

Industry News

Third generation takes helm on Zanders' 50th anniversary

by Bob Lesmeister
National Correspondent

At this past SHOT Show in Las Vegas, it dawned on this writer that in the past several years it appeared as though there were more women working behind the booths at the show as owners, marketing managers, financial officers and executives than signing posters in front of the booths.

"Definitely," states Stefanie Zanders-Key, general manager of Zanders Sporting Goods, a firearms and shooting sports wholesaler celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

"The SHOT Show was great this year. It's the biggest turnout I've ever seen for the show. I think the women's market has increased in handguns and all across the board really because everyone is more aware. There is much more training available and there are more products available for women now than what there was even five years ago. I think you saw that in this year's show."

In a world where money is tight and customers wary, it takes a lot to start a business and even more to stay in business. You do that by offering customers what they want, or think they want, anticipating trends and incorporating the equipment and manpower to offer exceptional service. For Zanders that started half a century ago. "My grandfather started the family business 50 years ago and Zanders has continued to operate successfully into what is now the third generation."

Zanders-Key has the responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day operations at the company. Her experience over the last 20 years includes working for the company in virtually every aspect of daily business from warehouse operations to human resources.

Two years ago in April, Zanders Sporting Goods moved from its old location in Baldwin, IL, to a new 72,000-square-foot facility down the road in Sparta, IL. Zanders-Key explains, "We've been here two years and it's allowed us to offer so much

more to our dealers. Accurate, fast shipping of more products than ever. The old facility was spread out over a large area comprised of several buildings. Compared to what we have now, the old place just wasn't efficient enough for our needs. When we moved into our new building here, we were able to put everything under one roof



Stefanie Zanders-Key is the third generation manager of the 50-year-old sporting goods wholesale firm. See additional picture on Page 33.

with a new, state-of-the-art picking system utilizing narrower aisles and a carousel. In our family, there's always been a strong passion for the shooting sports and hunting. We found the right products and put a great team together to make it all work."

Zanders has 59 employees and they stock firearms, ammunition, optics, and all types of accessories from major domestic and international manufacturers. They also carry many specialty and hard-to-find items

As both a consumer and supplier of firearms and shooting supplies, Zanders-Key is in a position to summarize the current upswing in women shooters. "Perhaps it has to do more with the self-defense market, but it doesn't end there. I think a woman might start out as a gunowner for self-

defense but then realize shooting is something she likes. It's so easy to get involved with shooting at the range or clay bird shooting because it's great fun. It is not a stretch to think that this leads to hunting as well."

Zanders Sporting Goods is a distributor that sells to federally licensed firearms dealers but also doesn't fail to offer the average consumer something a little extra. Zanders-Key revealed that, "Starting June 1st, we will have a weekly and/or daily drawing of products from many of our vendors. We will be giving away guns and accessories and continue this through the end of the year."

It doesn't end there, "We are also in the process of acquiring a special edition gun," revealed Zanders-Key. "Only 50 will be available. We are working on many ideas but have not

decided on which one yet."

By the time you read this, Zanders will be close to having its new website up and running. Says Zanders-Key, "We're getting ready to bring out our new website at www.gzanders.com. We have a new consumer link on there now where they can view all of the many products our dealers can carry from us; they just can't see the pricing. We're going to offer the ability where the consumer can get on, punch in a zip code and find a dealer in his or her area immediately."

Zanders-Key looks forward to another 50 years because "We have a very loyal national dealer base. Many are long-time customers and family friends. However, because of the dedicated service Zanders provides, we are adding new dealers daily."

Industry Briefs

Ruger sales up 29%

Ruger reported in late February that fourth-quarter sales were up 45% compared to the same period the previous year, and sales for 2011 were up 29% over in 2010, easily beating Wall Street expectations for both revenue and earnings.

The company reported net sales of \$328.8 million and fully diluted earnings of \$2.09 per share, compared with sales of \$255.2 million and fully diluted earnings of \$1.46 per share in 2010, crediting much of the increase to new products.

Much of the increase in the company's SEC report was linked to new products.

In May 2011, the company announced the Ruger Million Gun Challenge to benefit the National Rifle Association, pledging to donate \$1 to the NRA for every Ruger firearm sold from April 2011 through March 2012, with the goal of selling one million Ruger firearms and donating \$1 million to the NRA. Through December 2011, Ruger had donated \$871,100 to the NRA.

NICS numbers rising

The February 2012 NSSF-adjusted National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) figure of 1,266,344 is an increase of 31.4% over the NSSF-adjusted NICS figure of 963,746 in February 2011.

For comparison, the unadjusted February 2012 NICS figure of 1,734,646 reflects a 18.6% increase from the unadjusted NICS figure of 1,463,138 in February 2011.

NSSF reported that the February NICS total marks the 21st straight month that NSSF-adjusted NICS figures have increased when compared to the same period the previous year.

Ex-Glock CEO's trial

A Cobb County, GA, jury on March 2 found former Glock Inc. CEO Paul Jannuzzo guilty of stealing a pistol and conspiring with another former executive to skim millions from the international gun manufacturer based in Austria, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* reported.

Jannuzzo, 55, could face up to 30 years in prison for the charges for which he was indicted in 2009, however, defense attorney Robert Citronberg said they will appeal the verdict.

The other Glock executive, attorney Peter Manown, had previously pleaded guilty to three charges and was sentenced to 10 years probation, with no jail time. Manown testified against Jannuzzo.

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Zanders-Key says thousands of SKUs can be shipped more efficiently with the carousel system in the company's new 72,000 sq. ft. facility in Sparta, IL.

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