



He's got it covered

Pontrelli's Interiors has worked reupholstery magic for years.

Photos by **LYNN SEEDEN**

Fountain Valley resident Mike Pontrelli has been bringing new life to old furniture at his upholstery shop. Besides home furniture and antiques, Mike has upholstered an odd assortment of items, including a chair with real cattle horns, a wine barrel converted into a chair, and the Huntington Beach Police helicopter.

By **CURT SEEDEN**
FV Living Magazine

By trade Mike Pontrelli is a reupholsterer. His customers think of him as a magician. For more than 30 years, Mike Pontrelli has been taking couches used by cats for scratching posts and transforming them into masterpieces. He's brought new life to thousands of pieces of furniture in his Gothard Street shop in Huntington Beach.

"I love what I do," admits the 51-year-old Fountain Valley resident. "The look in people's eyes when I deliver furniture that was beat up and old makes this all worth it."

Mike has literally been in the business since he was a kid. Pontrelli's Furniture Co. was founded in 1922 in Los Angeles, the brain-storm of three brothers, immigrants of Italy, who sold furniture, records and gave music lessons.

One of the brothers had two sons—Tino and Mike (uncle to the "Mike" in our story)—who took over in 1959 and created an upholstery and drapery business. Eventually the store was sold and a move to Huntington Beach was

made. Mike, the son of Tino, took over the business and is still providing the same quality work that his grandfather provided.

Mike earned his bachelor's degree in history at Cal State Long Beach, and there was a time when he thought about teaching. But the family business beckoned, and that was OK with him.

"It's always been a family business and I love what I do," he said.

When he is not recreating lifeless furniture, Mike loves playing baseball with his son, Jonathan, 6, who is in his second year with Fountain Valley Little League. Mike and wife DeeDee enjoy watching the Angels, and Mike is also a member of the Kiwanis Club of Huntington Beach.

Mike invites customers and potential customers to his store to watch how he and his employees work. He's also been known to completely reupholster a piece a furniture during a home decorating show.

"I want people to watch us reupholster. I like that," he added.

Pontrelli's Interiors is at 18346 Gothard St. Call Mike at (714) 848-9944.

