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February 2012
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We Have LIFTOFF!

Apollo's Feger enjoys
skyrocketing growth

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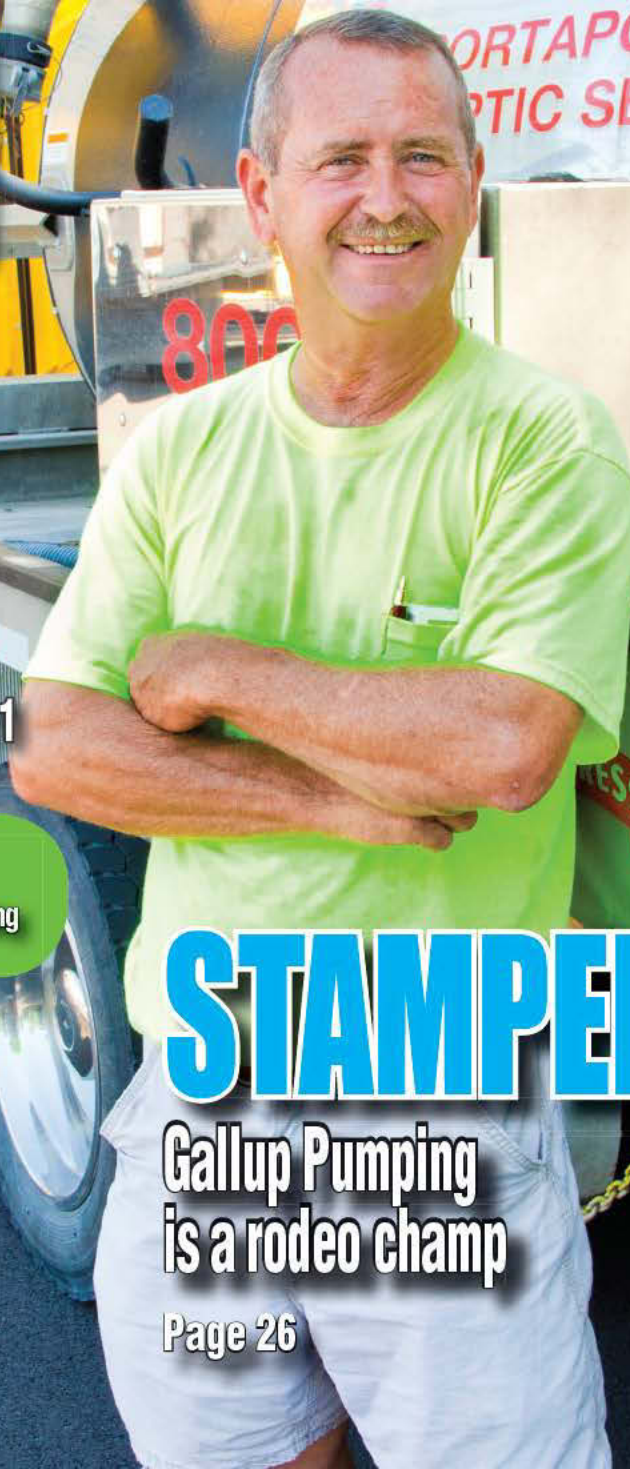
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STAMPEDE!

Gallup Pumping
is a rodeo champ

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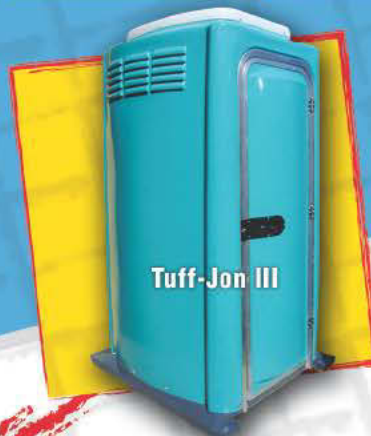
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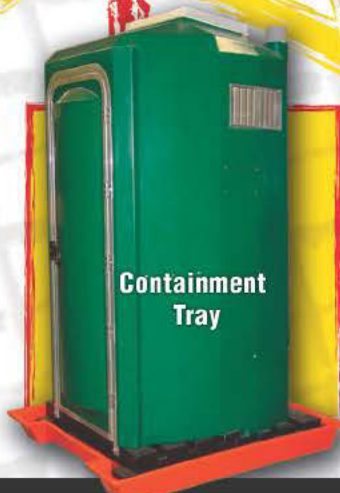
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ON THE COVER
Plugging away in an up-and-down economy, Missouri's Don Feger has built his family's Apollo Porta Potties & Pumping Service through good service, smart marketing and business diversification that makes sense. (Photo by David Owens)

PRO

PORTABLE RESTROOM OPERATOR

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COMING NEXT MONTH — March 2012

- **PROfile:** Australian contractor provides "dunnies with dignity"
- **Take 5:** Los Angeles newcomer grows in competitive market



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Penny Wise and Pound Foolish

FACED WITH GROWING REPORTS OF SANITATION-RELATED ILLNESS OUTBREAKS, SPECIAL EVENTS ORGANIZERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS CONTINUE TO QUIBBLE OVER PROVIDING HAND-WASH STATIONS FOR PUBLIC USE

By Jim Kneiszel

If you open a restaurant or operate any business, you are almost certainly required to provide restrooms for your guests or workers. That means both a toilet to handle the waste and a sink with soap and running water so users can wash up afterward.

But if you organize a county fair, manage a remote workplace – like a construction site – or drive a food vending vehicle, adequate toilets are a suggestion and hand-washing facilities, well that’s just a frill you can choose to offer the public if you want.

A public health battle in **Pima County, Ariz.**, once again raises a blatant double standard over when it’s necessary or optional to provide sanitation to protect the public and workers. And it points to the uphill battle faced by portable restroom operators who promote hand-wash stations and hand sanitizers as a way for customers to improve sanitary conditions.

In Pima County, the board of health proposed a code requirement that food truck vendors provide hand sanitizers for their customers and that special events provide one portable hand-wash station for every five restrooms rented.

BRING YOUR OWN SANITIZER

“Hand-washing is probably the single most important thing you can do to prevent illness, and we thought this would be an idea to promote ... that would lead to better health for all of us,” the health department’s **Brad Brumm** said in a media account. “Food festivals where there’s lots of people and food and portable toilets – and not adequate places to wash your hands – really have the potential for bad consequences.”

Pima County elected officials would have none of it. “People who want to wash will have the common sense to carry their own hand sanitizer,” one supervisor remarked as the plan was shot down unanimously. Members of the board of supervisors said they were worried about how small fairs and festivals would be affected by the added cost of providing sinks.

We’ve all been to public events and reluctantly used portable restrooms when no sanitary clean-up options are offered. If we don’t have the foresight to carry sanitizer with us at all times, we’re faced with the dilemma of using the bathroom and walking away with the potential to spread dangerous pathogens. I don’t know about you, but my mother told me over and over again as a little boy, “Wash your hands after you go to the bathroom!”

Why is it OK to scold the general public for not carrying hand sanitizer at a fair or a festival, while at the same time closely regulating the fast-food restaurant down the street to make sure they keep their bathrooms sparkling

clean? I don’t get it, and neither does **Ben Chapman**, Ph.D. and a food safety specialist at the **North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension Service**.

HIGHER STANDARDS

Chapman, writing a post on his “barfblog,” (<http://barfblog.foodsafety.ksu.edu>) recounts the litany of cases of illness outbreaks linked to fairs and festivals, including one in his own back yard. At the **North Carolina State Fair**, 12 people were sickened, including seven children who were hospitalized in an *E. coli* outbreak.

Chapman believes minimal regulation of food trucks and fair organizers as proposed in Arizona is a fine thing. But he believes event planners should choose to meet higher standards.

“If I ran a food festival, I’d be afraid of an outbreak leading to bad press,” Chapman said. “Look at it this way: The type of festival I want to go to as a patron is a place where someone doesn’t need to be regulated. They should already have the mindset that what would be bad for our festival is 700 people getting sick here.”

Chapman makes a good point. Smart event planners should already be ordering hand-wash stations, and I know many are. But I’ve heard plenty of stories from PROs to know that not enough event organizers are heeding Chapman’s advice. They scrimp on portable sanitation, not realizing what risks they are exposing themselves to. Chapman has a warning for event planners who are looking to get by on the cheap.

“WE’VE SEEN OUTBREAKS WITH TEMPORARY FOOD EVENTS AND STATE FAIRS WHERE THERE ARE ANIMAL CONTACT AREAS. IF I’M AN OPERATOR WITH ONE OF THESE EVENTS, I CAN’T HIDE BEHIND THE ARGUMENT THAT I DIDN’T KNOW THERE MIGHT BE PATHOGENS.”

Ben Chapman

“We’ve seen outbreaks with temporary food events and state fairs where there are animal contact areas. If I’m an operator with one of these events, I can’t hide behind the argument that I didn’t know there might be pathogens,” he said. In a courtroom with lawyers, judge and jury, ignorance over the basics of sanitation won’t cut it, he said.

MAKING THE CASE

Talking with Chapman reveals a powerful argument you can make to event organizers who are being penny wise and pound foolish when it comes to protecting their patrons: You may never know how many customers you're turning off by not providing hand-wash facilities.

"I look at it that if I can't do what I need to wash my hands, I just won't go there," Chapman said. "A segment of the population feels that way." Are organizers willing to skimp on sanitation at the risk of losing a percentage of their visitors next year?

It's pretty simple for Chapman. While it's impossible to prevent every illness outbreak, events should perform due diligence for public safety ... and that includes providing hand-washing options.

"Making people sick is really bad for business," Chapman concluded.

ALL SIGNS POINT TO INDY

Another year has flown by and it's time to get together for the **Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International**. I hope to see you all at the Indiana Convention Center starting with Education Day, Feb. 27. I know you'll be busy attending seminars, checking out the exhibit hall and meeting with old friends and colleagues. But I hope you take a few minutes to track me down and say hello. Just ask anyone wearing a **COLE Publishing** shirt at the Expo and they can find me.

There's nothing more important to my job as editor of *PRO* than meeting contractors and learning about the challenges you face on a daily basis. Your ideas and suggestions help us keep this magazine relevant to an ever-changing industry. ■

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Writer Judy Kneiszel has operated her own small business for 15 years and is familiar with the many rewards and challenges of business ownership. Write to her with questions, comments or topic suggestions at thewordhouse@ameritech.net.



A New Way to Trade Show

TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA WILL HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF THE PUMPER AND CLEANER ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO.

By Judy Kneiszel

Not long ago, all a trade show attendee needed to make the most of the event was a stack of business cards and a comfortable pair of shoes. But look around the 2012 Pumper and Cleaner Environmental Expo International and you'll see organizers, attendees and exhibitors armed with smart phones, tablets, notebook computers or laptops. They will be texting, tweeting, emailing, blogging, photographing and recording video. At the end of each day, complaints of tired, aching feet could be accompanied by complaints of tired, aching thumbs.

Like it is the other 51 weeks of the year, social media is a source of news and information during the Expo. But, during Expo week when so much is happening in one place at one time, social media can be even more crucial to your business communications. While attending the Expo you can use social media both to keep track of what is happening at the show and to share information with others at the show and back home.

SOCIAL MEDIA AT THE EXPO

If you are on Twitter, search for comments about the Expo using hashtags and also use them in your own tweets so other people interested in the show can find them. The hashtag symbol (#) used before relevant keywords in a tweet categorizes the tweet to show more easily in Twitter search. Clicking on a hash-tagged word in any message shows you all the other tweets in that category.

Similarly on Facebook and LinkedIn, you can announce your company's attendance at the Expo as well as any related news and events. You'll also want to keep an eye on Facebook to see what's being posted at www.facebook.com/PROmonthly and www.facebook.com/Pumpershow, and share thoughts and impressions about the show.

COLE Publishing, which creates this magazine and organizes the Expo, will have a mobile site for attendees to use at the event. The site will feature a searchable list of exhibitors and booths, a general schedule, and a more detailed educational schedule. Check out the mobile site at <http://m.pumpershow.com>.

One thing you don't want to do is waste time at the Expo, so make sure your team has Internet-ready smartphones or tablets set up with the right applications for social media use. Be sure to bring chargers to power up devices at night and have a large enough memory card if you are going to take a lot of pictures or video.

In general, using social media at a trade show is easiest on a mobile device. A laptop computer can be inconvenient and cumbersome to carry around on the floor, but handy when you want to download photos off your phone at the end of the day.

While at the Expo, you can send out real-time updates of what's going on all around you using Facebook or Twitter. You can also use YouTube to stream videos and Flickr to upload photos.

Another use for technology on the Expo floor could guarantee you get the "show discount" on a purchase. Suppose you see a product you like, but need authorization to buy it. Now you don't have to wait to discuss it after you get home. Simply snap some photos and email them to the boss. If he or she doesn't understand how the item works, make a video of the sales representative demonstrating it.

SUPPOSE YOU SEE A PRODUCT YOU LIKE, BUT NEED AUTHORIZATION TO BUY IT. NOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT TO DISCUSS IT AFTER YOU GET HOME. SIMPLY SNAP SOME PHOTOS AND EMAIL THEM TO THE BOSS. IF HE OR SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW THE ITEM WORKS, MAKE A VIDEO OF THE SALES REPRESENTATIVE DEMONSTRATING IT.

I SPY ... QR CODES

While walking around the Expo, you may see QR codes on printed materials in some exhibitors' booths. QR stands for "quick response" and refers to those black and white squares that are really a two-dimensional barcode readable by a variety of devices including smartphones.

The amount of information that can be contained in a QR code is about 4,300 characters. That's enough for a business professional to include contact information and some personal background or product information, which is more than will fit on a standard business card.

Newer smartphones come with QR code readers installed. If your phone doesn't have one installed, try Google Goggles or on an iPhone, the App Store to download a free reader.

Once you have the QR code reader installed, simply activate the application and take a quick snapshot of the data label with your camera.

If you'd like to use a QR code on your own company materials, the technology for creating them is usually free. There also are dozens of Web services that will create them for you.

There are plenty of places a QR code can be used, especially at a trade show. Try putting a code that contains all your contact information on your business card and then attach it to your show badge so people you meet can simply scan your card. If you want to be more memorable, have the QR code put on a baseball cap and ask people to scan you!

You can also put a QR code on flyers, brochures and other print collateral. That way, people have the option of scanning or taking these items with them. Those who are more technology oriented will appreciate you lightening their load. You may find after the show you've distributed fewer business cards, but made more contacts. And having your contact information scanned to someone's phone makes it much less likely to get lost.

THE PARTY ISN'T OVER

When the show is over and you're back at the office, don't assume your Expo social media efforts are over. Follow up with the leads you generated by connecting with them on LinkedIn or sending follow-up notes via email. Upload more media and recap the event for those who couldn't make it this year.

And then ... begin planning your social media strategy for next year's Expo. Did you observe other attendees using technology and social media applications in ways you hadn't thought of but would like to try? Could some of the things you tried have been done more effectively or efficiently? You've got a year to gear up for next year's Expo! ■


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Utility Supervisor II - City of Raleigh, N.C.

“I came back with some really good ideas.”

The 2011 Expo was Billy Bell's first, and he attended with five colleagues. "The most impressive thing was the new technology - the cameras, sewer cleaning equipment and rehab equipment on the exhibit floor," he says. "New technology has helped us tremendously. It's amazing how far it has come from the past. The sales representatives were very helpful. Any questions about the products, they could answer. You really have to see this for yourself."



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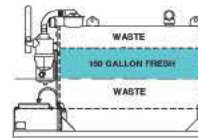
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The Apollo team includes, from left, Brad Gipson, Don Feger, Orr Pierce and Mark Mosley. (Photos by David Owens)

NAMED FOR THE APOLLO SPACE PROGRAM, THE FEGER FAMILY'S LONG-TIME KANSAS RESTROOM BUSINESS HAS ENJOYED A DECADE OF SKYROCKETING GROWTH

By Paul Holley

How does one guy manage 2,200 portable restrooms, 25 vehicles and work that includes far-flung construction sites and large-scale special events?

For Don Feger, owner of Apollo Porta Potties & Pumping Services in Mexico, Mo., it's a hands-on approach and 70- to 90-hour work weeks for a business that has nearly tripled its portable restroom inventory the past seven years.

Feger, 50, routinely arrives at his office at 5 a.m. to plan routes. He reviews each route weekly with four route drivers and handpicks the units to be assigned to each project. He'll also take a customer call anytime, anywhere.

"I pay very close attention to who does what, where and when," he says. "If too many people get their hands in, things get forgotten. That's bad for customers."

Close attention to detail is second nature to Feger, who started driving a service truck "as soon as I got my driver's license" nearly 35

years ago. Feger's father, Don Sr., launched the business in 1965 after a career as a union carpenter. The elder Feger once built wooden portable restrooms for his brother's portable sanitation business in California before returning to his family's central Missouri home country in the late 1950s.

A Korean War veteran who was wounded in combat, Don Sr. originally named the company DAV's Sanitary in honor of Disabled American Veterans. He changed the name to Apollo Porta Potties after the Apollo space mission put the first man on the moon in 1969.

Young Don rode along in the service trucks whenever he could and was running his own routes as a teenager. After his father passed away in 1993, Feger continued to run the business with his mother, Mae, until her death in 2006.

Because of Don Sr.'s work and connections, Apollo Porta Potties was oriented toward construction rentals. The construction industry still

accounts for about two-thirds of the company's portable sanitation business.

GRADUAL DIVERSIFICATION

Apollo started pumping bigger tanks in 1988 when a construction customer was looking for someone to regularly empty a graywater holding tank. To handle the job, the Fegers purchased a 1988 Mack built out by LMT Inc. of Galva, Ill. "That was a money maker from the get-go and we've been in septic and grease trap service ever since," he says.

Septic system and grease trap cleaning is offered in a 50- to 60-mile radius of the company's home base to customers that include restaurants, hospitals, college food service and commercial bakeries.

The company diversified into traffic barricades and metal storage box rentals the past year. Feger says he saw the opportunity for barricade

(continued)



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Technician Robert Hoffman III, center, stocks paper products in restrooms set up for a University of Missouri football game.

rentals at special events where he was already supplying portable restrooms, so he bought 100 barricades from Work Zone Inc. of Kansas City in the spring of 2011.

In response to requests for storage boxes by construction customers, Feger started buying used 20-foot steel shipping containers from R & R Shipping of St. Louis and acquired a Trailerman Trailers Inc. gooseneck trailer in 2010. Pulled by a 1-ton truck, the trailer is used to move the storage boxes from site to site or to transport as many as 16 portable restrooms.

Today, about 60 percent of Apollo's annual revenue comes from portable sanitation and 30 percent from septic and grease trap service. The other two categories are still fairly small at 5 percent each but Feger believes that could change.

SHOPPING FOR EQUIPMENT

After years of steady growth, Apollo Porta

APOLLO PORTA POTTIES & PUMPING SERVICES LLC, Mexico, Mo.

Owner: Don Feger

Founded: 1965

Employees: 10

Services: Portable sanitation, traffic/parking lot barricades, storage box rentals, septic and grease trap pumping.

Website: www.apolloportapotties.com



Potties had 600 to 700 portable restrooms by 2004. Feger then moved to take advantage of the region's growing commercial construction market and started shopping for used equipment from other PROs across the Midwest. Apollo's inventory of 2,200 restrooms and 100 hand-wash sinks is from PolyJohn Enterprises and Satellite Industries. About 40 transport trailers are from PolyJohn and 60 others are from a variety of sources, including fleet supply and hardware retailers.



Don Feger (left), Mark Mosley (on the truck) and Kenny Green deliver a Freedom 2 ADA restroom from Satellite Industries Inc. at the University of Missouri football stadium.

(continued)

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Specifications

Weight-Empty	185 pound
Waste Tank Capacity	60 gal
Width	43 inch
Height	90 inch
Depth	47.20 inch



“AS SOON AS THE FOOTBALL CROWDS LEAVE FOR HOME, WE GET IN THERE AND GO TO WORK. IT TAKES UNTIL ABOUT 11 P.M. TO GET IT ALL DONE. WE TAKE EVERYBODY OUT TO DINNER WHEN THE WORK’S DONE.”

DON FEGER

Apollo's first factory-built portable restroom service truck arrived in 1999 when the company purchased a rig built out by Keith Huber Inc. on an Isuzu chassis with a Masport pump and a 450-gallon waste/300-gallon

freshwater steel tank. The rig is still in use. Meanwhile, the rest of Apollo's 13 restroom service trucks have a considerably larger capacity of 1,100-gallon waste and 400- or 500-gallon freshwater tanks. “What happened was, our routes were doubling in size and we'd quickly run out of room,” Feger says.

The larger rigs in Apollo's service fleet are built out on Dodge or Ford chassis by Progress Tank or Satellite Industries. Four rigs have aluminum tanks and nine have steel tanks. All have Masport pumps. Feger's preferred powertrain combination matches Cummins diesel engines and Allison automatic transmissions.

The company's septic service trucks are a 2007 International 7800 built out by Progress Tank with a 3,600-gallon aluminum tank and a Challenger pump from National Vacuum Equipment Inc., and a 2000 International 4900 built out by LMT Inc. with a 2,000-gallon steel tank and Challenger pump.

Feger makes sure the equipment looks good and keeps running. He's instituted a uniform, white color scheme. “It makes a big difference when you show up at a jobsite every week with a clean, nice-looking truck,” he says. Feger adds that keeping meticulous maintenance records and consistently working with a reliable, local mechanic has meant fewer headaches over the years.

“Nothing is worse than to lose a truck for a day,” he says. “Taking care of your equipment pays off in the long run.”

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Customer loyalty runs deep for Apollo. Feger points



A cabover Isuzu flatbed truck and a trailer are used to transport a variety of restrooms to the University of Missouri campus.

out that two local construction customers have been with the company since the beginning. “It's really cool in this day and age to have that kind of loyalty,” he says. “It's also been fun for me to run into a lot of old-timers who remember me from riding with my dad as a kid.”

Feger believes paying attention to detail has helped Apollo gain - and keep - business sought by large, regional competitors. For example, his team puts in long hours to service about 150 portable restrooms for the entire season of University of Missouri home football games.

“Nobody wants to put up with a smelly restroom all week,” he says of the job that involves servicing, cleaning and restocking portable units scattered across the stadium parking lots. “As soon as the football crowds leave for home, we get in there and go to work. It takes until about 11 p.m. to get it all done. We take everybody out to dinner when the work's done.”

In addition to this high-profile venue, Feger serves weekend special events within a 100-mile radius of his base and maintains units at dozens of construction jobs, including a power plant project that required 150 units in the summer of 2011.

He says that the July 4 weekend of 2011 was his busiest ever with 155 units out at special events. He also fielded a personal record of 117 calls on July 1. “I just hate to have anybody get the answering machine. So, I'll have calls forwarded to my cell phone. I'll take a call anytime, anywhere,” he says.

Feger encourages his portable restroom route drivers to stay on top of things as well. He gives them digital cameras to photograph the units before and after servicing. This practice helps prevent customer complaints, he says. “In this business, you should never be afraid to get dirty or wet,” he says. “You also have to have a good, picky yard guy. Fortunately, I have one.”

A 4,500-psi Honda pressure washer is used to clean the units in the yard.

SMOOTH RUNNING

Feger says the company's 46-year track

(continued)

Customer care is the key to success for Don Feger and Apollo Porta Potties.





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PIPELINE WORK LEADS TO A BUSY YEAR

Back in 2005-06, Don Feger's Apollo Porta Potties & Pumping Services was doing pumping work at a power plant construction project in Northwest Missouri. While traveling to the jobsite one day, Feger noticed a pipeline installation project that had portable restrooms stationed along its path.

"I stopped to talk to some of the workers, who complained how awful the restrooms were," he says. "I got the name of the manager and called him to explain the problem. His workers must have gotten to him because he called back and ordered 70 units the next day."

From there, Feger learned a lot about serving pipeline construction sites, made valuable industry contacts and landed other pipeline construction projects over the next few years.

That led to his biggest year ever in 2010 after he won contracts to provide portable restroom services to pipeline construction projects in Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska.

To cover the pipeline work, Feger leased a building near Wichita, Kan., located about two hours from each project, as a temporary yard and service center. Then, he obtained permits and arranged for taking waste to municipal treatment plants.

Serving pipeline construction sites involves locating portable restroom units at every road crossing along the route. Feger says that every 400-mile stretch requires 500 to 600 units.

During the project, which can run a year or more, drivers service the restrooms and sinks and make sure that fresh units are in position as the construction progresses – 24 hours a day. "We had two guys driving at night and one guy driving during the day," Feger says. "I got involved handling deliveries of 50 (units) a week on average."

LESSONS LEARNED

To be compatible with pipeline contractors in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas, Feger formed a union shop called Donnie's Potties on the Spot in 2009. Its three employees are represented by the Teamsters Union. The company is currently inactive as Feger took a break from the pipeline work in 2011.

"Frankly, I was just worn out," he says. "In some ways, it's been nice to have a break. It's given us a chance to catch our breath."

But, Feger is bidding on pipeline construction projects for 2012. If all the contracts come through, he thinks he may need to hire two to five employees to handle the additional work. He's also thinking about buying his first restroom trailer.

In the meantime, his yard has about 600 portable units and 100 trailers ready to go. Feger says he's learned a few things that he can apply to the future:

- Stay organized: "I'll be honest, getting licensing and permits out of state are a hassle. We learned to be organized and keep files on each location," he says.
- Take care of your equipment: "Breakdowns can kill you," Feger says. He keeps service records on every vehicle in his fleet and gladly pays a local mechanic to perform routine maintenance, like brakes and tires, before problems arise.
- Make a decision and then act on it: "When it looked like the best thing was to form a union shop, I got my lawyer on the phone and did it right away," he says.

"I PAY VERY CLOSE ATTENTION TO WHO DOES WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN. IF TOO MANY PEOPLE GET THEIR HANDS IN, THINGS GET FORGOTTEN. THAT'S BAD FOR CUSTOMERS."

DON FEGER

record helps the phone ring, but he still spends about \$20,000 to \$40,000 annually on advertising in phone books, local newspapers, shoppers and radio.

Apollo runs four portable restroom service routes each weekday plus covering special events as needed. Grease trap cleaning and commercial holding tanks take up two to three days a week. Septic pumping is done on a per-call basis.

Apollo's operations base is an office, shop and yard built in 2008. Feger says the shop building holds all 17 trucks. The headquarters includes a break room, showers and a tool room. Feger hopes to add a wash building for his portable units in the future.

Employee turnover is low with the longest-term route driver at 10 years. "I think I've got the best crew I've ever had. We all work very closely together," he says.

After more than 30 years in the industry, Feger hints at perhaps retiring – or at least shifting gears – when he reaches age 55. At that point, he's thinking of keeping the septic pumping/grease hauling part of the business and buying a loader/backhoe to offer trenching work in the area.

"If things go right, I'll get out and maybe have time to ride my motorcycle a whole lot more," he says. ■



Technician Robert Hoffman III services a PolyJohn Enterprises PUN3 restroom that gets a lot of use in a parking lot at a college football game.

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Participants in the Junior High School National Rodeo Finals work their horses. A few of the restrooms placed by Gallup Pumping Service are in the background. (Photos courtesy of Gallup Pumping Service)

WHEN IT COMES TO WRANGLING RESTROOMS AND KEEPING UP WITH HUNDREDS OF RV PUMPOUTS, GALLUP PUMPING SERVICE IS A RODEO CHAMP

By Betty Dageforde

THE TEAM

The Mortensen brothers, Chris and Dustin, operate Gallup Pumping Service, a septic/portable restroom business in Gallup, N.M. They have 15 employees between the restroom service and their plumbing business, Williams Plumbing, three of whom are shared office personnel. For the rodeo, the company used their four route drivers and hired an additional four temporary workers.

Chris Mortensen describes their management style: "Neither my brother nor I are plumbers or pumpers, so the business is not dependent on us being in a truck every day. That allows us to focus on sales and customer service. We just try to grease the tracks and help our guys stay effective and billable."

COMPANY HISTORY

In 2007, Chris Mortensen was an accountant and Dustin was in construction and contracting, both living in Albuquerque. They had grown

up in Gallup and when they heard the 46-year-old Gallup Pumping Service was for sale, they saw it as an opportunity to move back home. They started out with 150 portable restrooms and now have 300.

They serve the northwest corner of the state in the Four Corners region, as well as the Navajo Nation located in parts of New Mexico and Arizona, where the company has one of its biggest events, the 10-day Navajo Nation Fair, for which the brothers provide 150 units.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

The rodeo project was won four years ago through a competitive bid from the City of Gallup. It was renewed each year since, and has been extended for another two years.

Chris Mortensen believes they've kept the contract because of their service. "We try hard to have a zero complaint, zero issue type of event," he says. "We make this a 100 percent turnkey thing for the city. They tell us where to set up and we take it from there and handle the entire operation."

(continued)



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THE MAIN EVENT

The Junior High School National Rodeo Finals was established in 2004 to promote rodeo among kids in grades six through eight. It's held in Red Rock Park outside of Gallup, this year the week of June 24-30.

The event includes standard rodeo competitions – roping, chute dogging, barrel racing, goat tying, bull riding, etc. – as well as less intense contests such as volleyball, tug-of-war, dancing, along with family oriented activities, shopping and sightseeing. At the Saturday evening championship round, \$75,000 in prizes and \$100,000 in college scholarships are given away.

The 2011 event attracted 5,000 attendees – about a fifth of them contestants – from 41 states, five Canadian provinces and Australia. The 1,152 horse stalls were full, as was the 603-space campground.

BY THE NUMBERS

The company provided 36 brown/beige PolyPortables Inc. Vantage restrooms and four PolyPortables Inc. Enhanced Access Units. These were placed in eight service areas – food courts, vendor locations, the practice arena, the campground, side event areas, and a few at individual campsites.

The bulk of the company's work was pumping out nearly 850 holding tanks because the campground did not have a dump station for the RVs and horse trailers (with living quarters) the contestants stayed in.

LET'S ROLL

The company started bringing in units on the Monday and Tuesday before the event. It took two trips using a 2002 Explorer 20-unit transport



Above left, technician Justin Yazzie, and right, Earl Samuel work in tight spaces to pump out RVs that combine living quarters for the participants up front and horses in the back.

trailer from McKee Technologies Inc. During the week units were moved around to accommodate changing demand using the back bed of a 2011 Polaris Ranger Crew – big enough to hold one unit but small enough to get into tight spaces.

The Gallup Pumping Service team is shown with a vacuum truck from Largo Tank & Equipment Inc. In the front row (left to right) are Dustin Mortensen, Vince Chee, Donovan Dez, Earl Samuel, Chris Mortensen (with Howie, the office dog), Andrew Sandoval and Kevin Manuelito. In the back (left to right) are Justin Yazzie, Brian Decker and Ryan Bracken.

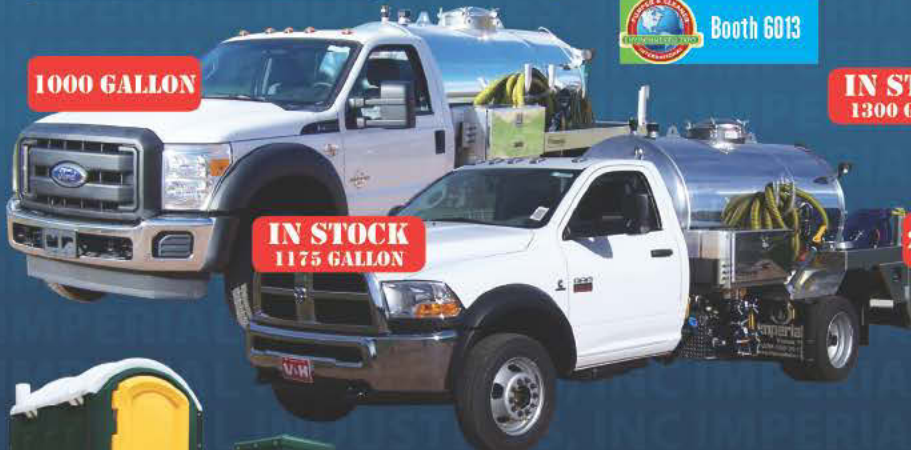


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KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

Four vacuum trucks were used. The 2008 Ford F-550 flatbed has a homemade slide-in 400-gallon waste steel tank and a Moro USA Inc. pump. The company's other vehicles were built by Largo Tank & Equipment Inc. in Farmington, N.M.: a 2005 Chevy 6500 flatbed with a slide-in 600-gallon waste steel tank, a 300-gallon freshwater steel tank and a Masport Inc. pump; a 2007 Chevy 7500 with a 1,500-gallon waste steel tank, a 400-gallon freshwater steel tank and a Moro USA Inc. pump; and a 2006 Chevy 8500 with a 1,500-gallon waste/500-gallon freshwater aluminum tank and a Masport Inc. pump.

Portable restrooms were serviced early morning and mid-afternoon starting June 23, using pressure sprayers, Simple Green cleaning products and PolyPortables Inc. Turbo Tubes.

Due to the congestion from tightly-packed trailers, along with kids, dogs, horses and golf carts, two technicians were in each service vehicle so one could act as a spotter for safety purposes. Drivers normally wear uniforms, but for this event the company made special T-shirts so they'd be more comfortable in the heat. One vehicle was left each night for after-hours emergencies.

With special permission from the city, waste was dumped into the Gallup municipal wastewater plant through a manhole near the park.

“WE TRY HARD TO HAVE A ZERO COMPLAINT, ZERO ISSUE TYPE OF EVENT. WE MAKE THIS A 100 PERCENT TURNKEY THING FOR THE CITY. THEY TELL US WHERE TO SET UP AND WE TAKE IT FROM THERE AND HANDLE THE ENTIRE OPERATION.”

Chris Mortensen

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED

A sign-up system was established for RV and horse trailer pumping. Attendees stopped by the company's tent and purchased a ticket. If they signed up by 4 p.m., they were guaranteed same-day service. After providing their name, state, type of trailer and RV site, they were issued a hangtag for the trailer. After cleaning, the technician would remove the tag and leave a note saying they'd been there.

BETTER WITH AGE

There were no unusual problems at last year's rodeo, the biggest event for Gallup and the second largest event for the company. “This was our



Gallup provided 36 brown/beige PolyPortables Inc. restrooms throughout Red Rock Park, from competition areas to a large campground.



Owners Dustin (left) and Chris Mortensen have operated Gallup Pumping Service since 2007. The rodeo is a large special event requiring plenty of hours on site.



This 2007 Chevrolet 8500 service rig from Largo Tank & Equipment has a 1,500-gallon waste/400-gallon freshwater tank. It maneuvers between RV sites, where workers keep 850 holding tanks pumped.

fourth year doing it, so it was business as usual," Mortensen says. Every year the company has the opportunity to sit down with event organizers for a post-event briefing to go over everything, get feedback and brainstorm about how to do it better. "The biggest thing is being able to respond very quickly to the demands of the customers and the demands of the event," Mortensen says. "It's really a lot of fun, and we're proud to be a part of it, not only for us but also for the city of Gallup." ■

MORE INFO

Largo Tank & Equipment, Inc.
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www.largotank.com

Masport, Inc.
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www.masportpump.com

McKee Technologies, Inc.
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www.mckee technologies.com
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Indianapolis 2012

February 27 - March 1, 2012 | Indiana Convention Center

Rockin'

Rodney Atkins

RED-HOT COUNTRY SINGER AND AUTHENTIC AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY RODNEY ATKINS WILL "CUT LOOSE AND HAVE FUN" AT THE PUMPER & CLEANER EXPO

By Jim Kneiszel

Rodney Atkins rose from a hardscrabble beginning as a sickly orphan to the heights of country music stardom, producing back-to-back *Billboard* top country songs for 2006 and 2007 and continuing to churn out popular anthems of real life and love.

Atkins' compelling American success story continues with his next musical challenge: Entertaining the throngs at the 2012 Pumper & Cleaner Environmental Expo International. Atkins will bring a bushel basket of heartfelt hits when he arrives on the stage on Tuesday, Feb. 28, at the grand ballroom of the JW Marriott Hotel in Indianapolis.

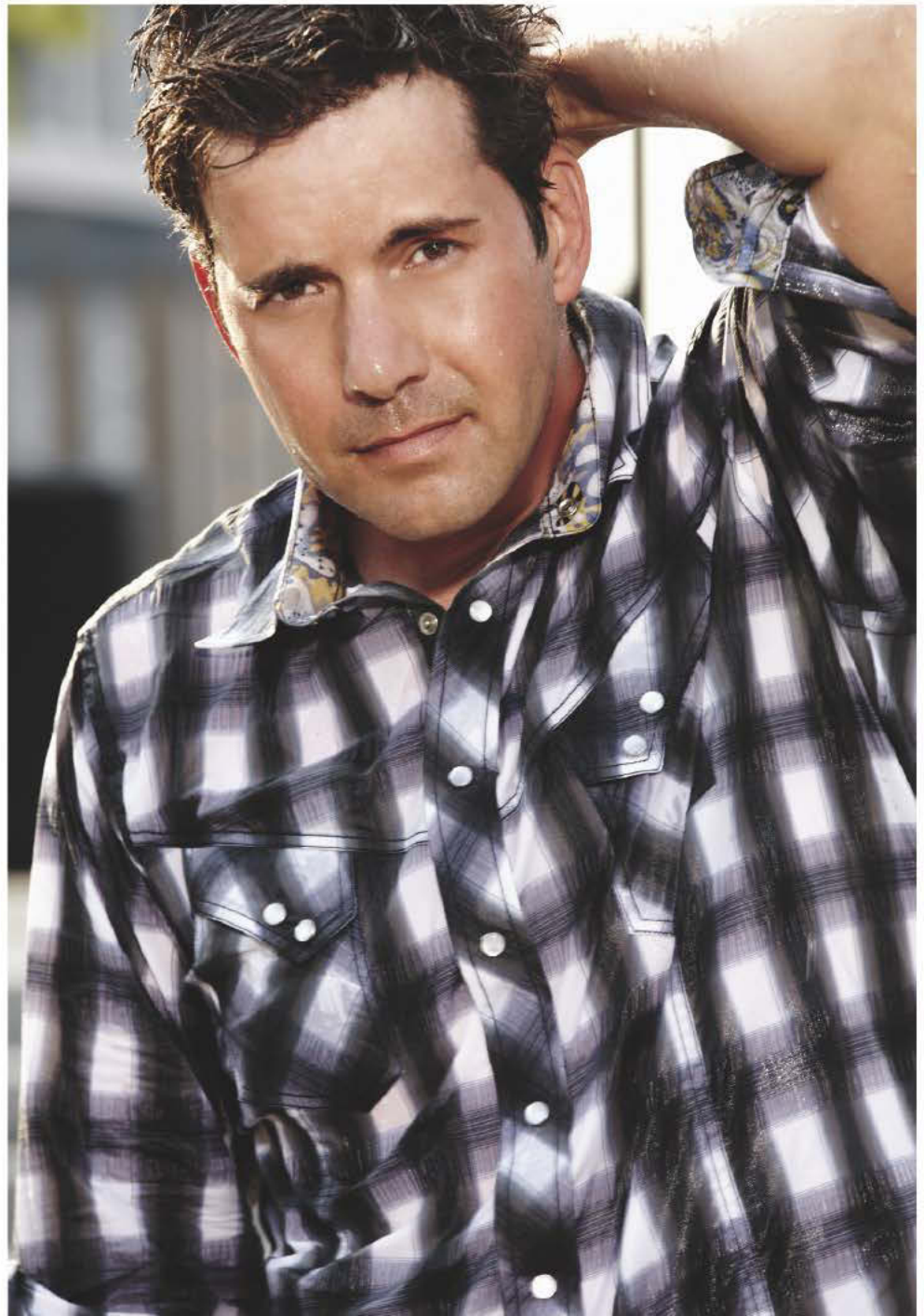
Atkins' 7 p.m. performance will follow the ever-popular Industry Appreciation Party - with its festive atmosphere and 25-cent tap beers - which begins at 5 p.m. The evening of fun caps off the opening day of the Expo exhibits at the adjacent Indiana Convention Center in downtown Indy. The Industry Appreciation Party and Atkins' live performance are included with full Expo registration.

Atkins is well-known for a string of top 10 hits that started in 2003 with "Honesty (Write Me a List)" from his first album entitled *Honesty*. A familiar voice on country radio for almost a decade, Atkins struck gold in 2006 and 2007, when his singles, "If You're Going Through Hell (Before the Devil Even Knows)" and "Watching You," hit No. 1 and were named the top country songs of the year by *Billboard* magazine.

Rags to riches

While country music fans can hum along with Atkins' many hits, they might not be so familiar with his inspiring personal story.

After being born in Knoxville, Tenn., in March 1969, he was put up for adoption and was twice returned to the Holston Methodist Home for Children by prospective parents who couldn't





**“SOMETIMES YOU
JUST WANT TO CUT LOOSE
AND HAVE FUN, AND YOU HAVE
TO DO SOMETHING UNEXPECTED
... YOU JUST HAVE TO KIND OF
ROLL WITH IT. THAT’S HOW
I TRY TO BE ON STAGE.”**

Rodney Atkins

deal with his numerous illnesses. Though his ailments worsened, Margaret and Allan Atkins, from Cumberland Gap, Tenn., adopted the boy.

With his dedicated adoptive parents, Atkins thrived and became interested in music during high school. After school, he eventually signed a recording contract, but didn't release his first album until *Honesty*. The string of hits has never stopped, with the album *If You're Going Through Hell* gaining platinum status and producing additional No. 1 hits in "These Are My People" and "Cleaning This Gun (Come On In Boy)."

Atkins followed with his third album *It's America*, with a single of the same title, then "15 Minutes," and "Chasin' Girls" heading up the charts. In 2010, Atkins hit with "Farmer's Daughter," and he's currently touring with the lead-off single of his fourth album, the title cut "Take a Back Road," which hit No. 1 just a few months ago.

While he's built a solid career in Nashville, Atkins is proud of the family he's built, including his wife, Tammy Jo, and his son, Elijah. Along the way, he's found it important to give back to others. He is a spokesperson for the National Council for Adoption and often returns to the orphanage that helped him find a loving family. In 2011, Atkins headlined the Nashville Give Back Concert to support tornado-ravaged communities through the American Red Cross.

A helping hand

"It is important for us to give to all of those in need. As an artist, I have performed in just about every town that has been hit by the many storms and I feel that this concert is a great way to reach out and help as many people as we can," he told

the Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau, which helped promote the relief effort. "We wanted to ... call people to action to continue to support the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund in any way that they can."

While Atkins is devoted to family and causes he finds important, he hasn't taken his foot off the accelerator, musically, either. According to his website, Atkins has sold four million singles in the past five years, and the sales have been going viral for "Take a Back Road." He credits the easy, heartfelt lyrics and laid-back, identifiable message of the song.

"'Farmer's Daughter' was one of the craziest download songs we had. It was peaking at 15,000 to 16,000 a week," Atkins says. "And now 'Back Road' is knocking on 40,000 a week. That was a validation for me to follow my heart ... It's one of those songs that, the first time I heard it I thought, 'Boy, that feels good.' And then it's catchy and something you want to just crank it up. But then, the more you hear it, you realize it's not just a ditty; it's about ... getting right with your soul, coming down to earth."

"Back Road" is about discovery ... both literally - exploring the beauty found in your backyard countryside, and symbolically - the simple joys of family and life. The emotional tune and the album in general present a winning formula for the thoughtful Atkins.

"I've had some success with my songs, and you've got to sit back and ask yourself, 'Why did these songs connect?' With a lot of songs, the approach is about how perfect things are, or how messed up things are - It's one or the other," he explains. "But for me, real life is there are ups

and downs, and if you can, get both sides of that in a song."

And he's taken a reality check when it comes to love songs, too. Atkins says he was never interested in recording conventional love songs until he found several tunes that scratch beneath the surface of complex relationships. He includes several of these on the latest album. And they're songs hardworking family business owners who attend the Pumper & Cleaner Expo can surely relate to.

"Love is not all blue skies and no bills," he says. "It's gutters leaking and the cat messed in the fireplace. It's not convenient at all, and you've got to make time for it - that's the toughest part of it."

A treat on stage

Love songs, simple slice-of-life songs, or just about anything Atkins performs, he promises an energetic live show. He likes to change up the set list night after night to keep the audience and band in tune and engaged. Expo attendees can expect an edgy and fun time with Atkins and his band.

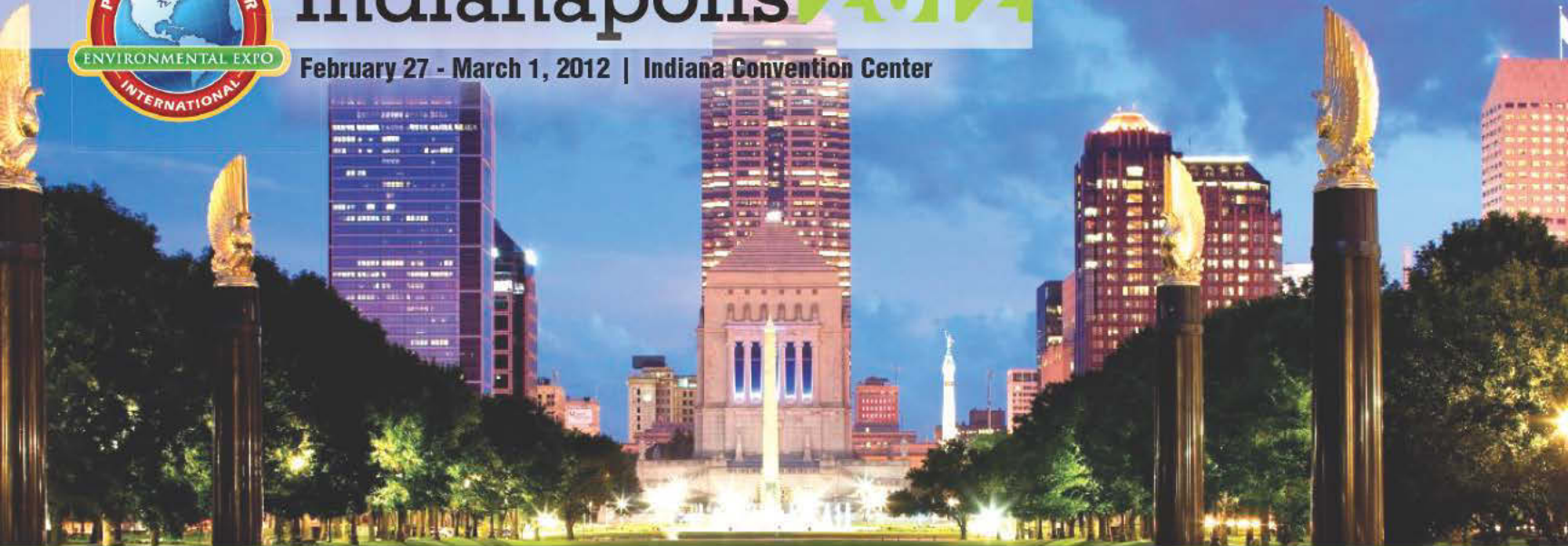
"Sometimes you just want to cut loose and have fun, and you have to do something unexpected ... You just have to kind of roll with it," Atkins explains. "That's how I try to be on stage, and the shows get better the more spontaneous they are, the less the band knows what's going to happen."

"I'm low-key, but I get excited on stage. I think that if I didn't have that outlet of playing live, I'd be frustrated a lot," he says. "Music was definitely my savior. It's a way of saying things that, hopefully, because it's in the form of music, will stay around awhile." ■



Indianapolis 2012

February 27 - March 1, 2012 | Indiana Convention Center



An Old-Time TWIST ON BOWLING

Fountain Square Theatre, a two-minute cab ride only a mile-and-a-half from downtown Indianapolis at the intersection of Virginia Avenue at Shelby and Prospect streets, was the first commercial historic district in Indiana. Its buildings span more than a century from 1871 to the present.

Extensively renovated starting in 1993, the building houses entertainment and events in the Fountain Square Theatre, art galleries and studios, two restaurants, seasonal rooftop dining, a cocktail bar, and duckpin bowling in either of two vintage alleys.

Duckpin bowling was born in Baltimore in 1900 and was a favorite of Babe Ruth. It uses smaller balls and pins and has different rules. The Action Duckpin Bowl has been restored with authentic 1930s vintage bowling equipment and eight lanes. A café area seats up to 120 guests, and surrounding windows give a great view of downtown.

The Atomic Bowl Duckpin, in the building's basement, has seven lanes with authentic 1950s and 1960s bowling equipment, along with displays of mid-century bowling collectibles. A café seats up to 90 guests. Visit www.fountainsquareindy.com.

Bar and lounge

The **ball & biscuit**, two minutes from downtown at 331 Massachusetts Ave., is a bar and lounge set in the cultural corridor of the Mass Ave neighborhood. True to its eclectic surroundings, it has the laid-back atmosphere of a Prohibition-era speakeasy.

From the 150-year-old quarter-sawn wood floor, to the distressed leather chairs, the exposed brick walls and the tin ceiling, the place is a neighborhood bar at heart. The menu includes craft beers, boutique wines and unique cocktails that range from pre-Prohibition classics to modern concoctions. Unique bar foods are served in an atmosphere of background music conducive to good conversation. Visit www.ballandbiscuit.com.

Casual dining

Black Market is a new gastro pub at 922 Massachusetts Ave., four minutes from the Convention Center. It serves up "comfort food" with an Indiana

flavor along with local beers and wines. Foods made with old-fashioned pickling and preservation methods often appear in the restaurant's dishes. Entrees like ale steamed mussels, rainbow trout, mushroom dumplings and the Black Market burger are served in a casual atmosphere where diners in a suit or jeans are equally welcome. Entree prices range from \$12 to \$22. Visit www.blackmarketindy.net.

Historic site

Dominating the five-block picturesque setting of War Memorial Plaza in downtown Indianapolis, the **Indiana World War Memorial** sits 210 feet above street level. This mausoleum-style limestone and marble memorial honors Hoosiers killed during World Wars I and II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

The memorial, at 431 N. Meridian St., includes multiple standing figures that symbolize courage, memory, peace, victory, liberty and patriotism. The Shrine Room, with 24 stained glass windows, provides the setting for a 17-by-30-foot American flag suspended from the ceiling. A military museum in the basement follows the history of Indiana soldiers from the Battle of Tippecanoe through the most recent conflicts. Visit www.in.gov/iwm.

Shopping

Midland Arts & Antiques in downtown Indy can keep you occupied for hours with four floors full of art and antiques from more than 200 dealers from around the Midwest. Located at 907 E. Michigan St., four minutes from the Convention Center, the market has been a destination for more than 15 years. Merchandise includes decorative items, works by local artists, furniture, pottery, vintage jewelry, 1950s collectibles, china and a great deal more. Visit www.midlandathome.com. ■



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By Jim Kneiszel

This red and white GMC 5500 vacuum truck built out by Imperial Industries is a top rig for P & C Sanitation. (Photos by Jim Kneiszel)



THE RIG: 2006 GMC 5500 built out by Imperial Industries.

BEHIND THE WHEEL: Kevin Marks

COMPANY: P & C Sanitation, Seymour, Wis., was started in 2005 by Paul and Connie Marks and maintains 400 portable restrooms serving construction and special event customers.

SPECS: Owner Paul Marks bought the '06 GMC chassis in 2008 from Fox Valley Trucks, then had it built out by Imperial with a 575-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tank and Masport HXL4 vacuum pump and a Burks DC10 water pump. The 19,500-pound GVW truck is powered by a 325-hp Duramax diesel engine tied to an Allison automatic transmission. Features include a dual restroom carrier on the back, aluminum wheels, two aluminum storage boxes, spray-on bedliner on the hose rack and work lights.

SHOWING MY COLORS: On this unit, Marks stuck with the red cab that came with the truck, and had Imperial add the tank in white. Maverick

Graphics added checkerboard graphics and lettering in a clean look. "Everything we've got has a checkered flag," Marks explains. "It dresses it up a little bit and offers something to break up the white tank. When you back into somebody's yard, you can't be driving junk," he says of the need to update trucks frequently.

WORKIN' FOR A LIVIN': Kevin Marks runs the GMC truck on daily restroom routes heading up to 90 miles north from the company's headquarters, while Paul Marks runs another truck on routes up to 60 miles south of the office. The company has maintained a good clientele in construction, and serves a variety of special events, mainly in the summer months.

ROLLING THE ODOMETER: The GMC logs about 40,000 miles per year.

WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT MY TRUCK: "It's just sharp and clean. Kevin takes nice care of it. You take that truck through a parade and everybody's looking at it," Marks says.



Kevin Marks and his dog, Baxter, run service routes together for P & C Sanitation in Wisconsin.

CREATURE COMFORTS: The rig came with all the extras you'll find in a pickup truck: air conditioning, cruise, tilt, CD player, tinted windows and an air-ride seat.

WHY GMC: It's all in the Duramax diesel, Marks says. "One of the guys that rents from me is a mechanic, and he knows the Duramax inside out. If I have any problems, he takes care of it." One of Marks' several businesses is operating a truck- and tractor-pulling track, and he appreciates a truck that knows how to pull. He says the majority of trucks that show up for pulls run Duramax engines, and the GMC easily pulls his 16-place restroom hauler or his 6,000-pound home-built restroom trailer. "That truck plays with it. It doesn't even know (the trailers) are back there," he says.

PAMPERING MY RIG: Marks delivers the props to his brother, Kevin, for keeping the GMC in showroom condition. Kevin Marks greases the truck every week, washes it four times a week and details it once a week. The engine is meticulously maintained, with oil changes every 5,000 miles. The vacuum pump is flushed with diesel every couple weeks. Tires are rotated regularly. The truck is kept in a heated garage to minimize wear and tear from Wisconsin winters. "For the year of that truck, it looks brand new. Kevin does all of that. He's pretty particular about that truck," Marks says. "As much as those trucks cost, you have to take care of them. If the trucks look nice, customers think they're getting quality service. If you're backing up there with junk, they're thinking they should have hired someone else."

MY BACKUP SERVICE VEHICLE: A 2005 Ford F-550 with the same tank and pump package as the GMC, also from Imperial Industries. The backup is Marks' daily driver, with 183,000 miles on the odometer.

WHEN I'M NOT IN THE CAB: Paul Marks spends free time with his wife, Connie, and their two sons, Konor, 7, and Kyler, 4. He also enjoys deer hunting, ice fishing, snowmobiling and competing in tractor and truck pulls.

"AS MUCH AS THOSE TRUCKS COST, YOU HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THEM. IF THE TRUCKS LOOK NICE, CUSTOMERS THINK THEY'RE GETTING QUALITY SERVICE. IF YOU'RE BACKING UP THERE WITH JUNK, THEY'RE THINKING THEY SHOULD HAVE HIRED SOMEONE ELSE."

Paul Marks

Park it over here!

Do you have a truck that's a real head-turner on the highway? This feature is your opportunity to share it with readers of PRO. Take a digital photo of your PRO Ride, posing the owner(s) with the truck. Any Portable Sanitation industry truck is acceptable. Please limit your submission to one truck only.

Your submission must include your name, company name, mailing address, phone number and details about the truck including tank size, cab/chassis information, pump information, the company that built the truck and any other details you consider important. In particular, tell us what truck features help make your work life more efficient and profitable.

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Bob Carlson is owner of Glendale Welding in Glendale, Ariz. His company has been building and repairing portable sanitation trucks for 40 years. Send questions for Carlson to truckcorner@promonthly.com.



The Magic of Vacuum

SIMPLE EMPTY ENGINEERING EXPLAINS HOW PUMPS CAN HOLD VACUUM UNTIL YOU NEED IT TO EMPTY RESTROOM HOLDING TANKS EFFICIENTLY

By Bob Carlson

QUESTION: I've been cleaning portable restrooms for three years but I really don't understand how the vacuum pump works. How can it pull the air out of the tank without letting more air in? I see the shaft and how it seems to be centered in the pump and since that is the case, I don't understand why it isn't allowing as much air into the tank as it is pulling out.

**Hank Sanders
Gillette, Wyo.**

ANSWER: The answer to your questions is relatively simple and explains the difference between a blower and a vacuum pump. Let's take a look at the two types of machines.

First, we'll look at the blower. The blower has a housing in which the shaft and the vanes are centered in the housing. The vanes are equally spaced and their purpose is to move air, a lot of air. The vanes are in a fixed position on the shaft. As the blower receives power, the shaft turns at high speed and the rotation pulls the air out of a tank and evacuates it into the atmosphere.

The air is being removed from the tank faster than it can be replaced. The blower, in that sense, acts like a vacuum cleaner. The air is moving so fast that a temporary vacuum is created. When the blower is turned off, the vacuum that has been created dissipates. This is one of the major differences between a vacuum pump and a blower.

PRESERVE VACUUM

When you create vacuum using a vacuum pump, the vacuum remains in the tank until a valve is opened and the outside air rushes in, or when the valve is hooked to a hose, the material in the hose is pulled into the tank.

The vacuum pump is structured differently than a blower pump. The first major difference is that the shaft is not centered inside the housing. The vanes are placed in a rotor with slots for the vanes to slide back and forth.

The vanes are not fixed to the shaft. As the rotor turns, the vanes slide out to the lubricated housing. As the vanes near the narrowing of the housing they slide back into the rotor, making sure the air is evacuated from the tank and not returned to the tank.

The air is then pulled from the vacuum tank and allowed to exit through the exhaust port (which is usually the path to the oil catch muffler) and eventually to the outside air. The vanes, sliding up against the inner housing, do not allow the air to return to the tank. They act as seals to prevent the air from returning.

Consequently, the vacuum remains in the tank when the pump is turned off. There is no relief for the vacuum until the valve is opened. By utilizing the off-centered shaft and rotor, the pump locks the vacuum in place and becomes an economical way, as you all know, for pumping septic tanks and portable restrooms.

BY UTILIZING THE OFF-CENTERED SHAFT AND ROTOR, THE PUMP LOCKS THE VACUUM IN PLACE AND BECOMES AN ECONOMICAL WAY, AS YOU ALL KNOW, FOR PUMPING SEPTIC TANKS AND PORTABLE RESTROOMS.

It's critical to pay close attention to the oil being used in the vacuum pump. While a blower requires oil for the bearings due to the high-speed rotation of the shaft, the vacuum pump is somewhat different. It needs oil for the bearings, but it also needs oil throughout the interior of the pump housing so that the vanes are able to slide over the surface at approximately 1,100 rpm.

Always use the type of oil specified by the manufacturer. Each pump manufacturer constructs vanes from different materials. Those materials react differently to different types of oil.

As they slide back and forth in the housing, the vanes are likely to wear down due to friction. As they wear down, the efficiency of the pump decreases. This is a common maintenance issue and it's fairly easy to diagnose. Pump manufacturers sell rebuild kits to ensure you can continue to use their pumps for years to come. A rebuild kit consists of vanes, seals and bearings and is intended for a specific pump.

When opening the end plate of a vacuum pump to install a rebuild kit, you'll see exactly what I have described. ■

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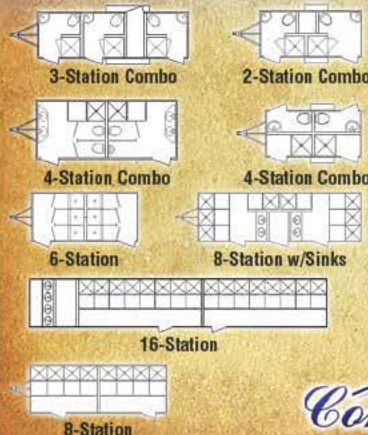
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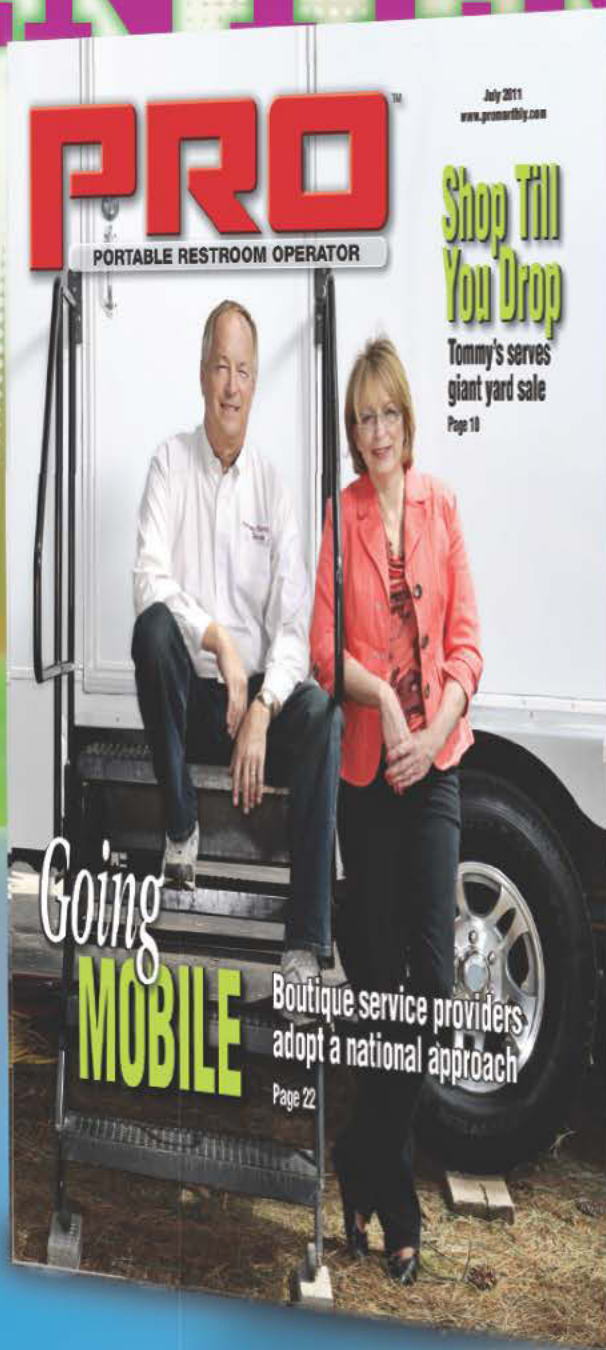
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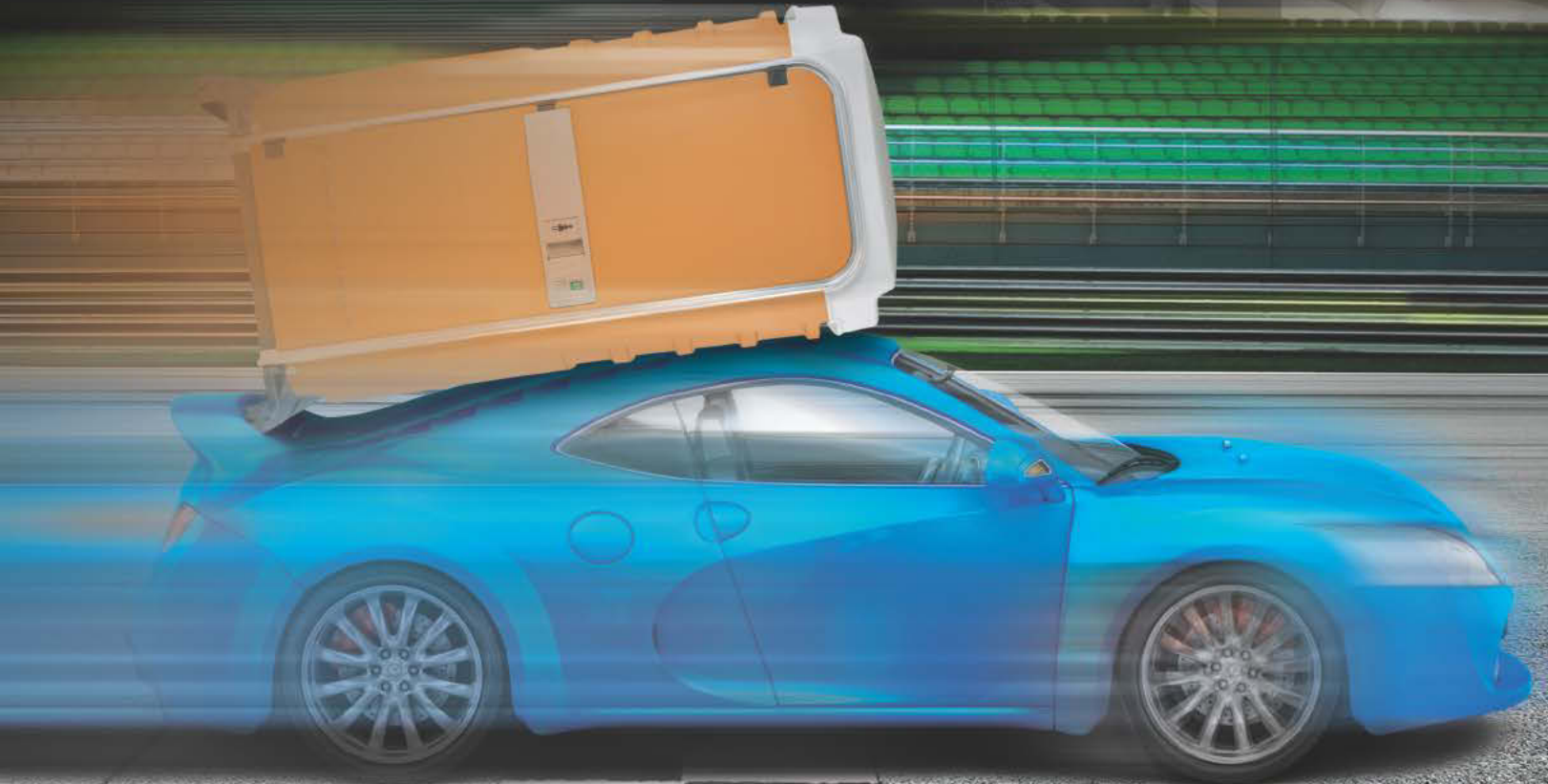
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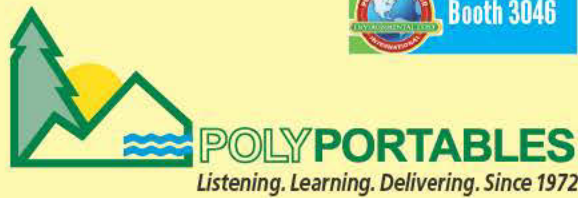
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