

Head To Furniture Concepts For Cheerful Improvements

By Russell Clark
Post Staff Writer

When your kitchen table starts wobbling and your mattress is sinking in, it's time to start making some cheerful improvements. Here is an idea. Give your home or apartment a fresh new face with colorful furniture from "Furniture Concepts" located at 3501 S. Tryon Street (in the Try-Clan Shopping Center).

Furniture Concepts features a neat, well displayed showroom. From custom tailored living room sets to ceramic lamps, the store offers many items to perk up your home or apartment.

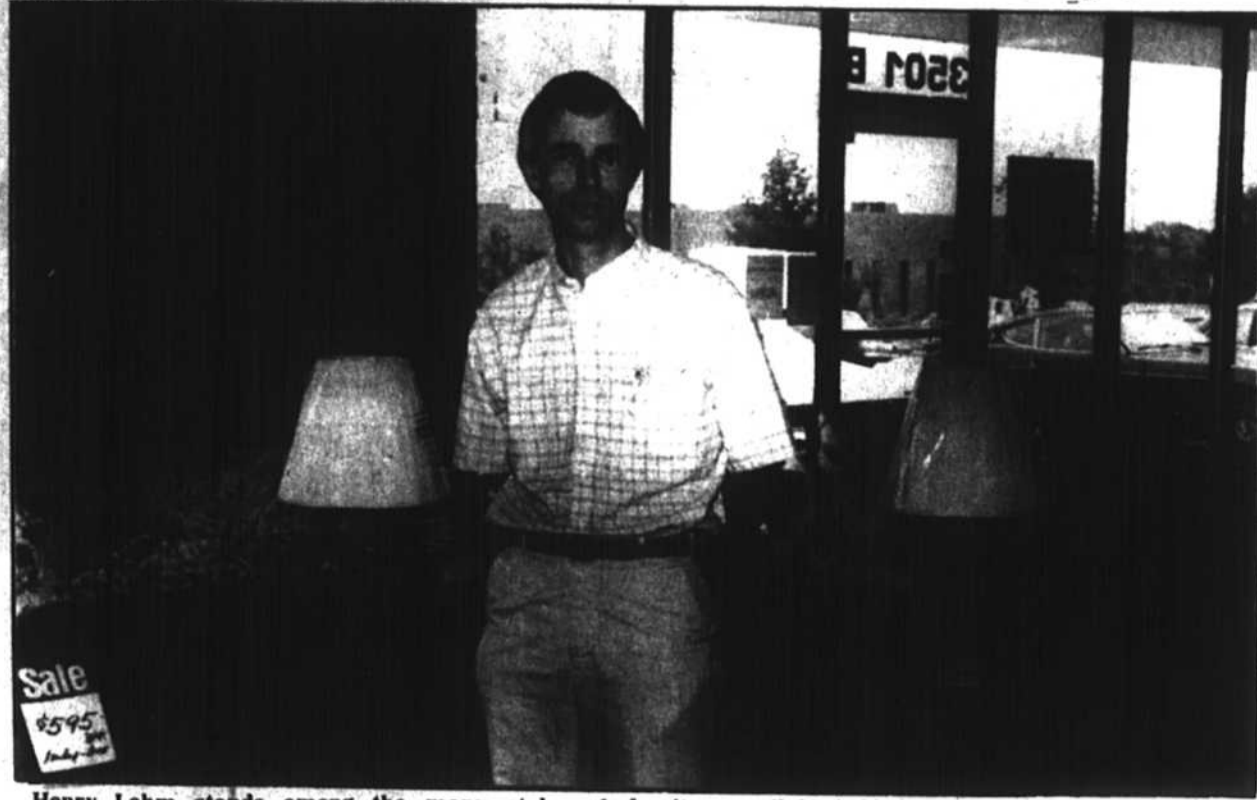
Owners, Henry Lahm and Dan Seagraves feel their business is much needed in the Charlotte area. "We opened here because there was a vacancy in the Charlotte market for a store with very good furniture at very good prices," says the New York natives.

"We are also able to offer discount prices to our customers because we have a low overhead. This means that we do all the work as owners," explains Lahm, who has 20 years of experience under his belt.

Since coming to Charlotte in 1966, Lahm has worked for Wicks, Rhodes and Pearlmans furniture stores. "I got tired of traveling all across the country that my job required, so I decided to put my experience to work for me," says Lahm while relaxing in a quilted, rust colored chair.

According to Lahm, the store has been successful since its opening on November 20, 1985. "Our average ticket sale is over \$800. Our success comes not because we have expensive prices, but because we sell a lot of group sets," he explains. "A customer might come in wanting only a sofa, but when they see that we offer them a love seat and chair to go with it at a good price, they usually buy the group."

Like many other new businesses, Furniture Concepts has a couple of



Henry Lahm stands among the many styles of furniture available in his store showroom.

problems. "The number one problem we have is shipping damage. We keep a good relationship with our suppliers so that we resolve problems quickly," Lahm said.

Limited space is the other problem the business has. "We put a lot of effort into making our showroom look as good as possible. To counter the space problem, we have made plans to renovate our stock room so we can show off more quality prices and furniture," Lahm adds.

Anyone who walks in off the streets can tell that the store is clean and neat, but Lahm says that's not all it takes to be successful in the furniture business. "We maintain a balanced ratio between our quality furniture and our prices. We pick up and deliver all of our merchandise which allows us to offer discount prices."

So if you or someone you know is in the market for a living room set, recliner, wing chair, sleeper sofa, den set, bedroom set, dinette set,

table, occasional lamp, wall picture, or entertainment unit—go by and see Furniture Concepts for yourself.

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A Moment for Black Pride

Jan E. Matzeliger (1852-1889), black inventor, was born in Dutch Guiana, came to the U.S. as a young man and served as a cobbler's apprentice, first in Philadelphia and then in Lynn, Mass. Although he died at age 37, he made a profound contribution to the leather industry with his "sole machine." This machine was the first appliance of its kind, capable of performing all steps required to hold a shoe in place on its last grip, pulled the leather down and around the heel, guide and drive the nails into place, and then discharge the complete shoe from the machine. The patent was bought by the United Shoe Machinery Company of Boston, which made millions on the basis of Matzeliger's invention. The company soon expanded to include 40 subsidiaries and employed tens of thousands of people in its plants.

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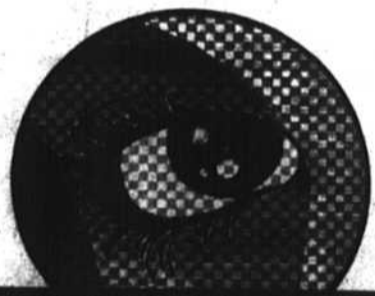
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