

## Dow's Diddley Bows Makes One-Stringed Folk Instruments

By Amy Makechnie  
For the Beacon

"Never say you can't play diddley!" is the tagline of the new Dow's Diddley Bows store in Hill. Specializing in tenor instruments and touting a jug band, Dow's Diddley Bows is open for business.

A diddley bow is a one-stringed bow," owner Mark Dow says. Anyone can learn to play it quickly. Dow's might be the only music store in the state that makes and sells diddley bows and sells tenor guitars, dulcimers, and mandolas, almost extinct and beautiful instruments.

"We are also a full-service music store," Mark says. In addition to his unique instruments, he also sells keyboards, regular guitars, tuners, music, amps, and banjos. Mark also offers lessons and fixes broken instruments.

Until a few years ago, Mark "never really got into music." Then he was given about 100 cigar boxes. From those boxes, he fashioned his first cigar-box guitar.

Diddley bows are hard to find these days, which gives Mark the chance to sell to New Hampshire blues and jazz guitarist, vocalist, and educator TJ Wheeler.

Dow's Diddley Bows is also a certified dealer for Gold Tone, a world-reknowned brand of stringed instruments. Dow's is at 764 Route 3A in Hill and is open from 10 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday, and 10 AM to 1 PM on Saturday.

Jam night is on Wednesday from 7 to 9 PM — all are welcome. "Bring your fiddles, banjos, and mandolas," Mark says. And get ready for some diddley. For more information, visit [DowsDiddleyBows.com](http://DowsDiddleyBows.com).



Jay Boynton has moved his law office from Cilleyville to 164 Main Street in downtown Andover. Jay is shown here with Beacon volunteer Robert Offenloch testing the fit of the firm's new sign. Photo: Charlie Darling

## Grevior Furniture Wins Concession For Corrections Furniture And Crafts

By Heather Makechnie  
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Now, in addition to six floors of furniture, customers at Grevior Furniture on Central Street in Franklin have access to astonishing custom handcrafted furniture and unique works of art at ridiculously low prices. Called "Corrections Creations," the store is on two floors. Smaller items are on the first floor, while larger furniture is on the second.

Inmates at the New Hampshire State Prison, taught by volunteer craftsmen, create wood, leather, ceramic, fabric, and woven works of art that are exhibit quality. The resulting products are sold at only the cost of materials.

Using solid hardwoods such as birds-eye maple, oak, cherry, and ash, inmates create elegant Shaker pie safes, children's rockers, nesting boxes, and settees, all of which carry breathtakingly low price tags. Rich, hand-tooled leather adorns custom-made saddles that would sell for several thousand in the open market. At Grevior, the cost is

in the \$600 range.

Woven ash hampers, anglers' creels, and Indian backpacks stun with their pristine perfection; and stun yet again with their paltry price. Jewelry boxes with secret hidey-holes are filled with semi-precious jewelry, all created by inmates. Precious baby sweaters are joined by perfect leather belts and buttery soft leather purses. Oil paintings, woodburning, water colors, model ships; you have got to see this to believe it!

Says Bob Grevior, co-owner of Grevior Furniture, "It was more than two years in the making. The reams of paperwork involved in getting the concession were unbelievable. The meetings, the documentation. And then it had to go before the Executive Council! But we hung in there through the process because of the beauty and quality of this work. We are very proud to be the winner of this concession, and it is truly a wonderful addition to our community."

The concession was awarded to Grevior Furniture for a period of three years, with an option for three more. "I'm sure we will keep the concession. These items are just flying out the door," says Bob. "Just look at this cedar-lined oak chest. Where will you find work like this at that price? Look at this black walnut mission desk; the perfection of every mortise."

Indeed, each piece of art fairly screams with pride. And pride is what the program is all about. As the prison's brochure explains, "The hobby craft program is not just about teaching the members a skill, it is also about creating hope and building self-esteem. By allowing the inmates to be free to create, they earn vital and necessary social and vocational skills that instill confidence and pride while advancing their success upon release."

"The inmates will take custom orders and build, sew, paint, or weave to your specifications," says Bob. Corrections Creations is open seven days a week.

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