

February 1, 2011

DeVault Industries LLC

Custom Engineered Shooting Solutions



Hello again everyone. Dean is back this month and he has been feeling much better. Most of the country has been in a real deep freeze but I have been looking out the window at the sunshine and seeing the heavy dew that has been coming down this month. Ah Yes, the warm tropical breeze that flows up to us from the South and then freezes at about North Carolina before it continues the journey to us in the Great Lake region. No, I am not crazy just trying to allow my mind to wonder and not focus on the bitter cold and the heavy white dew that seems to be a permanent part of our landscape.

I want to thank three people for pushing me to change the web site at www.devaultind.com & www.ddshooting.com. My attorney, Adam who told me he hated the old site, Mike my Tech guy here in the shop and my good friend Ron Baker. Ron spent many evenings answering panic phone calls from me as I would jump up and down telling him that, "I hate my computer." Ron would just laugh and wait for me to calm down and then another lesson would begin for me. I drove Mike nuts as well by putting things in wrong places and then not being able to find them later. So he would have to stop what he was doing and coach me a little at a time. Finally after 15 hours a day for 14 days both web sites have been rebuilt. I hope that everyone enjoys the new format. We are going to continue to improve the site as we go along. I hope that you enjoy the letter this month, stay warm & dry if you can. Now it's on to the newsletter.

The World According to Me ~ "Dennis DeVault"

For this month I am going to get back to the topic of gun stocks. Earlier this month we posted a couple of photos on the web site that displayed a little refinish work. Many people viewed that thread and I received enormous feedback on the job. First off I want to say that it was not on there to discredit the person who made the stock to start with. But it does bring up a point about having a stock made.

I have been in this game for about 44 years now. Back in the day I can remember shooters I knew sending off guns to have a custom stock made. The gun would be gone for 6 to 9 months and then one day the gun would show up back at the range. Other shooters would buy a ready-made stock from Reinhardt Fagen or Bishop located in Missouri. The difference to me was the detail in the custom made stock as compared to the catalog stock. In the beginning I had a Winchester Model 12 that had a Reinhart Fagen Rollover Aristocrat stock and boy I thought that I had won the lottery. I was proud of that stock and shot it very well even though it beat the hell out of me every time I pulled the trigger. It looked good and I had somehow convinced myself that if I stayed with it long enough, and took the beating, I might get a target or two for good looks and style. Well that pipe dream never materialized.

Today we expect everything we want to be here overnight and the quicker the better. Recently I have had a few calls from shooters who want a stock made. They call but do not want to give the gun up long enough for the stock to be made. Here is the way the call goes, "If you have another gun in your shop just fit my stock to that gun and when it is done ship it to me and I will just bolt it on the gun and be ready to shoot."

Not all guns are created equal. The reason that the refinished stock posted on the website was sent here to be repaired is because the stock had been made from a gun that the stock maker had in his shop. All the contact areas of the wood to metal fit were not hitting square and that caused the cracking. If the gun that the stock was made for had been sent to the shop this problem could have been eliminated. Many times customers bolt on a stock that fits another gun and it appears to fit but there are a few gaps here and there. They go out and start shooting and suddenly a crack appears and they are upset. Guess who gets the blame for this, the stock maker. There is one strong point to be made, I had the gun here that the stock belonged to, so we were able to fit the iron to it; problem solved.

Custom work is tough enough as it is, but to make a stock in the blind is asking for trouble. We have routinely turned customers away that want a stock but refuse to give up the gun and wait for the stock to be made. I don't know about everyone else but we do not get paid until the job is completed. For that reason I more than anyone want to get it out the door as fast as possible. It keeps my employees happy and all the outside vendors paid as well. So if you are considering having a custom stock made take a deep breath, sit back, and let the stock makers do their job. If you give them a little room you will end up with a first class job that you will be very proud to display. As we say here it becomes your, "Eye Candy." Now time to jump off of the soap box and begin.

I recently received an e-mail asking about the hand position and the grip as related to a pull trigger or a release trigger. Question, "Do you make the grip different for a release trigger shooter than you do for a pull trigger person." Answer, "Yes & No." I know, that answer was evasive and no I am not going into politics!

Let me explain. First when we get a shooter in the shop who wants a stock the first question is, "What target game are you shooting?" Second Question if the person is a sporting clays shooter, "Do you shoot with a pre-mount gun or do you shoot gun down?" Third question, "Do you shoot a pull or release trigger?"

With the answer to those questions I know where to start. I have written many times on the style of stock that DeVault Ind. builds and that it has for 16 years been a stock with a parallel comb. The pistol grips on all of our stocks have been as vertical as we can get them to allow the trigger finger to pull the trigger

straight back. On the release trigger set, it must be firm and smooth with the ability to release the pressure from the finger and not throw your whole hand forward to let the trigger go. The less movement that the hand has to make, the better and more consistent the release motion becomes. The area behind the grip is where the meat pad of the hand sets against the stock. This area shown below on the left is a critical area and must be fit properly. If tension is created it may cause a problem. Now I know that there are older shooters saying, "We did it that way for years and did it well why change everything?" I learned the answers from personal experience and studying video tapes of shooters. For every action there is an opposite reaction. Cause and Effect. As a younger shooter I tucked the gun down in my chest and held a very high arm with my hand rotated up and on top of the grip. Being on top of the grip solves the problem of the meat pad of the hand and why it is not compressed. But there was a sacrifice for this, all the recoil came back into the hand. I had a hard time being consistent with mounting the gun in the same place on my shoulder every time. As I got older and had less time to practice I noticed that the elbow would drop and roll the gun out of my face. I became disconnected with the stock, resulting in missed targets. The photo on the left shows the vertical grip and the relief area I am refer-



This is the area of relief I am referring

The arrow shows the meat pad of the hand that causes pressure in the finger joints and thumb.



ring to.

As a common practice we have always worked with each shooter to make this relief area as generous

as possible. We can have a problem achieving the greatest amount of relief possible if the shooter's hand is large. The size of the bolt hole in the back of the stock dictates how much relief we can obtain. The photo on the **right** shows the area that we call the meat pad and it is this area that needs the relief. If that pad is compressed you may feel discomfort on a long target day and I have experienced flinching due to the tension created from that area. With the last gun we built it was easy for us to shape the grip area as we did not have a bolt hole through the back of the stock.

The result of moving the hand to the side of the grip has more benefit than not. Rolling the hand down to the side of the stock as opposed to the hand up on top of the grip reduces recoil to the hand. The hand rotates in a more natural way and now the bottom three fingers on the grip hand control the stock. You end up with a better and more controlled mount and you will begin to hit the pocket of the shoulder on every mount. More consistency means more broken targets in comfort with no pain and fatigue. Downside, it has to be built one at a time for **your hand**.



Another item that helps a release trigger shooter be more consistent is the finger grips (shown to the **left**) that we install on many of our stocks. It really allows the fingers to grip the stock and keep the hand locked in place. But again a word of caution, these grips have to be fit properly to "**Your Hand**." Fitting the grips and asking to make them like my buddies stock will just not end up as a good experience. These grips help a shooter that struggles to keep their hand vertical instead of climbing up on the top of the receiver. The thumb is now out of play and the hand can control the gun as it is supposed to. No more tension in the wrist and that leads to shooting all day long in comfort and not pain. The recoil passes by the hand and not into the wrist or hand.

If you look at some of the new designs that are coming out, the major manufacturers are finally responding to what the customers are asking for. We developed the finger grip feature and now stocks made by other stock makers are incorporating the finger grips in their designs. There are several good stock people out there but there is a difference in making a good looking stock and one that truly fits. I don't want to walk around and live with an ugly stock but I will never sacrifice a good fit for beauty. As I stated earlier there are no extra targets for fashion and beauty. Remember, "If it is worth doing, it is worth doing right." Knowing what is right and then how to do it right is the secret

Do your gun lift exercises, eat healthy & remember to eat your vegetables. Until next month be kind to your neighbor, smile as often as you can & take a new person shooting our sport needs the fresh recruits to keep us alive, until next month this is the.....

Rodeo Man Out

P.S. On the health issues with me I am seeing progress everyday. The wild 6 to 8 pound weight swings everyday are leveling out. I am eating healthy, feeling better, my mind is getting sharper and my creativity is coming back. We have several new projects on the drawing board and announcements will be coming in a couple months. God Bless everyone that has written to me or called and thank you for your support.



Determination! This little guy is going for it no matter what hangs in his way. I like this little guy. Notice the finger grip, great control, on the side not on Top. Beautiful extension on that arm.

DeVault Winners Box

Congratulations are in order for the following people:

Tal Seger ~ DeVault Custom Shotgun, DeVault Custom Stocks ~ Men's Illinois State 1st Team

Phil Berkowitz ~ DeVault Custom Shotgun, DeVault 391, Double D Shooting Clinic ~ North Carolina Men's Veteran 1st Team.

Barry Clute ~ K-80 Pro Sporter w/DeVault Custom Stock ~ First Master Class Punch for Sporting Clays ~ Tampa Bay Sportsman Club

From the Mind of Dean DeBow

Shooting Glasses

Shooting Glasses are something that is seldom researched enough by shooters. Prescription or not, they are as individualized as custom stocks.

So many times the color of the lens and frames tend to be purchased according to what is offered in a set, what a friend likes, or what someone else likes and uses, such as, a good shooter. Many times they are sold as a set of three or five, at a discount.

That is great as long as the colors are suitable to your eyes. However rarely are the colors the ones needed for your eyes to perform at a peak level for color contrast on a target. You also want to bring in as much light as possible without squinting.

In most all cases, a person with blue eyes does not perceive the same definition of color as a person with brown eyes using the same color lens. Eye color will tell someone selling glasses, who knows what they are doing where to start. You may have to try them and see if a particular color is right for you. When trying lenses put them on for 10 to 15 minutes and give your eyes time to adjust.

The adjustable nosepiece was added in the past few years, that option is a big plus in my opinion. It allows the wearer to be sure to get them to fit high enough on your face that the frame is not in the way at any time you are shooting. Most shooters do not have custom stocks. However, they will have adjustable combs on their gun. This works in the same way. If you lose or gain a few pounds you can adjust your gun as well as your glasses. Glasses, particularly the lenses are made to be used looking through the center. This is very true for prescription lenses. This is one of the biggest reasons for the adjustable nosepiece would be my guess. As you get into your gun and your head goes down, you will find a different view than when standing straight up looking at a target with no gun in your hands. That being the case you may find yourself raising your head and not realizing why.

An old friend years ago went to his regular Optometrist and got some nice prescription shooting glasses. The Optometrist was a very competent person. However, he knew nothing about shooting or about what we do as clay target shooters. My friend spent the next 3 years getting reduction after reduction and trading one gun for another. Unknowingly, instead of glasses he had purchased a very expensive lesson.

So get your glasses from someone who knows what we do and has a good variety of lenses to choose from. You will need to get at least three different colors or shades. One for bright sunny days, one for cloudy days, and one for shoot offs at night and late evening when the light is bad. I hope this helps your shooting, it did mine!

Many of you know, I have had some minor medical problems over the past few months, and I want to thank everyone for your calls and concerns. We have not figured it out completely but things are looking better.

We hope to see some of you on the line, and hear of many of you headed into the Winners Circle somewhere this year. Please keep us posted of your progress.

Until next time,

Remember

There is a Champion in each and every one of you,

Dean DeBow



We are starting to Schedule dates for 2011. If anyone wants to schedule a clinic at their favorite club let Dean or Dennis know so we can put you in the schedule. Watch the web site for dates and locations as we post the schedule www.ddshooting.com Contact Dean @ 270-886-2095 or Dennis @ 330-456-6070. We look forward to seeing everyone in 2011.

**Check back at the web site to see our schedule for 2011
From Dennis DeVault & Dean DeBow we both thank you for
your support in 2010**

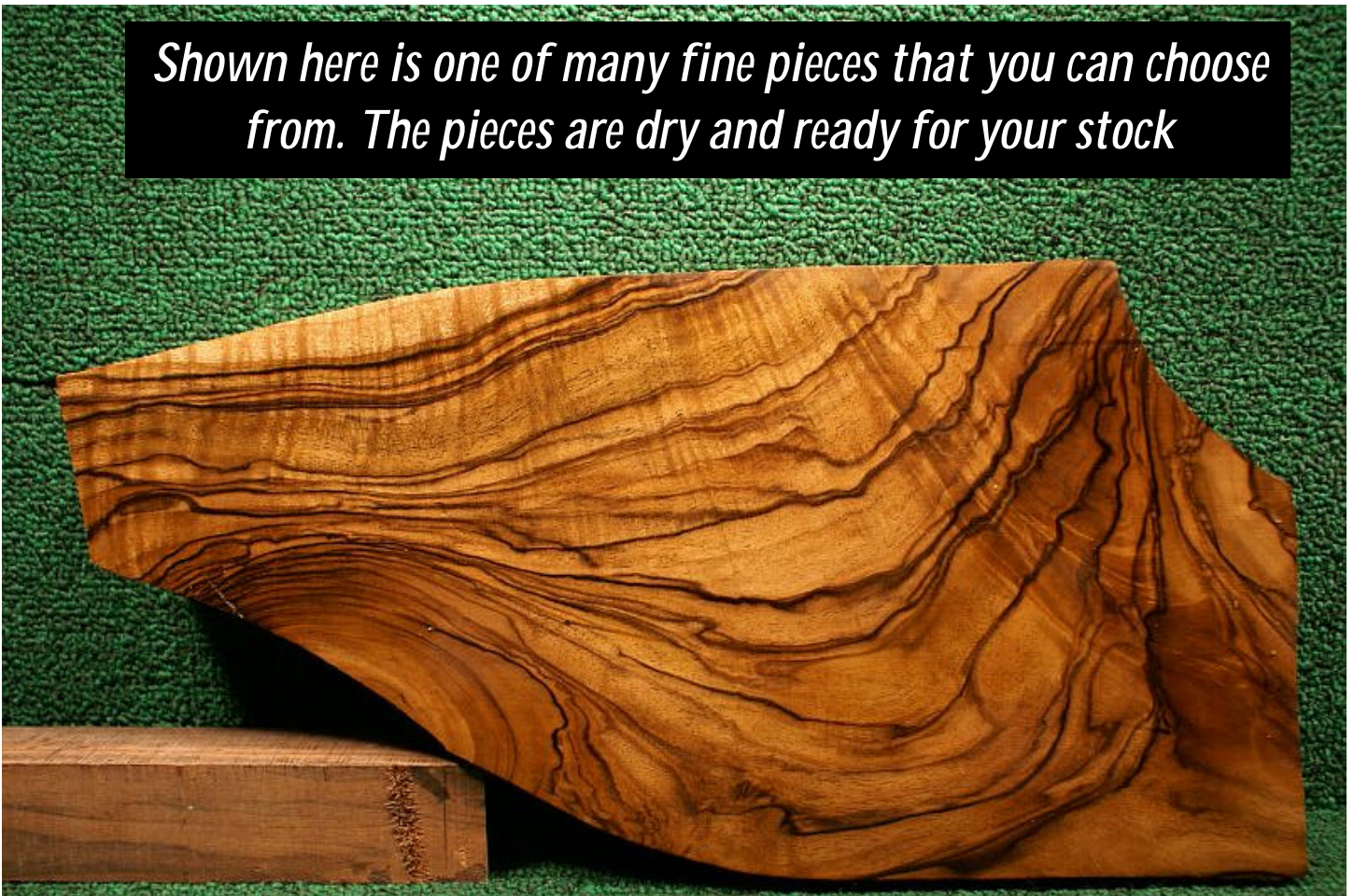
We are proud to announce the opening of our newest Company

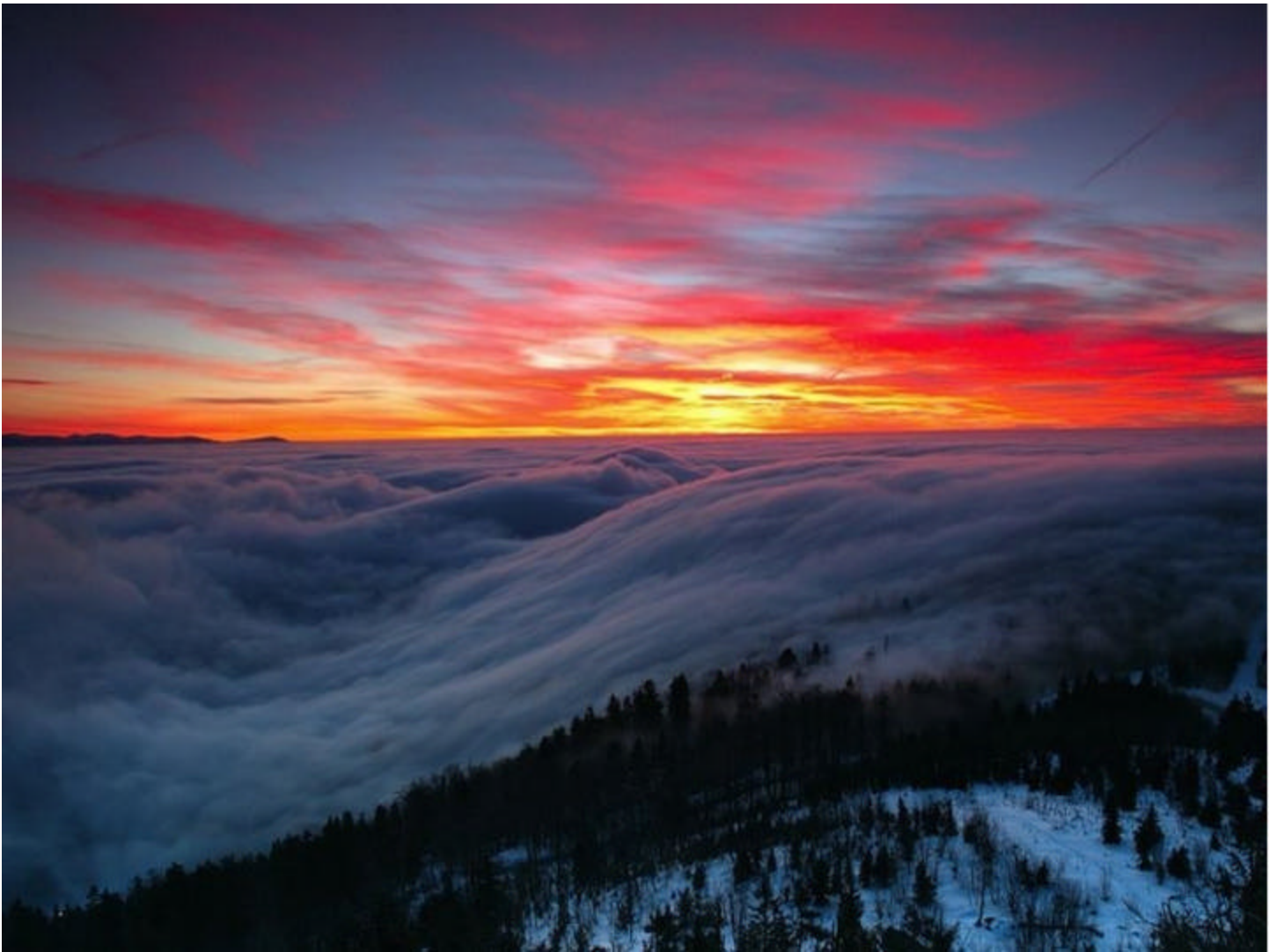
Wood Sales LLC

This company has been set up to offer hard to find Large Blanks that will accommodate the new High Rib guns that have dominated the market for the past few years. If you are in the market for a good piece of wood that is dry and ready to carve have a look and come back from time to time to find your dream piece for your next project. The site can be found at

<http://www.customwoodblanks.com>

Shown here is one of many fine pieces that you can choose from. The pieces are dry and ready for your stock





An absolutely stunning sunset of the snow covered mountains. This photo shows hope for a beautiful recurrence of life when the season changes back to summer. I can't wait.

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