

Davis Mill & Cabinet

Environmental Stewardship

“Environmental stewardship may have a religious connotation for some people, as in the Christian suggestion that people should be stewards of God's earth, and it is in their duty to respect His creatures. This may be construed as the true meaning of dominion.”

Davis Mill and Cabinet's owners, Brent and Mark Davis, have a generational, core-belief of environmental and financial stewardship, as well as self-reliance. It is common in today's world to have a gap in what happened in past generations and what is happening now. People in days-gone-by practiced good stewardship in environmental, financial and physical ways, but as manufacturers were able to produce goods more quickly and planned obsolescence began to be implemented, people lost sight of the value of the old adages “waste not, want not” and “use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do with out.” We believe we don't have that gap. We are not starting anew in the current green movement, because we have always been that way and still are.

How does all this benefit you? Let us explain.

Just a generation ago, one of our forbearers built a lovely brick and stone home with stone he picked up along the roads and recycled brick that was from a home that he had been asked to tear down. He also used reclaimed flooring and framing materials. When Davis Mill and Cabinet's owners built their own homes, some flooring came from either waste material or rejected lumber, stair spindles were salvaged and re-turned, windows were handmade and integral parts such as fireplace mantles and pedestal sinks were found from antiques. Much of the furniture was found in thrift-stores or yard sales, but carefully repaired and refinished and put back into use. This continues second-generation as homes are built using reject walnut flooring, salvaged architectural pieces, and almost new, but second-hand, appliances. This effectively reduces the cost of the home and thereby reduced the debt.

In a time where debt has not only been accepted as normal, but has been abused, the family tradition, and therefore the business tradition have chosen a different path of self-reliance. The homes have water saving appliances and bulkier clothes are hung out to dry to save energy.

Lifestyle habits are never just happenstance; they are always results of an individual's belief system. This is demonstrated by the Davis family's tradition of growing gardens and bottling and storing produce long into the winter. Green beans, tomatoes, and beets are bottled. Corn, raspberries, and asparagus are frozen, while potatoes and squash are put in cellars for the winter. Apples that are not fit to sell are juiced using an apple press whose wooden parts were handmade. Our lifestyle reduces the amount of packaging and

metal cans used by commercially produced food that is used by the family, and requires fewer trips to the grocery store.

It is not uncommon to find homemade bread in the Davis homes. Wheat is purchased in bulk and made into bread. Even the kids are taught to make bread in their early teens and have shared their skills with others.

Producing heirloom vegetable and saving their seeds for future planting has been a family project for many years. Many of these beautiful heirloom plants are remarkable and delicious. All organic waste from vegetables and fruits is returned to the soil, not to the landfill.

Handmade soap in the age-old tradition, lotion, salve and lip-balm are also made. Some of the ingredients are either produced by the Davis's or purchased from a local beekeeper. Items used in the products, such as shea butter and handmade paper are purchased from cottage industries in Africa and Thailand made by women in their own homes, who are helping to improve their family's lifestyle and self-reliance.

Grandma Davis has been making quilts for humanitarian service out of fabric that she has saved over the years. She has made dozens of quilts for those in need. It doesn't stop with Grandma Davis making quilts; her grandchildren the tradition by hand-piecing and quilting beautiful quilts.

On a community level, family members have worked hard to help implement a reasonable windmill ordinance in the community. DMC has provided a paper and cardboard recycle bin for cardboard, and has invited the community to use it.

We believe that the good things of the earth were created to "gladden the heart and please the eye". Therefore, we believe that doing our best, *our very best*, is not just a nice thing to do, but is a mandate from our Maker. When we make cabinets for you, we make beautiful cabinets that will stand the test of time. At the same time, we are very conscious that we also have a responsibility to use the earth's resources to the best advantage of all, causing as little waste as possible. It has been said, "Live simply, so others can simply live."

We produce doors that are thicker than the industry standard, thereby reducing warping and increasing their longevity. This not only creates value in durability, but beauty in a real and aesthetic sense. We hand-pick woods that will work more specifically with the door style, stain, and desired finish, thus reducing waste and enhancing the finished product. We never take short cuts that would reduce the quality and appearance of the finished product. We use innovative machines that have been manufactured by one of our owner's sons to improve the quality and speed with which the cabinets are built. These machines can do functions that commercially available machines are not capable of, necessitating the manufacture of a different type of machine; hence, "necessity is the mother of invention." Excess strips of wood are laminated and used for other cabinet parts. The cabinet cases are cut on a machine that optimizes the

panels by arranging them in an effective manner. It also utilized any smaller pieces in other part being produced. The sawdust and smaller scraps of wood are chipped and turned into sawdust briquettes which burn almost ash-free, producing the maximum BTUs possible.

The solvents used in the finishing department are recycled and reused. The rags are reclaimed from discarded clothing and are used repeatedly until they are fully used and then are disposed of in the OSHA approved method. We have the ability to create and manufacture entirely new door styles, although many of our style come from forgotten designs of yesteryear, redesigned and re-implemented by our in-house design team.

In the past year, we have analyzed and rethought procedures to try to further minimize any waste. We have read and put into operation the *lean* manufacturing concept, realizing that also was part of our core belief system. In our efforts to minimize waste, the shop has been re-arranged to make labor and human effort more efficient and effective.

Employees are being retrained to be able to do multiple tasks and are being asked for suggestions in their areas of expertise to help make our production more efficient and produce even better and more consistent quality

Back to the original question, how does this benefit you? The answer is that you can be assured that while we spare no expense to provide you with the largest choices of style, the most solid quality, and cabinets you can be confident and satisfied with, we have also not wasted resources in the process of their manufacturing.

That is our story, it always has been our story, and will continue to be our story.