



LARGO CLEANING SYSTEMS

Steve Tolley of GCA Largo has dedicated his career to two things: the military and the pressure washing industry.

Tolley served 32 years in the military, retiring in 1999 as the Tennessee Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Major. He served three tours in Vietnam. His last deployment was in 2004. That year, Largo continued to operate without him, “so our company obviously was able to do just fine without me,” he joked.

Tolley’s pressure washing-related career has expanded over 40 years as well. He started out as a “coat and tie” chemical salesman in 1972, providing cleaning product for the service industry. “I fell in love with the equipment,” he explained, and it has become “the only industry I’ve ever known.”

In 1987, Tolley took his love for the equipment in a new direction and began GCA Largo. The manufacturing company began in Memphis, Tennessee. However, he moved Largo to Rogers, Arkansas – which has been a hot spot for pressure washer manufacturers – for about three years after getting a contract with Wal-Mart, which is headquarter in the same area. GCA Largo has since returned “home” to Decaturville and currently employs 26 staff members at its headquarters.

Largo has always been recognized for its quality equipment, which is built in-house from the ground up. The company does its own metal fabrication and builds its own coils, then uses only industry leaders for parts. Largo, which has distributors located throughout the country, also custom builds equipment for several of its dealers.

While the company builds all kinds of hot and cold water pressure washing systems, perhaps it is best known for its two-step machines. Two-step cleaning, which is used in fleet washing, is traditionally done using a hot water pressure washer with low pressure injector for applying aluminum brighter. These traditional alkaline/



GCA Largo Cold Water 2-Step Skid Unit

acid systems require “adjusting the metering valve on the machine or the downstream injector until its cleaning the vehicle.”

Largo’s systems, however, use cold water and are designed to safely clean and brighten fleets without damage to glass, chrome or polished aluminum surfaces. The equipment’s precise chemical injections accurately meter the cleaning solutions and neutralize the runoff. “With this capability, waste, misuse and damage to vehicles do not occur.”

The two-step systems feature CAT pumps because “they work. We have tried all the other industrial pumps that work well with our hot water equipment, but they cannot handle the chemical products like a CAT.” The reason is in the way the check valves are seated into the pump head (O-rings and split ring) and the seals are held

in place with the packing nut. “With our cleaning solutions neutralizing each other, the pump head gives longer life, which adds to the value of using genuine Largo Cleaning Products.”

Cleaning over the road vehicles with cold water has many advantages: no burner issues, and less wear and tear on guns, hoses, wands and tips. “With the cost of diesel fuel to heat water in excess for \$3.50 a gallon and a typical 5 GPM Skid burning 2.5 gallons per hour – well you do the math.”

Combining Military Training with Pressure Washing

Tolley has always implemented his artillery military training into the way he has run his company. One example is “time on target” – i.e., ensuring that every task that needs to be done is finished at the scheduled moment. Another, “Priority of Fire” – determining where primary resources need to be focused first. “Choosing the right ammunition” – i.e., determining which components will best serve specific types of equipment. And building a strong “gun crew” – artillery can only be successful with a strong team; the same goes for Largo. Plus, he implements more general military concepts such as don’t cut corners and ensure it’s right. “I would prefer to send something out late than send it out wrong,” he stressed.

Recently, he’s also been able to take his passion for the military and applied it to the pressure washing industry with the help of one of his distributors and fellow Vietnam vet, John Allison of Envirospec. Together, Tolley and Allison have teamed up on a project to help wounded veterans get started in the pressure washing industry. “I have visited a number of wounded warriors over the years and it’s something I have a real passion for,” he explained. “I’m honored to help John Allison with his endeavors to help these soldiers get back on their feet financially.”

Largo and the PWNA

Tolley has supported the PWNA several times throughout the years, and Largo recently rejoined the association as a vendor member.

“The PWNA is a fine organization and we are proud to be able to work with them,” he concluded. “We are looking forward to exhibiting at this year’s show in Orlando.” The PWNA Convention takes place October 17-19. Visit www.PWNA.org to register.

To learn more about GCA Largo and their products, visit their website at www.GCALargo.com.

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New PWNA Members

George Aguilar
Empire Highrise USA

Yujin Anderson
Steamericas, Inc.

Richard Bond
Affordable Home Solutions

Bob Jacobs
Safetytec Industries

Sean James Mullane
Housewash New Zealand, Ltd.

Todd Steadman
Great Southwestern Fire & Safety

Michael Rucker
Window Cleaning of Augusta, Inc.

Steve Whetzel II
EcoChoice, Inc.