



Contest helps widow revamp a home office

"Disaster" room - An organization firm helps winner Susan Trone with the project

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After her husband died last spring, Oregon City resident Susan Trone has been trying to complete the home restoration the couple started nearly two years ago.

Earlier this month she got some help from Restoring Order, a Portland organizing company, after she entered a contest to win a reorganization of her husband Gene's former home office.

"It was . . . emotional to go through (my husband's) things and think he won't ever be able to use this again," Trone said, adding that she now plans to organize other rooms in her house and finish up the projects she and her husband started together.

The Trone family was featured on "AM Northwest" Tuesday, a week after they won the full reorganization of the room. Trone said the project inspired her to continue working toward restoration on her 29-year-old home, where she lives with three of her five children.

"When he died, there was no roof on the house, and that was just one of a multitude of things," she said. "There was just a ton of things that we were in the middle of doing."

Trone entered the contest the night before the deadline and said it is the first contest she has ever entered.

In choosing a winner, Restoring Order founder and president Vicki Norris and a panel of judges looked for "a really interesting space that applies to a lot of people," Norris said. They also looked for a good story. Trone had both.

"When people apply, you get everything," Norris said. "There are a lot of sad stories that I hear year after year."

But Norris said Trone was unique because she was a survivor. "You could tell she was not asking for a hand-out. This was one more thing that would help her put the pieces back together," she said.

Plus, the room was a mess, according to Trone.

"It was disaster," she said. "It was the kind of room that you looked at it and then you just shut the door, because you thought, 'I don't know how I'm going to tackle this.' "