Gigi Bechthold.

Life Choices Family Resource Center is

“That building has just suited our needs,” she said. “It was built big enough (so we) could have more office space and more space for our clients.”

Adam Renfrow, of Renfrow Realty, who helped broker the deal alongside his brother John Renfrow and agent Joey Huskey, said seeing the Life Choices staff walk through the building and determining how the space will be converted has been amazing to watch.

Adam said finding a buyer had been difficult. The property, previously owned by the Huffer family of Montrose, stayed on the market for six months until John showed the space to Bechthold.

Bechthold said Life Choices just couldn't seem to find the right the spot, prior to seeing the building. The center even considered adding onto the Fourth

Street building before John called about the unoccupied funeral home.

“I immediately thought this would work. This is amazing,” Bechthold said.

The prior tenant, Sunset Mesa, is embroiled in an FBI investigation and multiple civil suits over the alleged harvesting and selling of human remains without the proper consent of next-of-kin. The FBI served warrants at the funeral home and associated Donor Services Inc. in February 2018. No charges have been filed. Sunset Mesa subsequently had its crematory and funerary registrations suspended by the state, then surrendered them permanently. The state, in public documents, accused the entity and operator Megan Hess of returning cement mix instead of cremains to some families; incorrect ashes to another; record-keeping irregularities and other “willful” violations

LIFE CHOICES

FROM PAGE A1

of the Mortuary Science Act.

“We feel like we’re bringing life where there wasn’t life,” Bechthold said, of acquiring the building.

Adam said he thinks of Life Choices going in at the location as a complete turnaround for the property.

“As a faith-based organization and being able to believe in redemption and what God’s doing — bringing light and hope — is pretty awesome,” Renfrow said.

Life Choices provides free maternal assistance, local referrals, pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, counseling and education from prenatal through early childhood. Additional tween, teen and adult classes teach character development, goal setting

and establishing personal core values.

Courses will be more readily available with the move. The nonprofit’s education coordinator, Bechthold, believes the move will benefit the center’s teenage clientele. Life Choices current space, which is only two blocks from School, is too close to the educational institution, meaning pregnant teens who don’t want to be seen at the center may avoid it, Bechthold explained.

The nonprofit has tentative plans to move to its new home later this spring with a potential open house in June.

For more information about the Life Choices Family Resource Center, call 970-249-4302 or visit lifechoicesmontrose.org.

Andrew Kiser is the Montrose Daily Press’ sports/business writer. Follow him on Twitter @andrew_kpress.