

# From church to country home

BY GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

When Dennis Oliver decided to leave his architectural business, he became a caterer.

Then, just for fun, he transformed a 150-year-old former church into a home.

The owner of D.H. Oliver Foods at Dallas Corners, Oliver had constantly commuted between Philadelphia and California as part of his architectural business, in which he specialized in restaurant design.

"I got tired of living on airplanes and in hotels and decided to come back to Pennsylvania," he said.

After moving back to his parents' home at North Lake, he began to look

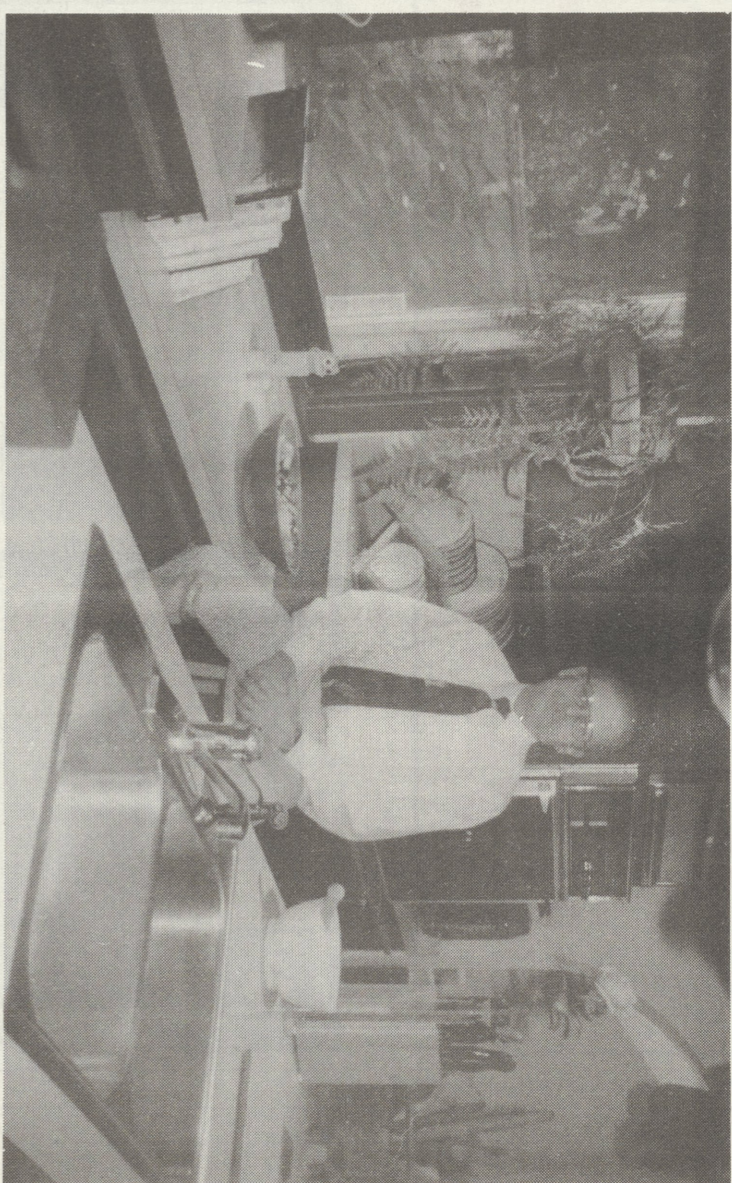
for his own place and soon found the 150-year-old former Church of Christ in Sweet Valley for sale.

Buying the building was easy, compared to the extensive renovations needed to transform it into a home, but planning what to do was easy.

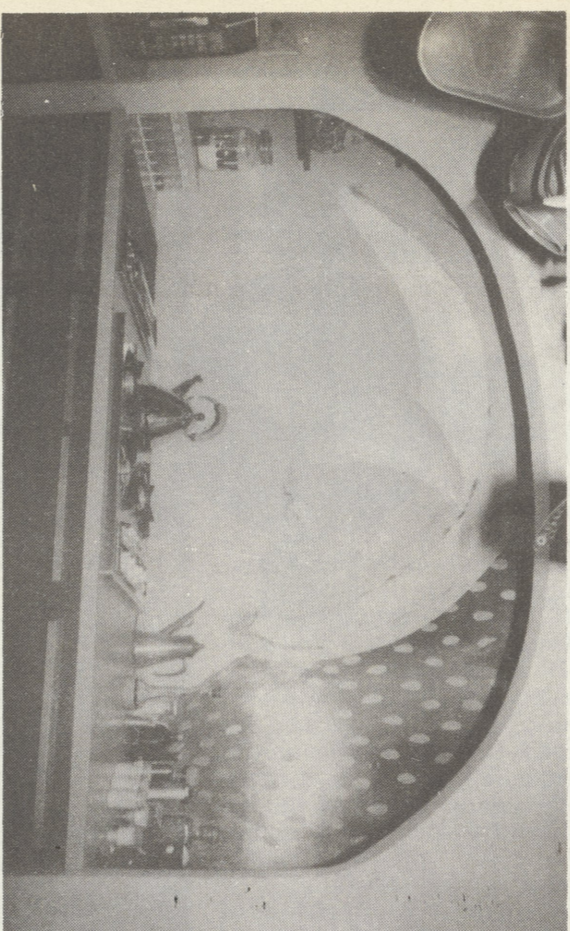
"Since I'm already an architect, it was really very simple," he said. "The largest part was restoring the exterior to its original appearance."

Inside, he had to work from scratch: plumbing, wiring and heating systems and the entire layout.

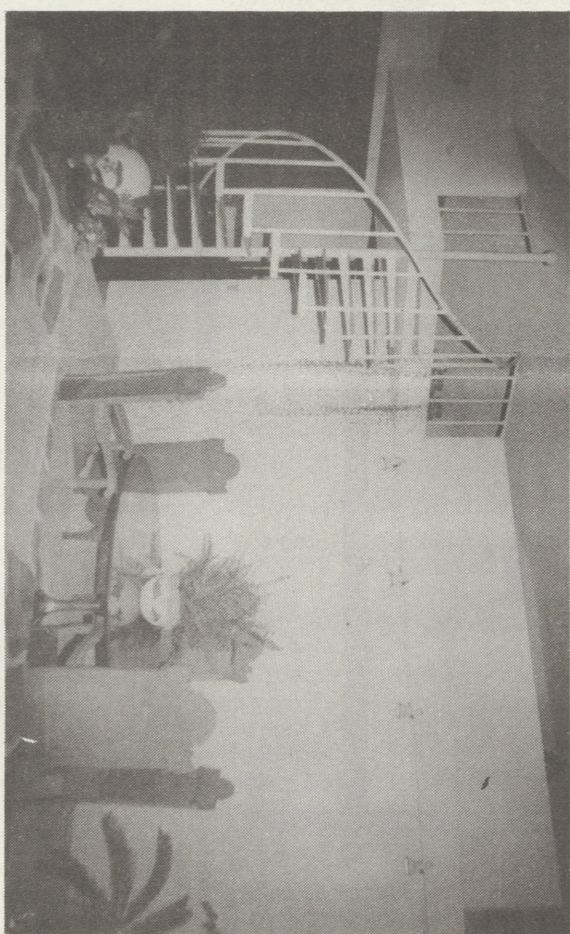
The basement Sunday school rooms became a family room, work



Dennis Oliver converted the former Church of Christ in Sweet Valley into comfortable country living quarters.



The cockpoo is recessed in an alcove decorated with a stunning painting of oversized fruit.



A circular staircase winds its way up to the latest addition, a master bedroom suite in the loft.

## Often-overlooked energy saving measures can save a bundle

Some ways to protect the environment—recycling, composting, switching to environmentally safe products—have become popular choices for home owners. The following home energy-saving tips—even though they're often overlooked—help protect the environment too, because they help you use your energy more efficiently, according to the Edison Electric Institute and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, two national electric utility trade associations.

**Insulating Doors And Windows**  
Start with your home's biggest energy wasters—the windows and exterior doors. You lose more of your heating and cooling dollars through these—per square inch—than through any

other part of your home. For instance, heat passes through a window with a single pane of glass 14 times faster than through a well-insulated wall. So even with an attic full of insulation, you still can be wasting money and energy through your windows and doors.

**Caulking And Weatherstripping**  
After insulating your windows and doors, don't overlook their caulking and weatherstripping needs. Almost 40 percent of your monthly heating and cooling bill could be going through cracks due to poorly caulked and weatherstripped doors and win-

**Duct Sealing**  
These are the ducts that carry heated or cooled air to the registers in each room of your house. Doing a check-up here can save 10 to 15 percent on your energy bill. All ductwork should be sealed at the joints to prevent leakage. Ducts located in unconditioned

spaces should be insulated.

**Water Heating**  
In the average American house, water heating is the second largest energy need to keep it hot by maintaining an energy-efficient water heating system and conserving hot water.

**Thermostat Set-Back**  
A set-back thermostat allows you to change the temperature setting, or turn off your heating or cooling system, at preset times. Each morning when you return, the temperature changes to save energy, automatically. Heating or cooling is done only when someone is home.

water garden as the focal point? To develop a wildlife center bursting with activity, fill your water garden with iris or other flowers, put out a birdbath and grab your bird book. Be prepared for lots of feathered visitors, as well as curious squirrels and other thirsty animals.

**A Sophisticated Outdoor Entertainment Area**  
Build an elegant outdoor buffet around your water garden, using uplighting to cast interesting shadows when entertaining after dark. Set the mood by bathing your water garden with different colored lights and hanging wind chimes nearby to transform your backyard, patio or deck into an almost magical place. Play classical music or jazz, or let the tinkling splash of water serve as music for your evening. Don't forget that this kind of water retreat works just as well for a romantic rendezvous for two as it does for a party of 20.

**Wildlife Center**  
If you want to get out and enjoy the great outdoors, why not set up your own wildlife center, using a

**A Quiet Spot in the Corner**  
When the world seems a little too crowded, noisy and hectic, rejuvenate your spirit by stealing some quiet time in your water garden. As you listen to the delicate splashing, smell the cool, damp, fresh scent and watch the water slip over the pebbles and rocks, you can feel the tensions of a busy day slip away.

**Make your water garden an inviting place in the early morning, noon or evening hours by placing a comfortable chair in a secluded spot. Then, let the soothing sounds, smells**

**Imagine the possibilities of a water garden**

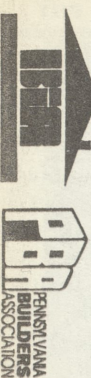
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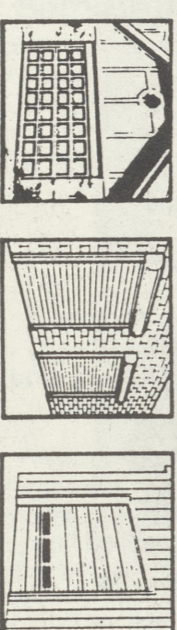
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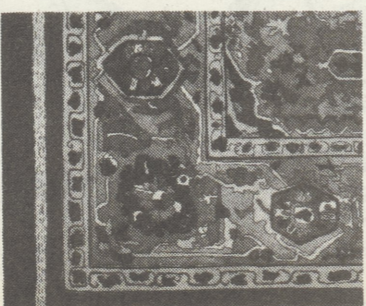
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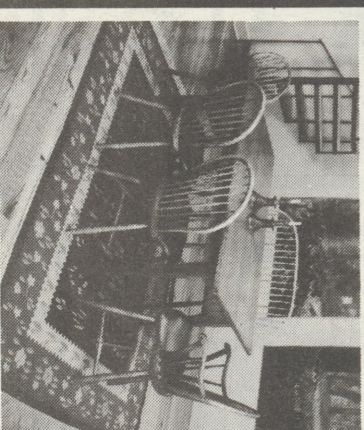


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