



May 2014 | Issue 3 | Company Founder John Pruitt

Dear friends and associates of Eastern Lift Truck Co.,

A few months ago we began sharing with you a series of occasional emails under the collective theme "Did You Know?" Today we are pleased to continue that series. Our 3rd edition is about the founder of Eastern Lift Truck Company, the late Mr. John Pruitt.

In his book, *The Greatest Generation*, Tom Brokaw states "it is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced." They were "a generation of towering achievement and modest demeanor."

Eastern Lift Truck Company's founder, John Pruitt, was a member of the greatest generation and Brokaw's description of towering achievement and modest demeanor is an excellent characterization of John as well. We'd like to share a bit of John's story with you...

World War II

The year is 1940 and a young man, an orphan, is looking for a better life. John Pruitt enlists in the US Navy. From a humble beginning, John will go on to play an important role in the success of the US Navy submarine fleet in the South Pacific during World War II, and he will be awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, Submarine Combat Award with 5 Battle Stars, Bronze Star, and Army and Navy Citations.

John is stationed at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attack in 1941. He survives the bombing and after President Roosevelt declares the United States is at war, John's sub is reassigned to Australia and then Guam.

After several combat missions as a radio operator in the conning tower, he is sent to New London, CT to help develop new radar to better detect the Japanese planes which have been attacking low in the horizon and destroying many US subs.

By 1943, the new radar is ready, and John is put in charge of installing it on the US attack subs throughout the South Pacific. He is often dropped off by seaplane and asked to perform the installation while the sub is on active mission. After the new radar is installed on the fleet, the US loses very few subs to enemy plane attacks.

John is reassigned to combat duty and serves on the USS Barb, Chub, Tang, Pilotfish and Seawolf, as well as several other boats. He is on the first US sub to penetrate Tokyo Bay, Japan, and the last sub in the line that the Enola Gay took on its route to drop the atomic bomb. John witnesses the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima, is on the deck of the Missouri for the Japanese surrender and takes part in nuclear testing in the South Pacific after the war.

Like so many others from his generation, John's personal contribution to the war effort was selfless and remarkable. His feats were made even more impressive by the fact that

he performed them in such a dangerous post. Only 30% of all submariners who served during the war came home alive. Thanks in part to John's efforts, that figure was not even lower.

Education & Early Professional Career

After the war, John attends the University of California at Berkeley and graduates with an Electrical Engineering degree. His professional career begins with Thomas Edison Co, in the mines of Colorado - Leadville, CO to be exact - selling industrial batteries which are used for all important stand-by power. But John's early career is cut short by war.

Korean War, Return To Work, Head East

In the early 1950s the United States finds itself at war once again. John answers the call to duty and spends most of 1951 back in the US Navy on various destroyers off the Korean coast.

Following his duty in Korea, John returns to Colorado to resume his sales career in the mines. In 1953 he is recruited by C & D Batteries and Hobart Motor Generator Co. to sell industrial power on the East coast of the United States. John moves to Baltimore, Maryland and begin to sells lift truck batteries.

Not surprisingly, John is successful in his new role and he catches the eye of Clark Equipment. They ask him to manage their Baltimore branch and he accepts. John performs this job for a number of years until Clark decides to sell the facility. At this point, John decides to go to work as a salesman for the local Yale distributor.

An Entrepreneur Makes The Most Of His Opportunity

John is industrious, an entrepreneur at heart. He has always dreamed of managing his own business. When he learns that Allis Chalmers needs someone to take over their struggling distributorship in Philadelphia, he feels up for the challenge. John takes the job and quickly turns things around. The year is 1971 and this is the genesis of Eastern Lift Truck Company.

John transitions to the role of owner and in 1974 he formally changes the name of the business to Eastern Lift Truck Company. Some of the Eastern Lift's earliest customers are the farmers of Southern New Jersey - hardworking men and women who come to trust and rely on John and his company to provide good honest service on their equipment.

Growth & Reunion With Yale

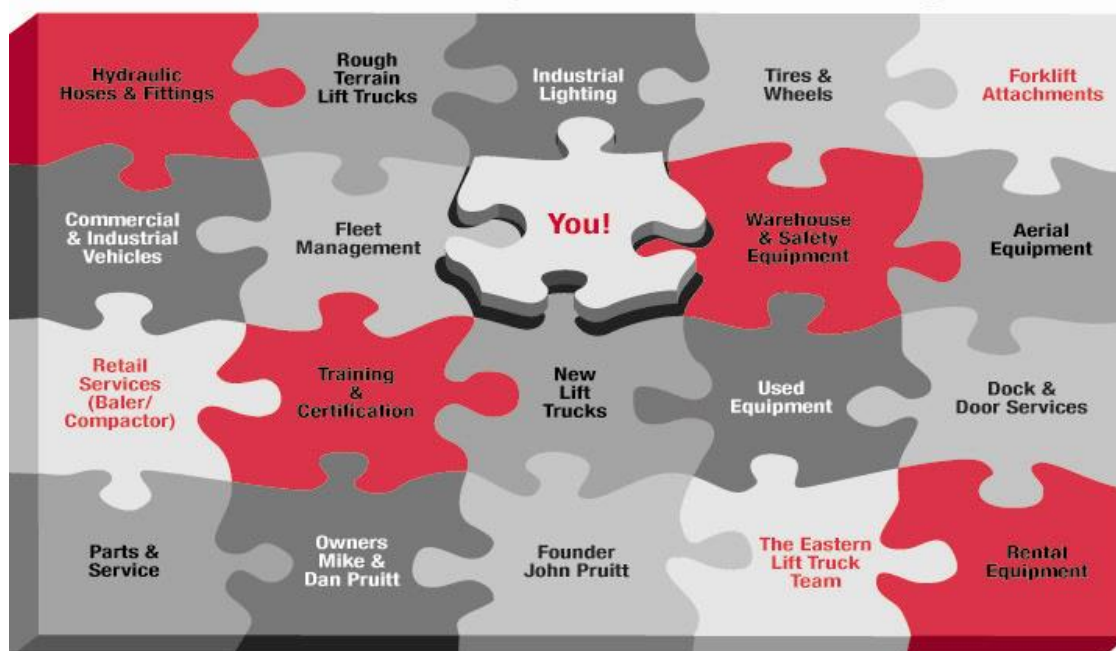
Eastern Lift flourishes throughout the 1970s and 80s and becomes well known for its attention to customer service. The company is an early adopter of the business model which includes a large staff of Customer Service Representatives working side by side with Account Managers. John is proud to have both of his sons, Mike and Dan, working for the company and learning the business.

Fast forward to the year 1996. John is reunited with Yale once again as Eastern Lift becomes an authorized Yale distributor. Now with Mike Pruitt at the helm as President and Dan Pruitt as Vice President, the company really begins to grow and acquire other Yale distributors. The first acquisition is the Yale dealer in Willow Grove, PA. The facility

has since moved to Warminster, PA. Then a facility is added in Newark, DE. Eastern takes over the Yale distributor in Maryland and adds three more facilities: Baltimore, Hagerstown and Capitol Heights (this facility has since moved to Upper Marlboro). The company also adds locations in Laurel, DE and Franklinville, NJ.

In late 2010, Eastern buys out the Yale distributor in York and Allentown, PA. In 2011, a facility is added in Bloomsburg. Reading, PA and Chester, MD are the most recent additions. Eastern Lift is proud to have been founded by John Pruitt, proud of its history and proud to be a distributor of Yale material handling products - the only American-owned and manufactured lift truck in the marketplace today.

Puzzled how to handle your material handling issues?



Eastern Lift Truck Company, Inc. offers solutions!

Contact Us Today!

Toll Free Headquarters
(866) 980-7175

Stay Connected!

[Website](#) | [Brochure](#) | [eNewsletter](#)

[Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Our Brands](#)