

North River Area **BUSINESS****Frazier Avenue says yes to Never No**By **HOLLY COWART**

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With a name like Never No you don't know what to expect of Frazier Avenue's newest retail addition and that's exactly what owner Danny Lewis had in mind.

"You never know what you'll find here" he explained.

Drawing from a collection spanning the 1600s to 2007, Mr. Lewis brought together eclectic items from around the world to create Never No.

"This shop takes some time to look at," he said. The good news for shoppers is that Never No means yes and Mr. Lewis is there to answer questions and negotiate when needed.

He said people are most drawn to the life-sized carved pirate. It came from a woman who deals in statuary outside Dallas. Among the truly unique items he pointed out was a confessional. It is a real, working confessional equipped with a slot for money.

An elephant head carved in wood hangs in the front window. Mr. Lewis said he got it from a friend who travels in Africa and deals in masks and aboriginal art. "And I find things in this region he can't find," he explained.

Mr. Lewis also has connections that he met through travel across the U.S., in England, the islands, Peru and Holland who provide merchandise.

Mr. Lewis is an auctioneer by trade and said he started selling by picking up items for his own home on scuba diving

trips and friends would ask where they came from. "It just kind of grew into 'Hey if you go, pick me up this, pick me up that,'" he said.

Mr. Lewis is from Chattanooga and returned to be closer to family. He said his roots run deep in this area with a father who was a teacher and grandfather who was mayor.

He's had stores in Nashville and Murfreesboro and said he would like to see some of the Music City incorporated here with street musicians.

He also said he would like to work with young artists to help them get their start. His idea is to display their work in the Never No front window while the artist or craftsman create their artwork. By being in the store, for no profit to himself, he said he can help them learn to work with the public and sell their artwork. "They don't know how to take it to the next level, yet," he

FOR MORE INFO:

Never No can be reached at 634-0203. It is located at 22 Frazier Ave.



Danny Lewis, owner of Never No, makes himself at home among his eclectic collection.

PHOTOS BY HOLLY COWART

said. Interested artists can contact Mr. Lewis at the store.

The most rewarding aspect of owning Never No is watching someone who is happy with what they bought, he said. "The biggest challenge

is getting away from here to go buy things." He picked out everything in the store and as a result he said it does look a bit like his house.

Mr. Lewis said his best advice for decorating is to buy

what feels good. "Put things in your home that you like instead of what you think other people will like," he said.

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