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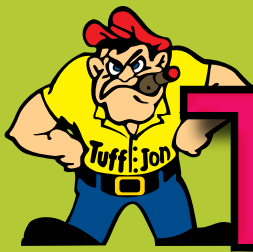
August 2015
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GROWING SMARTER

Successful with restrooms,
Nebraska's AI Branding branches
out into new, complementary
services **Page 24**

One-Stop Shop

Michigan PROs double down by providing
wastewater service and party supplies
Page 16



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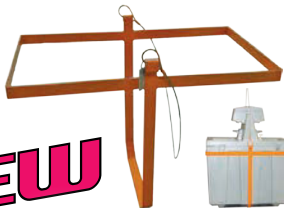


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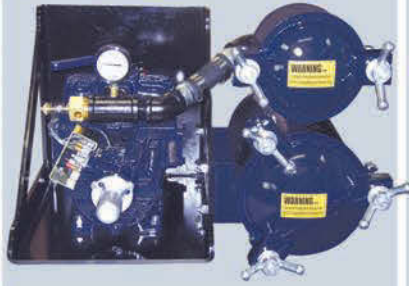
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Take 5: Growing Smarter
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ON THE COVER: Al Branding, owner of Al's Johns in Raymond, Nebraska, juggles three distinct businesses, refuses to play the low-price game for restrooms, and looks forward to passing the business to a new generation someday. Branding is shown with a Hino service truck built out by Satellite Industries and carrying a Conde pump (Westmor Ltd.). (Photo by Matt Ryerson)

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- **PRofile:** A homebuilder adds portable restrooms
- **Take 5:** Restrooms and party supplies in Indiana

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Let's Get This Party Started

EXPLORE WAYS TO INCORPORATE A FUN OUTING WITH PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS INTO YOUR NETWORKING PLANS

By Jim Kneiszel

A small-business contractor told me an interesting networking story the other day. We're not talking about the kind of networking you do at the chamber of commerce or by handing out brochures at a trade show. It was about entertaining prospective customers. This fella isn't in the portable sanitation business; rather, he provides septic system inspections. But his fun business-to-business marketing approach might spur ideas you can use to sell restroom services.

The Missouri business owner wanted to spend some time pitching his services to a real estate company in his hometown. So he bought 40 tickets to a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game, rented a coach bus and took everybody in the firm to the ballpark. Along the way they went to a nice restaurant for dinner. Everyone had a blast cheering on the redbirds ... and the contractor hopes he spread a whole lot of goodwill that will lead to future work for his company.

The Major League networking experience must have cost that contractor a small fortune, funds that could have been spent to advertise his business in many ways. But he's confident the baseball outing will pay dividends.

How much would you spend to have a captive audience of your targeted customer base for dinner, drinks and a ballgame? How far would you go to woo a builders' group to fill another construction restroom route? Would you write a big check to get to know a busload of event planners?

A GOOD INVESTMENT?

When you consider what this business owner planned and the potential benefit to his company, you might say, yep, that sounds like a good investment. But up until you heard this story, have you ever planned a grand networking gesture like this? Have you even taken a carload of potential customers out to lunch at Subway?

When it comes to business-to-business networking, many of us are guilty of not thinking big. This contractor may have spent a few thousand dollars treating his potential customers, but you can bet they were all talking about the swell time they had the following day at the real estate office. And the next time the Realtors need an inspector, there's a good chance they'll be calling the generous baseball fan.

So how do you get started making your own big networking statement? Consider these first steps:

Target your audience. Whom do you want to fill your tour bus - or minivan - for a networking outing? It could be the membership of the local builders' association or the board of the county fair association. Or you could go smaller by inviting one building company's executive team or a handful of wedding planners. To get the best bang for the buck, the group should include decision-makers who can land you new work or ensure repeat business for your restroom company.

This contractor may have spent a few thousand dollars treating his potential customers, but you can bet they were all talking about the swell time they had the following day.

Set a budget. How much can you reasonably spend on a special networking event? Temper your plan with realistic expectations. Would one new customer or job resulting from the networking put a significant dent in the cost of a night on the town? Can you justify taking from an existing budget for marketing purposes? Review where your marketing money is being spent and judge if it's being used effectively. Perhaps you'll determine that money would be better spent on networking than an ad in the phone book, for example.

Choose an irresistible activity. It should go without saying that you can't build goodwill by planning an event nobody is excited about attending. Go back to our example; not many people in the St. Louis area are going to turn down a free trip to cheer for their beloved Cardinals. Major league sports are a compelling attraction. Think about the irresistible activities in your hometown or region - maybe a casino night, a golf outing at a more exclusive course, a big touring musical attraction or the popular new hotspot everyone is talking about.

Pick the right date and time. Choose a time and day for your networking event that presents the fewest conflicts for the folks you're inviting. You probably want to stay away from Sundays, which many people reserve for time with the family. Avoid holidays, holiday weekends and daytime hours when business owners or managers may be too busy to get away. Weekday evenings Monday through Thursday might work best.

Keep it fun. Think party rather than hard sell. You're a cruise director more than a used car salesman for this type of outing. Get to know people on a personal level. Talk about their families and shared experiences over a beer or two; if business comes up, that's fine, but don't bring the party down. This is not the venue for going on and on about your service protocol or pulling out a brochure showing your restroom trailers. This networking opportunity is about making friends. You can reel them in as customers later.

A MULTIPRONGED APPROACH

Some small-business owners might frown on this type of outing, calling it a "junket" with a high cost and uncertain payoff. I see it, rather, as just one of many ways to promote your business in a competitive marketplace. Don't plan a party at the expense of other proven marketing programs - such as targeted advertising, participation in business-to-business trade fairs or creating a float for the hometown parade. But there's no reason you can't mix business and pleasure once in a while in hopes of landing a big customer. ■

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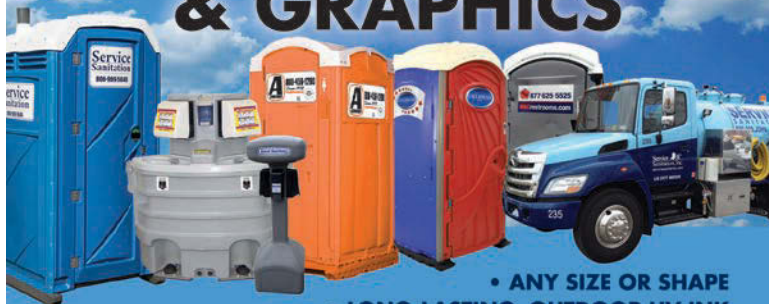


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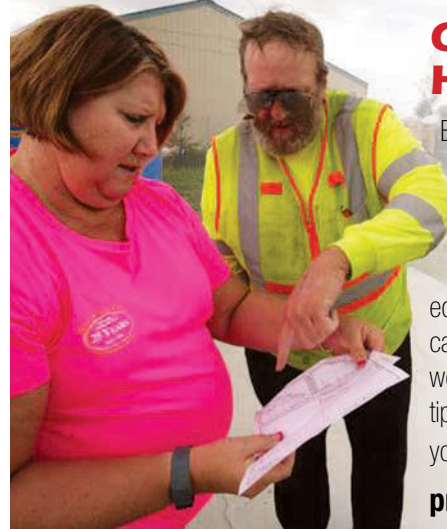
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Let's Make a Deal

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A TOP-FLIGHT JOB CANDIDATE COUNTERS YOUR WAGE OFFER? DO YOU NEGOTIATE PAY OR KEEP INTERVIEWING?

By Judy Kneiszel

If your portable restroom business is booming and you need to add staff, or you've had an employee resign, you face the challenge of attracting someone who will be a good fit for your company. They also need to be a good fit for your payroll budget. So what do you do if you find the perfect candidate who could step right into the position, but they won't accept the job at the salary you are offering? Do you negotiate? Or just move on to No. 2 on the list of applicants?

Why is this happening?

When the U.S. unemployment rate topped 10 percent in 2009, most applicants were thrilled to get any job and accepted whatever the wages offered. In 2015, the unemployment rate is considerably lower, dipping below 5.5 percent in April according to the Labor Department.

While lower unemployment may be good news for the overall economy, it could mean your job offer isn't the only one on the table for an applicant and he or she may want to negotiate.

Do your homework

Before you even advertise that you have an opening, evaluate what you are paying current employees to help determine how much you are prepared to offer the new person.

Don't mislead a qualified applicant into thinking the job's salary is significantly higher than it really is in hopes that once they meet you, see your operation and learn about your company they will jump at whatever you offer. Sure you've got a wonderful company, but their initial infatuation will quickly change to resentment if they aren't offered what they think they are worth.

Two websites can help you determine the going rate for the job you are offering. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides national hourly and salary wage estimates for about 800 occupations based on surveys it conducts (bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm). You can even narrow down the information by geography. Similarly, the "Salary Wizard" at salary.com has a searchable database of salaries by job title and location.

This information is easy to access, so obviously job applicants can look it up too and will know if you are low-balling them. Even if they don't know when they take the job, it probably won't take them long to figure out if you pay significantly less than the going rate in your area. While it may save you some money initially, if the job market continues to be strong, you could very well lose the new employee and maybe some old ones to the competition in the next couple of years if you pay significantly less than the going rate.

Once you've determined where the going rate intersects with what your company can afford, you've got two choices: either decide that your first of-

If the job market continues to be strong, you could very well lose the new employee and maybe some old ones to the competition in the next couple of years if you pay significantly less than the going rate.

fer will be your final offer, or come up with an offer that has some wiggle room in case the candidate wants to negotiate. Once you know what the going pay rate is for the job you are advertising and factor in how high you can actually afford to go, you can devise an initial offer. If you did your homework, your starting point for negotiations shouldn't be too far from where both you and the employee would be happy.

If you are willing to negotiate, know your absolute top limit and be prepared to let the prospect walk away.

How important is this job?

When determining a wage offer for a particular candidate, ask yourself these questions:

- Are other, equally qualified candidates available if this applicant says no? If the answer is yes, you have the upper hand.
- Has the job been difficult to fill? Are market conditions making finding and recruiting suitable candidates challenging? If yes, the job applicant has leverage.

If you've invested time and money in this candidate, you may want to increase your offer. On the other hand, if he or she has been unemployed for a long time, there's a good chance the applicant will accept an initial offer. Someone with a lot of experience or particularly valuable training and skills may demand higher pay than someone just starting out.

Also keep in mind that if the candidate would have to relocate for the job or commute a long distance every day it could increase the salary required to lure them into your company.

How to negotiate

If you've made your final wage offer, there are ways to further encourage a potential employee to sign on. Take a cue from the sports world and offer a signing bonus. This is an up-front, one-time cash payment given to an employee at the start of employment, independent of salary. To the employee, it might help defray the costs of taking a new job. For the employer, it shows the seriousness of the job offer without altering the company's salary structure.

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Don't make promises you can't keep, however, or you'll create resentment. For example, don't dangle a possible year-end bonus in front of an applicant in order to get them to agree to a lower wage if you've got no intention of following through on a bonus. Don't suggest that a starting wage is only temporary until the candidate proves his or her worth if you have no intention of actually giving them a raise after a probationary period.

Beware the bidding war

Maybe the perfect candidate walked through the door after a sad parade of grossly unqualified job seekers, and you know he would be an asset to your company. You make an offer and it's rejected. You strongly suspect he's negotiating with the competition, so you up your offer again and again because your competitiveness kicked in and you want to win. Stop yourself before you make an offer so out of line with existing pay levels for comparable positions at your company that it causes turmoil.

A certain degree of pay equity among co-workers doing the same job creates an environment of teamwork and fairness. If you get carried away in negotiations and offer a candidate wages significantly higher than the company's existing pay scale, you risk hurting staff morale if other employees find out. While you'd like to think employees are discreet, this type of information can leak out.

If a job candidate's demands are significantly higher than what you are currently paying, either those demands or your current pay structure is out of line. Accept that the candidate may reject the job offer or face the fact that you need to bring everyone else up to scale.

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If you do choose to negotiate with a potential employee and end up paying more than you initially offered, don't resent the employee down the road for costing more. It was ultimately your decision. The fact that your new employee was a well-prepared and confident negotiator means he or she will be a well-prepared and confident employee. That's just the kind of person you want on your team.

Yes, negotiating can be stressful for both parties. The only way to start this new employer/employee relationship off on the right foot is for both of you to be satisfied when you seal the deal. ■

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The Stenberg crew includes, from left, Matt Stenberg, Jeremy Vandermissen, Lance Possi, Mitch Dagenais, Carl Stenberg, Wayne Stenberg, Rob Gerstner, Mark Stenberg and Dave Falish. The company's JAG Mobile Solutions restroom trailer is in the background. (Photos by Holly Richer)



ONE-STOP SHOP

When a portable restroom operator caters to a large, mostly rural and sparsely populated area, it often pays to offer more than one service rather than keep all of its proverbial eggs in one basket. A good example is Stenberg Bros. Inc., a well-diversified, family-owned company that provides its customers in Michigan's central Upper Peninsula with everything from portable restrooms to party/special-event rentals to septic tank pumping and excavating.

"To keep everyone busy and generate sufficient business volume, we found we had to do more than just one thing," says Wayne Stenberg, the company's general manager and one of four brothers who are minority owners of the company, based in Bark River, Michigan. Their father, Carl Stenberg, is the majority owner, and brothers Mark, Matt and Todd round out the other three co-owners. "The more diversified you are, the better off you are, especially up here ... it's better to not be too dependent on one market.

"Plus, most people would rather deal with one company than multiple companies, so the more services we offer, the better it is for our customers," he adds.

The add-on services didn't come about randomly. They were similar enough to avoid a huge learning curve in terms of equipment used and markets served. Or they leveraged an existing base of customers, which minimizes the need for additional marketing efforts and makes the most of customer points-of-contact. A good example of that synergy is restroom and party rentals. And as a bonus, a wider array of services provides more consistent cash flow and can help ease

Michigan's Stenberg Bros. provides diverse wastewater services and party supplies under one big tent to keep customers coming back for more

BY KEN WYSOCKY

Stenberg Bros. Inc. Bark River, Michigan

Owners: Carl, Wayne, Mark, Matt and Todd Stenberg

Founded: 1970

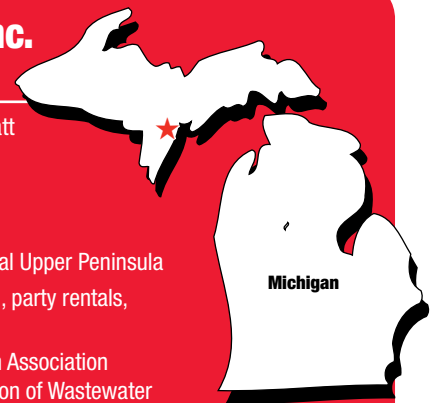
Employees: 18

Service Area: Michigan's central Upper Peninsula

Specialties: Portable sanitation, party rentals, septic service

Affiliations: Portable Sanitation Association International, National Association of Wastewater Technicians, Michigan Septic Tank Association

Website: www.stenbergs.us



(continued)



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Right: Mark Stenberg pauses on a route in Escanaba, Michigan, to look at work orders.

Below: Stenberg moves a Satellite Industries wheelchair-accessible restroom at the company yard.



up-and-down fluctuations or offset seasonal downturns in business, Wayne says.

Carl Stenberg founded the company in 1970, primarily as a septic tank pumping outfit that dabbled in portable restrooms and general excavating on the side. Today, septic services account for roughly 35 percent of the company's business volume, while portable restrooms contribute 50 percent and party rentals generate the remaining 15 percent. The family also owns an industrial-cleaning and hazardous-waste-hauling company called UP Environmental Services Inc.

"We were already a service company bringing in restrooms, so party rental was a natural fit," says Mark Stenberg, who heads up the company's portable restroom operations. "We built it up slowly because chairs and tables and tents are pricey. Getting into party rentals helped make us more competitive ... customers like the one-stop-shop concept."

MORE SERVICES, MORE EQUIPMENT

Providing so many services requires a large inventory of equipment. On the portable sanitation side, Stenberg Bros. owns approximately 600 restrooms, primarily from Satellite Industries, PolyPortables LLC and Five Peaks; about 50 hand-wash stations from Five Peaks and PolyPortables; and two restroom trailers from JAG Mobile Solutions Inc., used mostly for weddings.

The business runs five restroom service trucks, all built out by Imperial Industries Inc. with Masport Inc. pumps: a 2015 Ford F-550 with a 1,100-gallon wastewater/300-gallon freshwater aluminum tank; a 2008 International with a 1,200-gallon waste/400-gallon freshwater aluminum tank; a 2000 Ford F-650 with a 1,000-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater

"Almost everyone in our company can jump into a different truck and do the job ... We're all pretty versatile, and part of that comes from hiring drivers with commercial driver's licenses so they can drive all of our heavy trucks."

MARK STENBERG

steel tank; a 2006 Ford F-750 with a 1,000-gallon waste/400-gallon freshwater aluminum tank; and a 2006 GMC with a 300-gallon waste/150-gallon freshwater slide-in steel tank.

In addition, the business owns a 2004 Ford flatbed rack truck carrying an Imperial slide-in aluminum tank (400-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater). The tank is mounted crosswise on the flatbed, behind the cab, leaving room to haul six restrooms.

On the septic pumping side, Stenberg Bros. owns four pump trucks: a 2008 Freightliner with a 3,600-gallon aluminum tank and

a Challenger pump (National Vacuum Equipment), outfitted by Imperial; a 1998 International 4300 with a 2,300-gallon steel tank built by T-Line Equipment Inc. with a Jurop/Chandler pump; and two 2000 Sterling trucks, one built out by T-Line with a 2,300-gallon steel tank and a Jurop/Chandler pump and the other outfitted by Imperial with a 3,400-gallon steel tank and a pump made by Fruitland Manufacturing.

For dirt work, the business owns a backhoe, a bulldozer, two wheel loaders and a tractor, all John Deere models; an International quad-axle dump truck with a 20-cubic-yard dump body; a multi-terrain track Case loader; and a pipeline inspection camera system, a portable drain-cleaning machine and a portable water jetter, all from Spartan Tool LLC.

To support the party business, Stenberg Bros. owns about 150 plastic rental tables (either 8-foot-long or 5-foot-diameter round tables), an estimated 1,000 chairs and more than 30 tents.

STRATEGIC GROWTH

To expand the company's territory and boost business volume, Stenberg Bros. acquired five other restroom companies over the last 15 years, either

(continued)

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Getting into party rentals: Plan for equipment costs

Party rentals – things such as tents, tables and chairs for special events – are a logical add-on service for portable restroom operators who are looking for an additional revenue stream and worry about being too dependent on one core service. Stenberg Bros. Inc., a portable restroom outfit based roughly in the southern center of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, jumped into party rentals about a decade ago, and the move has paid dividends since then.

"It fit in well with what we were already doing," says Wayne Stenberg, one of four sons who co-own the company along with their father, Carl. "And no one else in our area was doing it, other than a couple of mom-and-pop outfits. There weren't a lot of customers asking for it, but enough to make it worthwhile to get into. We started out with six tents and now have close to 30."

Wayne says profit margins on party rentals are decent, but anyone who's thinking about branching out should understand that the startup costs are considerable. For example, one 20- by 20-foot tent costs roughly \$3,500 and an 8-foot-long plastic table goes for about \$100. The rental rate for a 20- by 20-foot tent is \$225 for a weekend and \$8 per table. The company buys its tents from Economy Tent International, tables from Lifetime Products and chairs from PS Furniture.

Stenberg Bros. owns about 150 tables, approximately 1,000 chair, and tents ranging in size from 20 by 20 feet to 40 by 80 feet. They're all what's known as frame tents, which means there's no center pole for support. "Frame tents just look nicer because there's no center poles ... people like them because they're so wide open inside," Wayne says. "They also can better withstand higher winds because they're more heavy-duty."

The company also bought a 14-foot Ford cube van, two Ford pickup trucks and two trailers made by Wells Cargo Inc. to transport tents and other rental items. Stenberg Bros. also hires two high-school students during summers to handle party-rental deliveries and setups, Wayne says, ticking off other startup and ongoing costs. "Like with anything else, it took about four or five years before we started getting a return on our investment," Wayne says.

Another tip: The company started out buying smaller tents first; as demand grew, it was buying larger tents. "The biggest thing is to take good care of the tents," he says. "There's more to it in terms of maintenance and upkeep than you think. It's especially important to store them properly ... put them away only if they're thoroughly dried so you don't get mold. And if you fold them up correctly, they're that much easier to install."

because the owners were retiring or wanted out from part-time operations. "That's the main way we gained market share," he notes.

But just as importantly, the company kept those new customers on board by providing great customer service – doing things like cleaning restrooms thoroughly and continually reinvesting in newer, nice-looking restrooms, he adds.

To provide faster service, the company opened a second facility in Gwinn, which is about 80 miles north of Bark River and close to Marquette, the largest city in the Upper Peninsula. "It takes about an hour and 30



minutes to drive from Bark River to Marquette, so it was hard to justify doing all that driving – a three-hour round trip," Mark explains. "So we have four guys up there that run two septic trucks and two restroom trucks. We do some party rentals from up there, too."

Technician Neil Larson stocks paper products on his International service rig built out by Imperial Industries with a Masport vacuum pump.

Stenberg Bros. collects about 1.3 million gallons of waste annually. Fortunately, waste-disposal facilities are conveniently located: one in Bark River and one in Gwinn. Any waste collected within a 25-mile radius of Bark River must be dumped at the Bark River treatment facility. The same rule holds true for waste collected in and around Gwinn.

To reduce operating expenses, the company also land-applies waste collected beyond a 25-mile radius around Bark River. During summers, the company applies the waste on about 40 acres of farmland the company owns, using a Challenger TerraGator land injector. Drivers first off-load waste into two 25,000-gallon and one 10,000-gallon steel holding tanks before pumping it into the Gator's 3,000-gallon tank for land application, Mark says.

NOT NECESSARILY A BARGAIN

Providing good customer service offers another benefit: It helps Stenberg Bros. ward off fly-by-night competitors who try to gain market share by offering low-ball prices.

"Under some circumstances, we'll match a low-ball price. But most times we explain to customers that if there's a problem, that guy is not as likely to take care of you because it's not how he makes a living. But we always will."

MARK STENBERG

"It's fairly easy to get into septic pumping or the (portable) restroom industry in Michigan," Mark points out. "You get a permit and buy a truck – it's not very complicated. As a result, we see a lot of guys that get into either business on the side and start under-cutting on price."

This is where customer education kicks in. The Stenbergs stress that low-price companies may not be as responsive to off-hour calls for service, while an established service provider has a reputation to protect.

"Under some circumstances, we'll match a low-ball price. But most times we explain to customers that if there's a problem, that guy is not as likely to take care of you because it's not how he makes a living. But we



always will," Mark explains. "Customers can call us 24 hours a day and someone will answer the phone. You just hope customers realize that."

To increase operating efficiencies, the company cross-trains employees so they're just as adept at pumping out septic tanks as they are at servicing restrooms; this also illustrates the benefits of adding complementary services. The company's various divisions also borrow equipment from each other when needed, which minimizes capital expenditures, Mark notes.

"That's how we're able to make things work to our advantage," Mark says. "Almost everyone in our company can jump into a different truck and do the job. A guy on the environmental side, for example, might help set up tents if things are slow for that division. We're all pretty versatile, and part of that comes from hiring drivers with commercial driver's licenses so they can drive all of our heavy trucks."

Clearly, diversity – whether it's employee skills, equipment or services – is a vital part of Stenberg Bros.' strategy for success. ■

Mark Stenberg pumps a PolyPortables LLC restroom placed temporarily at an accounting firm's office during plumbing repairs. All of Stenberg's restroom service trucks were built by Imperial Industries and use Masport pumps.

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Flat Vac tanks can carry up to 2,000 gallons of waste and haul up to 12 restrooms for delivery

By Craig Mandli

Amthor International has been manufacturing the Matador Flat Vac portable restroom tank truck for several years, but customer feedback at trade shows such as the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show has given Butch Amthor keen insight on design improvements. Several of those updates were on display on the Matador Flat Vac model on the 2015 WWETT Show exhibit floor.

“The biggest change this year is the rounded-bottom tank with a full-length formed sump design for drainage,” says Amthor, the company’s executive vice president. “All waste material flows to the center, which virtually makes the tank self-cleaning.”

The Matador Flat Vac serves as a multipurpose vehicle for portable restroom operators, as it carries six (on the 12-foot model) to 12 restrooms (on the 20-foot model) on top of the tank, as well as pulls a restroom delivery



Butch Amthor, left, of Amthor International, points out the new rounded bottom on the company’s Matador Flat Vac tank for an attendee at the 2015 WWETT Show. (Photo by Craig Mandli)

trailer. The vacuum tank includes full baffles every 24 inches transversely and longitudinally for strength, with separate wastewater and freshwater compartments as well as an option for a chemical or brine compartment.

“Your typical portable restroom service truck will have a carrier on the back for two units, while this unit carries up to 12 and is still compact enough to fit into tight areas for special event servicing,” says Amthor. “Being able to deliver units and service them with the same truck is both cost- and time-efficient.”

Tanks are available in 800 to 2,000-gallon capacities, with a standard 4-inch waste valve and 2-inch water valve, and 2-inch pressure-relief valve. It is available in 1/4-inch steel, 1/4-inch stainless steel or 5/16-inch aluminum, and comes with a workstation and a vertical cabinet with an aluminum extruded door including multiple shelves. There are 2-inch sight glasses for the waste compartment and a sight tube for the water compartment. A liftgate is installed behind the tank to load and unload restrooms. It has an outside rub-rail with stake pockets every 36 inches. Aluminum removable side racks with e-track or solid sides are available.

“The frame actually flexes opposite of the body, which provides a smoother ride for passengers and cargo,” says Amthor. “It is easy to load and unload units with the liftgate as well. It’s a unit made for one-person operation if needed.”

Amthor says the 2015 model of the Matador Flat Vac is the result of several years of feedback, much of which has come on the WWETT Show floor. “That’s how we learn what works and what doesn’t in this industry,” he says. “The rounded trough design came directly from customer feedback. They wanted something that was easier to clean, and we listened.”

Amthor points out that his company’s goal is to debut a new product at every WWETT Show, and he promises 2016 will be no different, though he doesn’t want to get into specifics.

“A lot of the decision will come down to what we hear on the floor here,” he said during the 2015 show. “I’m always thinking about something new or a way to innovate something we already have. And this show is always the one we aim for. It’s the biggest in the industry.” **800/328-6633; www.amthorinternational.com. ■**



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Take 5 ... with Al Branding

Growing Smarter

Nebraska's Al Branding turned a construction injury into a new career — and a surprising expansion into other businesses

By Peter Kenter

When a back injury sidelined Al Branding from a construction career, he applied for what he thought was a full-time waste hauling job in Kansas City, Kansas.

"Instead, I found out I was applying to drive for a portable restroom company," says Branding. "I was hired, and I liked the job. I was paid on piecework and I was pretty aggressive. I soon figured out how much the truck cost and how much money I could make on my own."

Branding sat down with his wife, Thressa, to choose a location large enough to sustain growth but where customers were underserved. They settled on Raymond, Nebraska, and a service radius of about 50 miles, including Lincoln.

"We bought 15 Satellite units and a GMC pumper truck from Lane's Vacuum Tank in Kentucky and started up in 1995," says Branding.

Twenty years later, Al's Johns offers 715 portables, most of them by Satellite Industries. About 25 units are handicap-accessible models from PolyPortables LLC, and 15 PolyJohn Enterprises units mounted on trailers are fabricated in-house. Three luxury restroom trailers are all from Ameri-Can — a 2014 816 Oasis, a 612 Royale Dooley and an 814 Traditional. Branding also offers 25 hand-wash stations by PolyPortables and 12 hand-sanitizer stands from Satellite.

The company uses Satellite and Walex Products deodorizers.

The pumping fleet includes five vehicles equipped with steel tanks and

Conde pumps (Westmoor Ltd.): a 2015 Hino (800 gallons waste/400 gallons freshwater); a 2011, 2012 and 2013 Ford F-550 (600 gallons waste/250 gallons freshwater), all outfitted by Satellite; and a 2006 7500 GMC flatbed with an unbranded 450-gallon waste tank. The company also runs a 2015 3/4-ton HD Chevy pickup.

The trucks haul two restroom trailers, a 10-unit and a 16-unit, fabricated by a local welder.

"I specialize in the construction industry and split about 70-30 between construction and special events," says Branding. "I do weddings and festivals, mostly in Lincoln, and a lot of high school and college football. I sometimes have 200 units out for home games."

Branding launched a rental service for 20-foot portable storage containers in 2006 (he uses a 2006 GMC 8500 for deliveries) and has operated four day care centers since 2007 (more on that later).

The company employs five workers on the portable restroom side and two managers who cover the three businesses, which employ a total of more than 60 workers. "We're blessed with good employees and if you're going to be successful, you have to treat them fairly," says Branding.

The business has experienced steady growth since it was founded, only sidelined briefly by the 2008 economic downturn.

"We've not only gained back that ground," says Branding, "we're up almost 25 percent over our previous high before the downturn."

EXPLORE FIVE ISSUES THAT AFFECT AL'S PORTABLE SANITATION BUSINESS:



The crew at Al's Johns includes, from left, Amy Hraban, Katt Bryant, Josh Bruhl, B.J. Helmstadter, Thressa and Al Branding, and Sara Martin. They're shown with two service trucks from Satellite Industries. (Photos by Matt Ryerson)

1 RUNNING DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT BUSINESSES ...

Branding found that running a storage pod rental business dovetailed nicely with his portable restroom business. He's also looking to launch a sideline business, refurbishing construction office trailers.

Running a series of day care centers? Not so much.

Branding purchased four day care centers in 2007 to help provide ongoing financial support for the Christian school his sons attend.

"I thought they could turn a profit with minimal attention," he says. "It was enough of an adjustment moving from the male-dominated world of construction to the female-dominated world of day care. But the centers did not perform financially as advertised, so I had to take personal control and with a lot of time and effort eventually stopped the flow of red ink so they could become solvent."

(continued)

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2 ... AND LEARNING TO DELEGATE

"Once I got the day care centers under control, I realized that between day cares, storage containers and portable restrooms I was stretched way too thin," says Branding.

Soon after, Sara Martin was brought in to lessen that load, and she became Branding's right hand for the day care business. Laurie Polivka now manages special projects, promotions and marketing.

"With Sara and Laurie dealing with other important business, I could focus more attention on the restroom business, and it was the smartest decision I could have made," he says. "When you go from a mom-and-pop business to the next level, you need to take on a completely different mindset and set the overall direction for the company — not manage every detail."

AI Branding is shown with Sara Martin, who runs Branding's four Little Hands At Work & Play centers near Omaha, Nebraska. Stretched in too many directions, Branding needed help operating the day care facilities and Martin stepped in.



4 DEVELOPING IN-HOUSE EXPERTISE

If you want something done right, do it yourself. Branding's team continues to perform routine vehicle repair and maintenance and is looking to bring marketing functions in-house.

"We change oil and do brake work on all of the hydraulic brakes," he says. "It not only saves time, it saves money and keeps everyone busy in the few minutes of downtime we experience."

Branding advertises in the phone book and operates a website, but hasn't fine-tuned and optimized advertising opportunities as the business grows. He's currently placing responsibility for marketing in the hands of special projects manager Laurie Polivka.

"I can come up with the projects, but I'm not nimble enough to follow up with the advertising as quickly as I need to in order to alert potential customers," he says. "Laurie promises to help bring our marketing into the 21st century. I'd settle for bringing us into the 17th century."

(continued)

3 THE BEST PRICE, NOT THE LOWEST PRICE

Like many PROs, Branding faces pressure to play the low-price game.

"I have had people ask me to cut the total quote by 50 cents," he says. "I haven't played that game since I went into business. My price includes getting the job done right and done on time."

On occasion, Branding has even recommended his competitors to clients who are unhappy with price.

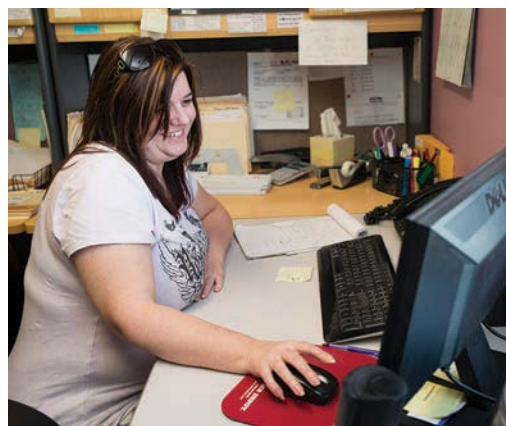
"I've done that maybe five times in the past 20 years," he says. "There are customers out there who will probably be unhappy and frustrated no matter what price I give them or how much service I provide them, and there's no point going down that road with them again. By recommending them to a competitor I'm giving them both a chance for happiness."

Branding's philosophy extends to his own suppliers.

"I'm looking for good products, and if I'm satisfied, I won't keep shopping the contract around," he says. "I'll shop for toilet paper if a supplier discontinues a line, but I won't squeeze suppliers to death over a nickel or a dime."

"I have had people ask me to cut the total quote by 50 cents. I haven't played that game since I went into business. My price includes getting the job done right and done on time."

AI Branding



Left: Employee Amy Hraban fills out a work order for a customer at the AI's Johns office.



Below: Technician Josh Bruhl services a restroom at an apartment complex in Lincoln, Nebraska.



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Some of the inventory, including restrooms from PolyPortables LLC, Satellite Industries and PolyJohn Enterprises, are shown in the company yard in Raymond, Nebraska.



5 PASSING IT ON

Branding's sons Isaac, 17, and Joshua, 15, help out in summers, while Caleb, 25, is finishing a term of duty as a U.S. Marine and is expected to join the business later this year.

"I like the idea of having each of them try their hand at taking over one of the businesses," says Branding. "However, sometimes family businesses run into trouble because the old guard tends to micromanage and smother initiative. The younger ones have a ways to go, but when they're ready I'm not simply going to hand them the keys. They will have a free hand, but with that freedom will come responsibility. Their decisions will have consequences and will have to be justified in the quarterly P and L's."

However, Branding intends to stay involved with the business for a long time to come.

"All I really want is to plan a cruise and then actually follow through and go on that cruise," he says. "That will be a new phenomenon for me." ■

"Take 5" is a feature in which one PRO or industry leader shares unique business challenges with the entire portable sanitation community. It's a chance for service providers to meet over the back fence - and across the country - to learn more about each other and promote industry excellence. If you know a PRO who would be an interesting subject for "Take 5," send their contact information to editor@promonthly.com.

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Handy, Helpful Tools

EVER USE A SPLIT-RIM TIRE IRON TO PRY LOOSE A TAILGATE PIN OR A HAND PUMP TO EXTRACT OIL FROM YOUR ENGINE? NEXT TO DUCT TAPE AND A HAMMER, HERE ARE A FEW TOOLS YOU MIGHT WONDER HOW YOU EVER DID WITHOUT.

By Ed Wodalski

What unique tool or gadget do you have around the shop that you just can't do without?

Jim Hanna, owner of J. D. Hanna Excavating in Warner, New Hampshire, says next to duct tape, WD-40, vise grips and a hammer, his go-to gadget is a split-rim tire iron. Even though Hanna has never used the tool to separate rims, he says it has just the right angle and length to serve as an effective pry bar.

"We have one in every truck, and we've probably given a dozen to good friends over the years," he says. "It's not something we made, it's something we buy. We sure would be at a loss without it."

HANDY PRY BAR

Officially known as the Ken-Tool T23A 30-inch truck lock ring remover, the tool is available online or from auto supply stores.

"We use it almost every other day for something," Hanna says. "If we don't have one in every truck we feel naked. We're so fond of using it that we try to turn other people on to it. The hook angle is perfect for tailgate pins and/or pulling other pins or bushings, and the compact length still provides good leverage. It's just a wonderful tool."

Mark Green, owner of Green Construction Management in Waterbury, Connecticut, keeps his tools in a utility trailer he custom built about three years ago. Green likes it so much he's in the process of building another.

"It's pretty unique the way we have the trailer set up and organized," he says. "Lasers, cut-off saws, walk-behind saws, compactors, tool boxes, generators; everything is in that trailer. It's 14 feet long, but it's organized nice and neat. You can walk in it and back it up almost anywhere. A lot of guys will put all their tools in a pickup; unfortunately, a lot of the jobs we're on are more than a week long, so we want to keep everything safe, secure and locked in."

Green plans to trick out his new trailer with an auxiliary fuel tank. "A lot of the jobs we do, even being in septic, you can't get a truck behind someone's house or in the back over a hill to fill the machines, but we can walk the machines up to the trailer to refuel."

"We're so fond of using it that we try to turn other people on to it. The hook angle is perfect for tailgate pins and/or pulling other pins or bushings, and the compact length still provides good leverage. It's just a wonderful tool."

Jim Hanna



Left: The Pela Pro Oil Extractor from Pela Products holds about 14 quarts, enough capacity to remove engine oil or hydraulic fluid from your skid-steer or mini-excavator.

Below: The Ken-Tool T23A 30-inch truck lock ring remover has just the right angle and length for prying loose tailgate pins and/or pulling bushings.



OIL EXTRACTOR

Tom Canfield, owner of Earth Construction in Rochester, New Hampshire, also believes in keeping everything neatly organized and considers his work van a must for the job site, but for handy gadgets nothing beats his cordless tools.

"I was glad to finally find a DeWalt grease gun. This reduces my battery needs and means the reliable, long-lasting DeWalt batteries I have can do another duty."

In the world of unique and handy tools, the Oil Extractor from Pela Products might be one to include in your shop. Rather than contorting your body to wrestle loose a drain plug, the extractor enables you to simply pump oil out from the filler tube.

Available in several sizes, the Pela Pro holds about 14 quarts. When used with a 7/16-inch O.D. tube it can remove engine oil or hydraulic fluid from your work trucks, skid-steer or mini-excavator.

"As an engine distributor, we learned that when you have equipment and you have people responsible for maintaining the equipment, if the procedure is difficult or messy, they're inclined to not perform that procedure on a regular basis," says Richard Rumley, product support for Pela Products. "With the Oil Extractor, it's a clean operation. Once you use it, you wonder how you were able to live without it."

Here are a couple more tools you might find helpful around the shop:



Left: The Dog Box rolling tool chest from Snap-On Industrial is available in three sizes.

Below: The ProGear 2760 LED headlight from Pelican Products pivots 45 degrees to put light exactly where you need it.



CORRAL THOSE TOOLS

Like a puppy on a leash, the Dog Box rolling tool chest from Snap-on Industrial follows you around the shop. Available in three sizes (the large model comes with five or nine drawers), the tool box is available with either an interchangeable hard steel wagon-style handle that keeps it from nipping at your heels or a soft nylon leash to keep the box from wandering away.

Show us yours

Have an idea for a helpful tool? Send us a photo and brief description of your go-to gadget and how it makes your work in the shop easier and more convenient. Send your info to editor@promonthly.com.

No more fumbling for a flashlight with the ProGear 2760 LED headlight from Pelican Products. The water- and weather-resistant light has a cloth band with battery life indicator that is comfortably worn around the head. The light weighs about 3 ounces, pivots to 45 degrees and provides up to three hours, 30 minutes of light at low beam (90 lumens) or two hours, 15 minutes on high (133 lumens). Batteries are included. ■

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Karleen Kos is executive director of the Portable Sanitation Association International. She may be reached at karleenk@psai.org or 952/886-7416.



Participate in World Portable Sanitation Day

By Karleen Kos

Why in the world do we need World Portable Sanitation Day, coming up Aug. 15? That's a great question that deserves a great answer. And believe it or not, we have one. Whether you realize it or not, we have a public image problem that stops us from reaching our full potential as an industry and as individual businesses. But we are about to change that, and you can help.

A group of operators and suppliers to the portable sanitation industry have teamed with the PSAI to change public opinion about our industry. As a matter of fact, this group has created marketing materials you can use to

convince people that your business is "green" and "clean" with exceptional "hygiene."

Yes, it is true. Our restrooms are environmentally friendly and do an amazing job of protecting public health. But the way people talk about our restrooms you would think the opposite.

As an operator, you can reverse this perception by first talking to your employees about the benefits of our industry. If you are not sure what benefits we offer, visit the PSAI website and find articles, press releases and marketing materials that explain the benefits clearly.

It's all available at psai.org/world-portable-sanitation-day.

Next, you can promote the benefits of our industry when talking to existing customers. Download some of the information on the PSAI website and make a copy to hand out to your customers. Explain to them how portable restrooms save 125 million gallons of freshwater per day. Tell them how portable restrooms provide employers over \$10 billion per year in added productivity. Let them know that without portable restrooms they could be facing severe danger from drinking water contaminated by human waste. (By the way, we know 125 million gallons sounds like a lot, but we have the data to back that number on the website - check it out.)

Last year, operators like you promoted World Portable Sanitation Day (WPSD) through handouts, holding community events and hosting lunches with employees to tell them about the importance of portable sanitation. This year, we would like you to be involved. You can find ideas on how to market WPSD (mark your calendar for Aug. 15) on the PSAI website.

WPSD focuses on two main goals. The first is to educate portable sanitation operators, their employees and the general public about the critically important role portable sanitation plays in the health and well-being of their local community. The second is to spread the news to others around the world that portable sanitation can help ease the pain of 2.6 billion people who desperately need proper public sanitation.

This year we hope to see many more operators get involved in this important initiative. For complete information, please use the following resources: Visit <http://psai.org/wpsd-toolkit/> or contact the co-chairs of the PSAI's Education Initiative, Nancy Gump at nancy@andygump.com and Steve Brinton at steveb@satelliteco.com. ■

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The Portable Sanitation Association International (PSAI) and concerned people around the world ask you to imagine:

- your life without access to any kind of toilet—so that you have to find a field or a plastic bag in which to relieve yourself?
- grocery shopping, education, workplaces, parks, homes—with no facilities
- that you live in a place where children die because of unclean drinking water
- that you are one of 2.6 billion people who deal with this challenge every day

PSAI invites you to join us in recognizing World Portable Sanitation Day (WPSD). Join us in making sustainable sanitation a priority!



psai.org
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Standard Restrooms, Hand-Wash Equipment and Supplies

By Craig Mandli

STANDARD RESTROOMS

ATLAS PORTABLE SANITATION PLUTO4

The **Pluto4** urinal stand from **Atlas Portable Sanitation** is suited for lengthy rental periods and is designed for use in a wide variety of conditions and locations. It is stackable up to four units and serves as an ideal solution for reducing public urination in locations such as city centers, campsites, picnic areas and marinas. The unit can be drained into the sewer system or be serviced by a toilet rental company. Its floor space is identical to portable restroom units, ensuring a smooth and carefree integration in the existing fleet of rental units. www.atlastoilets.com.



POLYJOHN ENTERPRISES PJN3

The **PJN3** from **PolyJohn Enterprises** has a spacious interior and a translucent roof. It comes with anti-slip floors, maximum ventilation, a two-roll paper dispenser and an occupancy signal latch. Options include a hand-washing sink or hand-sanitizing dispenser, convenience shelf with hook, locking kit, and gender signs. The waste tank design makes cleaning and servicing easy. Each unit comes with a door-mounted mirror, handle and a non-splash urinal. It is available in the standard static tank model or with an optional recirculating flush tank. **800/292-1305; www.polyjohn.com**.



FIVE PEAKS GLACIER II

The **Glacier II** portable restroom from **Five Peaks** has an ultra smooth door and sidewalls, making it easy to clean. It provides integrated vents, eliminating unnecessary screen maintenance. Extra deep molded-in grab handles are located in all four corners for ease of maneuverability. It is manufactured from durable high-density polyethylene with UV-stabilizers, with a strong twin-sheet heavy-duty door and jamb with integrated hinge and return spring. The 65-gallon tank has sloping lines to keep the tank top dry and clean. It comes standard with a hover handle, oversized mirror, two shelves, gender sign, coat/purse hook, beverage holder and three-roll toilet paper holder. **866/293-1502; www.fivepeaks.net**.



POLYPORTABLES AXXIS

The **Axxis** portable restroom from **PolyPortables** has self-closing hinges that operate from an internal stainless steel spring, a heavy-duty rotary latch that is tough enough for hard use, a deep ambidextrous door pull for convenience and a durable door frame for maximum structural integrity. It comes with a 60-gallon waste tank, rotationally molded plastic skid, urinal, coat hook and a three-roll toilet paper holder. **800/241-7951; www.polyportables.com**.

HAND-WASH STATIONS

MONSAM ENTERPRISES PSE-2003LAP

The **PSE-2003LAP** from **Monsam Enterprises** is a three deep-basin hand-washing station that is portable and propane-powered, so there is no need for plumbing. Models are also available in one, two or four basins. It allows customers to have hot or cold running water whenever and wherever they need it without electricity. Water can be heated up to 145 degrees F. It comes with freshwater and wastewater tanks, and industrial casters with brakes for easy mobility. **800/513-8562; www.portablesink.com**.



KROS INTERNATIONAL USA KROS URINAL

The **KROS** urinal from **Kros International USA** is designed for outdoor event sanitation as it is easy to clean, durable and 100 percent recyclable. It allows four men to urinate simultaneously with ample separation due to built-in dividing walls. **855/576-7872; www.krosinternationalusa.com**.



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SATELLITE INDUSTRIES BREEZE

The **Breeze** easy-to-operate hand-wash station from **Satellite Industries** has a sealed water tank to ensure proper hygiene. It includes two stations with full finger-tip-to-elbow washing, and operates with a hands-free, baby foot pump. It includes freshwater and graywater drain plugs and an additional pumpout port on the base for wastewater. To aid drivers, all plugs are tethered to the unit to prevent loss or damage. It has two handles for lifting and fits easily inside most portables for ease of transporting. It has a sealed freshwater tank where chlorine can be added to kill bacteria. To maintain attractiveness, the blue areas have a fleck pattern to hide scuffs and scratches. For added protection and simplicity of care, the top, middle and bottom gray sections are extended to provide a natural bumper. The middle gray washbasin section is replaceable. **800/883-1123; www.satelliteindustries.com.**



T.S.F. COMPANY TUFF-JON FREESTANDING SINK

The **Tuff-Jon 90-Gallon Freestanding Sink** with trash container from **T.S.F. Company** provides two wash stations; hands-free, foot-operated pumps; towel dispenser; and 10-cup-capacity soap dispenser. A sink-lifting bracket allows for easy positioning in high-rise applications. The sink-lifting bracket has a 1/4-inch wire cable, weighs 30 pounds and is safety orange. The unit is constructed from easy-to-clean polyethylene, with 45-gallon waste and freshwater capacities, a towel dispenser, trash container, protective skid plate and freshwater drain plug. The unit weighs 85 pounds. **800/843-9286; www.tuff-jon.com.**



RESTROOM MOVERS

ALLIED FORWARD MOTION MINI-METRO MOVER

The **Mini-Metro Mover** from **Allied Forward Motion** has a load capacity of 525 pounds. The portable, collapsible restroom mover fits on a truck, weighs 56 pounds and has four pneumatic tires, formed steel construction and black acrylic E-coat finish. **920/493-2987; www.minimetro mover.com.**



ARMAL TRANSPORT DOLLY



The **Armal** transport dolly is used to move **Wave** portable restrooms from one location to another. It is made of lightweight aluminum, making it easy for one operator to maneuver a portable restroom quickly and efficiently. It is made for rigorous daily

use and speeds up the process of picking up and/or dropping off portable restrooms. **770/491-6410; www.armal.biz.**

DEAL ASSOC. SUPER MONGO MOVER

The **Super Mongo Mover** hand truck from **Deal Assoc.** moves both standard and handicap/ADA restrooms. Its aluminum and steel frame is lightweight and strong, and is available with up to eight wheels for use on soft ground. The operator stands on the rear axle so body weight works to help tip the restroom, while the long handle provides leverage, making it easier to tip back-heavy restrooms with minimal strain. It can be carried on the back bumper of a vacuum truck or trailer, or strapped to a restroom for transport. **866/599-3325; www.dealassoc.com.**



CASE STUDY

Soap needed in high-temperature conditions

PROBLEM: A portable restroom operator in central California serves agricultural customers, placing portable restrooms and hand-wash stations throughout produce fields waiting to be picked. The growers must provide hand soap that is dye- and fragrance-free, stands up to high heat, and doesn't become so thin that it drips when temperatures exceed 90 degrees. Changing dispensers would be cumbersome because there are hundreds of dispensers scattered across multiple farms.

SOLUTION: **Hauler Agent** provided **Whisk**, a scent-free, dye-free lotion soap that won't drip under extreme heat.

RESULT: The soap filled all the dispensers with ease. **888/557-1460; www.hauleragent.com.**

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The **Tow-Let** portable restroom trailer remains sanitary and usable while being towed from job to job for up to a month before service is required. Permanently mounted on a trailer, the unit is a self-contained polyethylene portable restroom with a 50-gallon waste tank and 30-gallon freshwater tank for washdown. A solar-powered 12-volt system powers the washdown pump, which charges the hose on a self-retracting reel. The unit includes a single-user hand-wash sink, LED interior lighting with control panel and a storage box for supplies. Larger size tanks (including a 300-gallon waste tank for long-term placement) are available, and units can be customized to match company colors. It can be towed behind any vehicle with a 2-inch ball receiver. **712/623-4007; www.tow-let.com.**



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The **Foaming Hand-Sanitizing System** from **CPACEX** dispenses foam from the top of the unit, eliminating leaks and waste while delivering the proper amount of sanitizer, with no towels, water or rinsing needed. It meets CDC recommendations for hand antisepsis, killing 99.9 percent of common germs within 15 seconds. The push pad at the top of the unit eliminates wasteful over-dispensing of product and is ADA compliant. Choose from alcohol-based or non-alcohol (E-3 rated) hand sanitizer. The dispenser accepts both liquids and foaming products. **800/974-7383; www.cpacex.com.**



DEL VEL CHEM CO. SIMPLY SOFT

Simply Soft toilet tissue from **Del Vel Chem Co.** offers an economical alternative to standard tissue with the small-core roll lasting two and a half to five times longer, and the double roll lasting one and a half to three times longer than standard rolls. Each roll of tissue is individually wrapped and packaged for protection. **800/699-9903; www.delvel.com.**



J & J CHEMICAL J-LIGHT



The solar-powered motion-activated **J-Light** from **J & J Chemical** is a dependable light source that easily installs in the roof through a 1 1/2-inch hole. The self-contained solar panel acts as a day/night sensor, saving energy

during the day and charging the batteries, allowing the light to activate only when it's dark. The long-life rechargeable batteries save time and money by not having to replace standard alkaline batteries, and are environmentally friendly. The motion sensor turns the light on when activity is detected. Once the restroom is exited or there is no longer activity, the light will remain on for 35 seconds then turn itself off. Five high-intensity LEDs emit 30 lumens of light. **800/345-3303; www.jjchem.com.**

CASE STUDY

Florida portable restroom company chooses lighting for units

PROBLEM: AAA Porta Serve of High Springs, Florida, maintains a number of recreational and job site restrooms used at night, as



well as supporting festivals that often don't conclude until after midnight. Using restrooms after dark takes patrons longer and can leave restrooms messy. During the recent Water & Wastewater

Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show, AAA staff looked for solar lighting products that would be easy to install, vandal-resistant and provide adequate light.

SOLUTION: Owner Ross Ambrose and field supervisor Darren Fout met Rex Barton of RJ Products to see the **Lunarglo Solar Light** in operation, watch the installation process and discuss the durability of the units. Ambrose and Fout decided to try the product.

RESULT: Ambrose recently placed a second order. "The lights not only provide a more comfortable environment for our customers, but lit restrooms are much easier to clean due to the customers being able to see at night," he says. "Our team services units more quickly, everyone benefits from increased cleanliness and the lights are a great surprise for those 'dreading' having to use a portable restroom at night." **574/294-2624; www.lunarglo.com.**

PROSTITCH INSULATED COVER



Insulated portable restroom covers from **Prostitch** prevent freezing, providing comfort to customers during cold conditions. Made of insulated fiber, 10-ounce PVC and a poly-cotton fabric, covers have an R5 insulation rating. They are tear and crack resistant, and are easy to install using snaps and self-tapping screws. Covers are available for all models of portable restrooms. Options include a clear roof, 2-inch silver reflective stripes on the door, clear pockets on the front of the door for contact information and logo, and several colors. **705/524-6009; www.prostitch.net.**

RESTROOM ACCESSORIES AND SUPPLIES

**SOLAR LED INNOVATIONS
SOLAR POD LIGHT**

The Solar Pod Light compact lighting system from Solar LED Innovations provides 65 lumens of light, illuminating portable restrooms for nighttime use. About the size of a hockey puck, the unit protrudes less than 1/4 inch above the roofline and securely double-locks through the roof. Automatic and manual settings control lighting. A day in the sun provides up to 24 hours of lighting time. It exceeds Cal/OSHA illumination requirements for nighttime agricultural operations. **484/639-4833; www.solargoose.com.**



WALEX BRAVO

Bravo urinal screens from Walex Products are a urinal odor-control product featuring bacteria action that deodorizes and cleans. The fragrance release lasts 30 days. The shape and ribbed surface reduces splashing, and the product fits in all styles of urinals. **800/338-3155; www.walex.com. ■**



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Progress Tank launches website

Progress Tank launched a new website, www.progresstank.com. The site features real-time online inventory of new and refurbished units, one-click access to customer service, and detailed descriptions and images of vacuum tank trucks.



Isuzu achieves production milestone

Isuzu Commercial Truck achieved a production milestone in April when the 20,000th gas-powered, low-cab-forward truck rolled off the assembly line.

NuConcepts names general manager

NuConcepts, manufacturer of portable restrooms and utility sinks, named Dan Chase general manager. He will oversee manufacturing and production at the Ontario, California, facility, as well as repair, servicing, sales and product development.



Dan Chase

Ring-O-Matic names CEO

Ring-O-Matic, an Iowa-based manufacturer of vacuum excavators, named Brian Metcalf chief executive officer. A native of Pella, Iowa, Metcalf will be responsible for developing a sustainable strategic growth plan for the company as well as its complement of related support products.



Brian Metcalf

Southwest Products expands sales territory

Southwest Products (SWP), together with Iowa Mold Tooling (IMT), has expanded its sales territory into the Pacific Northwest. SWP has been a distributor of IMT mechanics trucks in the western United States and will now offer trucks, parts and service throughout Oregon and Washington.

Wieser Concrete celebrates 50th anniversary

Wieser Concrete celebrated its 50th anniversary at its Maiden Rock, Wisconsin, location in April. Beginning as a one-man crew with a hand-mixer in 1965, Wieser today employs 160 workers.



Macquarie Group acquires Advantage Funding

Macquarie Group acquired Advantage Funding Management from Marubeni America Corp. Advantage Funding will become a fully owned subsidiary of Macquarie's Corporate and Asset Finance group. Advantage Funding provides transportation financing and leasing options for commercial vehicle operators in the municipal and industrial markets.

GPS Insight founder finalist for EY Entrepreneur of the Year

Rob Donat, founder and CEO of GPS Insight, is a finalist for the 2015 EY (Ernst & Young) Entrepreneur of the Year award in the Mountain Desert region. The award recognizes individuals who demonstrate excellence and success in innovation, financial performance and personal commitment to their businesses and communities. ■

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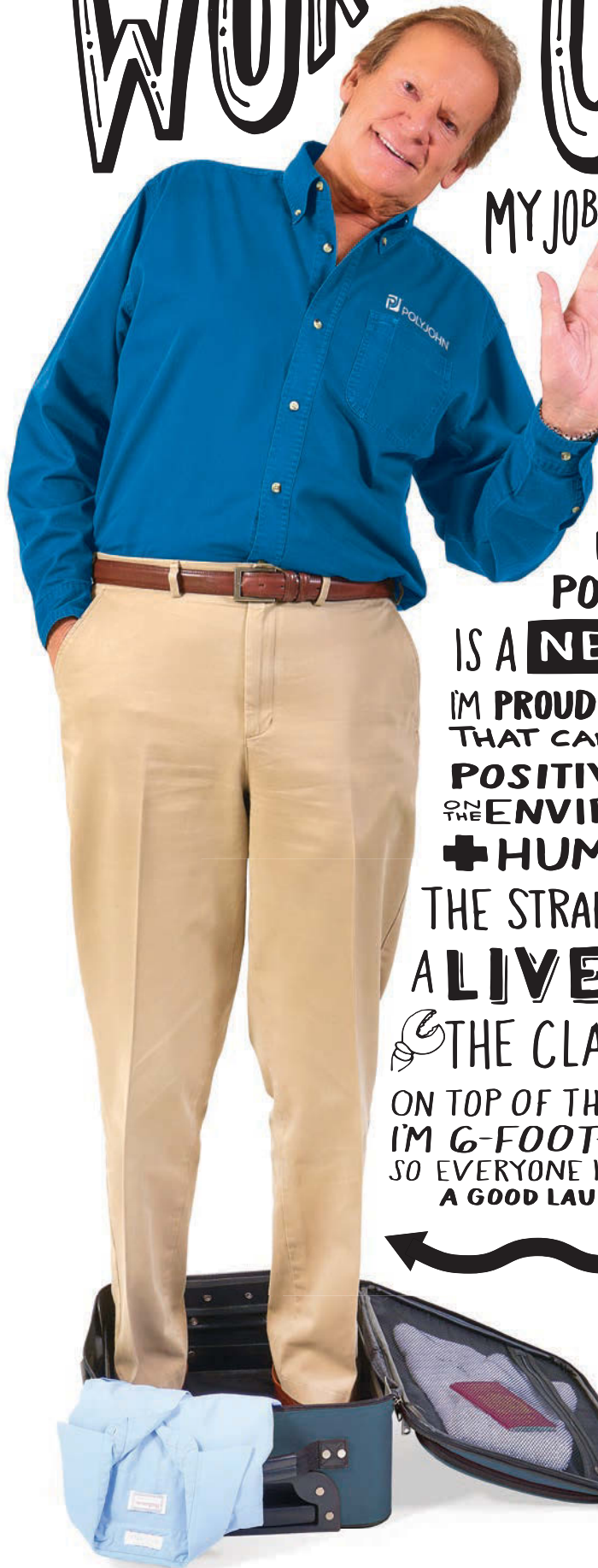
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