

How to create and use storage space more wisely in your home

Is the interior of your house beginning to look more like the setting for a rummage sale than a home? Do you feel like you're living in a constant state of "Clutter chaos" as you desperately seek out new nooks and crannies in which to store your ever-growing number of belongings?

And what about the exterior of your home? Does it look like a jumble of confusion, simply because you've run out of space to store your outdoor items? Do you leave your garden furniture outdoors all winter because you have no other place to store it?

If the above descriptions sound all too familiar, then it may be time to look at creating some new storage space — or using the space you already have more effectively.

Where to Start

Obviously, it's easier to make more efficient use of your existing storage space than to install new cupboards, closets or shelves.

There are many storage organizing kits available on the market today to help you do this. Inexpensive cardboard boxes that fit neatly under your bed are a great option for stor-

ing items like extra bedding or out-of-season clothing.

Storage Bins

Plastic-coated storage bins are also an alternative for getting more efficient storage out of your existing closets and cupboards. These stackable units can be easily assembled into the required space and are usually reasonably priced.

Rolling or sliding storage bins are also particularly handy in the kitchen or pantry to help maximize storage space in awkward places.

Most hardware stores and building centres carry a selection of storage units. You may also want to consult a company that specializes in shelving and storage to have a system custom designed for you.

Prioritize Needs

When searching for new storage space, it's important to consider how often you'll be using the items you're storing and prioritize your needs accordingly. If they're occasional-use items, you won't necessarily want them in the way of things you use more frequently.

If you're thinking of creating new space,

look at areas of prime activity where existing wall space is not used to its full potential.

For instance, if you're a bookworm or a music lover, you can create or buy pre-fabricated wall units to display your collections. Either way, you can tailor these units to suit your taste, decor and budget.

Bathroom

The bathroom is a prime example of an area where you can make a difference. If you have an older home with a small medicine cabinet and a reasonable amount of wall space, consider having a much larger unit installed. In addition, you can add extra shelves where wall space permits.

If you think that your basement or attic is already filled to capacity, take a closer look. You may be surprised. Closets and cupboards can be created under a stairwell with a little know-how. You can customize your storage space to the angle of your staircase to make sure you get the maximum use out of the area.

However, before embarking on such a project, you may want to consult the appropriate experts at your local building supply centre — or hire a contractor if

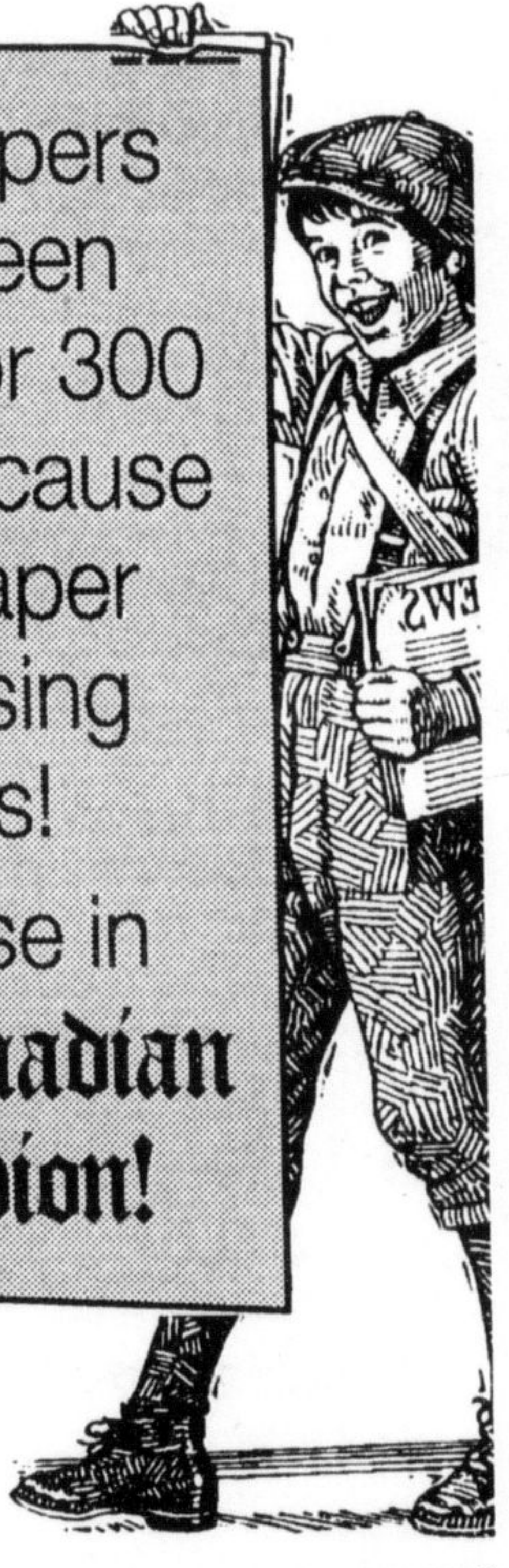
you're not particularly handy.

If you love to putter with a hammer and nail, you probably need some additional storage space for all the tools you've collected over the years. For most people, the garage is the ideal place that comes to mind.

You can buy handy pre-fabricated storage or work centres or you can build one yourself. However, if space is severely restricted in your garage, consider hanging pegboards or installing overhead storage units.

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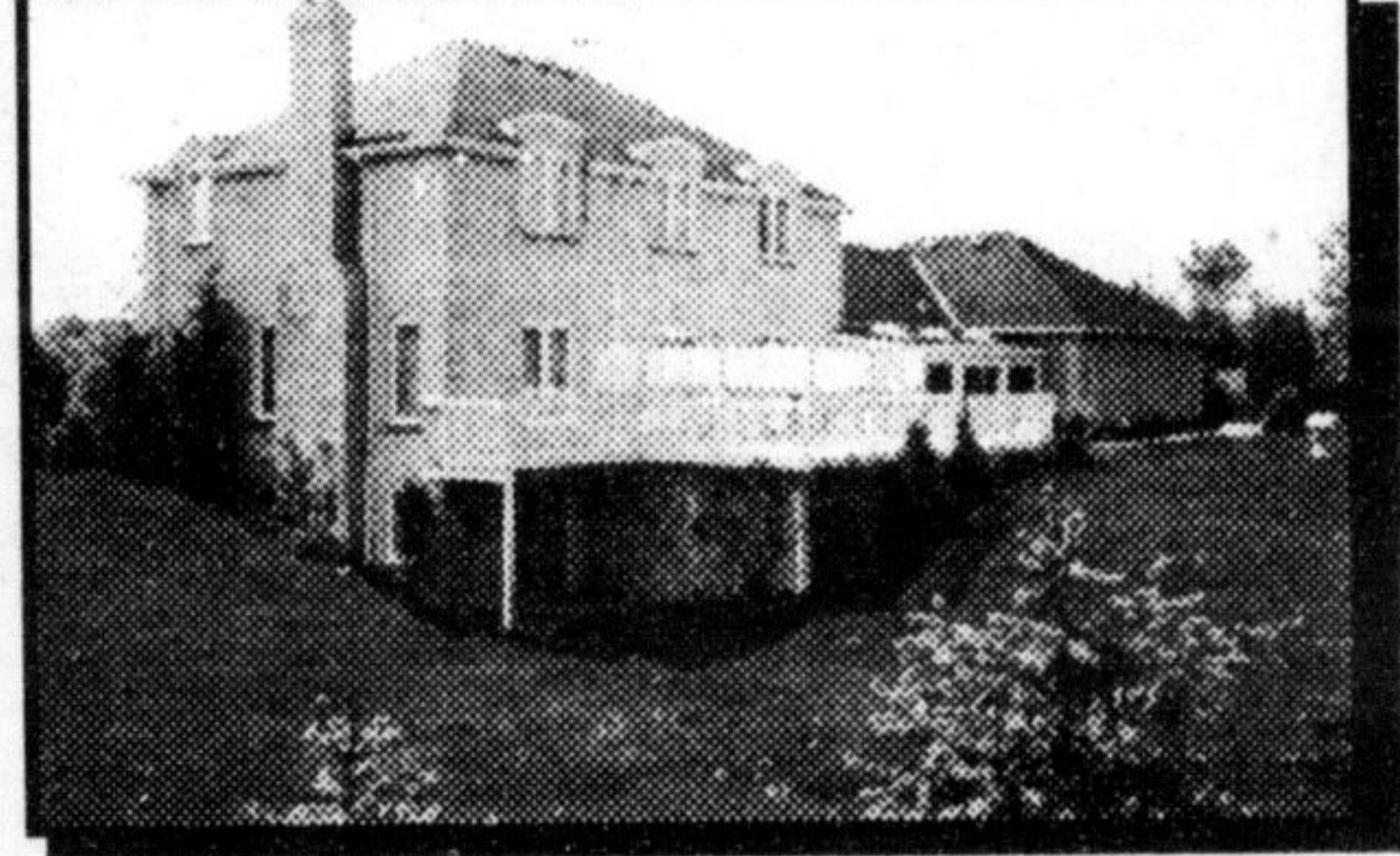
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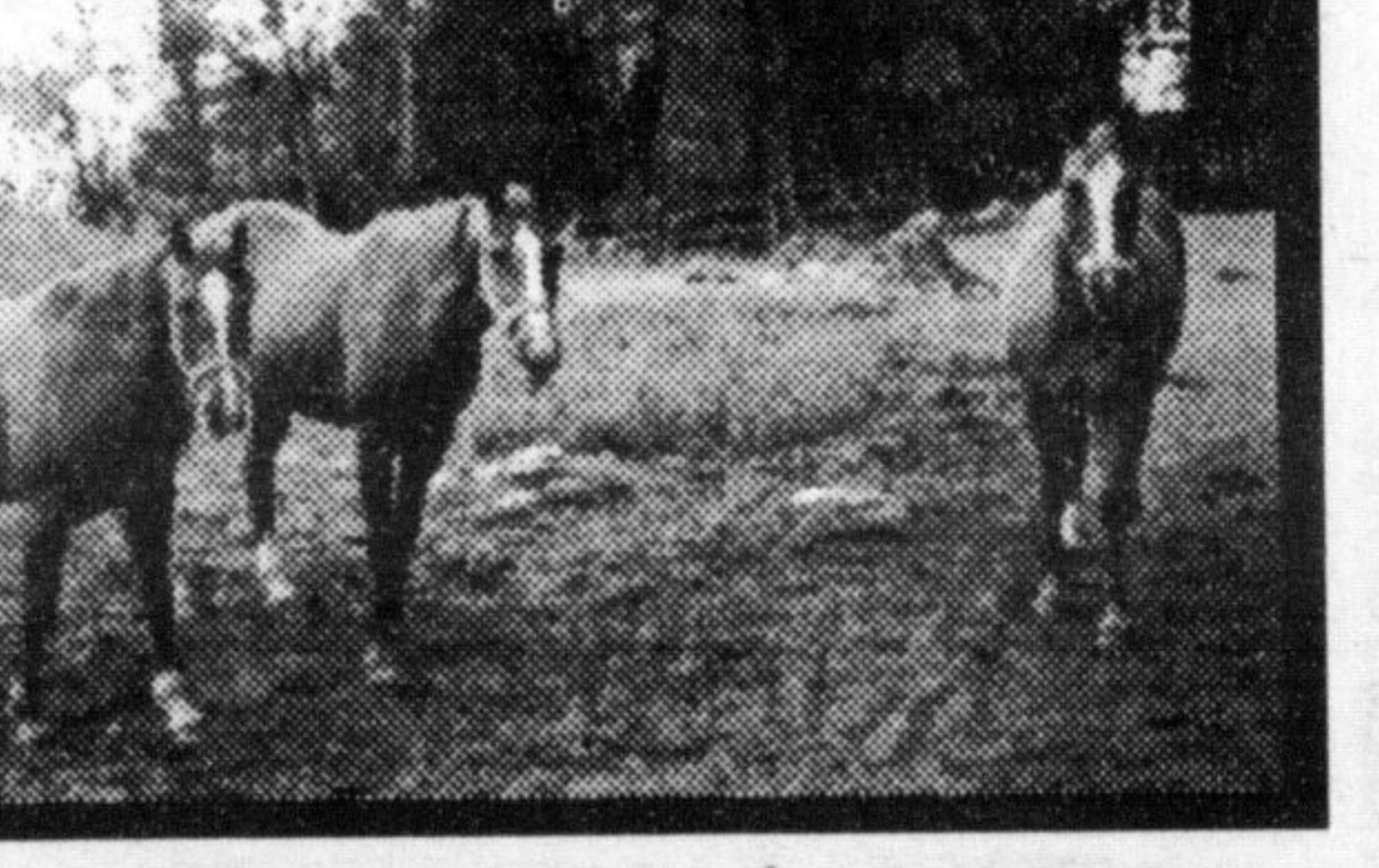
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