



These boots were made for working!

When you meet Bill Gardner, you'll get a sense immediately that he wants to understand what you're all about and how he can help you.

Bill grew up in his family's shoe business right here on the Southside. His grandfather, Charles, started in the shoe business in the 1940s and in 1986, he and Gardner's father, Frank, opened the Red Wing Shoes store on Midlothian Turnpike.

"I started sweeping floors and running stock when I was about 12," Bill Gardner said. "I was on the sales floor in the mid-1990s. I've been doing it ever since."

The Red Wing brand is synonymous with high-quality work boots. The company caters to hardworking men and women who need a boot or shoe that provides consistently outstanding comfort, longevity and durability.

Red Wing Shoes was a perfect fit for what the Gardner family had in mind in the shoe business. "We chose it for the quality of the products, its manufacturing process and Red Wing's dedication to workmanship," Gardner said. "It's a brand we are proud to affiliate with our family name."

Bill's father and grandfather built the business the old fashioned way: one customer relationship at a time. Since they first opened the Red Wing Shoes store on Midlothian Turnpike back in 1986 (now known as Red Wing Richmond), they've taken some big strides by opening up a second location



Bill Gardner continues a family tradition, operating four Red Wing Shoes locations.

(Brook Road in 1999) and then a third location (Chester in 2007). Recently in 2015, they opened a fourth location in Charlottesville (Red Wing Charlottesville), to better serve customers in the western part of the state.

As retail traffic surged over the years, so did their commitment to their industrial accounts. With Red Wing Richmond's mobile shoe truck program, a company truck visits various business locations like chemical plants, warehouses, etc., serving the needs of hardworking men and women where they work.

Even with all of Red Wing's extraordinary growth over the past three decades, the Gardner family never lost sight of what made this venture so successful in the first place: a steadfast, unwavering commitment to their customers and their employees. According to Bill, "We are in the people business first, and the shoe business second."

Bill's wife, Elizabeth Gardner, also plays a key role in helping their business thrive relative to bookkeeping and financial management. "She has been a phenomenal part of my life both personally and professionally," Gardner said. "This truly is a family business."

He is extremely proud of the employee retention rate for the company. "Some of our people have been with us for more than 25 years ... we have been blessed with the quality and caliber of our employees. A lot of our growth can be credited to our people," says Gardner.

All four of the Red Wing stores carry not only Red Wing Shoes boot lines, but also WORX, Irish Setter and Vasque. In addition, the stores offer a 30-Day Service Program, where Red Wing will clean, polish or condition any product they sell every 30 days for FREE! "That gives us a great opportunity to stay engaged with our customers," Gardner said. "A lot of times we develop lasting

relationships and friendships with these folks. They appreciate our service. They are very loyal customers."

Bill also owns and manages Gardner's Shoes, located next to the Red Wing store in Midlothian. Gardner's Shoes specializes in the popular SAS (San Antonio Shoes) brand for both men and women.

"SAS shoes are more comfortable than other shoes," Gardner said. "Most are softer, lighter casual shoes such as oxfords and sandals. We carry everything from slim to triple wide."

Bill Gardner brims with enthusiasm about the quality of the products his stores offer and the wonderful relationships he and his family have developed with customers over the years. "The passion we have is definitely for our customers," he said. "We have a wonderful group of customers that come to see us. They are hardworking folks like the rest of us."



Red Wing Locations:

8513 Midlothian Turnpike,
Richmond, VA 23235
2633 W Hundred Rd, Chester, VA 23831
8191 Brook Rd D, Richmond, VA 23227
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