



Beautiful wood dining sets on display and for sale at JK Creative Wood in Kalona.



The headboard on this queen-size bed is maple stained to look like walnut.

CHERYL ALLEN/THE NEWS

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KALONA
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JK Creative Wood: handcrafted furniture for home-based lives

BY CHERYL ALLEN
 The News

KALONA

2020 was a year that changed us. As we enter our fourth year in the post-pandemic world, we might begin to distinguish which changes were merely temporary, and which are longer lasting.

One way in which we are different is how we have come to understand and value our homes. What once may have been a place we store things and sleep became a 24/7 base of operations for everything from homework to working out. Obligated to stay within our dwellings for a time, we started to really live in them.

We noticed how our homes functioned and did not function. We noticed how they looked and how they felt. And we made changes.

At JK Creative Wood in Kalona, owners Joel and Karma Brokaw felt the shift. Rather than suffer a setback, their more than 40-year-old wood-working business experienced a surge in sales.

2020, Karma says, "was fabulous. We actually had one of the best years we've ever had."

Although perhaps best known for their handcrafted smallgoods, such as beautiful cutting boards striated with bands of cherry, sycamore, ash, and walnut, and clipboards assembled to resemble quilt blocks, JK Creative Wood also sells custom Amish-made wood furniture, and this is one area where they saw the uptick in demand.

"People were at home and sick of their furniture, and our furniture sales just escalated," Karma says. "We sold more furniture in those years than we've ever sold in our lives."

People's values changed suddenly, Karma explains. Now spending more hours at home for both work and leisure, warehouse furniture no longer satisfied. Customers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3C

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