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AT WAR WITH **COVID-19**

The team at Oregon's Above All Sanitation works overtime to help customers and the public stay safe during the coronavirus pandemic

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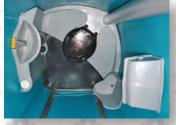


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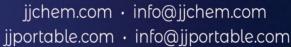
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An accountant by trade, John McGreavey crunched all the numbers before deciding to buy portable restroom business Mini Biff.

- Peter Kenter

ON THE COVER: Accountant John McGreavey looked at the numbers for Mini Biff of Hutchinson, Minnesota, and saw a good second-career business opportunity. McGreavey bought the company and is shown in the yard with restrooms from Satellite I PolyPortables. (Photo by Brad Stauffer)

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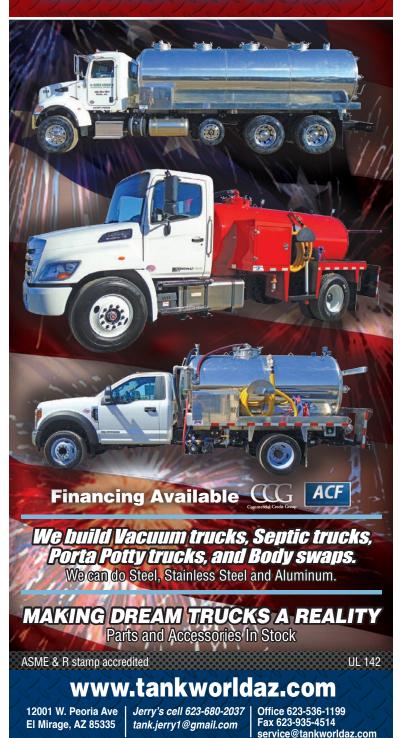


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By Jim Kneiszel

An Ongoing Public Health Threat Shows the Value of PROs

When COVID-19 hit, you were called on to provide an essential service and delivered with professionalism

o matter how long you've been pushing portable restrooms around — even if you go back to the days of plywood walls and steel barrel holding tanks — you have never seen a year like 2020 as we pass the midway mark.

When it struck in March, the COVID-19 pandemic was like nothing we have ever experienced — stay-at-home orders, social distancing, the canceling of events like March Madness basketball and many months of large special events. Small business has been hit, and hit hard.

For PROs, the normal patterns of work have been radically altered. By late in the spring, you were informed that many of your events — some of the most profitable jobs of the year — were canceled or postponed. Right when you would be gearing up to deliver dozens or hundreds of restrooms to an early summer festival, that business suddenly went away.

At the same time, many of you were reacting to serve a different kind of customer. Local governments, states, universities and federal highway officials were calling to ask you to place restrooms — and especially hand-wash stations — in public places. Much of this equipment was needed to serve the workforce essential to keeping the world running during the pandemic.

That included temporary medical testing and hospital facilities for our health care professionals. Many highway rest stop bathrooms were closed, and officials hired you to place and service portable restrooms as a more workable alternative. Cities requested additional portable sanitation equipment in downtowns to allow people to social distance rather than crowd into public bathrooms.

HEAR FROM A PRO

When the pandemic kicked into high gear, I received an email from Tyler Gordon of Above All Sanitation in Eugene, Oregon. He offered to share his story with *Portable Restroom Operator* about the many requests they were getting for new service.

"Recently, due to the COVID-19 virus, we have been slammed with orders for hand sanitizers, portable sinks and restrooms," he wrote. "We have been contracted by the state's largest university and local governments to handle their sanitation needs during this pandemic."

We followed up with Travis Gates, the operations manager at Above All Sanitation and talked with him about the challenges the company faced as the pandemic took hold in the Pacific Northwest. Their story is our On Location feature in this issue.

Like all the stories we heard about grocery store shelves being cleaned out by shoppers desperate for toilet paper and foodstuffs, Gates and his crew faced numerous challenges that many of you also probably experienced. They enhanced their cleaning procedures to make sure they were wiping out any coronavirus on frequently touched surfaces. Before the end of March, the company ran out of hand-wash stations. They ordered what they could, but

When battling COVID-19, they [customers] learned that washing hands after using a portable restroom is not optional. You can make the point from now on that a sink, or at least a sanitizing station, is a must for all restrooms.

never got enough to fill potential orders. At the same time, vandalism became an issue.

"We've had people either ripping sanitizer dispensers out or damaging them enough to get the bag out," Gates told our writer Betty Dageforde. Gates is far from the only PRO I've heard these stories from. Vandalism, especially to sanitizer dispensers, was a tremendous problem, as was damage to restrooms in many public locations. Unfortunately, that's nothing new.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

As the year goes on, one thing is for sure: You can expect the unexpected. Your business world will continue in a topsy-turvy pattern with highs and lows to navigate before everything returns to normal, or as close to normal as we can expect.

In the meantime, I'd like to make one important point. The success of your small business relies — more than ever — on the strength of your relationships. You must be reassuring and flexible in all of your dealings at times like these. Be fair, upfront and reasonable. Promise what you can realistically deliver, and then follow through.

Take special care when working with these important business partners:

YOUR VENDORS

The companies you have bought restrooms and supplies from for years will do whatever they can to help out during an emergency. I've heard a few

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complaints this year about manufacturers running out of products or announcing production delays. Remember that they are facing the same kind of challenges you are. Maybe they can't get the raw materials needed to keep pace with production demand. Like your end users, they probably received calls from all of their customers at the same time when the pandemic broke, and while they want to satisfy every order, at some point it's impossible. Stay in touch with them and make sure they are aware that you value them as much as they value your business.

GOVERNMENT CUSTOMERS

This is a time to shine for your municipal, county, state and federal customers. Over the years, you may have felt like you were hitting a brick wall trying to convince these customers about the value of portable sanitation. Well, you don't have to convince them anymore. They now realize it may be more practical to hire you to place and service restrooms than to put their own workers in a difficult situation cleaning overused public bathrooms. Also, when battling COVID-19, they learned that washing hands after using a portable restroom is not optional. You can make the point from now on that a sink, or at least a sanitizing station, is a must for all restrooms.

EVENT ORGANIZERS

Just because so many events were postponed or canceled doesn't mean you should forget about these important customers. Make occasional wellness checks with the planners who are probably under a lot of stress these days. Call just to say hello and ask if there is anything you can do for them. Or have a special treat delivered to them. Find new ways to keep your name in front of them and they will remember to call on you for help when events are rescheduled.

YOUR HARDWORKING CREW

Your guys and gals on the front lines deserve a lot of credit, especially in these days of high stress and uncertainty. They were out doing necessary work when others were sitting safely at home. They probably worry about the future: Will the business continue to be busy or at some point drop off?

First off, continue to make sure your technicians have plenty of the proper personal protection equipment and the training to use it effectively. Keep them informed month to month about the state of the business and reassure them they provide a vital service that won't go away. And while you can't always give them the pay raises and bonuses you would like, do something nice for your crew. It could be as simple as a gift card from a local business or a pizza delivered to their homes. Now more than ever, your folks need to hear your support and thanks.

YOU ARE ESSENTIAL

If there's one reminder PROs can draw from all of this upheaval, it's that your service is essential, especially in a time of crisis. Portable sanitation providers have never received the respect they deserve and often bear the brunt of "potty humor." No more! You protect people from disease, offer comfort when needed and ensure a cleaner, safer environment. Congratulations on the important job you perform every day!

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Tips for Upselling to Restroom and Shower Trailers

By Jeff and Terri Wigley

For a growing number of your customers, the basic portable restroom is not good enough. You need to offer them the VIP treatment.

over the past decade, restroom trailers have rapidly grown in popularity and are now considered a standard piece of equipment for many PROs. Shower trailers are now beginning to increase in popularity. We had two questions this month that dealt with marketing ideas for both categories of trailers.

QUESTION: We are quite interested in getting into the restroom trailer market and are looking at purchasing a small, two-stall trailer and a larger six-stall model. What ideas do you have in terms of marketing these two trailers?

ANSWER: The idea of purchasing two trailers is very sound. The ability to offer customers a choice of products shows your company is anxious to meet customers' needs. In addition, offering a choice of restroom trailers will minimize the likelihood that the customer will have to shop elsewhere if, for example, you only have a large trailer and the customer is having a small, backyard event.

Not all customers are familiar with restroom trailers, as they tend to only associate portable restrooms with our industry. For this reason, your marketing efforts need to advertise and educate the customer.

While many marketing suggestions apply to all restroom trailers, a target-market approach based on trailer size and style can be most effective.

BASIC TRAILER MARKETING COMPONENTS

As in marketing any new product, repetition of the announcement to your potential customer base is vital. Possible communication methods include:

SOCIAL MEDIA – Photos of the trailers, both outside and inside, introduce and educate the marketplace about your product. Videos are even better in terms of giving a full description of the trailer. The goal is for the potential customers to envision uses where your trailer will meet their needs. Reference your company's website for more information.

COMPANY WEBSITE – Consider using a banner advertisement on your homepage announcing the company's new line of trailers. Since your homepage is the first and most visited page, this information is important to capture your audience's attention.

A dedicated page should not only advertise by showing photos or videos, but also educate. Listing the electrical and water source requirements is extremely important. Another requirement that PROs sometimes overlook is clearly stating the requirements for the placement of the trailer: level ground, access for a delivery truck and the total area required for trailer

As experienced PROs can attest, the customer plan for putting a 15-foot trailer in a 20-foot clearing is not an option. The rule of thumb is that, at a minimum, double the trailer length is required for it to be properly placed.

placement. As experienced PROs can attest, the customer plan for putting a 15-foot trailer in a 20-foot clearing is not an option. The rule of thumb is that, at a minimum, double the trailer length is required for it to be properly placed.

TARGETED MAILINGS – Sending flyers to targeted customers such as event planners is another way to spread the news. Again, photos and references to your company's website are the key to successfully using this advertising tool.

MEETINGS AND BUSINESS SHOWS – Attending these events, with flyers and business cards in hand, is an excellent way to converse with potential customers about your new product. Photos make the explanation of the trailer concept easier. The sooner customers understand the concept, the sooner they can begin to assess where and when they can use your new product.

SMALL-TRAILER TARGET MARKET

Small trailers are excellent options for backyard weddings, VIP areas at outdoor concerts and shows, and similar-sized events. Applying the general marketing suggestions listed to this marketplace, consider:

CALLS TO WEDDING PLANNERS – Personal touch is important in this industry, and a phone call with the promise of mailing additional information is an excellent way to become acquainted with these contacts.

EXHIBIT AT A WEDDING SHOW – Smaller trailers are easier to handle and less expensive to display in a vendor booth. Planners and families can begin to formulate site plans that will include these restrooms as a necessary part of their event. Have your flyers on hand as well to present the larger trailer as another viable option if needed.

RESEARCH BUILDING PERMITS FOR COMMERCIAL RENOVATIONS – Any restaurant planning to stay open during renovation will need customer access to restrooms. Many PROs have had small trailers move from location to location when a restaurant chain is renovating multiple stores in one city.

LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES – Small local events may require small trailers in locations where permanent restrooms are not available. In addition, restrooms may be needed in certain areas but, due to space requirements, portable restrooms would take up too much space.

EVENT PLANNERS – Many concert venues have either permanent facilities or banks of portable restrooms for the audience, but small trailers behind the stage area offer an alternative for the performers and other VIPs. Always mention that your company also offers larger trailers.

LARGE-TRAILER TARGET MARKET

In addition to merely larger versions of the small-trailer market, consider more specialized uses of larger trailers such as:

DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCIES – Register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and state agencies (see our June column for details) and have trailers as an option during disasters and emergencies.

LARGE JOB SITES – Some job sites in large downtown areas have very confined spaces to work in, so a large bank of portable restrooms is not feasible. Other large union job sites require equal facilities for workers and the superintendents who have restrooms inside their construction office trailers.

SPECIALTY INDUSTRIES – Mining, logging and some road construction jobs present unique opportunities to place a trailer for a large group of workers for long periods of time. Consider these jobs if you have at least one other large trailer for special events.

QUESTION: Our company has had restroom trailers for several years, and we are looking at purchasing a shower trailer. What unique marketing strategies should we consider?

ANSWER: In addition to the strategies listed above, there are a few additional markets you should consider:

ROAD RACE PROMOTERS – Primarily biathlons and triathlons incorporate shower facilities into these events. Contacting these promoters and even attending such an event, if possible, will give you additional knowledge as to specific needs.

LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS – Some facilities require decontamination areas, and showers often fulfill those requirements. Inquire and you may be surprised.

DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCIES – As with the large-trailer market, there is almost always a need for showers in these scenarios.

FINAL THOUGHTS

You must let the marketplace know you have this equipment, and you must educate potential customers about the many ways restroom and shower trailers can meet their needs. Advertise, advertise, advertise! Educate, educate, educate! ■





An accountant by trade, John McGreavey crunched all the numbers before deciding to buy portable restroom business Mini Biff

By Peter Kenter

ohn McGreavey didn't set out with a business plan to purchase a portable restroom operation. As a corporate accountant, he was searching for a sustainable business opportunity and let the results of a careful analysis do the talking. In 2016, he purchased Mini Biff of Hutchinson, Minnesota, a company he's transformed and poised for growth in less than three years. His strategy is no secret — he's just running it by the numbers.

McGreavey was a British citizen employed by global food conglomerate Cargill for more than 30 years, working in the U.S. since 2000. Following a business restructuring, he accepted a compensation package from Cargill in 2015. He became an American citizen the same year and began a search to acquire a business.

"I didn't want to work until I was 80," he says. "I wanted to buy a business that met a specific set of criteria so I could build it up and eventually sell it at a profit. It had to demonstrate good cash flow. It needed to be a low-risk business — not so innovative that it would become redundant when the equivalent of the next iPhone launched."

Mini Biff Hutchinson, Minnesota

Owner: John McGreavey

Founded: 1997

Employees: 10 year-round full time; up to an additional 20 seasonal full time

Services: Portable restroom and trailer rental and service for construction, weddings and events

Service area: Within 60 miles of Hutchinson

Website: www.minibiff.com

McGreavey, 59, was also looking for a broad customer base

McGreavey, 59, was also looking for a broad customer base that could mitigate credit risk.

"The basic elements of the portable restroom business haven't changed in decades, and I didn't expect them to change dramatically in the near future," he explains. "From an accountant's view, with thousands of customers, the loss of any single customer wouldn't really dent us. The portable restroom business checked all the boxes.



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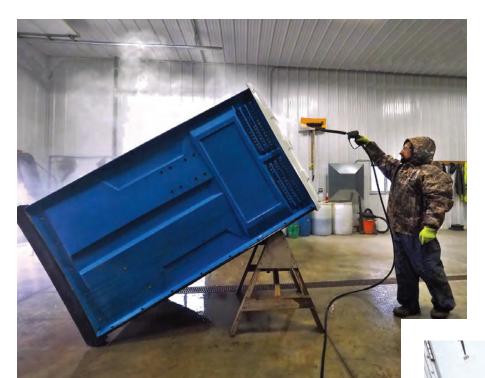
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Above: John "Garcia" Lindquist cleans off the white roof of a Satellite |
PolyPortables restroom unit at Mini Biff. Above, right: Employees Sean Henke,
left, and Thomas Palmer load Satellite | PolyPortables restrooms for delivery.
The trailer was built by Mini Biff staff. Right: Samantha Oberfoell, left,
and Jesse Fuentes set up a railing on a Wells Cargo restroom trailer.
Three units serve about 50 weddings per year.

IN TRANSITION

McGreavey and his family live in Maple Grove, just outside of Minneapolis. He was alerted by a business sales agent to the availability of Mini Biff, a portable restroom business, about an hour's drive west in Hutchinson. Established in 1997, Mini Biff was acquired in 2004 by its most recent owners, a family who operated it out of their home.

"Mini Biff was an established business with a good history and solid brand awareness," McGreavey says. "They were so well known in the area that people don't ask for portable restrooms, they ask for Mini Biffs. They'd purchased one smaller competitor but had largely grown organically from

about 100 restrooms to 1,400 without any aggressive marketing. I believe they'd reached the point where they had grown beyond their ability to manage effectively — but still had the potential to grow."

McGreavey bought the assets of the business and its trade name in September 2016, essentially starting a fresh company with no potential legacy liabilities. Under the sales agreement, the family would continue working for a 12-month handover period, as new hires were introduced. The business would also continue to operate from the family's home during that year. McGreavey leveraged funding from the

"My first focus has been to transform the company from a family-run operation into a disciplined venture poised for growth. After a lot of effort, I believe we're there."

JOHN MCGREAVEY

Southwest Initiative Foundation's Business Finance Program, an independent community organization, to finance a move to a new location.

"We were outbid on a parcel of land at the last minute, so the transition took closer to 18 months," McGreavey says. "But soon after, we purchased a 10-acre parcel of land, leveled 6 acres of it and put up a new facility on the property in February 2018."

GROWING INVENTORY

Today, Mini Biff operates about 1,550 portable restrooms, primarily from Satellite | PolyPortables. Most are Tufway and Maxim 3000 models. Fifty are ADA-compliant Freedom 2 models, and 30 are wheelchair-accessible Liberty models. Two are High Tech II luxury units with flush toilets and sinks.

Mini Biff also offers five trailers. Three luxury restroom trailers — a two-stall unit and two three-stall units — are from Wells Cargo and used for as many as 50 weddings per year. Two units are rebuilt urinal trailers.

The company supplies two sizes of hand-washing stations: 30 Breeze models and 15 WaveWash, both from Satellite | PolyPortables. It also supplies 20 hand sanitizer stations assembled by Mini Biff.

Portable restroom supplies are provided by Hillyard and Satellite \mid Poly-Portables.

The company operates 10 vacuum trucks, all built out by Satellite Vacuum Trucks with 650-gallon waste and 350-gallon freshwater steel tanks and



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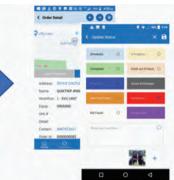


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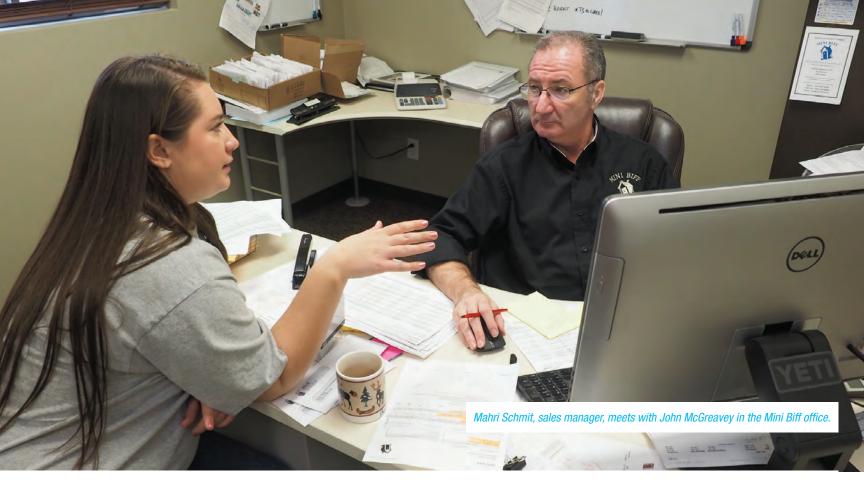








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Conde pumps by Westmoor. Four trucks are Ford F-550s — a 2002, 2012 and two 2015s. Three are Ram 5500s — a 2011, 2014 and 2016. A 2004 GMC 4500 and 2005 Chevrolet 5500 round out the fleet.

A stand-alone 2005 Silverado 2500 is used as a hauling vehicle.

The trucks pull six trailers. The largest, from Johnny Mover Trailer Sales, has a capacity of 20 standard restroom units. The rest are custom-built by Mini Biff: a 16-unit trailer, two 12-unit trailers, an eight-unit trailer, six-unit trailer and four-unit trailer.

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

Mini Biff clients fit into roughly three buckets: construction; seasonal, including Minnesota Department of Natural Resources sites and golf courses; and summer events, including weddings, concerts and fairs. The company's largest event is the Winstock Country Music Festival in nearby Winsted, which attracts about 20,000 visitors and requires between 650 and 700 units.

McGreavey had no aspirations to become an operations manager, instead leveraging his accounting experience to analyze the business and working to make it operate more efficiently.

"I spent a lot of time looking at the trends and the cash flow cycle," he says. "During the winter, our activity drops to about 20%, primarily construction, but fixed costs remain so it can be challenging."

Accepting that the cycles are largely beyond his control, McGreavey concentrated on determining how quickly he would need to take action before each cycle kicks in. That includes buying and deploying equipment and ensuring that enough workers are available as each busy season begins.

He's also taken an accountant's view of profitability, building models for each aspect of the business. For example, he's set a strict service area for portable restrooms.

"The economics of profitably limit us to a 60-mile radius," he says. "Luxury trailers include a mileage fee, so we can profitably deliver and service them up to $200 \ \text{miles}$."

LOGISTICS IS KEY

In the U.K., McGreavey worked with Cargill's grain trading business. It's given him a solid appreciation for the importance of logistics. One of his first purchases at Mini Biff was a StreetEagle (Insight Mobile Data) advanced GPS tracking system.

"Logistics alone can mean the difference between a profitable route and one that loses money," he says. "We focused on optimizing routes and making sure that whenever possible our trucks could handle multiple jobs. We also optimized our schedules by asking our customers to be more flexible on delivery and pickup. Delivering a little earlier and picking up a little later allows us to combine more deliveries and pickups in a single trip."

McGreavey says he quotes each contract "to the last 20" to ensure it will be profitable.

"I have a very specific profit margin in mind," he says. "I will never quote a job just to keep busy."

Mini Biff also quickly dropped its least profitable customers, simply by quoting prices that included an acceptable profit. "We didn't dismiss them," McGreavey says. "Presented with a quote that included a reasonable profit for us, they chose to go elsewhere."

MORE INFO

Insight Mobile Data Inc. 301-866-1990 www.insightmobiledata.com

Johnny Mover Trailer Sales 800-498-3000 www.cesspoolcleaners.com **Satellite | PolyPortables** 800-883-1123 www.satelliteindustries.com

Satellite Vacuum Trucks 800-883-1123 www.satellitetruckxpress.com

Westmoor Ltd. 800-367-0972 www.westmoorltd.com Mini Biff has pivoted away from directory and newspaper advertising to promoting its website and buying paid ads on social media platforms such as Facebook.

"Our website and advertising have also been optimized for smartphone screens, where most of today's searches are happening," McGreavey explains. "If it's not optimized for the phone, people will pass on you and go somewhere else."

McGreavey has attended the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show to find new ways to improve business efficiency.

"As a new entrant into the business it was an eye-opener for me," he says. "There were many innovative products I wouldn't have seen otherwise, and it was a great networking event."

FIRST MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Mini Biff may ultimately expand the scope of its business into other profitable and complementary ventures on the same property, but for now, McGreavey is satisfied with his progress.

"My first focus has been to transform the company from a family-run operation into a disciplined venture poised for growth," he says. "After a lot of effort, I believe we're there."



PERFECTING THE SCIENCE OF HIRING

When John McGreavey purchased the assets of portable restroom company Mini Biff in 2016, he counted on the labor expertise of the previous family of owners to tide him over for the following year.

"As the family moved off and I had to hire new staff, I began to appreciate the work ethic and experience they had brought to the business," he says. "Despite my initial due diligence, I failed to pick up the fact that there was a very limited supply of labor at the pay rates I expected. I'm by no means the only business to experience that issue, but I had to address it."

McGreavey went about solving the problem scientifically, beginning with advertising.

Although Mini Biff advertises positions in the local newspaper, McGreavey finds that his company's Facebook page is more effective as a help wanted poster.

"We pay a little extra money to have the Facebook ad presence boosted, and it's been much more successful for us than newspaper advertising," he says.

McGreavey also worked to optimize the hiring of seasonal employees: to ensure workers are brought on quickly enough to train for the spring busy season, but not so early that they remain idle for weeks before work begins.

"It's not as though you hire today and have active, trained employees tomorrow," he says. "In my experience so far, each year we need to start earlier and earlier."

As part of its compensation package, Mini Biff also began to offer medical insurance at three months of employment and paid vacation after 12 months.

"I wanted to be competitive in the labor market without competing solely by increasing the pay rate," McGreavey says. "Offering these benefits speaks to both attracting employees and retaining them. If a portable restroom is placed in the wrong location and the worker needs to go back to reposition it, that's any level of profit shot. Keeping good people is one of the keys to business success."



on 10 acres in Hutchinson, Minnesota.

Above Left: Two years after John McGreavey took over Mini Biff, the company moved into a new building



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PORTABLE SANITATION MAKES IT HAPPEN WHERE THOUSANDS EAT, DRINK AND CELEBRATE THEIR TIME-HONORED PASSION AT THIS STORIED VENUE

Jim Kneiszel

here's no doubt portable sanitation plays a huge role in spectator comfort at this 2,000-acre attraction that turns into a chaotic frenzy of visitors during about 380 activities per year. From its start about 60 years ago, this has been one of the biggest sporting and special event venues in America, generating about \$450 million in regional tourism spending each year. Fun fact: On a busy event weekend, visitors will consume 34,000 slices of pizza, 9,500 gallons of soft drinks and water and 13,500 feet of hot dogs. More evidence that this place requires a lot of portable restroom services.

Here are a few clues to help you identify the location of this restroom trailer:

- 1. The largest nearby city is named in honor of the wife of Britain's King George II.
- It is considered the home away from home for many gutsy participants in a certain sports world.
- **3.** It was the first modern super venue of this sport to have lighted nighttime contests.
- 4. Up to 89,000 spectators can gather to cheer on their heroes.
- **5.** The trailer is parked under what was the largest high-definition TV at a sporting venue when installed in 2011: 16,000 square feet of screen space.
- **6.** The hall of fame dedicated to this sport is located on the grounds.

To win the contest, name the city and the event venue where this restroom trailer is parked. The winner will be recognized as a geographical whiz on the *Portable Restroom Operator* Facebook page. Send your responses to editor@promonthly.com.

SEND YOUR MYSTERY PHOTOS! Do you have an interesting spot where you've been dropping and servicing restrooms? Send photos to editor@promonthly.com. We will credit you for submitting to Where's the Restroom?











The team at Oregon's Above All Sanitation works overtime to help customers and the public stay safe during the coronavirus pandemic

By Betty Dageforde

THE TEAM

Travis Gates is the operations manager of Above All Sanitation, a portable restroom and septic service company in Eugene, Oregon, owned by his parents, Mike and Cindy Gates. The staff of 15 includes sister Jessica Gates, secretary; Aunt Kari Reynolds, office manager; and brother-in-law Tyler Gordon, sales and marketing.

COMPANY HISTORY

About 30 years ago, an ad in the paper caught the attention of Mike Gates and his father, James, who were living in California at the time, and they soon found themselves owners of a portable restroom company in San Diego County. They grew the company from 500 to 2,000 units. In 2000 they moved to Oregon and briefly considered trying something different but quickly saw a big need in the market for portable restrooms and septic



Technician Justin Sims deep-cleans restrooms in the Above All Sanitation yard.

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Right: Tyler Gordon, sales and marketing, wipes down a Satellite | PolyPortables hand-wash station set up at the Downtown City Square in Eugene, Oregon.

Below: Technician Rob Ross sanitizes a restroom stationed at the Seneca Sawmill in Elmira, Oregon.

services. This time, they started from scratch with the purchase of 28 units, which they have now built up to 1,300. About 80% of their business is portable sanitation work.

THE MAIN EVENT

COVID-19 first appeared in China in December 2019. The virus spread quickly, and by March the World Health Organization declared it a pandemic. In an effort to contain the disease, nonessential businesses were shuttered and citizens across the world were asked to stay home and practice social distancing.

THE JOB

Companies, government agencies, the university and homeless facilities in Eugene scrambled to obtain more sanitation equipment, especially hand-wash stations and sanitizer stands, in an effort to keep everyone safe and prevent the spread of the virus. In addition, customers wanted more frequent servicing of existing equipment. "It wasn't just the normal weekly service," Travis Gates says. "It was six times a week. So it's been an extreme change from just slowly growing our routes to an all-out full-force effort."

LET'S ROLL

The company started getting calls around March 6 from some of its regular customers asking for more equipment and more service. By the end of the month, they had run out of hand-wash stations and hand sanitizer stands. In addition to home improvement and other stores wanting hand sanitizer units for their entrances, some of their larger customers included the following:

City government agencies. Eugene and Springfield, sister cities on opposite sides of Interstate 5, needed portable restrooms for their parks because, even as park visitations increased, on-site bathrooms were closed since the park personnel who clean them were not considered essential workers. The company placed one standard and one wheelchair-accessible unit at 23 parks with servicing six times a week. Three parks also needed hand-wash stations. They also placed 10 hand-wash stations in various Eugene city center locations such as the library, high-traffic street corners and major bus stops; two hand sanitizer stands and a hand-wash station at

"Obviously we already used disinfectant, but now we're doubling up on making sure those high-contact areas — handles, doors, sanitizer dispenser, seat, toilet paper dispenser — are

getting double-covered."

TRAVIS GATES

the fire station that served as the virus response headquarters; and two hand sanitizer stands at the police station, all with twice-a-week servicing.

University of Oregon. Despite spring break and the stay-at-home order, a number of staff and students remained on campus. The university ordered 43 handwash stations for placement around campus with servicing twice a week.

Homeless agencies. "Eugene Mission was one of the first ones to jump on the bandwagon for getting sinks at its facilities," Gates says. The company placed one hand-wash station outside each of

the mission's three buildings. The Dusk to Dawn facilities at the St. Vincent de Paul Society, which provide overnight accommodations for homeless in military-style tents, requested two additional standard units and one wheel-chair-accessible unit to supplement existing equipment, serviced six times a week. Its administrative building added a standard portable restroom and five hand-wash stations serviced six times a week.

The company's equipment is from Satellite | PolyPortables and Poly-John Enterprises. All portable restrooms have hand sanitizer dispensers.







Right: Greg Smith inspects a Satellite | PolyPortables restroom at a customer's home in Harrisburg, Oregon.

Below: Ansley Pennington reaches for cleaning supplies during a service stop on his daily route. The Isuzu truck is from FMI Truck Sales & Service and carries a Masport pump.



#2 business!

Many hand sanitizer stands are company-designed and built by Eugene Ornamental Iron. Equipment deliveries were made using vacuum trucks, a 16-foot flatbed Isuzu truck from FMI Truck Sales & Service and a 2008 Chevy Express box van.

KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

The team arrived at the office each day around 5:30 a.m. and headed out by 6 a.m. to service equipment. "We do these routes first thing in the morning to avoid coming across people while servicing and to make sure we can get everything clean at an appropriate rate so that when people start coming out, they're ready for use," Gates says.

The company has six Isuzu (2016-19) WorkMate vacuum trucks from FMI Truck Sales & Service, one with an aluminum tank and National Vacuum Equipment pump and the others with steel tanks and Masport pumps. Each can handle 300 gallons of freshwater and 500-750 gallons of waste. They are in the process of purchasing another vacuum truck, something that was already on their radar for the busy summer season but now has become an urgent necessity. They use Satellite | PolyPortables deodorizer products. Waste goes to the municipal treatment plant or a sealed lagoon treatment facility.

Gates says they've beefed up their cleaning process. "Obviously we already used disinfectant, but now we're doubling up on making sure those high-contact areas — handles, doors, sanitizer dispenser, seat, toilet paper dispenser — are getting double-covered."

CHALLENGING TIMES

As the general public has been desperate to find hand sanitizer, the company experienced some vandalism issues, Gates says. "We've had people either ripping sanitizer dispensers out or damaging them enough to get

the bag out." The company is telling its customers to lock the units at night, when most of the problems occurred.

Another problem has been running out of equipment. The company's stock of portable restrooms has been sufficient thus far, but they quickly ordered an additional 18 hand-wash stations, 10 wheelchair-accessible units and 20 hand sanitizer stands, all of which were immediately spoken for. Further deliveries are unlikely in the immediate future, Gates says. "We could definitely do with a lot more."

Another challenge was responding to increased requests while maintaining high standards. "Obviously we help as many people as we can," Gates say, "but not to the extent it's going to hurt our quality of service. We have to make sure we stay in the realm of being sanitary."

Gates credits the employees for really stepping up, most of whom are working at least 10 extra hours every week. "The onset of this was really fast, and everyone has been very, 'Hey, let's go, let's get it taken care of.' It's definitely been a huge change, but everyone has been great. We're very blessed with all our employees."

MORE INFO

FMI Truck Sales & Service 800-927-8750 www.fmitrucks.com

Isuzu Commercial Truck of America 866-441-9638 www.isuzucv.com

Masport, Inc. 800-228-4510 www.masportpump.com See ad, page 9 National Vacuum Equipment, Inc. 800-253-5500 www.natvac.com See ad, page 17

PolyJohn Enterprises Corp. 800-292-1305 www.polyjohn.com See ad, page 36

Satellite | PolyPortables 800-883-1123 www.satelliteindustries.com



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The PolyJohn Enterprises Comfort XL restroom offers users a larger unit with more than 16 square feet of interior floor space. The wheelchair-accessible unit comes equipped with a self-closing door and interior grab rails that provide added safety and convenience. Available in a wide variety of colors, the spacious restroom is designed for extra comfort for users. 800-292-1305; www.polyjohn.com.



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Developed as an alternative to full ADA compliant restrooms, the **Liberty** from **Satellite | PolyPortables** is a spacious, wheelchair-accessible restroom that can also be promoted as a family-sized restroom. It has a flat-floor system for easy wheelchair access and maneuverability. The handrails and paper holder, together with the rotary latch, are designed and manufactured for simple

end-user operation. It has a twin-sheet, non-metal doorframe; roof tie-down grooves in both directions; four corner stake down holes; and large easy-to-grasp handles. **800-883-1123; www.satelliteindustries.com.**

T BLUSTAR SPACE160

The **Space160** from **T blustar** is a spacious portable restroom suitable for parks, beaches, recreation sites and handicapped-accessible requirements. It has a flat floor that allows a wheelchair or child's stroller to easily roll into and turn around inside. The interior metal handrails assist people and children with disabilities for easy maneuverability inside



the restroom. It comes standard with a freshwater flush and hand-wash sink, both with hand pumps. It can be personalized in a large selection of bright colors and a company logo. A double wheel and lift jack allow a single operator to move it easily. **404-719-0715**; www.tblustar.com.

GRAFFITI REMOVAL



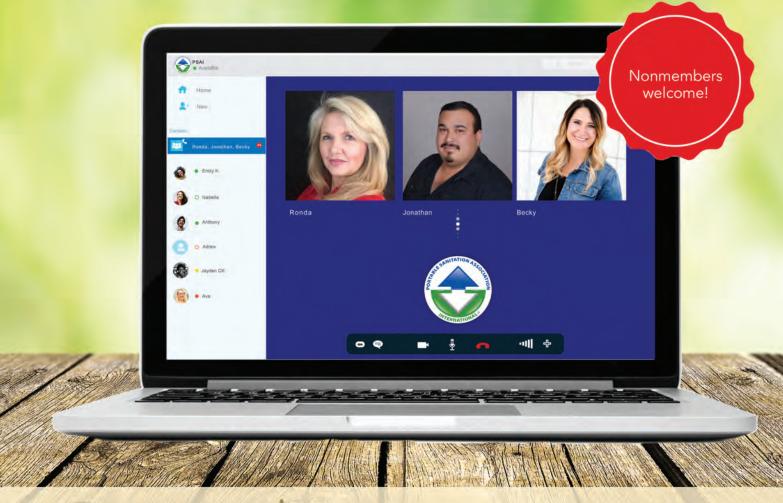
CENTURY CHEMICAL GRAFFITI WIPES

Graffiti Wipes from **Century Chemical** are designed for fast, easy cleanup of ink from nonporous surfaces. The abrasive, yet nonscratching fabric aids in cleaning and can be used on a variety of surfaces, including portable restrooms, showers, partitions and hand-wash stations. They are premoistened with an environmentally safe and biodegradable cleaning formula that removes paints (including enamel), ink and permanent marker. A few swipes with a single wipe dissolves unwanted paint and graffiti, according to the maker. Each case contains six canisters, with each canister holding 70 wipes that are 9 1/2 by 12 inches. **800-348-3505**; www.centurychemical.com.

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saving time. 800-648-1153; www.sunrisenv.com.

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Green Hornet from **Walex Products** is a versatile cleaner that eliminates grease and grime. Simply dilute the super-concentrated formula based on the intended use: 1-5 for engine degreasing, whitewall tires, concrete and cement, spot cleaning, fuel oil truck bodies and heavy kitchen greases; 1-10 for wax stripping, heavy metal parts degreasing, medium kitchen grease, laundry degreasing,



mold/mildew and charcoal/gas grills; 1-15 for carpet and upholstery, filter screens, medium metal parts degreasing, heavy soap scum and shower stalls; 1-20 for use in a pressure washer, steam cleaner, aircraft, and boat cleaner, light metal parts degreasing, ceramic tile floors, air conditioning grills and ducts, tile and grout; 1-30 for general purpose cleaning, interior floor cleaner, buses and auto finishes (before waxing), floor mats, bathroom surfaces and stainless steel; 1-40 for walls and painted surfaces, medium general cleaning, vinyl interiors, light fixtures and soap scum; 1-50 for pots, pans and dishwashing and grills; and 1-90 for light general cleaning and countertops. **800-338-3155**; www.walex.com.

ODOR CONTROL

J&J PORTABLE SANITATION PRODUCTS TRUEX SQUEEZE BOTTLE

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lasting deep blue color, advanced time-released odor eliminating technology, and it breaks down paper and waste, reducing mounding. **800-345-3303**; www.jjchem.com.



JOHNNY'S CHOICE BY CHEMCORP INDUSTRIES SENSORY GRAND DISKS

Sensory Grand Disks for portable restrooms from **Johnny's Choice** by Chemcorp Industries are designed to eliminate tank odors. They are simple to use and are available in many long-lasting fruity fragrances. **888-729-6478**; www.johnnyschoice.com.



SAFE-T-FRESH ECO BLUE

Eco Blue eco-friendly deodorizer from **Safe-T-Fresh** is a packet product with no hazardous materials that doesn't sacrifice fragrance or deep blue color. Its malodor control technology eliminates chemical processes by naturally absorbing malodors. It is biocide- and bacteria-free, making it fully biodegradable and treatment plant friendly. It is designed to provide a worry-free week of service with a lavender scent at any temperature. **800-883-1123**; www.satelliteindustries.com.

SURCO PORTABLE SANITATION PRODUCTS POTTY FRESH PLUS P.T. SPRAY DOWN

Potty Fresh Plus P.T. Spray Down water-soluble spray from **Surco Portable Sanitation Products** eliminates stubborn odors and dirt in portable restrooms and provides long-lasting freshness. Its intense odor protection is designed to clean and disinfect portable restroom units using Metazene, an odor-neutralizing additive that destroys particles that cause vaporous malodors at their molecular level. Spray it on directly or



mix it with water. It's available in five fragrances — xtreme clean, cherry, lavender, super spice or bubblegum — and in cases of four 1-gallon jugs, 5-gallon pails or 55-gallon drums. **800-556-0111; www.surco.com.**

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The **CV Series** cargo van drain jet from **Cam Spray** offers diesel-fired hot water for additional jetting power. Several models are available up to 4,000 psi and 12 gpm. A triplex plunger pump with power pulse valve provides an extra push when needed. Air purge and recirculation to the tank are provided for freeze protection. A 5-gallon fuel tank provides hours of runtime. It comes

with a heavily built, powder-coated frame with full deck and 130-gallon water capacity; a 12-volt DC reel with 2-1 clutch drive allowing for free spooling; and a powered hose return. It is controlled by a push button or foot switch. Accessories include a four-nozzle set, storage box, tip cleaner, tiger tail, safety shield, rubber gloves, high-visibility safety vest, 50-foot washdown hose and trigger gun. **800-648-5011; www.camspray.com.**

JENNY PRODUCTS STEAM JENNY

Steam Jenny electric cold pressure washers from **Jenny Products** allow operation in enclosed areas where gas-powered machines can't be used. They are powered by Marathon or Baldor electric motors, range from 1.5 to 10 hp and are available with either single-phase GFCI or three-phase power. They have industrial-grade triplex ceramic plunger pumps and are available with pressure ratings between 1,000 and 4,000 psi and



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2013 Ameri-Can Engineering 612 Royale Dooley. Pewter in color. 2 stalls, one women/baby changing station, one men. Please reach out to Kimberli at PortaPros for more information and images 208-467-0089 or kimi@portapros.com. \$17,500. (T08)

PORTABLE RESTROOM TRUCKS

Trucks, Trailers, Slide In: 2017 F550 - \$65,500, 2010 F350 - \$19,500, 2006 Freightliner M2 - \$28,950, 2006 Hino 268 - \$13,500, 2016 Pik-Rite Slide-In, 2007 JAG 3 station Restroom Trailer, 2007 JAG 2 Station Trailer. See pictures and details at http://portabowlrestroom.blogspot.com/. Email Cory@ Portabowlinc.com. Phone - 215-416-3005 Pennsylvania. (T07)

1,600-gallon portable toilet service unit (tank only). (Stock# 13762). www. VacuumSalesInc.com. (888) VAC-UNIT (822-8648). (TBM)

2014 Imperial, 1,175 aluminum portable toilet service unit (775 waste/400 water) with Masport HXL4 pump (No Truck). (Stock #71975V). www.vacuumsalesinc.com. (888)VAC-UNIT (822-8648). (TBM)

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PRODUCT NEWS

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Ameri-Can Engineering brings smart technology to its restroom trailers

By Craig Mandli

Unnecessary service calls can be a large expense for a portable sanitation business. Getting to a restroom trailer on the service route only to find



out service isn't needed wastes an operator's time and money. Ameri-Can Engineering answers that issue, partnering with Dometic Internet of Things solutions to offer the Ameri-Connect restroom trailer monitoring system.

The smart solution allows the operator to control and monitor the trailer's system devices via a mobile app. It can monitor the trailer's lighting, climate control devices, awnings, water heater, water pump, batteries, inverter status, water and wastewater tank levels and LP gas from multiple locations.

"Our goal was to integrate today's technology into our trailer units," says Keegan Campbell, Ameri-Can Engineering's chief operating officer. "We want our customers to be able to maximize their profits, and efficient solutions like this can help."

The Ameri-Connect smart technology helps operators use predictive analytics to better judge water and power usage, while fully customizable LCD screens and the remote app allow devices to be turned on and off at preset times in an orchestrated sequence. It is easy to install and allows for independent control and monitoring of most vital functions of the trailer.

According to Campbell, the solution grew out of a smaller partnership tied to the environmental functions of the company's trailers.

"We approached Dometic about manufacturing air conditioning units for our trailers that utilized smart technology," he says. "When they got in our trailers, they realized that their remote operation platform could extend to much more than just the air conditioning units. What we came up with together in essence makes the entire trailer a smart device."

The device's predictive monitoring capabilities provide a historical view of system usage and forecasting. The system is configurable and customizable, allowing the user to view multiple functions at the same time via the flexibility of Dometic's modular screen design. Haptic touch screens provide an audio confirmation when selecting options. Load boxes are installed close to the unit, reducing wiring time and cost. Multiple screens allow total control of all systems throughout the trailer, while the customizable, modular design accommodates numerous installation configurations.

"It allows operators to keep better track of their units in the field," Campbell says. "The fewer service calls you need to make, the more you can save." **574-892-5151; www.ameri-can.com.** ■

ScreencO Systems Trash Master 400 Auto Screen

The Trash Master 400 Auto Screen from ScreencO Systems uses gravity to separate the trash from the flow stream through a 4-inch inlet with a fan spreader to power-offload vacuum trucks to the



screen. An aluminum hopper with a 6-inch outlet cam and 3/8-inch gapped 1/4-inch bar screen meets U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 503 regulations. A stainless steel U-channel with plastic-lined titanium UHMW provides for years of wear, with a high-strength alloy steel 8 1/2-inch shaftless screw that moves trash to a waste container. The U-channel has slotted drain holes and a center channel bar screen for cleaner and dryer trash. A custombuilt stainless steel bar rake is included. A front spray bar with a 1 gpm nozzle keeps the unit free of buildup. The lower cover contains a cam fitting with two built-in 1 gpm nozzles, which allow for easy removal of the covers to access the U-channel and screw. A 2 hp NORD gear reduction drive with Lenze variable-frequency drive control accomplishes a variable-speed screw from 6 to 30 rpm. 208-790-8770; www.screencosystems.com.



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