

## The Gift of Work

He is the heart and strength of our law firm. His name is James D. "Jim" Harrison, and he, along with his late friend, Warren C. Moberly, started our firm in 1950. We will help him celebrate his 95th birthday this year, and it is our honor and privilege that he brings his steadfast presence to the firm to work for a while almost every day.

I have long believed that "work" is a gift unto itself to the worker. The author Robert Dallek in his book called *An Unfinished Life* on the life of President John F. Kennedy states that "Sigmund Freud believed that a well-spent life rests on successful engagement with *Arbeit* and *Liebe* - work and love." As I observe people, it does seem that a happy life is somewhat connected to an engagement with meaningful work. It appears that the work itself brings benefits of health and good spirits. Our law firm has a significant tradition of celebrating a person's accomplishments by an e-mail from a firm colleague to all users highlighting the award or event. Jim Harrison is almost always one of the first to e-mail back to all users his kudos to the honoree(s) of the day. Jim's friends and co-workers agree that his genteel spirit and kindness to everyone make him the epitome of an Esquire. He clearly would not have to come into work every day, but he wants to do so, and it is a gift to everyone he sees.

I, too, have parents, now in their 80's, who happily work at their interior design and furniture business almost every day. The passion and energy with which they embrace work is an inspiration to all who know them, and I believe it gives them added energy and zest for each day. They are the first ones to bring a homemade meal to a sick friend or to visit with someone in need, all after a full day's



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work. My parents also would not have to go to work every day, but they want to do it, and it energizes them in ways I cannot explain.

Although I realize that there are times when people are unable to be gainfully employed, I do know that there are many charities which need volunteers to help in many ways. The Wheeler Mission is one such example, as they serve approximately 1050 full meals a day 365 days per year to homeless people (almost all as a result of the work of volunteers).

My readings this year took me to the book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible, and I found this verse in this book of the Old Testament.

"So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than to enjoy his work..." Ecclesiastes 3:22a

It made sense to me why Mr. Harrison and my parents are such a joy to all those around them. Even a book written thousands of years ago, which is still read and believed today, says it so well.

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