

IN CONVERSATION WITH MIKE AND PAM YOUNG

ALAMO SPORTING ARMS

BY NICK SISLEY

There are a number of husband and wife teams in the gun store/gun shop business, but I wonder if any of them have the dual experience and competition shotgun savvy of Michael and Pam Young at Alamo Sporting Arms.

Mike was born and raised in Virginia, and that's where his dad introduced him to both hunting and fishing when he started tagging along at the age of eight. They hunted dove, quail, duck, geese and they fished. "Actually, my Dad took me all over Virginia to fish – he really liked it – and I followed right in his footsteps," Mike related.

Pam was born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania and lived in Doylestown. After graduating from the Kathryn Gibbs School of Business she began working for a downtown Philadelphia law firm. Earlier, Mike's family had moved to western Pennsylvania, so the youngster spent his last year in high school at Bethel Park High – where he graduated – and then went on to the Pennsylvania Gunsmithing School in Pittsburgh.

He worked for a couple of gun shops, eventually working for a gunsmith I often use myself – Mike Crevar in West Mifflin (PA). Mike gave Crevar a lot of credit. Why? "Crevar was a good influence on me. He was very particular – he emphasized the virtues of being careful and paying attention to detail during the two years I worked for him."



In 1986 Mike was offered work at Krieghoff International in Ottsville (PA) – and was one of the first American gunsmiths on board. He spent part of both 1989 and 1990 training at Krieghoff in Ulm, Germany, and returned fully qualified and trained to do anything with Krieghoff guns. Pam told me that one of his treasured tools of the trade from those days

is his hammer. “He made it by hand – to Krieghoff’s demanding details – and he still uses it today.” Shortly after returning from Germany, Mike and some other

Krieghoff employees were involved in a car accident. There were a number of injuries and a law suit ensued – and Pam worked for that law firm – so you can bet that’s how Pam and Mike Young met. They were married in 1993.

In 1995 Hal duPont was looking for a gunsmith – and so Mike took the job and moved to Vero Beach, Florida with Dieter Krieghoff’s blessing. Pam figured she would find work with a law firm in Vero Beach, but on the same day she was offered a job in the legal field, Hal hired her to work in the office part time, work that didn’t involve the gun end of the business. It didn’t take long for Hal to discover that Pam had a penchant for the business and was soon working full time – eventually becoming

the Sales Manager at duPont/Krieghoff.

With Mike as Service Manager and Pam as Sales Manager it was an ideal team, not only

for the Vero Beach office, but this husband/wife team hit the road regularly – to gun shows and to all the important trap, skeet and sporting shoots.

The Young Team stayed with Hal duPont in Florida until 2008 when the opportunity came up to buy Alamo Sporting Arms from Rich Kaysa and Norbert Haussman who at that time had just taken on the Blaser dealership in the US. By 2010 Alamo had become Krieghoff’s top dealer in the country. Not surprisingly, Alamo had quickly expanded its line to additionally include Blaser shotguns and rifles and most recently have added Mauser and Sauer rifles to their line-up.

Rifle sales are part of their expanded marketing plan for the future, however, competition shotguns is still their specialty – so increased sales of Krieghoff K-80 and K-20 O/Us are on their figurative hit list, as well as increased sales of Blaser F3 O/Us

and other Blaser shotgun models.

Even while Mike and Pam were still in Vero Beach, they were no longer shooting competition. Reason? Work simply had them too busy – and their work schedule hasn’t dropped off any at Alamo. Perhaps there’s now even less time for competition gunning, despite the fact that Mike did shoot both trap and sporting competitively (that’s how Pam got started with shotgunning). However, this duo still find time to enjoy wingshooting – Pam tells me she and Mike have recently returned from a dove shoot in Argentina and enjoyed it so much they’re already planning to return soon. Both shot the 28 gauge Krieghoff K-20 over and unders ‘Down South’ as this model was actually designed for high-volume shooting.

In co-operation with Krieghoff International, Alamo is very much into helping with the promotion of youth shooting. One example would be the support given to the



U.S. Shooting Team. Alamo is also one of numerous sponsors of the Centre County Youth Service Bureau – a benefit fund raiser for children and families in that area of Pennsylvania. Similarly, they offer support to the San Antonio Youth Charity Shoot, as you might guess – a fund raiser to help youth and families in the area. There’s also



the Lamar Institute of Technology Shoot Out that they support, with the proceeds going to students who cannot afford tuition. In addition, Alamo are co-sponsors of the Krieghoff Cup (part of the National Sporting Clays Championship in San Antonio), the Triple Classic Sporting Clays Championship as well as supporting the Ladies Charity Classic and the Wild Sheep Foundation Shoot.

Recently, Alamo donated two rifles to the Lone Survivor Foundation – a Krieghoff Semprio and a Blaser R93. Both are topped with Swarovski scopes. In November 2011 the two rifles were used by selected wounded warriors during a hunt sanctioned and set up by Safari Club International. Both these rifles will be used every ensuing year (by deserving wounded warriors) in actual hunting situations. The Lone Survivor Foundation's mission is, "...restores and renews hope for wounded warriors and their families through health, wellness and therapeutic support." (www.lonesurvivorfoundation.org)

Upcoming in the next few months, Alamo will be partnering with Krieghoff International at the Dallas Safari Club Show (Dallas Convention Center) January 5th-8th, the Houston Safari Club Show (the Woodlands) January 12th-

15th, the Wild Sheep Foundation Show (Reno Convention Center) January 19th- 22nd, Sporting Clays Shoot staged at Sage Hill Gun Club near Reno January 19th and Safari Club International Convention (Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas) February 1st-4th.

In wrap up, I asked Mike about sales – in other words what guns are selling best! He was quick to respond, "The Krieghoff Pro Sporter and the Blaser Super Sport – these high rib, high adjustable comb over and unders now represent 95 percent of our sales – these guns are the wave of the future in competition shooting."

With Pam's two decades of enviable sales experience and Mike's prowess as one of the finest gunsmiths in the country, this husband and wife team bring a knowledge of competition over and unders unmatched by any other duo – no wonder it only took a couple of years before Alamo Sporting Arms became Krieghoff's Number One dealer in the country. ■

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