



Since I was a young boy, I have been around wood workers and woodworking. My grandfather, August Ulmen, had the kind of shop behind his house that many of that time did. As one who experienced the Great Depression, Grandpa created most of his tools and the space to use them. His cramped but adequate shop, heated by an old pot-bellied stove, was a place of constant fascination and curiosity for me. Fortunately, my dad learned many of the same skills and kept and used many of those tools. As one of three sons, I still have many of Grandpa's tools, many of them sporting some fine creative upgrades courtesy of Dad. Among my most prized inheritances is a homemade lathe that Grandpa used for both wood and metal working. I knew I had the right background to become a woodworker when the time was right.

After raising a few sons of my own, raising a home of our own, and raising a few grey hairs as a middle school teacher, I have been blessed with the opportunity to do my own woodworking. Grandpa and Dad would be at the same time delighted with and envious of my shop, which like many others existed in an earlier life as a garage. The tools are mostly newer, they are mostly shinier, and mostly fond of electricity, but one constant remains. That is the satisfaction of creating an interesting and useful object that is pleasing to the eye and gentle to the hand. This is the constant that links my enjoyment of woodworking to that of my predecessors. It is my pleasure to get to share those creations with others through 461 CustomWare, a dream I have had since I ran my fingers through that soft and silky sawdust in Grandpa's shop when I wasn't tall enough to reach much else.

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