

Away from home improvement

Students don't need a TLC show host to decorate dorm rooms on a budget

By Amber Gray
THE BATTALION

As school swings into session, most students living on campus are wondering about what's hot in décor in 2004.

For many students, this semester marks their first time away from home and subsequently their first time decorating their own space.

"I really didn't decide or plan what to bring; I just grabbed the necessities," said Ryan Robbins, a freshman biomedical sciences major and a resident in a Commons dorm. "Most of the items I brought were what I already had from home."

Since packing only the necessities may leave some walls bare, turning a dorm room into a home may require a trip to a home decorating store.

"The vogue look is huge with girls this year. We have posters and pictures featuring this 1950s style that have been selling like crazy," said Mashalle Lara, store manager at Bed, Bath and Beyond. This look includes posters and pictures featuring vintage European liquor advertisements.

This trend has not caught on as well with the men, who seem to favor bold colors.

"Guys are opting more for black, navy or maroon color schemes for their rooms," Lara said.

Another popular theme has been the coffee shop look, which includes posters, pictures and accessories to easily imitate that of a Parisian café scene, she added.

"And since most students are looking for a bargain buy you can purchase a cheap poster in this theme, or any other for that matter, and add a plastic frame to add more appeal," Lara said.

While many students may be discovering difficulties in decorating a 10-foot by 10-foot dorm room, Lara had many tips to add dimension to the room.

"In order to brighten up a dark room, mirrors are definitely beneficial because the light will reflect throughout the space," she said.

"Another helpful item that we're completely sold out of are the medusa lights, the ones with different colored lamps that can bend in all crazy direction that add light and color at the same time."

Lara has also noticed some of the most popular necessity items students have been purchasing are sheets, mattress pads and alarm clocks.

"The absolute hottest items have been the bed lifts, which add about six inches of height so that students can actually store items underneath," she said.

Designing on a budget can be tricky, but there are good deals

waiting to be found.

"One good bargain to look for is the bed-in-a-bag," Lara said. "And buy a big pack of hangers versus individuals, this is definitely a big best buy."

Those living in residence halls know that finding space for their belongings can be challenging; however, there are items that can be beneficial for organization and storage.

"Anything over the door has done really well this year," Lara said. "Over-the-door shoe racks, for example, can add a lot of space to your closet."

Like most students in the dorms, saving space in Robbins' small room has become a major issue.

"My room has more space now because me and my roommate stacked our drawers on top of each other," he said. "And to add room in my closet I just divided it up between my clothes and my laundry basket."

Many students have also been looking for items that make the residence halls cozier.

"Good items that add comfort are pillow backs," she said. "They are great for lounging anywhere on your bed or even the floor, and they add seating."

To make community showers more bearable, Lara suggests comfortable robes and sarongs.

When it came to décor, Robbins wanted his room to reflect what he is all about.

"We have mostly Aggie colors in our room," he said. "All we have on our walls is a bulletin board with a few pictures on it, but I think my room says that I'm just a regular guy who loves sports."



EVAN O'CONNELL • THE BATTALION

Freshman political science major **Meghan Sheridan** (left) and her roommate, freshman business major **Gina Bullock**, accentuate their Mosher Hall room walls with photos Sunday afternoon.

While Robbins may have opted to bring a minimal amount of belongings, some female students seem to head in the opposite direction.

"I brought as much as I could from home; all that would fit anyway," said Meghan Hancock, a junior agricultural development major and Krueger Hall resident. "I wanted it to feel like home."

Texas A&M mailed Hancock a checklist of things that she would need during her first year in the dorms, which was helpful when she planned out what to buy, she said.

"Plus, I had an older brother who had already lived in the dorms, and he helped out a lot too," Hancock said.

See Decorating on page 4

Show your student I.D. & get
15% off
regular price merchandise.

Here's a no-brainer: Simply show your valid student I.D. and save 15% on all regular price stuff. (That's a lot of stuff.) But, you'd better hurry. Come September 26th, this offer's history. Sorry, cannot be used with any other discount or offer.

Offer ends September 26, 2004.



Visit Design U at pier1.com for a chance to win a \$1,500 Gift Card.

Pier 1 imports®

Only Texans Get It!

ZiegenBock
MUSIC FESTIVAL
AND RIB FEST

www.ZIEGFEST.com

ONLY \$10
PRE-SALE

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
LAKE BRYAN
CAVENDERS
TRADITION BOOKSTORES
WWW.CLICKNPRINT.COM

SATURDAY, SEPT. 4TH AT LAKE BRYAN

ROGER CREAGER • JACK INGRAM

KEVIN FOWLER • JASON BOLAND

BLUE EDMONSON • PHIL PRITCHETT • WADE BOWEN • MAX STALLING

BOTTLE ROCKETS • MACON GREYSON • LOST TRAILERS • ELI YOUNG

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO:
WWW.ZIEGFEST.COM

DOORS OPEN
AT 11:00 AM

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT:



Greater Houston Exchange Club Charities, Inc.

PRESENTED BY:



KQRA
98.3
TEXAS • COUNTRY

PRODUCED BY: **Mustang**
MUSIC GROUP, LLC