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## Explored New Uses for Vintage Items (Summer 2024)

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## **Staff Creative Residencies Summer 2024 Self-Assessment**

### **Cocktail Cabinet**

**Trent Bloodworth, Network Analyst II in Telecommunications, explored new uses for vintage items by repurposing a 1960s refrigerator into a cocktail cabinet.**



The Staff Creative Residency has been a rewarding experience as well as a challenging one. As someone who has built their own house and is continuously working on projects related to finishing and upkeeping the house, it is refreshing to be able to put my hands to work on a project that, even though it requires using a lot of the same skills and tools, is more artistic and detail focused.

For my project I took a Kelvinator refrigerator from the 1940's and repurposed it in to a cocktail cabinet. The entire project was completed in my home workshop. I started by removing the refrigeration mechanism and insulation and

stripping off the paint and rust. Then, using black walnut wood from a tree that was locally sourced and which I sawmilled myself, I crafted the bar top, backsplash, shelving and bottle storage of the cabinet. Most of the glass shelving and two glass doors from the refrigerator were intact, and I was

able to reuse them for an enclosure to showcase glassware. My favorite part of the cabinet is the lighting. I find the way the light refracts through the etched bottles and their liquid contents mesmerizing.

Once I had the paint and rust stripped off I discovered that the surface of the metal was pitted more than I anticipated. I was able to fill in most of the pitting on the door with multiple layers of paint, but if I could go back I would apply Bondo to smooth out the surface prior to painting. I also encountered a problem during final assembly. When I installed the original interior door panel, the door was no longer able to close. This required crafting a panel from wood, which I am still in the process of finishing.

The stipend was used to purchase materials and hardware for the cabinet: LED string lights, drawer hardware, sand paper, wood finish and a lot of paint. If I decide to pursue building more cabinets like this one to sell, I will need to invest in a more efficient painting system because spray cans are not the way to go.

I am very happy with how the project has turned out and look forward to showcasing it and getting feedback from the community.

A 1948 Kelvinator refrigerator converted into a cocktail cabinet









