

Soundview Millworks: Handmade in Darien

BY SUSAN SCHULTZ

When Darienite Grant Tankoos and his friend Rob Campbell were working with some wood in the garage, they weren't sure what they'd come up with.

Tankoos had worked for Vineyard Vines for about six years, through college and three years after he graduated. He wanted to do something different.



"We started making these cutting boards in my garage just to kind of see what we could come up with," Tankoos said.

And Soundview Millworks was born. The company makes cutting boards and coasters right now in a nautical theme, but Tankoos is hoping to expand it to make ice buckets and other home nautical accessories.

"Our product is unique. It is handmade in Darien. The material comes to us rough and we mill it down. We don't have any computerized machines or any automation – it is a totally handmade product," Tankoos said.

All the wood products are made from American maple or Santos mahogany.

Tankoos said not only are the products all handmade, but they have the ability to personalize each one.

"We can do personalization and engraving catering to any need or desire. We can monogram initials or we have 25 stock images on hand," he said.

The stock images include an outline of Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket, as well as trumpets, roses, sailboats, crabs and others.

"We can personalize the board to fit someone's personality or characteristics," Tankoos said.

Soundview Millworks already has 25 accounts, from wholesale to boutique. Darien's Good Food Good Thing, 865 Post Road, carries Soundview Millworks products, and Tankoos said that Amy Sporrer from the store has been very supportive.

"We've had great response," Sporrer said of the Soundview Millworks products.

"Everybody likes them. And both guys are so easy to work with."

Tankoos said he and Rob Campbell grew up in Darien together, although Tankoos said he has primarily taken control of Soundview Millworks now that Campbell has headed back into the building business.

He said he "grew up being handy" and was always working on projects around the house with his dad which contributed to his talent in creating the cutting boards.

"I've restored a couple of boats. I've kind of learned by doing," he said.

Tankoos said that part of the reason behind creating Soundview Millworks was there wasn't a lot else going on and no one was hiring.



“We wanted to see if there was something better out there. And we have had a lot of success with it,” he said.

In addition to the cutting board business, Soundview Millworks does custom work for Noroton Yacht Club, creating trophies and awards, as well as custom trophies for golf tournaments in the summer.

Soundview Millworks's Website, soundviewmillworks.com, shows off the various cutting boards that Tankoos has created.

“It is a pretty neat-looking Website,” he said.

Tankoos said Soundview Millworks is interesting because it was created a “Darien kid,” all items are handmade in Darien,

and the product is special.

“We had an idea about how to add a fresh look to an old boring cutting board. It is kind of nautical, and has a neat aesthetic appeal. It is something different,” Tankoos said.

Visit the Soundview Millworks at soundviewmillworks.com