

# Trees give form to artist's wares

Jeff Dreisbach's creations from wood can be seen this weekend at the Old Deerfield Christmas Sampler at the Big E in West Springfield.

By **NANCY H. GONTER**  
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**WORTHINGTON** - Jeff Dreisbach has found another world here in this quiet hill town.

Once an actor in the soap operas "Another World" and "One Life to Live," as well as a veteran of the Broadway stage, Dreisbach now spends his days in the woods near his home on Patterson Road looking for saplings that he turns into what he calls one-of-a-kind tree art furniture.

Eighteen months ago, Dreisbach, 48, was laid off from his job as executive director of Connecticut Schools of Broadcasting. His wife, Patricia McCorkle, still a casting director in Manhattan, told him this was his chance.

"Pat was so supportive. She said this is a sign. This is what you've been looking for," Dreisbach remembered.

The couple purchased their five acres 18 years ago after working at the Berkshire Theater Festival and falling in love with the area. For seven years, they camped on the land on weekends, and 11 years ago they built their house there.

When he lost his job, Dreisbach decided to pursue making furniture, something that had started as a hobby 10 years before.

"I always saw the practical



Staff photo by **BOB STERN**

**Jeff Dreisbach of Worthington recently displays one of his free-form wood creations, a maple coffee table, in his home.**

## IF YOU GO

**Event:** Old Deerfield Christmas Sampler

**When:** Today, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; tomorrow, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Where:** Better Living Center, Eastern States Exposition, West Springfield

**Cost:** \$8 for adults, \$1 for children under 12.

**For more info:** Call (413) 774-7476, Ext. 18

application of natural forms. It's about using your imagination to make something practical," Dreisbach said.

Unlike most rustic furniture, Dreisbach's work is not bulky. He calls it "refined." He makes lamps, chairs, tables and smaller items such as pens and kitchen mallets. No two pieces are alike.

"Everyone should have a natural form in their home," he said.

Using his all-terrain vehicle, he scours the woods for saplings. He also gets wood from friends and neighbors.

"I'm shameless. If I see someone burning wood, I tell them I'll make them something if I can take their wood," he said.

He does his work in a small building behind his house that is part workshop, part art studio. A wood stove provides warmth.

On weekends, Dreisbach goes

to craft fairs, drawing on his experience as an actor to sell his work. During his 18 years as an actor, he was in the original cast of the Broadway show "A Few Good Men" and had parts in "Splash" and "Die Hard with a Vengeance."

"I've found the perfect combination of lifestyles. I can be solitary and create during the week. Then, on the weekend I have to be in front of people and pitch my wares," he said.

This weekend, he will be showing his work at the Old Deerfield Christmas Sampler at the Big E's Better Living Center in West Springfield. In the last 18 months, he's been to 30 shows.

His work can also be viewed at [www.rusticforrest.com](http://www.rusticforrest.com)