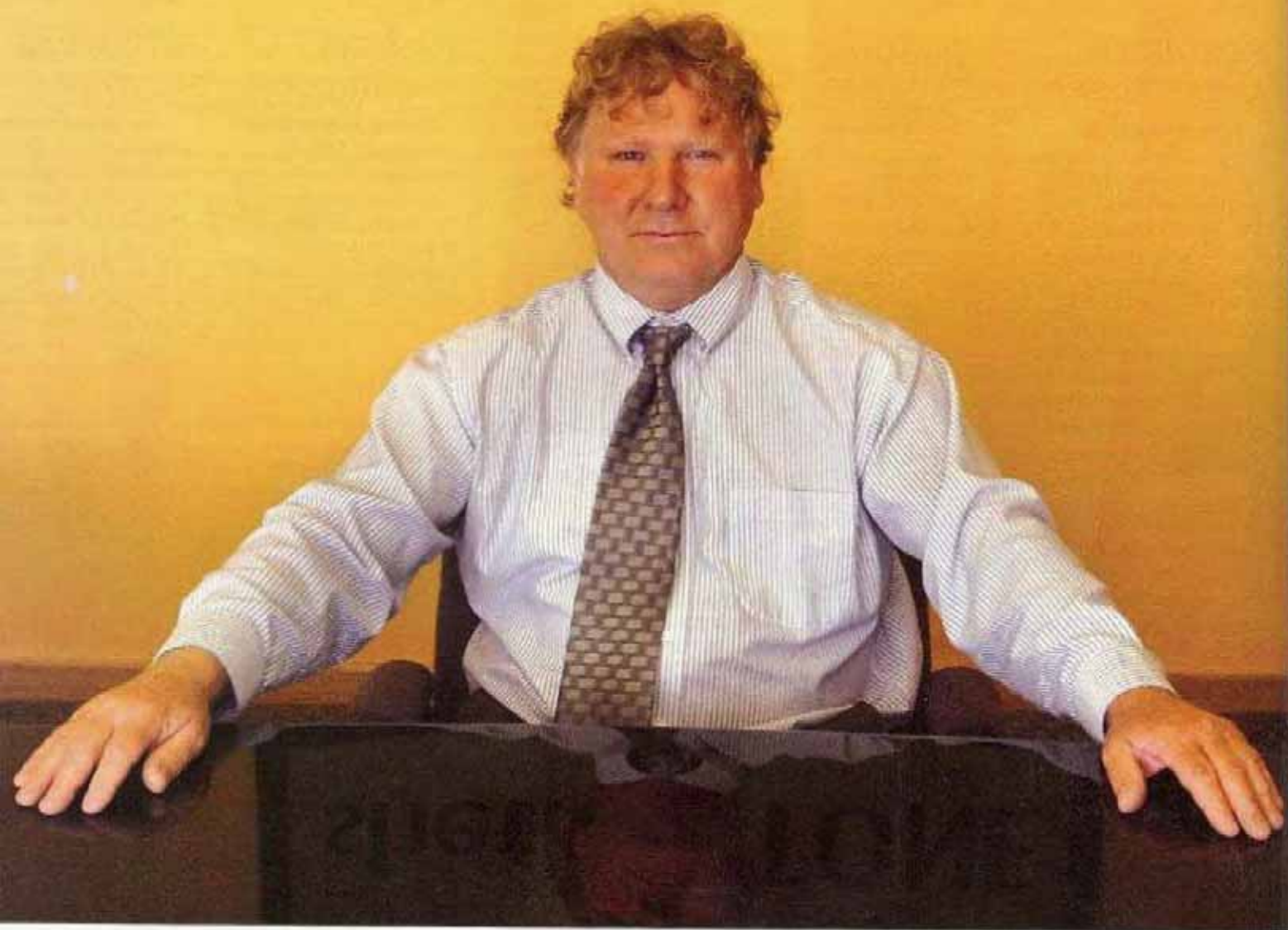


shetkaSTONE



# Going Green

'Revolutionary' process has given Le Center company a bright future

By **ERIKA GREINER**  
Photos by **THOM CAYA**

**W**hen Stanley Shetka was a college student at the University of Minnesota, his art history professor assigned his class a term paper. When it came time for the students to hand in their papers, the professor received paper after paper after paper — until Shetka walked up and handed him a block.

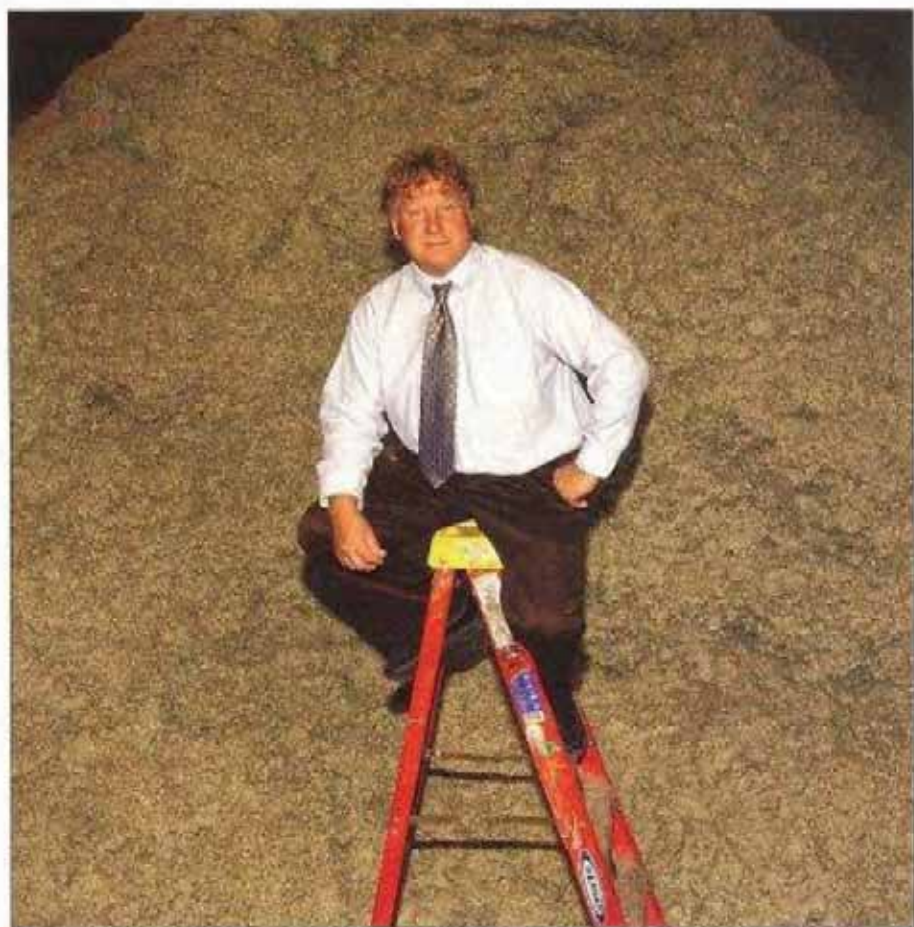
"What's this?" Shetka recalls his professor asking.

"It's my paper," replied Shetka.

Though the assignment that Shetka handed in was not individual sheets of paper stapled together, as the professor had expected, Shetka certainly was turning in a paper. In fact, the paper contained the entire contents of the class's art history book.

Shetka decided that rather than writing a typical college paper, he would make a paper of his own sort, "destroying history to make history," in his words.

"I took my art history book, pulped it in the washing machine, and put it in a mold. Then I dried it overnight in an oven and I ended up with a block," Shetka said. >>>



Using 100 percent post-consumer waste, like uncirculated currency (above), in manufacturing products like counter tops, benches, flooring, ceiling tile and awards, Stanley Shetka is sitting on a gold mine with his revolutionary process called shetkaSTONE.

>>> The bold, unconventional decision to hand in a paper block made from the art history book about which Shetka was supposed to write a paper impressed his professor so much, he earned an A for the project.

The A that Shetka earned on his "paper" as a college student was only a glimpse of the success he would enjoy as he followed his passion for art and the environment.

"My background was in art and design," said Shetka, "but I could never figure out why you needed to go to art stores to buy supplies. I just saw the natural resources around me and figured I could use those instead."

#### Still going natural

Today, more than 25 years after his initial college paper experiment, when Shetka is not teaching as an art professor at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn., he is busy running his company, called "All Paper Recycling," which he formed after developing shetkaSTONE.

Shetka calls his shetkaSTONE a revolutionary product that has a 100 percent sustainable life cycle. Products that are produced from shetkaSTONE are



ShetkaStone employees Cody Sarbacher (left) and his brother John, set up a piece of product to be cut to size.

manufactured from pre- and post-consumer waste paper and rely on using none of the Earth's over-tapped resources.

"All by-products (waste created in the manufacturing process) can be recycled back into the manufacturing process," Shetka said. "All products that are damaged or are at the end of their life cycle do not have to be put in any landfill, they can be recycled back into the manufacturing process."

Shetka believes his process is one-of-a-kind.

"We're the only company using 100 percent post-consumer waste and we are one

of the only ones that doesn't use formaldehyde in the process either," explained Shetka. "That's important because formaldehyde is a carcinogenic and gets into your home and makes it not as safe."

"It's the cradle-to-cradle concept. We're making products kids won't have to pay the price for later."

ShetkaSTONE has been used to make counter tops, tabletops, benches, chairs, tiles and more. In fact, experimental model homes have even been made from shetkaSTONE and are displayed at the Minnesota Science Museum. >>>

## Going green with shetkaSTONE

shetkaSTONE is a revolutionary product that has a 100 percent sustainable life cycle. Products that are produced from shetkaSTONE are manufactured from pre- and post-consumer waste paper and rely on using none of the Earth's over-tapped resources.

"shetkaSTONE is a necessary part of our human existence on this earth," owner Stanley Shetka explains. "If we do not start creating products with the same sustainability, we will burn out all of the earth's natural resources."

#### The shetkaSTONE file

**What:** A manufacturing company that makes products like benches, counter tops, wallboard, chairs, tabletops and flooring from 100 percent recycled materials

**Where:** Le Center  
**Owner:** Stanley Shetka  
**Information:** visit [www.shetkaworks.com](http://www.shetkaworks.com)  
**Contact:** 507-357-4177

*"We're the only company using 100 percent post-consumer waste."*

— Stanley Shetka, owner of All Paper Recycling

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Plaques and awards are just a few of the products made from the shetkaSTONE process.

>>> Most recently, the most popular item to sell is a chair made entirely from currency taken out of service.

"ShetkaSTONE is as durable as wood," Shetka said. "It's also scratch-resistant, stain-resistant and water-resistant and it has a seven-year warranty. In order to sell, we knew the product had to cut, saw and finish like wood, which it does."

While all of these aspects of shetkaSTONE appeal to Shetka's many customers, perhaps one of the most enticing selling points is the product's affordability.

"Since we make shetkaSTONE entirely out of recycled paper products and leftover parts of trees that lumber companies don't use, our product is extremely affordable and competitively priced,"

Shetka said. "We can undersell just about everyone because we are using a lot of materials that are very inexpensive and that other manufacturing companies don't have much use for."

#### Looking to the future

All Paper Recycling's "shetkaSTONE" has done remarkably well and is in high demand, according to Shetka. Since it is the only product of its kind in the country, Shetka is currently working with distributors across the United States and is also looking ahead, considering how his company will grow in the future.

"We're probably the only ones using this kind of process in the country, so the demand is really high," said Shetka, who has patents on both the process and the equipment used in making the recycled >>>

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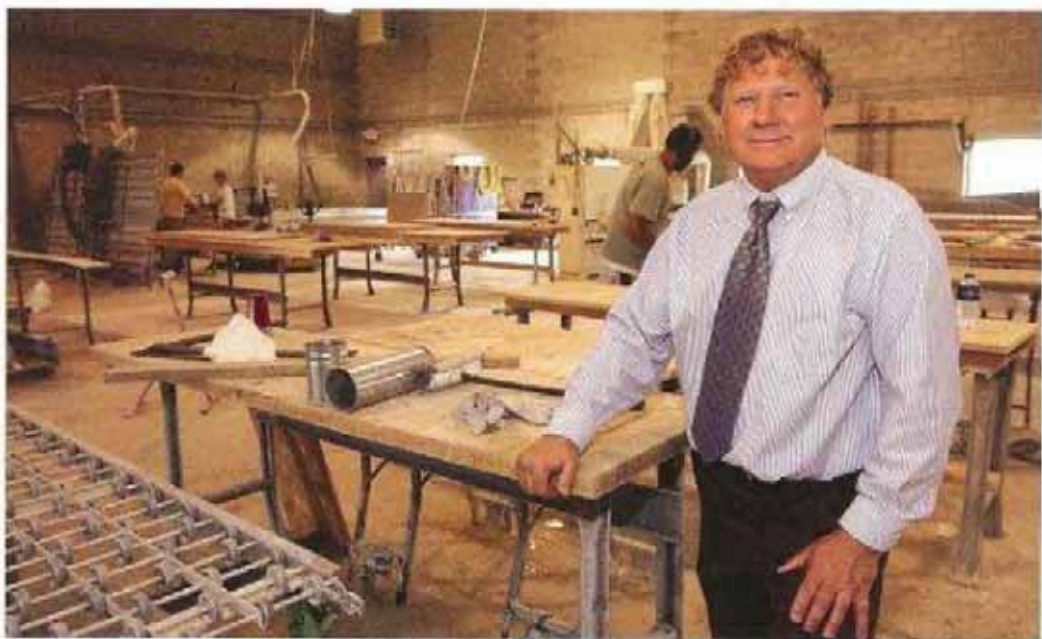
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>>> products. "We want to make sure we stick to our sustainable practices though, so rather than sending our products all the way from Le Center, Minnesota, to other regions in the U.S., we're working on expanding the company. We're coming up with an automated system right now so that we can have locations spread about 1,000 miles apart, and that way we can remain environmentally-friendly and LEED-certified in taking this process out to other communities."

Shetka is confident that shetkaSTONE will continue to grow in popularity as people continue learning about it.

"We have many indications of strong interest in our product outside the United States," Shetka said. "Initially, people mostly learned about shetkaSTONE through word-of-mouth,



Stanley Shetka believes shetkaSTONE products will continue to gain in popularity.

but now I've been in the Wall Street Journal twice, once on the front cover. There have been stories on CNN and in the New York Times and Washington Post.

I'd say someone writes an article each week, so there really is an interest in this product and our company. The phone rings here all the time; even in this economy,

business is good." □

— To find out more about shetkaSTONE and the products All Paper Recycling make, visit [www.shetkastone.com](http://www.shetkastone.com).



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