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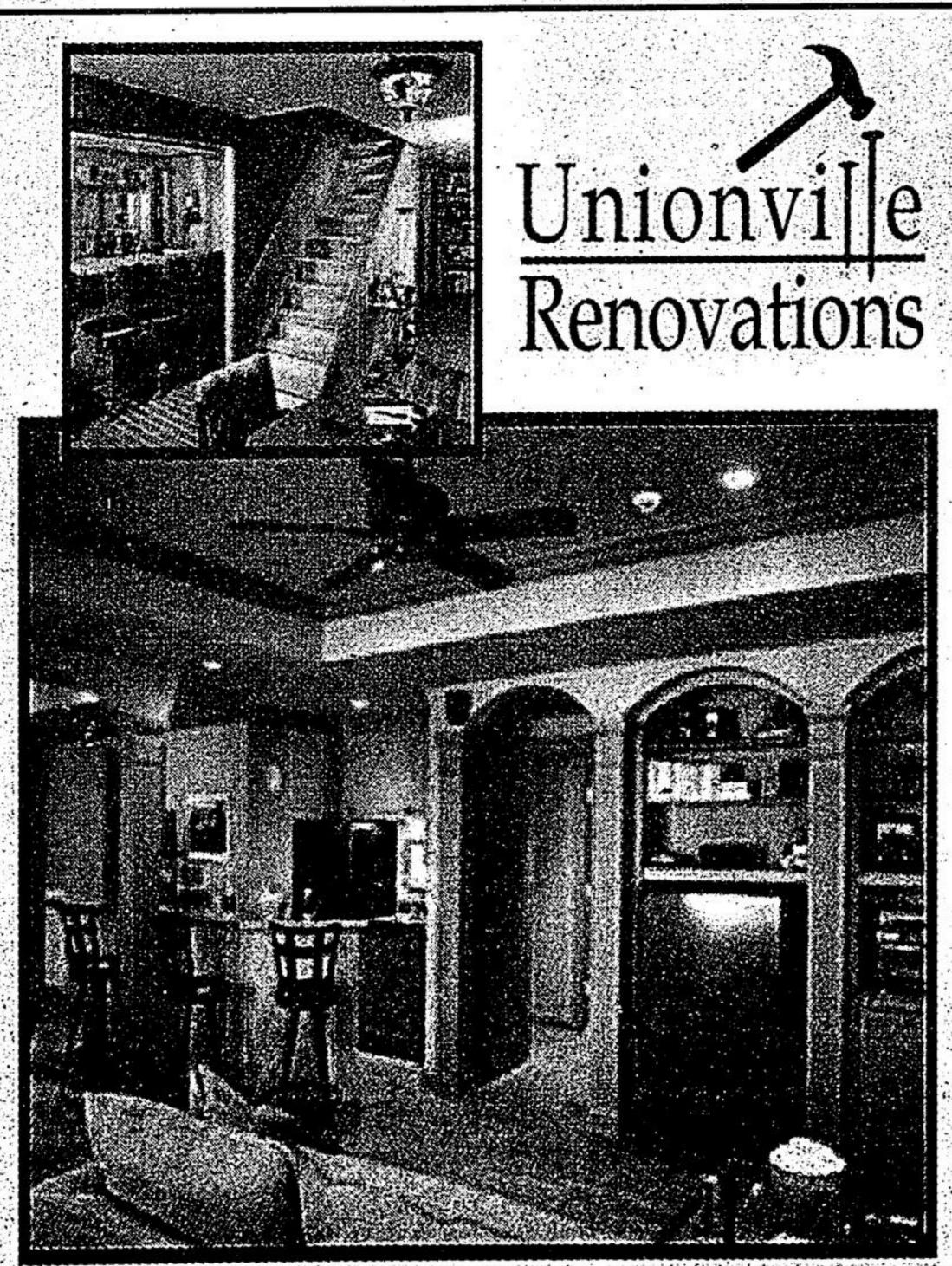
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## Furniture shopping on a limited budget

## The finishing touch on home-improvement projects

The finishing touch to home-improvement projects is adding furniture. You may have the most intricately painted room on the street, but your look won't be complete without adding furniture to finish off the space. However, after the endless trips you made to the local home-supply center to complete your project, do you have any money left to furnish the space? Most people answer,

But don't despair. You don't need a designer's wallet to score beautiful furniture. All you need is a little ingenuity and some time to search for bargains. If you're handy, that is an added bonus, and it will make narrowing your choices even easier. Here are some frugal ways to decorate on a budget:

- Outlet and Clearance Bargains ---Head to your neighborhood warehouse store for well-priced items that are within reach for those with tight budgets. Or check out department store clearance centers, where discontinued or outdated furniture is reduced.
- Model Home Mania -- If there is a surge of home building happening in your area, check with the developer's sales office to see if they will be selling the furnishings when the models are closed to the public. Keep in mind that some items may be faded or worn due to the number of people visiting the homes.
- Consignment Shops -- These stores as well as thrift stores often have won-

derful treasures, if you have the time to sort through their inventory. Remember, since items move in and out of these stores frequently, be ready to make quick purchases if you fall in love with some-

- Scour the Neighborhood -- Many people make it a hobby of searching for furnishings in their neighborhood on garbage pick-up day. As they say, "One man's junk is another man's treasure." Don't forget yard sales or moving sales for other low-price sources of furnishings.
- Slightly Irregular Department ---Some furniture stores have areas where they keep furniture that has slight imperfections such as scratches or dents. If you can live with the blemishes, you may be able to haggle a reasonable price on normally expensive finds.
- Consult Friends and Family -- Have you had your eye on Aunt Jane's chaise lounge or think that your best friend's armoire would look beautiful in your bedroom? Don't be afraid to ask loved ones if they have furniture they can part with. Some may have wonderful pieces hiding out in basements or attics, just waiting to be discovered.
- Revamp Your Furnishings -- If you're unhappy with the budget-friendly finds out there, consider reupholstering or improving your current furniture. A new slipcover, coat of paint or swatch of fabric can do wonders to tired furnishings.



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