

French appreciation group enjoys new home

By **Martha Elson**
 melson@courier-journal.com
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L'Alliance Francaise de Louisville says "Bonjour!" from its new headquarters in St. Matthews.

The organization, which offers French language classes to the public and promotes an appreciation of all French-speaking cultures, has moved from Plainview to an office and retail building on Sears Avenue.

It hopes to be more visible and involved in the community and closer to most members and students, said Dr. Elizabeth Amin of Mockingbird Valley, a retired physician and Alliance board member.

The office in Plainview was on Timberwood Circle next to ITT Technical Institute. "We were just hidden back there," Amin said. In addition, the lease was up and the rent was increasing, she said.

The 220-plus-member group will hold a public open house Aug. 27 at its new headquarters in the Miraflores Center.

Becca Brodarick of Anchorage, an Alliance board member and past president, said she hopes new people will be interested in joining the group, which has some members who speak several languages.

They discuss their travels and experiences, and speaking the language is like a hobby for others, she said. She became interested when her four children were younger and her family played host to French and Spanish exchange students. She has a master's degree in education from University of Louisville and taught French for two years at Trinity High School and one year at Male High.

"It just really became a passion," said Brodarick, who also is vice-president of the Chicago-based Federation of Alliances Francaises USA.

Amin and other Alliance members recently painted their new space, which has a classroom, office and multipurpose room. Amin said she has an interest in French as a result of growing up in Eng-



L'Alliance Francaise members Elizabeth Amin, Len Roberts, center, and Charles Pooser posed in the group's new space in the building below.



Photos by Martha Elson, The C-J

L'ALLIANCE FRANCAISE OPEN HOUSE

When: 4 to 8 p.m. Aug. 27

Where: 173 Sears Ave.; take the elevator downstairs in the Mariposa Center.

Information: 897-9800

land, where studying several languages was the norm in the school system.

L'Alliance will have a booth at the WorldFest celebration Labor Day weekend Sept. 4-5 on the Belvedere downtown, and most of its language classes will start after Labor Day at its new offices.

It holds other events and gather-

ings throughout the year, such as an annual Bastille Day celebration in July. A French conversation group meets monthly at the Heine Brothers coffee café in the Gardiner Lane Shopping Center.

L'Alliance had been at the Clifton Center before moving to Plainview in 2001. Its first language classes were held on the Ursuline Campus in Crescent Hill, after its school was started in 1987.

L'Alliance's president is Charles Pooser of Old Louisville, a French professor at Indiana University Southeast, who left last week for a French-related festival in Canada.

Reporter Martha Elson can be reached at (502) 582-7061.