

A SOLDIER

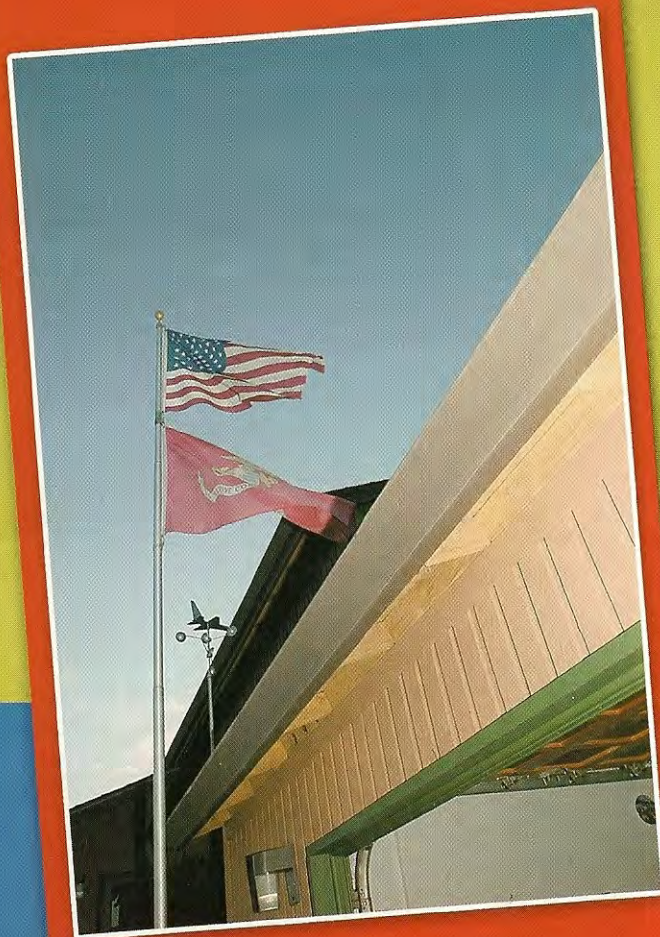
and His Jet



If life is a cartoon,
Larry LaRue is a
star character
you'll never forget



Thirty-eight-year-old Oregonian Larry LaRue keeps things in a simple perspective: "Life is like a cartoon . . . you just have to figure out which character you are on any given day." A two-time Gulf War veteran, Larry feels the cartoon character he most closely emulates is the Roadrunner, whose constantly being chased by the ever determined Wile E. Coyote.



A SOLDIER *and His Jet*

Larry's military career started 21 years ago, spending the first 18 years with the U.S. Marines in Special Operations. Once retired from the Marines, Larry re-enlisted with the U.S. Army, where his last assignment found him face to face with enemy Iraqi troops.

"For me, Desert Storm wasn't that big of a deal, but Iraq scared the hell out of me." Larry served for a year and a half in Iraq as a heavy truck master mechanic, up until his retirement, September 19, 2004.

"We followed the first troops in, and kept the equipment running." Larry remembers days of endless battle, moving the front line forward, taking on enemy gunfire, losing friends in battle, and capturing prisoners.

Today, Larry proudly displays an American and a U.S. Marine Flag outside his home, and his garage is filled with military memories, including all the medals and ribbons he earned serving his country.

For Larry, he always had a dream. "Even since I was a little boy I wanted to have a car nice enough to be featured in a magazine." Larry had such a car, a beautiful 1973 Maverick Grabber GT, custom painted yellow, with air-brushed stripes of red, blue, purple and orange...ready for the drag strip. Larry no longer owns his Maverick, and it never made it in a magazine.

Now in civilian life, Larry's concentration has shifted to boating and fishing. With his change in interest, came his new dream, "To have a boat nice enough to make it in a

magazine, to turn heads on the river, and to put a smile on people's faces when they see it!"

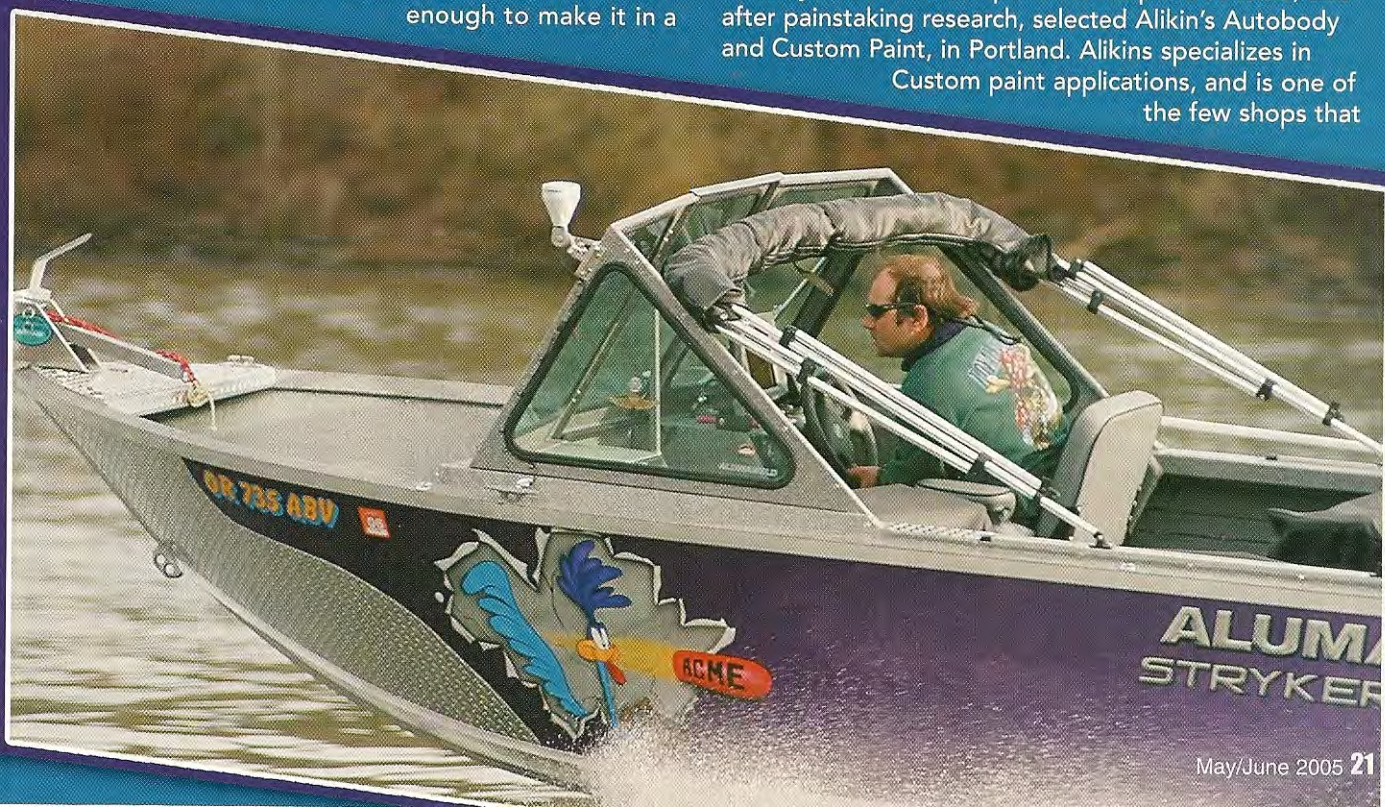
Larry dreamed of owning a jet boat while serving his military stay, but while on active duty, he never formulated an actual plan...it was a dream he thought he would never realize. The good thing is Larry's better half, Susan, was way ahead of this game. While Larry was activated in Iraq, Susan was putting money away, one dollar at a time.

On September 19th, as a retirement gift, Susan presented her husband with a check for \$35,000 and said, "Honey, lets go pick you out that boat you've always dreamed about!" As the story goes, while Larry was serving active duty, his stipend and hazard pay was being sent home, and Susan was putting portions of it away for a big surprise.

Alumaweld was the chosen boat manufacturer, and Steven's Marine was selected to help build the "Dream Boat."

"I could tell right away that they wanted to help me build a one-of-a-kind boat. They were as excited as I was when I told them what I wanted to do." The boat ultimately chosen was the Alumaweld Stryker Series, which is 19'10" long, and features a 4.3-liter Vortec powerplant matched to an American Turbine 309 Jet. Swivel seats on dry boxes trim out the interior, with a full soft top and back curtain. The boat was ordered with factory Zolatone in the bow and gunnel rails, but the rest of the hull was ordered unpainted.

Larry had some wild plans for his paint scheme, and after painstaking research, selected Alikin's Autobody and Custom Paint, in Portland. Alikins specializes in Custom paint applications, and is one of the few shops that



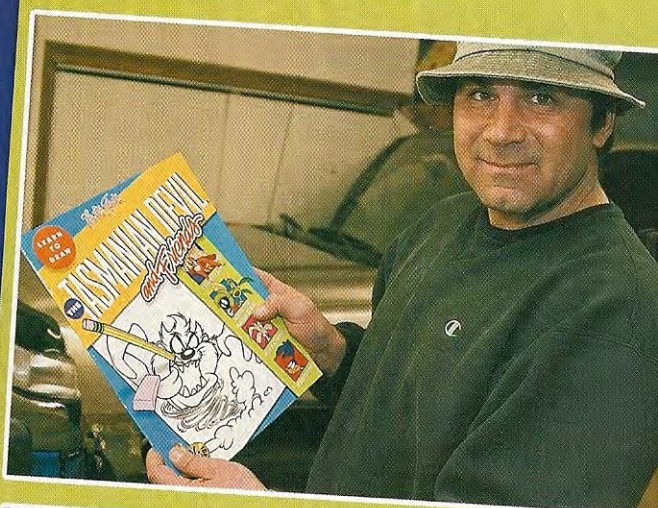
A SOLDIER *and His Jet*

have mastered the art of true Candy and Pearlescent paint jobs.

Putting on a nice paint job was important, but the custom graphics Larry had in mind were even more important. Painter and Airbrush Artist Jon Stewart (Jonny) looked through Larry's ideas, and together they devised the design. "Fishing is supposed to be fun," proclaims Larry. "I wanted to have a fun paint-job!"

The painting process started with a full day of sanding and prepping the aluminum. The next step was to apply a metal etch primer, followed up with a base coat sealer of House of Colors White. Following the white sealer the boat was coated in Passion Pearl, then lightly clear coated to protect the paint during the masking process. "When the graphics started, I entered the paint booth on Friday evening, and didn't leave until Sunday afternoon," claims Jonny. "The hours of cutting and masking were endless to get the graphics right." To finish the paint to its glass-like appearance, several layers of House of Colors Clear were applied. When the paint job was finished, Alikins, Jonny, and Larry were all ecstatic.

To finish the boat off, Larry has spent hour-upon-hour complementing his Dream Machine. The boat boast a 15 HP Mercury hydraulic assist trolling motor complete with TR-1 Autopilot, a Lowrance 104C Color Fishfinder/GPS, VHF Radio, Scotty Rod Holders, and a custom crab ring/ fish cleaning station mounted atop the motor-box. Larry has also



When Nature Calls

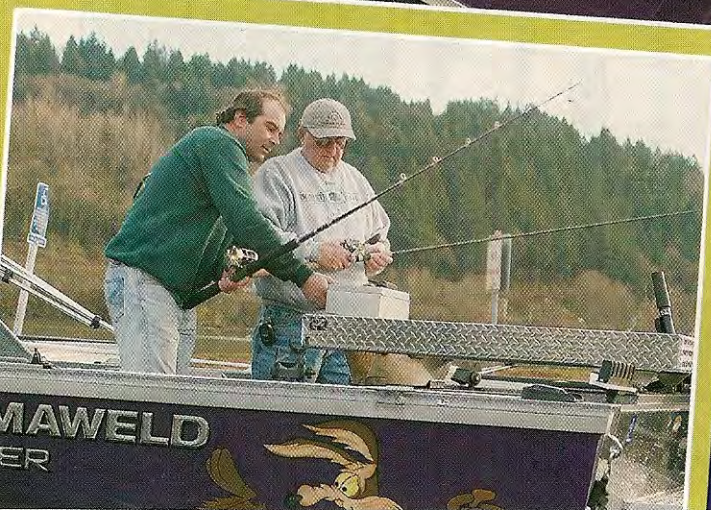
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engineered several items which he is quite proud of, including a custom net holder, custom garbage cans, a custom bait box, and a custom rod holder for rods that are rigged in the standby mode. "I picked up a bunch of ProMotion brackets, and went crazy," explains LaRue. Finishing touches include highly polished diamond-plate accents in critical areas, including a sculpted diamond-plate bow to protect the boat from anchor scarring.

To complete the package, custom G Loomis fishing rods were ordered from Temecula Bait and Tackle, in California. "I had the rods wrapped in purple to match to boat," boasts Larry. "Now all I have to do is start catching some fish." Complementing two of the top notch rods are Accurate Boss Magnum 870 Reels, which have been engraved, one with the phrase, "SSGT USMC Retired," and the other with "Life is a Cartoon."

Now that Larry is retired, he has the time available to live his dream. He has a wonderful wife, Susan; a loyal fishing partner and fellow war veteran, Fred Trowbridge; and a boat that will make anyone smile that's lucky enough to see it out and about. LaRue would ultimately like to become a fishing guide, but right now "I just want to learn how to fish as good as my buddy Fred."

My dad coined the phrase, "See you in the funny pages," when we would tell us kids goodbye. Maybe he too had the same perspective on life that Larry has? So, if "Life is a cartoon," which character are you? Larry declares, "If you look at the boat, you see the Roadrunner coming through the bullet hole...that's me...running like hell from the bullets!" My hat goes off to Larry, and all the men and women of our armed forces, who keep our country safe. *river lot*

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