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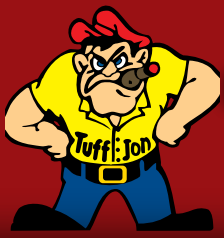
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**CALLED to
Serve**



Following the death of his father in 2019, Mack Long was thrust into leadership at Piedmont Disposal and Recycling

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restrooms**
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COVER PHOTO: North Carolina's Piedmont Disposal and Recycling started by offering dumpster service, but expanded into portable sanitation to better serve its construction customers. President and CEO Mack Long is shown with Satellite Industries restrooms and a hand-wash station from T.S.F. Company. (Photo by James Nix)

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By Jim Kneiszel

Are You Facing a Disposal Dilemma?

Dumping is becoming a bigger issue for PROs who face higher fees and reduced access to treatment plants. What is the answer?

When participants at a roundtable discussion during last fall's Portable Sanitation Association International Nuts and Bolts conference were asked about topics they'd like to discuss, John McGuire raised his hand. The future of disposal was on his mind. A chorus of other PROs at the table chimed in to say their dumping options were becoming limited too.

"Every other day on [wastewater industry] social media groups, it's 'Where can I dump? Where can I dump?' So it's obviously a national problem and that's why I brought it up at the PSAI," McGuire recalled during a recent phone interview. The business development manager for Rent-A-Can in Casa Grande, Arizona, (a subsidiary of ROX Group) went on to share his company's present disposal dilemma. And once again he found out he wasn't alone with his concerns.

Last June, Rent-A-Can was notified that the city of Casa Grande, located midway between Phoenix and Tucson in central Arizona, was soon to make two changes at its municipal treatment plant that would have a major impact on the restroom business. First, they announced a rate hike for processing portable sanitation waste from 3-4 cents per gallon to 25 cents per gallon. And second, they were no longer going to take waste generated outside of city limits.

And these changes were going to take place the following month, in July. As you can imagine, the announcement sent Rent-A-Can leaders into crisis mode trying to figure out how this would alter their business outlook. It wasn't a pretty picture.

"That's an 800% increase for us. We were quite taken aback by that," McGuire says. Aside from the price increase, the new border restrictions are a burden. "We do have one or two large customers in the city, but 80% of our business or more comes from outside the city limits."

NOT MANY CHOICES

The new rules were brought about by concerns over high BOD strength of the portable restroom and septage waste, use of formaldehyde for deodorizing, as well as treatment plant processing capacity, McGuire says. Prompted by meetings with area haulers, the city agreed to open treatment to waste from surrounding Pinal County, which covered 60-70% of the Rent-A-Can flow, but they have refused to make allowances on the per-gallon price.

"It still didn't solve our problem in any significant way," he says. "We went from \$50,000 in dumping fees a year to \$350,000 a year and that's a big difference."

Rent-A-Can approached 20 area municipalities to find more reasonable disposal options. None would accept the portable restroom waste, let alone provide a better price. The company ended up purchasing a \$250,000 transport truck and now runs a daily route to a private waste processor in Phoenix that charges 16 cents per gallon.

CONTACT US:

PRO strives to serve the portable restroom industry with interesting and helpful stories. We welcome your comments, questions and column suggestions and promise a prompt reply to all reader contacts. Email PRO editor Jim Kneiszel at editor@promonthly.com or call 800-257-7222.

The company is also considering setting up its own treatment operation that would empty directly into the Casa Grande sewer. Rent-A-Can offered to set up an operation to screen out trash and trickle the waste stream into the sewer line so it doesn't have as big of an impact. But the city is requiring effluent to be treated to the strength of residential waste and that would require the company to invest an estimated \$1.5 million. Even then, the city would not reduce the per-gallon rate.

"It's been quite a blow to our operating costs," McGuire says. "It's difficult for us to be competitive. It's not only an operational and actual bottom line hit, but can we raise our prices to cover this and still be successful in the industry? Will our customers understand this?"

No decision has been made on Rent-A-Can creating its own treatment operation. Another option would be for the company to relocate to Phoenix, which has a tiered system that would offer lower rates, or where the company could reduce its transport costs for waste going to a private facility there.

"Somewhere, at some point somebody is going to hear us. What I would say to the feds is, 'Does an environmental pandemic have to happen before you realize the seriousness of this?'"

Jason Birdsong

Rent-A-Can isn't the largest or smallest restroom provider in the state. ROX Group bought out an existing PRO three years ago and grew the business from 700 restrooms to about 2,000. It currently has about 25 employees and serves customers in the Phoenix to Tucson corridor with a population of about 6 million. It's been a great industry to add to real estate, publishing and other ventures the company owns.

A KEY TO LOCAL GROWTH

The area is experiencing a development boom. Factories including a new electric car plant are located near Casa Grande and housing is also growing. All of these generate new business for Rent-A-Can, and portable sanitation continues to be in high demand.

McGuire just wished the cities could be more flexible in serving portable restroom companies.

"I don't know what these people expect us to do. The portable sanitation industry isn't going anywhere. All of these cities have construction and events," he says. "On one hand the city is using us, and on the other hand, the city is making it difficult for us to use them. It's a conundrum."

McGuire wants local officials to realize how sudden price spikes and service cutoffs impact small wastewater businesses and look for ways to phase in price increases or reduce flows they accept. When you hurt portable restroom businesses, you're hurting builders, special events and others who require essential sanitation service, he says.

"There really is no perfect solution," he added "So we have to all work together to come up with something. There needs to be more of a regional or national solution discussed."

McGuire realizes some PROs haven't faced these issues and continue to enjoy low disposal rates and no capacity issues at their local plants. That's the way it was for decades for haulers in Casa Grande, he says. "But who knows when it's going to rear its ugly head anywhere?"

JOINING FORCES

You don't have to convince Jason Birdsong that disposal is a widespread issue in need of a comprehensive solution. Birdsong, president of the Oklahoma Onsite Wastewater Association and vice president of the National Association of Wastewater Transporters, hears the concerns from McGuire and others and joined the roundtable with this issue on his mind.

"A nationwide pandemic is where it's headed," he says. "You start turning the haulers away, they're going to find someplace to dump it and it might not be legal. Even people that try to do things right hit their wit's end when they're beating their heads against the wall. They have no alternative but to not do things the right way to survive."

Birdsong is president and CEO of JT Septic in Claremore, Oklahoma. He is concerned about pumpers and portable sanitation companies finding and affording disposal opportunities moving forward. He's also worried about future generations of wastewater professionals and preserving the environment.

"I want it to be better for her than when I started," he says of his daughter who could take over the business one day. "I want the environment to be friendly for my grandkids. If there's no regulations or regulatory monitoring of the regulations, it's going to get worse and somebody, somewhere down the line is going to pay the price."

One possible way to move forward, according to Birdsong, is to require municipalities to allow disposal access to pumpers and PROs if they take state or federal money to upgrade wastewater treatment plants. Education of local government officials is also key. Haulers and treatment plants need to work together to solve issues of capacity and wastewater strength, and testing loads for hazardous materials.

Birdsong is not sure private companies alone can process the waste.

"I think I speak for many small businesses when I say it's not economically feasible for me to purchase a \$2 million treatment plant, or to purchase a 7,000-gallon tanker and haul it three hours," he says.

Birdsong promotes creating a federal roadmap to address the inevitable increase in wastewater from portable sanitation and septic service companies. He would like to see the government, businesses and wastewater trade groups organize to overcome the disposal issue.

"To me, the bigger the voice the bigger the squeakiness of the wheel," he says. "Somewhere, at some point somebody is going to hear us. What I would say to the feds is, 'Does an environmental pandemic have to happen before you realize the seriousness of this?'"

A PROACTIVE MOVE

Sarabia's Portable Jons/Blue Sanitation in El Paso, Texas, has been proactive in dealing with disposal issues for many years. More than a decade ago, the company worked with the city of El Paso to set up its own dump station that sends wastewater directly into the municipal sewer. The company's president, Monica Brown, says that move — made by the former owner, her late sister Lorraine Wardy — was very forward-thinking.



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The arrangement has become more important to Sarabia's operations since the city closed the disposal station used by all haulers five years ago. Brown says other haulers are transporting their waste greater distances in tankers to find a place to dump. That can mean driving five hours one way to Odessa, Texas, a trip her crew luckily hasn't had to make.

"When [the city] closed, we were totally privileged to have what we have," says Brown, who also attended the PSAI conference and heard the concerns of others. "We can operate 24/7 and that gives us a very competitive edge over everyone else. I feel for my competitors because those that don't have a discharge area in their own yards have a real hard time."

Learning of disposal options being threatened for so many PROs, Brown recommends others working with their local treatment plant officials and considering whether they can set up their own dump sites where practical.

"If they can get a permit like mine or any kind of an option to do it in their own facility, that's the best bet," she says.

WHAT SAY YOU?

Let's expand the disposal conversation started at the PSAI roundtable. What is the situation for your restroom company and throughout your region? Have your disposal fees been raised recently, and how have you changed your operation to cope with that? Would you be willing to join a trade association and jumpstart lobbying efforts for more funds to treat private sources of wastewater? Drop me an email at editor@promonthly.com. I'll share your thoughts with the rest of the portable sanitation community. ■

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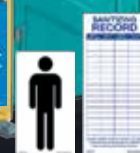
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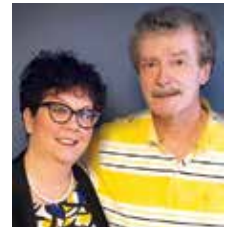
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Jeff and Terri Wigley are portable sanitation industry veterans, having owned and operated Atlanta-based Pit Stop Sanitation Services for 25 years. Send your questions or comments to editor@promonthly.com.

Restroom Panels Offer a Blank Canvas for Creative Marketing

We asked art students to decorate some of our units and they became a big hit with many of our customers



Jeff and Terri Wigley

By Jeff and Terri Wigley

Portable restrooms often attract attention, especially at special events. Through the years, many PROs have capitalized on this fact and added creative touches to some of their units to attract attention at an event. From painted units to affixing posters, balloons and holiday lights to the equipment, these creative ideas make your company more a part of the event and increase name recognition in your market. We will address this topic in the first question.

The second question, similar to the first, deals with publicizing your company name and contact information on all your equipment. All too often PROs merely place their company logo on the door and potential customers can only get this essential information by looking directly at the door from a short distance away. Larger wall decals on the three walls increase visibility and name recognition. We will also discuss affixing your company logo and contact information on all your rental equipment.

QUESTION: We have seen photos of your company’s painted units on your website and in various articles throughout the years. Could you explain how to go about doing this? What other ideas for decorating units do you have from your years in the business?

ANSWER: We first heard about painted units from fellow operators at a Portable Sanitation Association International convention many years ago. The idea was to provide unique units that would allow customers to further promote a festive atmosphere at their special events. At the same time, our company would be afforded name recognition in the community.

We chose units with flat sides and minimal indentations, providing an ideal surface for painting. Upon recommendation from a friend, we approached a local high school art teacher who was enthralled with the idea. Her classes produced the designs for several units and presented them to us for approval. Each class then worked on its own unique unit over time. We ended up with a dozen painted units. At the teacher’s suggestion, a local body shop sealed each unit with a clear protectant to preserve these portable restroom works of art.

We then created a brochure and included pictures on our website. The arts and crafts shows were by far the most frequent customers, but chamber of commerce and corporate events were soon requesting these units as well. Other artists and art teachers then inquired about creating units. We agreed to let them participate in this program and began a royalty program so that

they could be active participants in marketing these units. Today, some 12-15 years later, these units are still popular and profitable.

Care needs to be taken with these special units. The painted units were stored inside our warehouse for protection from the weather. Special care must be taken when the units are being strapped down as the buckles cannot be thrown over the units as is normally the case. The straps must be gently placed over the units to avoid chipping the paint. Every few years, the painted units are touched up by an artist and resealed.

If the demand for units is at a premium in your company and you cannot designate “permanent” painted units, consider “temporary” painted units. We have seen PROs who will use paper sheets to cover the walls of a unit with a separate sheet covering the door and have paintings, pictures, advertisements, or decorations attached. At the end of the event, remove the paper and your unit is ready for the next rental. *(continued)*

Below: Several of the Pit Stop Portables painted restrooms decorated by local high school artists and requested for arts and crafts events. **Right:** This marketing brochure was used to raise awareness for the painted restrooms.



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Other ideas include wrapping the units in holiday lights, attaching balloons to the roofs of units, and affixing small decorations on the outside walls. Be creative when given the chance as it will set your company apart from your competition.

One note, and this leads to the second question for this month, is to always display your logo and contact information on your equipment. Our painted units had our large company wall decal with phone number and website prominently displayed on the inside back wall above the tank to greet the users as they entered.



QUESTION: We have been told we should consider adding wall decals to the outside of our units. Others have suggested adding decals to our sinks and our two restroom trailers. What are your thoughts and suggestions?

ANSWER: Years of experience and interaction with fellow PROs have convinced us that units can be effective billboards to advertise a company.

Door decals do not allow for the general public to identify your units as they pass them on job sites, view them from a distance at special events or see many units on trailers driving down the road. Name recognition is vital in any business.

In addition to company name, phone number and website, many PROs also add QR codes to their decals allowing customers to use their phones to scan and easily access information about your company.

Do not neglect your other rental equipment in terms of decals and advertising your company. Door decals fit quite well on most hand-wash stations and hand sanitizing stands. Holding tanks can accommodate either the larger wall decals or door decals.

In addition to company name, phone number, and website, many PROs also add QR codes to their decals allowing customers to use their phones to scan and easily access information about your company.

Restroom trailers present an interesting dilemma in terms of decal usage. Many large upscale and corporate events do not want massive advertising on restroom trailers. Some events add their own removable signage to the trailers.

The consensus among most PROs and trailer manufacturers is to place company decals on the front of the trailer near the hitch and on the back of the trailer near the tag at a minimum to identify your property. Having a decal on the utility door that opens to the power box, water valve, and storage area is strongly recommended so that in the event of any problem or question, your company information is readily available. If the customer wants all decals hidden, a color-coordinated magnetic sheet is an excellent alternative to physically removing company decals.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Set your company apart from your competition. Professional service and quality products are your keys to success. Use creative methods to further enhance your name recognition. Whether it is painted units or decorated units, always have your company decals on all your equipment so that prospective customers can easily reach you and your name will spread in your community. ■

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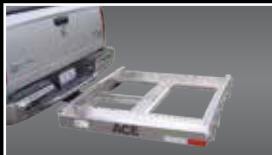
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The crew at Piedmont Disposal and Recycling includes, from left, Mack Long, Octavio Jarquin, Jeffrey Long, Lindley Jones, Jeff Rule, Debbie Shelton and Tim Gardner. Vacuum truck builders include Amthor International and Integrity Tank and pumps are from Masport.

Called to Serve

Following the death of his father in 2019, Mack Long was thrust into leadership at Piedmont Disposal and Recycling

STORY: Peter Kenter | PHOTOS: James Nix



Piedmont Disposal and Recycling
Winston-Salem,
North Carolina

FOUNDED: 1999

OWNER: Mack Long

EMPLOYEES: 25

SERVICES: Portable sanitation, trash containers, storage box rental, fencing recycling

SERVICE AREA: 55-mile radius around Winston-Salem

WEBSITE: www.piedmontdisposal.com

From his earliest days, Mack Long remembers his father, Kevin, saying that he wasn't building Piedmont Disposal and Recycling for himself — he was supporting a family, providing good employment for his workers, and offering a growing number of services for customers in the Winston-Salem, North Carolina, area.

His father passed away from ALS — also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease — in 2019 at 52 years old, thrusting his son into a leadership role at the company at age 22. But four words from his father — "It's not about me" — have continued to guide Long and inform the company's success.

Kevin founded Piedmont Disposal with 30 roll-off containers in 1999.

"At the time, there was no such thing as same-day service in our area," Long says. "My father's main focus was to provide clean, efficient and friendly service to the construction industry. His vision positioned Piedmont for growth."

STARTING YOUNG

Long's earliest recollections of the business were posing for photos in his dad's roll-off containers and riding shotgun on deliveries.

"My grandmother wanted me to have a traditional Catholic name, so my name is Joseph Mackenzie," says Long. "But that was my father's way of naming me after a truck. I didn't really stand a chance of choosing any other industry."

In 2007, the business added 100 portable restrooms and a vacuum truck, a value-added service aligned with the needs of the construction industry. In the following years, Piedmont also extended its services to offer waste solutions, including compactors and preconsumer paper recycling.

"My first summer work experience in the business was working in the paper recycling warehouse, sorting material, placing it on conveyor belts and feeding it into balers," Long recalls.

After he finished high school, his father offered him the "opportunity of a lifetime" — a raise in pay for taking on the portable restroom service route for the summer. With the growth of that division, the company fielded roughly 200 units and handled up to 50 daily service stops.

"This was my first exposure to portable sanitation," Long recalls. "Being the only route driver, I knew that I had to put my best foot forward and provide a level of

Jeff Rule, restroom division supervisor, loads a Satellite Industries restroom to the back of a service truck at Piedmont Disposal and Recycling in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

service that not only my father would approve of, but more importantly, Piedmont customers. That summer taught me the importance of service, and of developing personal relationships with clients.”

BAD NEWS COMES

In 2016, Long headed to Western Carolina University to study business administration and law. Although he had considered an eventual return to Piedmont, he had no clear career path.

That changed during his 2017 fall break.

“I came in excited and ready to work and my father sits me down and he says: ‘Son, I’ve got bad news.’ He told me that he had ALS. I thought it was some kind of joke, but he was serious.”

ALS is amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. A rare neurological condition, the disease disrupts the ability of the brain to send signals to muscles that control voluntary movement. ALS is progressive, devastating and always fatal.

“We needed to appreciate the limited time that we still had together as a family,” Long says. “But after that initial shock, I also realized that this wasn’t about me. It was about my father, the legacy he created with Piedmont Disposal, its employees and the relationships we had built with customers.”

Kevin continued to lead Piedmont, even as he began to negotiate work each day in a motorized wheelchair.

“At times he would be so tired, he would find a corner in the recycling warehouse, lean his wheelchair back and take a nap,” says Long. “A half-hour later he would be back at it, wheeling around and running over people with his chair.”

Long knew he would soon be required to lead the company, and expedited his studies in the hopes that his father could attend his graduation. However, Kevin

stopped working in May 2019 and passed away a month later. He exercised his famous sense of humor one last time by arriving at the funeral in a customized coffin designed to look like a Piedmont dumpster.

“The following Monday, I was in dad’s office organizing and cleaning things out, which was tough,” Long says. “But I stepped in and started making my face better known.”

TAKING THE REINS

Long graduated in December 2019 and started working full time as president and CEO of Piedmont on Jan. 2, 2020. At that point, the company employed 18 people and the portable restroom division still had an inventory of about 200 units, serviced by a single truck.

In the following 18 months, Long counted on the dedication and expertise of the employee team to carry the company as he learned the ropes. The COVID-19 pandemic added challenges, but the business survived.

“At this point, I was hungry to promote a growth mindset,” Long says. “We’re the only supplier in Winston-Salem that provides both dumpsters and restrooms to the construction industry, but we were stymied as to how to grow the restroom division.”

The answer came in the form of Jeff Rule, a seasoned professional who understood the value of consistent, quality service and impeccable cleanliness. Piedmont hired him as a route driver, then extended his duties to division manager. Long credits his hard work and professionalism with the division’s growth.

QUALITY EQUIPMENT

Quickly adding restrooms to the inventory, Piedmont currently offers about 550 Satellite Industries restrooms, including four ADA-compliant units. Long says he orders standard units of the same model, the Global, and green



“After that initial shock, I also realized that this wasn’t about me. It was about my father, the legacy he created with Piedmont Disposal, its employees and the relationships we had built with customers.”

Mack Long

Mike Thompson washes a hand-wash station, surrounded by Piedmont Disposal and Recycling service trucks, including roll-off container delivery rigs to the left.





Jeff Rule cleans a portable restroom. Workstations on the vacuum trucks were designed with low hose hangers and other ergonomic features to reduce strain on service technicians.

“A good-looking, clean truck on the road or job site speaks volumes and creates brand recognition. We also like to think it inspires pride in our employees.”

Mack Long

The company fields three vacuum trucks, all with 1,500-gallon (1,000 waste/500 fresh) steel tanks and Masport pumps. The first is a 2013 Hino, the second is a 2022 Freightliner M2-106 built out by Amthor International and the third is a 2023 Freightliner M2-106 built out by Integrity Tank.

A 2000 GMC stake body performs double duty, delivering up to 10 restrooms, or delivering water totes.

The 2022 Freightliner also has room to deliver up to eight portable restrooms. For large events, portable restrooms are delivered using a 2008 Peterbilt 389 tractor hauling a 53-foot enclosed trailer with 28-unit capacity from Great Dane Trailers.

Trash containers are from FleetGenius and Rudco Products.

DEDICATED CREW

Piedmont employs 25 people, with three dedicated to the portable restroom division. An in-house welder and a mechanic work in the company’s 35,000-square-foot warehouse to keep equipment in top shape.

Large construction contractors represent about 98% of the portable restroom clientele, although referrals from construction clients and Google ads

BUY NEW, BUY CUSTOM

When Mack Long, president and CEO of Piedmont Disposal and Recycling, buys a pumping rig, he always buys it new.

“When we spec out our vehicles, we focus on longevity, functionality and efficiency,” he says. “We collaborate with our drivers to make sure that their preferences are implemented into the trucks, making their day-to-day work easier. Ultimately, this makes the drivers safer as well.”

Piedmont workstations, for example, drop down to just above knee level. This prevents drivers from being required to lift hoses and supplies above their waist. In addition, everything a driver needs for service is located in one area: water hose, vacuum hose, freshwater tank fill and chemicals are all within arm’s reach.

Likewise, the exterior PTO switch is located near the drop-down workstation, so drivers won’t have to climb into the cab to switch on the PTO.

“Our toolboxes hold three and one-half cases of paper and having that capacity makes a big difference for our drivers,” Long says.

Piedmont also likes to see a new truck come with a custom paint job.

“We could buy a standard white truck with steel wheels, but what’s the fun in that?” Long asks. “A good-looking, clean truck on the road or job site speaks volumes and creates brand recognition. We also like to think it inspires pride in our employees.”

color because it makes his brand stand out. Deodorizers are supplied by J&J Portable Sanitation Products.

Piedmont also offers 70 TJ-Junior hand-wash stations from T.S.F. Company, 70 Handistand hand sanitizer stations from Satellite and 70 250-gallon holding tanks from Satellite. The company also offers 40 275-gallon freshwater totes from IBC Tanks to provide water to office trailers — Piedmont staff outfit them with pumps in-house.



Mechanic Octavio Jarquin works in the shop at Piedmont Disposal and Recycling.



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“We collaborate with our drivers to make sure that their preferences are implemented into the trucks, making their day-to-day work easier. Ultimately, this makes the drivers safer as well.”

Mack Long

are generating more event work, such as weddings, church events and meetings.

“We recently bought our first trailer, a Satellite Selfie, featuring two private stations,” Long says. “It’s getting some traction. In the next year, we could see ourselves buying another one.”

Piedmont staff routinely attend trade shows, although this is the first year they’ve sent staff to both the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport Show and the Portable Sanitation Association International Annual Convention and Trade Show.

“It keeps us up to date with important issues as well as new equipment,” Long says. “But simply being there and meeting other contractors helps promote a sense of professionalism.”

Long continues to lead the company on to further opportunities, seeking to dominate his existing territory, while gradually expanding Piedmont’s territory. In a way, his father is still by his side.

“What he taught me was more valuable than any college degree,” Long says. “He taught me how to lead from behind and treat employees and customers with dignity and respect.” ■



Rule services a row of Satellite Industries units.

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Technician Richard Reid uses an AVANT 528 articulating loader to shuttle restrooms in the McGraw Event Pros yard.

Be a Problem-Solver

This former U.S. Marine believes in providing service after the sale to secure profitable long-term business relationships

STORY: Peter Kenter | PHOTOS: James Nix

For Tommy McGraw, a former U.S. Marine and local law enforcement officer with a keen interest in business, renting out a few portable restroom trailers was supposed to be a side gig. But less than two years from its launch, McGraw Event Pros has exploded into a full-scale portable restroom operation built on a reputation for client care and service.

Trying his hand at real estate and property rental in the Charleston, South Carolina area, McGraw was intrigued in 2019 by an ad on Craigslist offering a pair of three-station UltraLav restroom trailers.

"I rented those out once a month to festivals and weddings and had other companies service them," he recalls. "I soon realized there was a good opportunity in luxury restroom trailers in the Charleston area, which was underserved."

Introduced to Bridget Lundberg, a 30-year sales and marketing veteran of the portable sanitation industry, McGraw hired her and launched McGraw Event Pros in early 2022. By the summer of 2023, the company employed eight people and ramped up its inventory to take on new business.

Today, the company owns 360 portable restrooms from Armal, PolyJohn and Satellite Industries, including 15 ADA units. Its 11 portable restroom trailers include: five from Lang Specialty Trailers, ranging from four to nine stations; three from Satellite — a three, six, and 10 station; two three-station trailers from Forest River; and a four-station trailer from a manufacturer now out of business. The company also offers 30 hand-wash stations from Satellite and PolyJohn.

They're serviced by four trucks all with Masport pumps. A 2022 Ford F-550 features an 800-gallon waste/400-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank built by Best Enterprises. The others feature aluminum tanks: a 2021 Ford F-450 with a 350-gallon waste/100-gallon freshwater slide-in unit from Imperial Industries; a 2022 International with a 900-gallon waste/400-gallon freshwater tank from Imperial Industries; and a 2022 Ram 5500 with

"I owe all my success, personally and professionally, to what was instilled in me in the U.S. Marine Corps. At the end of the day, it all comes back to self-discipline, integrity and service — doing the right thing."

Tommy McGraw

500-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater tank built by FlowMark. The company expects to order three additional trucks with slide-in tanks in 2023.

Transport trailers include two 16-unit haulers from Liquid Waste Industries, and a 10-unit and 16-unit from F.M. Manufacturing.

The company serves the Charleston area, as well as Georgia, through Savannah and Brunswick, with about 60% of the business in events, film work, emergency services and disaster recovery. The other 40% involves longer-term clients in construction, quarries, industrial applications and warehousing businesses.

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

1 DEVELOPING CHARACTER IN THE U.S. MARINES

"I owe all my success, personally and professionally, to what was instilled in me in the U.S. Marine Corps," McGraw says. "At the end of the day, it all comes back to self-discipline, integrity and service — doing the right thing. Doing what you need to do, even though you don't always feel like it."

That philosophy extends to taking care of company equipment: "In the Marines, you're cleaning your weapon because your weapon's going to save

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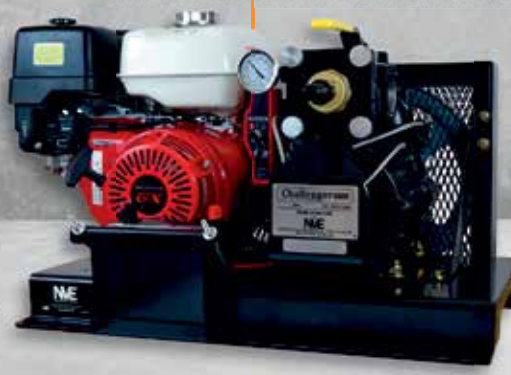
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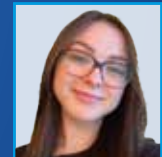


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Shawn Snyder readies a Satellite Suites restroom trailer for transport to an event location.



your life. Then you're taking care of all your nonessential gear and last but not least, you're taking care of your body. Equipment we use in this business isn't cheap and getting the full value from it involves keeping it impeccably clean and maintaining and servicing it to high standards."

2 SELECTING THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR THE JOB

McGraw doesn't believe in a one-size-fits-all equipment philosophy and likes to order a range of products from different suppliers to assess their pros and cons.

"All of the manufacturers have great products and they all have things that they could probably improve on if they're used in a particular situation," he says. "I might like a restroom trailer design, but if I find that the waste tank is smaller on those units, I will use them for VIP service at an event, instead of general admission. We also use particular portable restroom manufacturers for construction. We like to try these different products, so that we can determine who's going to be our best partner for a particular application and clientele moving forward."

One of McGraw's favorite pieces of equipment is an AVANT 528 articulating loader.

"A skid-steer doesn't maneuver in the most efficient manner," he says. "It also has tracks that tear up people's grass. The AVANT 528 has turf tires and can turn in extremely tight spaces. We don't have to drive our trucks and trailers through fields to serve a festival anymore. We park in a safe location and then use only one guy and that loader to move 50 or 60 toilets. It's saved us a ton of time and a ton of muscle."

3 HIRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

McGraw credits sales manager Bridget Lundberg for helping him understand the market opportunities in the area.

"She explained the potential for a company founded on excellent service," he says. "We don't look at ourselves as being in the restroom business, we're in the hospitality industry."

In the earliest days of the company, McGraw delivered restrooms and provided service, but he soon stepped back and now employs five drivers. "I'm never going to ask any of my people to do something that I would not do or have not done," he says. "Even now, if I get a call at midnight, I'm the one who will get in the truck to follow up."

Most of the company's employees are referrals. McGraw believes in paying competitive salaries, but also works to ensure employees feel valued. That begins with giving them the training and tools they need to be successful.

(continued)



Technician Jordy Hernandez rearranges inventory in the company yard. McGraw Event Pros has an assortment of restrooms from Armal, PolyJohn and Satellite Industries.

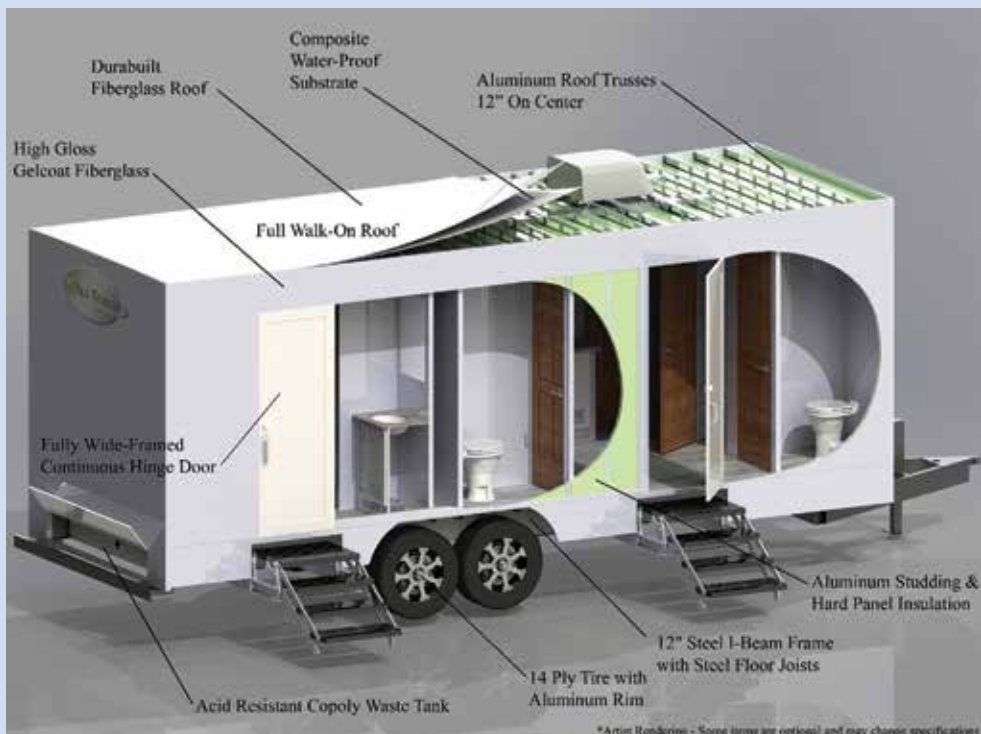
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“A customer is a sale. A client is a long-term relationship and a chance to demonstrate the value we create.”

Tommy McGraw



Richard Reid power-washes Armal restrooms in the company yard.

“Having a solid employee team behind me has allowed me to focus on new sales ideas, brainstorm new opportunities and work with our equipment manufacturers to move the business forward,” McGraw says.

4 BEING A PROBLEM-SOLVER FOR CLIENTS

Film and television contracts for productions such as HBO’s series *The Righteous Gemstones* and Netflix’s *Outer Banks* require the company to work in situations with a lot of moving parts.

“In these complex environments, we want to make our clients’ lives as easy as possible,” McGraw says. “They should talk with us once and never again have to worry about restrooms or trailers. But if we see an opportunity to take anything else off their plate, I want to be the first one to try and solve their problem, even if it isn’t our forte.”

The company has provided garden hose, floor mats, traffic cones, roll carts and cable trays to film clients. McGraw even carries light towers if the production requires extra illumination.

“I believe there’s a difference between a customer and a client,” he says. “A customer is a sale. A client is a long-term relationship and a chance to demonstrate the value we create. We might not see that financial return immediately, but we’re going to see that return in the relationship over the long haul.”

5 THE VALUE OF ATTENDING TRADE SHOWS

Members of the McGraw Event Pros staff regularly attend the Water & Wastewater Equipment, Treatment & Transport (WWETT) Show.

“It’s almost overwhelming,” says McGraw. “You feel like a kid going to Disney World. You find new business opportunities, and new ways to expand and grow. It’s a ton of fun to get up there to see the new products, and where the industry as a whole is heading. It also gives us an opportunity to see our sales reps and to talk with them about what’s going on, and even look for advice on how to use some of their products better.”

While the company has previously sent only members of the management team to the show, McGraw is looking to send drivers as well.

“They normally see portable sanitation from the working level,” he says. “We’d like them to see the newest technology and equipment and get their minds jogging so that they come home with new ideas that will make us more efficient, make us better as a team and help us grow.” ■

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A Look Back at Nuts & Bolts and a Preview of the Annual Convention and Trade Show



By Veronica Crosier

Last fall, the Portable Sanitation Association International wrapped up a record-breaking event at its 40th Nuts & Bolts Education Conference. The conference has become a must for PROs looking for serious networking and education.

About 240 portable sanitation contractors from the U.S. and around the world met in Atlanta for a day of speakers and roundtables, plus site visits to tour facilities of United Site Services and Satellite Industries. The evenings were filled with live music and the second annual Ramble Amble Poker Walk. The Ramble Amble is the latest fundraiser to support the PSAI Scholarship Fund and the organization's charity partner, Friends of Ngong Road. Nearly \$10,000 was raised for these causes through the event.

This month, PSAI gears up for its second and larger event — the PSAI Annual Convention and Trade Show, which will be held in Daytona, Florida. Like the education conference, this event continues to grow. PSAI expects 500 industry members to attend. The trade show floor will feature about 50 exhibitors.

This isn't just a trade show though. Attendees will listen to speakers and enjoy roundtable discussions including hands-on learning on industry topics. This year, PSAI will highlight several innovative and technology-specific topics like artificial intelligence in the industry and PROs making new attempts at portable restroom waste recycling and disposal.

The PSAI has temporarily moved from its traditional event dates. This year, the Annual Convention and Trade Show will take place Feb. 13-14 with an opportunity on the Feb. 12 for additional training and volunteer meetings.

PSAI has rooms at the Daytona Grande Oceanfront Hotel - Daytona's newest beachfront hotel with plenty of rooms overlooking the ocean. An infinity pool and outdoor bar also overlook this stunning view.

More importantly, the event will run up against the beginning of the Daytona 500. For this reason, PSAI encourages last-minute attendees to be ready to look for rooms a little outside of Daytona as the city will fill up fast for this huge event. But for PRO racecar fans, this is your perfect work vacation!

Visit psai.org/convention-and-trade-show to learn more and register. ■

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PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Solution tackles foul vacuum pump odors

By Tim Dobbins

It started with complaints in the 1990s. Specifically, garbage truck odors that were creating neighborhood grievances.

“As an odor-control company, we were tasked to find a product to combat the odor,” says Tonya Ray, account manager for **Surco Portable Sanitation Products**. “Pumper trucks also needed to address exhaust odors and alleviate complaints. We were able to provide a safe and easy fix to these issues.”

The fix is **Fresh Lube**, a **pump oil exhaust freshener** designed to control pump odors by counteracting and neutralizing offensive exhaust fumes generated by vacuum pumps.

The product is simple to use and requires no additional truck attachment boxes. It is an oil-based fragrance additive that mixes directly in pump oil. The Metazene molecular odor neutralizer is safe to use, causing no harm to the pump. “Simply mix a ratio of 2 to 6 ounces Fresh Lube into each gallon of pump oil and foul exhaust odors are replaced with a pleasing Cherry Drop fragrance,” Ray says.

The concentrated solution is added to pump oil before adding to the truck so refilling is only required as often as pump oil is added to the reservoir. Fresh Lube is available in 5-gallon pails, 1-gallon bottles or 4-ounce bottles.

Ray says its effective uses range from septic pumping and grease trap pumping to portable restroom service trucks or any truck that uses vacuum pump oil.

“It minimizes customer complaints and call backs,” she says. According to Ray, user feedback has been positive. “They say they wouldn’t pump without it and they can tell when it is time to add more.” Restaurant owners are happy there are no longer odors when getting their grease traps pumped. Portable restroom service trucks can do their routes when people are around without odor complaints.

“People don’t hold their noses and roll up their windows when they see a truck coming that uses Fresh Lube,” says Ray.

800-556-0111; www.surco.com ■

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STANDARD RESTROOMS

By Craig Mandli

Standard Portable Restrooms

ARMAL WAVE

The Wave portable restroom from Armal is designed for easy assembly, handling and cleaning. The single-block floor is resistant to impact. The units are made of high-density polyethylene and are treated to resist UV damage, color fading and parts durability at extreme temperatures. Curved corners make it easy to handle, and smooth surfaces make it easy to clean, according to the maker. The unit can be configured with several options.

866-873-7796; www.armal.biz



J&J PORTABLE SANITATION PRODUCTS ECHO

The Echo portable restroom from J&J Portable Sanitation Products is designed to withstand constant use and abuse and be easily maintained. It includes a domed floor with drains in front of the tank top for easy cleaning and no puddling. It includes an easy-to-clean deep-sump holding tank and a hover handle. The sides and roof have handgrips for easy moving.

800-345-3303; www.jjportable.com



NEXGEN PORTABLES P-POD

The P-Pod portable restroom folds for convenient transport and storage. Units are designed to be practical, lightweight and spacious, and the unit does not require a vent stack. Interchangeable tanks can be removed quickly without tools. They can be equipped with a traditional drop tank, recirculating tank or freshwater flushing tank, while allowing sanitization of all surfaces. They can be stacked three high when not in use.

866-763-9436; www.nexgenppod.com



T BLUSTAR RAPIDLOO STAR

RapidLoo STAR portable restrooms from T blustar are engineered to meet the needs of operators servicing special events and construction sites. The STAR model uses 16 latches to assemble one restroom. Panels are fabricated using roto-molding technology to provide durable HDPE plastic components that are resistant to extreme weather conditions, according to the maker. They feature rounded corners to decrease friction on the ground during handling and to allow an easy tilt during the loading process. They also include double door springs, an easy-slide door handle and exterior grab handles on each panel for easy hauling. When assembled, they measure 86.6 inches tall, 43 inches wide and 43 inches deep. The restroom comes in



eight colors, and because the restroom breaks down into individual components, the pieces are interchangeable. This allows for side wall color changes or easy replacement of single panels in cases of damage.

404-482-0736; www.tblustar.com

POLYJOHN PJN3

The PJN3 from PolyJohn has a spacious interior and a translucent roof. It features anti-slip floors, maximum ventilation, a two-roll paper dispenser and an occupancy signal latch. Options include a hand-wash sink or hand-sanitizer dispenser, convenience shelf with hook, locking kit and gender signs. It is available with a standard holding tank or an optional recirculating flush tank. Its waste tank design makes cleaning and servicing easy, according to the maker. Each unit comes with a door-mounted mirror, handle and a nonsplash urinal. It is made from high-grade polyethylene.

800-292-1305; www.polyjohn.com



SATELLITE ASPEN

Aspen portable restrooms from Satellite Industries come with features that heighten the usability for female users. Amenities include purse hooks, hover handles that allow for a contact-free experience and ample shelf space. Other features include an optional solid floor cover that accommodates users wearing heels and the option to eliminate the urinal. These features create a user-friendly restroom experience and help meet the needs of men and women to ensure customer satisfaction, according to the maker.

800-883-1123; www.satelliteindustries.com



T.S.F. TUFF JON III

The Tuff Jon III from T.S.F. has molded wall vents, a sky heater, lifting brackets and a 16-gallon hand-wash station with foot pedal pump. Designed for easy cleaning, the one-piece polyethylene unit is available in nine colors and has a 70-gallon holding tank. Options include towel holder and soap dispenser.

800-843-9286; www.tuff-jon.com



Decals/Magnets/Signage

ALLIED GRAPHICS DECALS

Decals from Allied Graphics are designed to stick and stay on portable restrooms in tough environments. The long-life vinyl decals use ultraviolet inks to look good for years, according to the maker. The decals can also be applied to sinks and trailers. 763-428-8365; www.allied-graphics.com



DYNAMIC PRINT + PROMOTIONS QR CODES

Printed QR codes from Dynamic Print + Promotions can help promote interaction and engagement through mobile phones. QR codes do not take up a lot of space on marketing material, so they fit on ad banners, company logo decals, pamphlets or other prod-



ucts. They can be accessed by a smartphone camera and do not require a special device to interpret the message. Uses include inventory management, customer service checkpoints, directing customers to a landing page or website, reaching a business number, sending a message or email, app downloads, viewing a business address, directing customers to social media platforms, and shopping and eCommerce sites. They can be printed on vinyl, aluminum and plastic.

800-472-0285; www.dynamicprintplus.com

ROEDA DECALS

ROEDA decals use an upgraded compound adhesive for an adhesion rating that surpasses the company's previous line of adhesive-applied vinyl. The decals have an increased coat weight to provide a wider range of conformability to textured surfaces. The vinyl has gone through comprehensive testing over the last year to ensure optimized adhesion for decal longevity, according to the maker.

800-829-3021; www.roeda.com



Lighting

LUNARGLO SOLAR LIGHTS

LunarGlo solar lights are designed to improve the user experience and make units easier to clean after dark. Life expectancy is 3-5 years. Lights provide consistent brightness from dusk to dawn and the ability to take pressure washing day after day with no impact on performance, according to the maker.

574-294-2624; www.lunarglo.com



SOLAR LED INNOVATIONS SOLAR POD LIGHTS

Solar Pod Lights from Solar LED Innovations are available in three versions that provide 30, 50 and 65 lumens to illuminate portable restrooms for special events and nighttime use. Low-profile units install quickly and double-lock securely through the roof. Automatic darkness and motion sensors control lighting as well as a manual on/off option. Up to 30 hours of light are provided from a single-day charge in the sun.

484-639-4833; www.solargoose.com ■



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INDUSTRY NEWS

Samson Pumps and Fruitland Manufacturing form business partnership

Samson Pumps and Fruitland Manufacturing, a Canadian vacuum solutions manufacturer within the mobile vacuum industry, announced a business partnership in North America. The partnership will leverage Samson Pumps' expertise in liquid ring vacuum technology and Fruitland Manufacturing's market experience to deliver customer solutions within the mobile vacuum industry. ■

Companies For Sale

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 - Southeast portable sanitation and roll off company, \$5.25mm revenue *SOLD*
 - Northeast septic pumping and installation, \$5.2mm revenue
 - Southeast portable sanitation and roll off company, \$4.25mm revenue
 - Southeast portable sanitation and roll off company, \$4.0mm revenue
 - Northwest septic pumping and installation, \$3.6mm revenue
 - Midwest portable sanitation and restroom trailers, \$1.75mm revenue
 - Southwest portable sanitation company, \$1.75mm revenue
 - Southeast portable sanitation company, \$1.6mm revenue
 - Northeast portable sanitation company, \$1.0mm revenue
 - Mid-Atlantic septic company, \$1.0mm revenue
 - West coast portables and septic company, \$1.0mm revenue
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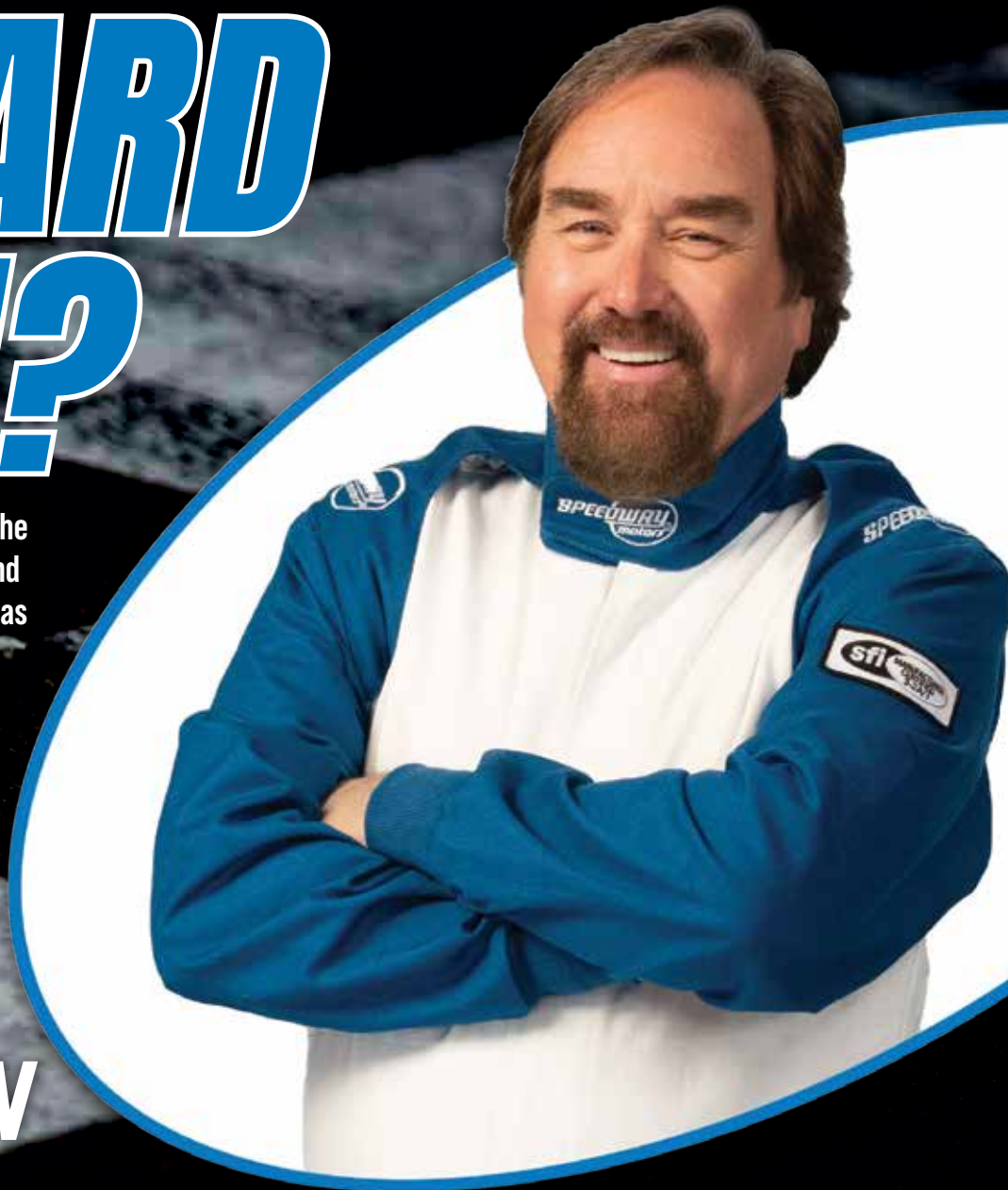
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