

Work's work dovetails with his love for furniture

By **CHRISTINA HILL**
Correspondent

Gerald Work, owner of The DoveTail Joint in Kerby, may be fairly new to

said that he went from being founder and CEO of a couple of moderately large computer software companies to designing and build-

son, but the mechanical strength is always in the joint," Work said.

"Wood naturally expands and contracts all

throughout its life even after 200 or 300 years," he said. "Since it's going to move, unless you design to accommodate that, after a couple of months or years, it's going to start cracking."

According to Work, the precise measurements of his work, combined with dovetail joints, allow for the natural expansion of wood, therefore resisting cracking.

"If it's designed properly, it's going to last for many years," he said. "I tell my customers that if it's fine furniture, it's going to be enjoyed by their grandchildren's grandchildren."

"And," he added, "No two pieces are alike. I don't use veneers for anything. Everything is solid wood. Every piece is custom designed. I use a variety of exotic woods that are sustainably harvested from plantation-grown trees."

Work's style ranges from funky to classical, he said. From dining room sets to free-standing bathroom vanities, desks, clocks and more, Work produces a wide range of durable pieces, all of which serve "functionality and as eye candy."

"I'm currently working on a line of stands for high-end gongs," he said. "I don't have all the distribution details arrangements worked out yet, but it would be for the world's largest manufacturer and distributor of symphonic gongs. It's a Swiss company," Work said.

The stands are made using a wide assortment of wood including Australian silky oak and Oregon big leaf maple. They are trimmed with walnut and adorned with leather.

"Gongs have a centuries-old tradition throughout the world which many people describe as healing properties," said Work. "If this project goes through, I'll be manufacturing a wide variety of high-end gong stands."

Between gong stands and supplying the demand for his other pieces, Work is constantly busy.

"It's full-time fun," he said. "I believe that you do what you enjoy and the money will follow."

"A surprising amount of business is here locally and within 600 miles north and south," he added.

When Work isn't busy designing and building new pieces, he can be found helping others.

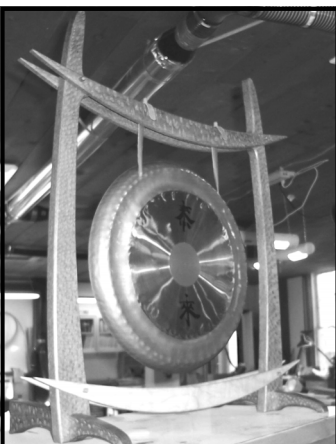
"Everywhere we've ever lived, we've been extremely active in the economic development of the area," he said. "We spend a lot of time and energy volunteering to try to improve the standard of living in this area."

"Here, both of us serve on the board of directors for the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization. I chair the Social Ventures Committee, which manages the concessions that we run at the Oregon Caves," Work said.

In addition, Work founded the Southern Oregon Guild: 70 members strong and growing.

"That's another economic development founded to help professional artists and artisans help themselves to become more commercially successful," he said. "Again, creating living-wage jobs. It's not a hand-out, it's a hand-up," Work concluded.

For more information, on The DoveTail Joint, visit southernoregonguild.org or phone 592-5360.



Gerald Work (left) ponders one of his projects, which include exquisite high-end gongs. (Photos by Christina Hill)

the valley, but he's no stranger to fine furniture.

Since his mid-20s, Work, 64, has hand-crafted fine furniture as a "counterpoint to the work" he was doing.

"I've learned from a gazillion mistakes," he said. "I've basically done it (built fine furniture) all my life. The first half of my career I was in technology management, and since I worked with my head all the time, I had to work with my hands to maintain my sanity," Work said with a laugh.

Undoubtedly, Work's life has done a '180.' He

ing fine furniture as a full-time hobby and job.

He moved to the valley in March 2002, with Sharon, his wife of 45 years, after they finally found what they were looking for.

"I took early retirement, and for four years my wife and I traveled the United States," said Work, "looking for a funky, old building to restore and build fine furniture in. We found this building and it was perfect."

"It was built in 1907 and was the Masonic Temple for a number of years. This location was also the first plat of land in Josephine County, so there's a lot of history behind this building," Work said.

The renovation gave birth to The DoveTail Joint, named quite simply after the joint that Work uses to hold his pieces together.

"All this furniture is mechanically locked together by dove-tail joints," he said. "I don't use any mechanical screws or fasteners. I'll occasionally use glue to help keep pieces in place if there's a good rea-

You Don't Say

The pyramids in Egypt contain enough stone and mortar to construct a wall 10 feet high and 5 feet wide running from New York City to Los Angeles.

Newly elected John F. Kennedy gave each of his aides a PT-109 tie clasp, which became the highest status symbol of the New Frontier. Cufflinks and tie clasps are usually chosen as gifts by gubernatorial winners because of their high visibility.

In Australia, the No. 1 topping for pizza is eggs. In Chile, it's mussels and clams. In the United States, it's pepperoni.

Before she became a film actress, Sharon Stone was one of the top 10 models at the famous Ford Agency be-

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Tax News

**Cars & Taxes:
The 2005 rules of the road.**

Do higher operating costs for your auto have you fuming? If so, whether you use your car for business or personal use, make sure to take advantage of the available tax deductions. For a happier ride, here's a brief overview of the basic tax rules for 2005.

Business provisions:

Standard mileage allowance. The standard mileage deduction for business use of a vehicle increases this year from 37.5¢ to 40.5¢ a mile. Higher fuel prices are behind the rate boost.

Actual cost method. The actual cost method requires more recordkeeping to track expenses for gas, insurance, repairs, depreciation, etc., but it may generate a higher deduction. (Tip: Once you use the actual cost method, you cannot use the standard mileage allowance for as long as you use that vehicle.)

Expense and depreciation deductions. The rules are less favorable for business vehicles purchased in 2005. Cars have a combined first-year deduction limit of about \$3,000, while SUVs still qualify for a \$25,000 first-year expensing deduction.

Personal provisions:

Personal use mileage rates. Rates for 2005 are 15¢ per mile if you use your auto for medical reasons or for mileage related to a qualified moving deduction. For auto use as a volunteer for a charity, the rate is 14¢ per mile.

Donating your car. If you donate your auto to charity, you can enjoy a deduction for the amount for which the charity sells your vehicle.

Hybrid gas/electric car. In 2005, a \$2,000 deduction is available if you buy a new hybrid vehicle.

Sales tax deduction. If you buy a car in 2005, you can deduct the related state sales tax as an itemized deduction if you choose to deduct sales taxes paid instead of state and local income taxes paid.

For details or tax assistance, give us a call.

Federal, Oregon, California, and other state tax returns.

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