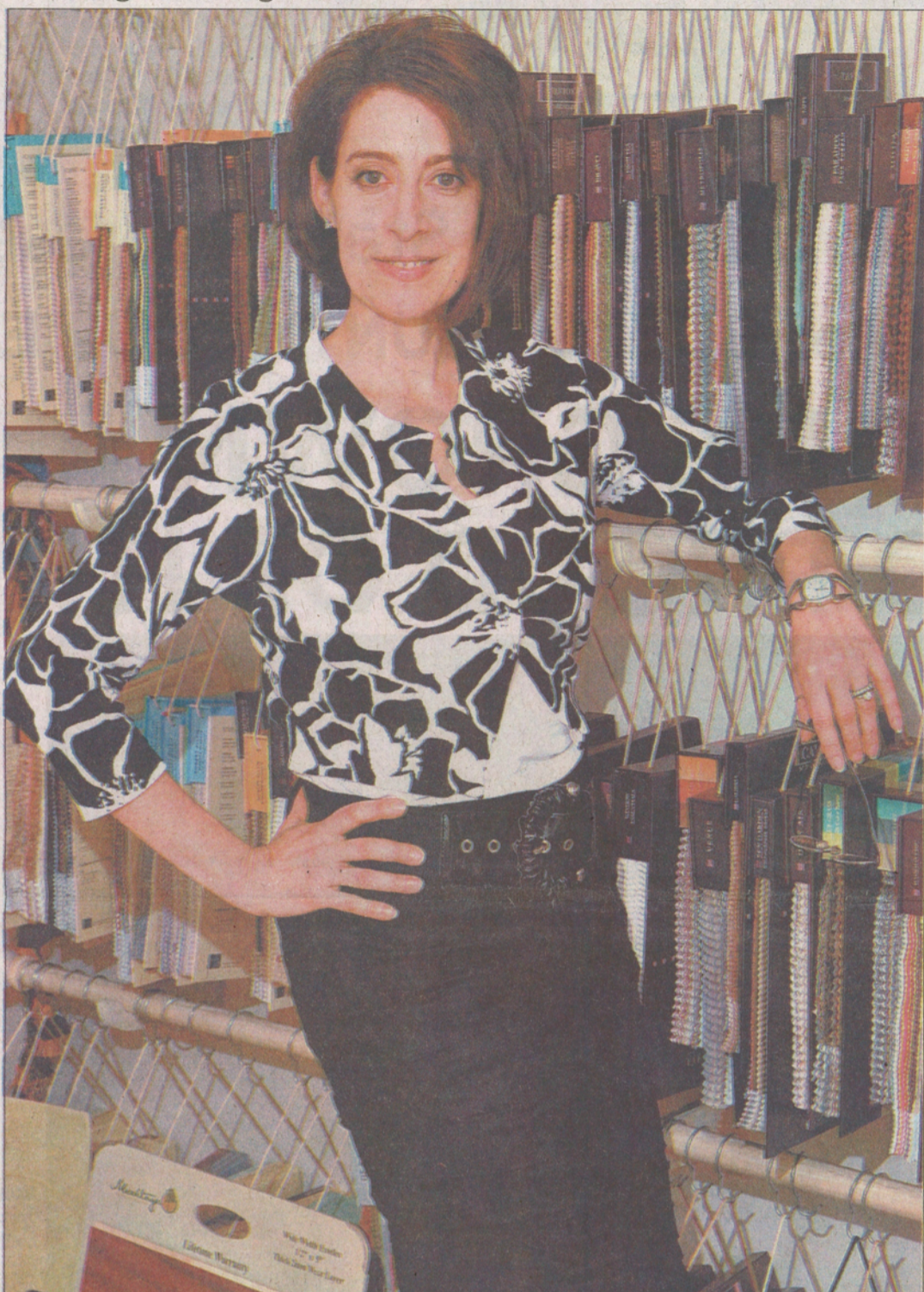


## Making a Living



DAVID GARRETT / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Donna Hoffman, who was a host on QVC in the 1990s, today owns Interiors by Donna Hoffman, based in Lower Makefield.

# Seeing possibilities

**A former QVC host now sells her own interior design expertise.**

By **JOHN ANASTASI**  
STAFF WRITER

Lower Makefield's Donna Hoffman, who spent part of the 1990s pitching other people's products as a QVC host, is now selling something all her own — her interior design expertise.

"My goal is to help people create the homes they want," said Hoffman, who founded Interiors by Donna Hoffman three years ago.

In the early 1990s, the Long Island native and former Manhattanite relocated to Lower Makefield, which was halfway between her husband's job in New York City and West Chester's QVC. There, she appeared on camera selling everything from jewelry and clothing to computers and VCRs.

"I left QVC (in 1996) to start a family," said Hoffman, who has two children.

She had a one-year non-compete clause that precluded her from working "in the field or near the field." So she stayed home, dabbled in hypnotherapy and eventually began working as a consultant to train spokesmen and spokeswomen who appeared on home shopping programs.

"All the while, I was doing interior design on the side," Hoffman said. "One day, my husband saw something I was doing and said for the five-billionth time, 'Why don't

### CONTACT US

Do you know anyone who's making a living as an entrepreneur of an interesting business or as an employee in an occupation he or she always had dreamed about? If so, e-mail [cshoemaker@phillyBurbs.com](mailto:cshoemaker@phillyBurbs.com) or call 215-345-3186.

you do this full time?' And the light bulb went off. ... The business really sprung up around me."

Hoffman has a master's degree in fine arts and has studied interior design at the Parsons New School of Design in New York City.

At Interiors by Donna Hoffman, she handles everything from home accessorizing and color selection to face-lifts that make a room look bigger and start-from-scratch designs based on the tastes and personalities of her clients. When she meets clients, she asks them to pick out photos of rooms, furniture, accessories and other images that appeal to them.

"I walk through their house and see the patterns emerge in how they relate to lines, form, color, pattern and texture," she explained.

She charges \$118 for a full consultation. After that, prices vary widely depending on the job.

"There's no minimum spending requirement and I don't require a retainer," she said.

Working within her clients' budgets, she creates designs based

on all of that information. Some clients take it from there. Others prefer to have her manage the project.

Hoffman also offers periodic design video seminars. The next one, which costs \$24.95, is scheduled for Thursday. The title: "How to Make Any Home (or room) Feel & Look More Spacious (no sledgehammer required)." It can be accessed through [www.interiorsbydonnahoffman.com](http://www.interiorsbydonnahoffman.com).

"General interest in design has been helped by HGTV," said Michael Alin, executive director of the American Society of Interior Designers. "But the downside is definitely that there's a total misunderstanding of the time and expertise it takes to do a residential home redesign."

Hoffman's level of expertise really impressed Northampton's Debra Paikoff who hired her in March.

"We changed some furniture and she helped pick out a new rug for the dining room, but the big thing is that we have an odd-shaped family room that wasn't being used because it's long and narrow, so we're redoing that and changing the configuration of the kitchen," Paikoff said.

It was her first time hiring an interior designer, she added.

"She's better than we could have imagined," Paikoff said. "She makes it a lot less stressful ... She had the vision to see the possibilities and that's what we needed."

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