

Where our journey started

# Humble beginnings

PREMIUM QUALITY

**PRESIDENTIAL  
BILLIARDS**

★ ★ ★



*The original Wilgro Exports factory*



*Locals enjoying a game of pool on their makeshift pool table*

# Just before the turn of the millennium,

Elaine Gerber was tasked with something different, something foreign, something new - to produce a top quality, billiard table for the United States. Today, Gerber's work and success has laid a solid foundation for Presidential Billiards, a wholesale distribution company selling pool tables and over three hundred pool-related products globally. But the legacy of her feat doesn't start in 1999. In fact, it doesn't quite start with her either!



*Tessa and James Wilson, Founders of JW Wilson*

In 1958, in a post-war world full of opportunities, Elaine's father, James Watt Wilson, settled in Southern Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) with his wife Tess where the couple opened a furniture factory known as J.W. Wilson. With the use of exotic woods and skilled craftsmen, it wasn't long before the Wilsons made a respectable name for themselves within the furniture industry.

By the mid-1980s, Elaine's two brothers, Jim and Allan, were heavily involved in their family's business and by early 1999 they had persuaded her to consider taking on the American wholesale billiard table industry. With a business degree and no cue sports experience, Elaine drafted roughly fifty questions to get herself on the right track. She contacted two billiard companies - one in Austin and another in Houston - and quizzed them on the precise details of their operations. If not for their generous participation, Elaine wouldn't have had the information needed to get her business off the ground. More importantly, if not for their generous participation, Elaine wouldn't have secured her very first two customers. Both Texan companies agreed to purchase one table each from the newly established Presidential Billiards.

*The Carmel Billiard Table*





*Elaine's attention to quality and detail has been passed down to all who work for Presidential Billiards*

Elaine prides the success of Presidential Billiards on the company's ability to listen to its customers eagerly and attentively. With no middlemen in their way, Presidential Billiards can offer top of the line, detail oriented products at very affordable prices. And with J.W. Wilson as its sister company and manufacturer, the Gerber family has always maintained full control over the quality of their products. On her company's humble beginnings, Elaine was frank, "We didn't come in knowing much. We really listened to what our dealers were telling us."

Since the inception of Presidential Billiards over twenty years ago, Elaine's sincere and unwavering customer service has elevated the company to new and stunning heights. Based just north of Houston in New Caney, Texas, as of 2022 Presidential Billiards sells more than three hundred and fifty products from eighteen trusted partners across four continents! Still family run, Presidential Billiards now serves 224 retailers with an experienced and veteran team, most of whom have been with Elaine and the company for many years and are an integral part of this success story. As for J.W. Wilson, the company has two of its own retail stores in Zimbabwe and another sixteen in Zambia.

Still, their attention to detail would be meaningless without their impressive craftsmanship to follow through with. A key element of Presidential Billiards's tables is their use of exotic woods. On the uniqueness of these tables and the accomplishments of Elaine, a former president of the Billiards Factory, a billiards supply store, has said "What she did was come up with a niche of an exotic wood that is not available here in the United States. She was able to market that and sell it."

Following the amazing growth of Presidential Billiards, the company has had many opportunities to expand their operations throughout its esteemed history. Elaine started the company out of a 1500 square foot warehouse rental with the help of just one staff member. Today, she owns a five acre property with 55,000 square feet of office space and warehousing.

In spite of Presidential Billiards's incredible success, there were many hurdles to overcome during the formative years. The company's growth was on a steady incline until the Great Recession in 2008 decimated the billiard industries around the world. Sadly, many retailers and manufacturers did not survive the resulting economic hardships. In 2009, action had to be taken when Gerber saw an opportunity to expand the company's product lines.



*Careful craftsmanship at the heart of every table produced by Presidential Billiards*

*The Karta Billiard Table*





*The Tyler Billiard Table*

Elaine Gerber today



## With the introduction of many new items,

including shuffleboards, foosball tables, billiard cloths, furniture, pub tables and stools as well as billiard table maintenance and repair items, Gerber's fast thinking was not only able to reverse the effects of the recession, but to also pave the way for a continuous steady growth. Today, those product lines account for nearly half of Presidential Billiards's total sales. Their reputation has grown within the billiard industry into something of a 'one-stop shop' for all billiard retailers' needs.

Elaine owes her success in this competitive industry to constantly analyzing the market, to consistently searching for new opportunities, and to continuously reacting appropriately. "Without my staff, I could have never brought my business to where it is today," she said. "It's not just me; it's the whole team."

The story of Presidential Billiards is an inspiring one, but Gerber doesn't want all of the credit. "I'm a great believer in fate. That doesn't mean you can ever stop trying. You've always got to try your damndest to succeed." With her own modesty, concern, and devotion, Elaine Gerber has turned Presidential Billiards from a speculative gamble into one of the strongest testaments of quality, craftsmanship, and good will. From furniture to sports, J.W. Wilson and Presidential Billiards are a pair made for success.



Presidential Billiards office and warehouse in The Woodlands, TX



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