Wes Lang
Caesar Guerini USA

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Wes Lang, President of Guerini U.S.A., was accustomed to people asking, “What’s that?” or sometimes even, “Who’s that?” It’s pretty amazing how quickly the American market embraced the quality lines of Guerini. The U.S. shotgun community can be a very traditional group in their purchases, not easily impressed with new or foreign smoothbores. For the most part, we tend to gravitate to the tried-and-true established brands, but since we are a savvy bunch, after the first shipment in 2002, we quickly learned to appreciate the features and excellence of Caesar Guerini guns. It is currently a highly recognized name and a force in the sporting world.

As with the introduction of any new creation, marketing and advertising are keys to its success. In coordination with the Guerini brothers, those are two of Wes’ primary jobs. Well, perhaps “primary” isn’t exactly the correct word because, as any businessman will tell you, an owner must assume all types of duties, and his primary duty is the one he’s working on at that moment in time. As President of Caesar Guerini U.S.A., if there is such a thing as a primary-primary job, Wes would probably consider it talking to customers and ensuring they are happy. Speaking with him back in December, it seemed to me it was that facet of his work he enjoys most. Wes genuinely appreciates his customers.

The work-a-day world of Wes Lang, as you probably gathered from the last paragraph, is not one that is routinely repetitive. Guerini guns are manufactured in Italy under the leadership and engineering of brothers Antonio and Giorgio Guerini and shipped to Wes in the U.S. With a background in marketing and advertising, Wes’ daily schedule involves a great deal of that type of work. Alongside his staff of a dozen, he also confers with the gunsmithing department and deals with everything from accounting issues to sales, distribution and all the details between.

Wes is largely responsible for product development, also, which often revolves around ideas or suggestions from shooters and customers. Caesar Guerini guns are designed mainly for the U.S. market, so Wes has to have a handle on what American consumers want in a shotgun and what features are essential to their needs. While Guerini also sells to clients in various countries all over the world, the majority of their product comes to the U.S.; therefore, a considerable amount of the design concepts and features are generated from Wes and company. As you can imagine, time is the biggest challenge he has. There is barely enough of it to get all his work done, say nothing about spending time with his two young sons or having time to shoot his favorite Guerini at the sporting clays course. Wes is a NSCA Master Class competitor.

Beginning right out of school, Wes has spent his career close to the firearms industry. His first job was at RSR Wholesale, a huge gun wholesaler. After a few years, he moved on to Seminole Gunworks, working for Randy Mitchell. Wes said, as a single guy, it was a super job that took him to heaps of shoots. With an ardor for shooting first developed as he learned...
trapshooting from his grandfather, Fred Lang, and then sporting clays with his dad, Barry Lang, setting up for Seminole at various competitions around the country gave him the opportunity to pursue his love of clay-target shooting. Wes recently won the 2008 Zone 2 NSCA Championships, which includes Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia. He has also won Florida, Delaware and New Jersey (non-resident) and Maryland (resident) state titles and was a past Runner-up at the prestigious Seminole Cup in Florida.

Wes joined Beretta and, some years later, Sig Arms. It was in his capacity there he first met Giorgio Guerini. Leaving Sig Arms, he entered the outdoor publishing business, working for a company that put out over a dozen magazines, including Guns & Ammo. Believing it to be a more stable environment but still in the realm of the shooting world, Wes had decided to join the publishing group, but in time he realized he had moved away from his real passion, too far away from the products and shooters that had always been his real zeal.

Wes and Giorgio Guerini had remained friends since their working relationship at Sig Arms. As the needling thought process dawned on Wes the publishing business was taking him away from shotguns and the people who were so important to him, the Guerini brothers and Wes started talking about creating their own sporting-gun masterpieces. Dreams became reality in 2002.

If you talk to Wes about Caesar Guerini guns, you come to the realization he loves his work, has unending respect for Antonio and Giorgio and a great deal of admiration for what they have produced. Throughout our conversation, I never once felt he was trying to sell me on the gun, only that he was telling me about something of which he is infinitely proud and that is a big part of his life. Sometimes business owners just automatically go into their “sales speak,” often not even knowing what they are doing. It’s sort of an autopilot thing. I did not get that from Wes. It was just two shooters talking about shotguns and shooting… fun.

Fun is a word Wes often gives as advice. This NSCA Master Class competitor suggests new shooters always remember to have a good time and keep things in perspective. Wes said one of his greatest enjoyments is purposely squadding with people he doesn’t know and learning about them. Socializing with different people is what brings out the best of sporting clays for him. That social aspect keeps the NSCA Nationals on the top of his list of favorite shoots. Squadding for four days of competition gives him the opportunity to get to know many wonderful people.
Wes is a Master Class sporting clays competitor and genuine student of the game.

Going back to the Nationals each year, he loves reacquainting with old friends and meeting new ones. It is how he keeps the game fun.

Which Guerini does Wes shoot? He has a Maxum. At first, he tried the 32” barrels then switched to the longer 34” ones. As Wes said, the 34s are not for everyone, but with his lengthened stock to accommodate his 6’5” frame, the barrels are perfectly balanced to his liking. The custom stock was not made for Wes’ customers and read about Guerini U.S.A.’s “Pitstop Program” and warranty, if you need examples. The Pitstop Program provides Guerini gun owners with a yearly service and gun tune-up, free of charge. The customer need only pay the shipping cost for Wes and his experts to service the gun each year for the life of their ownership. Turnaround time is just seven business days, or less. Wow, that is customer service at its very best!

Wes has had a challenging yet exciting year so far, furthering Guerini’s commitment to keeping gun owners satisfied and happy. At the 2009 S.H.O.T. Show, Wes announced a full custom shop was opening in a new building at their facility in Cambridge, Maryland. There, a customer can choose any engraving pattern, different recoil pads, checkering, high-grade walnut or a custom stock, which will be turned around in 45 days to complement their purchase. Wes told me this is a much cheaper option for the customer than going to an engraver or gunstock maker after the purchase is made. All the custom work can be done at the time of purchase, rather than after, at a dramatically lower cost, plus it can be turned around much quicker. Wes and company integrate with the factory to do these things.
with some work done in Italy and some completed at the new custom shop in Maryland. Instead of just one person like a stockmaker doing the work, a team of the factory and Guerini people in the U.S. work together to get the product to the client.

Wes is one of the rare people who have found their bliss in life. Being a people person with a passion for shotgunning, guns and shooting products has led him to a job he loves everyday. When you see him at the NSCA Nationals or other shooting events around the country, you will see his enthusiasm. Stop and say hello and, while you are at it, say hello to the Caesar Guerini shotguns Wes loves. The “new kids on the block” have much to offer, and I think you will be impressed with both Wes and his guns.

Connie Mako Miller’s shooting career began in 1969 with trapshooting lessons at the Winchester Club in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1988, she attained ATA Lady High Handicap Average in Ohio, 8th in the U.S. She was chosen for the NSCA All-American Team two times, four times Michigan State Lady Champ, five times Ohio State Lady Champ and Runner-Up in the NSCA National Champion of Champions in 1993. She began writing for Shotgun Sports in March, 1997.

Wes takes a short break during a chilly hunt in North Dakota for pheasants, sharptail and Hungarian partridge.