

Creative Living

classifieds inside



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designing ways
Eve Garvin

When you decide you need the help of a professional designer, let me tell you what to look for.

Most furniture stores have a designer service available. When you purchase furnishings from that particular establishment, the help of a designer is a service given at no extra charge.

There are many freelance designers who work in different ways, i.e., the designer can take you to any furniture store and work with their lines or work with their own catalogues and use a warehouse to receive and deliver to you. There are also designers who will shop with you and just charge a fee, which can range from \$50 an hour and up. Any of the aforementioned work for you.

Here are some pointers for you to consider:

Firstly, you must have a rapport with your decorator. The chemistry must be there for both of you to get the best job done. It's important to be honest with your decorator. At this point in time, your decorator must be your best friend.

If you have a budget, tell the decorator what it is. Don't spend endless hours looking at pieces which are beyond your budget. Expect to go a little over budget. It always helps to be impossible to stay right to the dollar. In my experience, I find completing a room at a time the best way to go when you have a fixed sum to work with. If you do a little bit here and there throughout the house, no room is finished. You have spent money and it will not show.

Beware of the designer who looks at your furnishings and very loftily states, "It all must go." There is no reason to dispose of any piece that you love and that has value for you. A god designer can work around and/or include a piece or two which you want to keep.

Be wary of the designer who claims to work at 10 percent above cost. No one can be in business and work that close and give you recourse should there be a problem. Freight and delivery is costly. That is something the designer absorbs in the cost of the furniture.

Q. My master bedroom is 11-by-11 feet. We have a queen-size bed, nightstand and chair. Our walls are yellow, carpet, golden yellow. We have a large floral painting over the bed in which yellow, gold, red and pink predominate. My curtains are white. I am shopping for a bedspread. What shall I look for?

A. Any store that carries bedding will have coordinated sheets, coverlet, duvet and pillow shams. Select one with a lot of white background. Any pattern with yellow or yellow and pink will be good as long as the background is dominant.

Buy an extra sheet and make a pair of tiebacks. Use a small ribbon if you will cover the entire tie to fill in the center, use your tiebacks on either end. Make the holder above the pocket for rod four to five to five inches high. To hold the tieback in place, make a simple holder of the material four inches wide. Make a streamer of the same fabric three feet in length, four inches wide. Then loop it through the holder, tie into a bow and let the streamer hang from the bow.

Eve Garvin has been an interior designer in the area for many years. She welcomes comments and questions from readers. Send these to her in care of this newspaper at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Unfancy

Their 'gallery-in-a-barn' offers furniture bargains

By Mone Grigg
special writer

WHEN DONALD and Cyma Carn gave up their lease at Northwood Center in Royal Oak a few years ago and closed the doors to Charles Furniture, a venerable 30-year-old business, it was like "giving up my baby," Cyma Carn said.

Actually it was more like putting it down for a long nap. Though the northwood showroom was closed, the Carns looked around their huge warehouse on Harrison Street in Royal Oak and began to envision "a fine furniture gallery-in-a-barn."

They took off an entire year and, with the help of one lone employee, restocked and refurbished the warehouse, including carpeted floors and better lighting. And during that year Cyma Carn made several extended buying trips to major furniture centers like New York, North Carolina and San Francisco — something she still does regularly, she said, to keep up with the trends. In fact, she just got back from North Carolina.

When the Carns were ready to open to the public again, in May 1984, they called all of their former employees back, and couldn't believe their good fortune when most of them accepted. They now employ five salespeople, as well as several office staff. Donald Carn takes care of the administrative duties, freeing Cyma to "be the creative one," she said.

"I always tell him that he thinks when I'm considering something out of the ordinary. Then if he says he doesn't like it, I know I'm right and I go ahead and do it." She winks at her husband of 33 years, and he grins back. The staff nods in straight-faced assent. They are used to Cyma's brand of humor — often a little startling to the newcomer. "I should have been in show business," she said. "I'm such a ham. But I found furniture instead."

YES, WELL — SEE Cyma in the Yellow Pages ad. Pure Cyma, arms outstretched, enveloping the showroom, the business, the world. She loves people, she'll tell you, and people seem to love her. See Cyma work with a young couple

enamored with a puffy peach and seafoam living room set. They want it. She knows they want it. This is their third trip back. "What can I do?" she said. "Would it help if I held it for you for two weeks? A month?"

She doesn't push. The policy is cash and carry, she says, the only way they can sell it as inexpensively as they do. They'll take major credit cards, but . . .

The young couple leaves with a little more time and Cyma is happy that they're happy.

"You hear this a lot, I know," she said, "but we are all like a family here. We care about each other, and we have long-standing relationships with our customers. It's fun to come to work. I'm miserable when I'm not here."

Carn says keeping their store in the low-rent warehouse district allows them to offer everything a top gallery would offer — from top-line merchandise (like Bernhardt, Caspary, Hickory Hill, Crestline furniture, Ross Lighting and James crystal) to interior decorating assistance to after-purchase repair — and still keep the prices comparable to a mid-price furniture store.

Still, it took a while for shoppers to find them, Carn said, hidden as they are on a side street off of Main between 10 and 11 Mile Roads.

"When we first opened we just kind of waited around here waiting for customers. People have to be creative to find us. It's like a scavenger hunt. They hunt for clues and then they find us and get the prize. Now our customers come from Bloomfield and Birmingham and Troy — from all over, really — and our business comes through word-of-mouth as much as anything else."

The cavernous warehouse is divided into three sections: contemporary in the front, traditional in the middle, country in the rear.

She leads the way to a contemporary bamboo grouping covered in nubby pastel-swirled fabric. It took eight months to acquire — and now that it's here she's almost rather not see it sold. "Have you ever seen anything more beautiful?" she said, and there is no question that she means it.



CHARLES and CYMA CARN at home in a barn of a place they operate as Charles Furniture on the beaten path in Royal Oak. It took awhile for shoppers to find them, the Carns admit, but once they did . . .

Other bargains out there

October is a traditional furniture sale month. The careful shopper can find bargains even in the quality furniture stores and galleries. Every store needs to move discontinued and scratched floor merchandise, as well as special order cancellations. Some stores tag furnishings while still on the showroom floor; others move it to special clearance centers or back rooms.

Stewart-Glen co-owner Jim Oakley says to watch out for sales, but may not be true sales. "We do sales in big percentage-off" discounts at stores that seem to have sales all the time. Some markdowns reflect inflated retail prices," Oakley said.

"You can avoid that by getting to know the store so that you're aware of legitimate sales," Oakley says to ask the reason why something is marked down. "Don't be afraid to say, 'What's wrong with it?' Especially if the mark-down seems too good to be true."

HERE ARE THE locations and hours of a few stores offering discounted quality merchandise:

Trouton House Inc. (an Ethan Allen Show-

case Store) 3600 E. Eight Mile near Mound.

366-6512.

Floor sample sale through mid-November. Twenty to 50 percent off.

Hudson's periodic warehouse sales at the Beaumont Distribution Center in Detroit. 223-1920.

Usually every other month. Watch for ads.

Gorman's Galleries Clearance Center (Drexel, Heritage) 22155 Telegraph Road, Southfield. Clearance merchandise from stores in Troy, Southfield, Dearborn and Grand Rapids, as well as special purchase merchandise. Thursday, Friday from noon to 9 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday from noon to 6 p.m. 357-7774.

Stewart-Glen Company (Pennsylvania House and others) 2600 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills. 332-8348.

Discounted merchandise is worked into current showroom settings. Look for clearance tags.

Englander's Clearance Center, 1400 Academy, Ferndale. 398-1000. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday only.

Town and Country Interiors Clearance Center, 2203 Mally, Madison Heights. 588-5800.

Chancery merchandise from stores in Dearborn, Bloomfield Hills and Rochester. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, noon to 5 p.m.; Friday, noon to 8:30 p.m.



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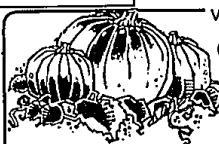
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