

IT'S A DIRTY JOB Meet 4 behind-the-scenes pros who gotta do it

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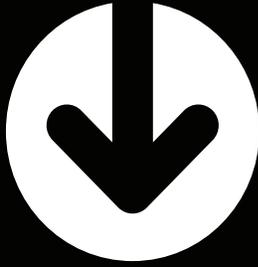
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DIRTY JOBS

These behind-the-scenes stars do what some might call unsavory duties not only because “someone’s gotta do it,” but because they take pride in it.

BEHIND EVERY STUNNINGLY DECORATED EVENT are the people who put their blood, sweat and tears into making it flawless. That garbage you didn’t throw away at the end of the night? Someone’s picking that up and making sure it gets categorized correctly as a recyclable, compostable or trash. And the garbage you threw away in the Biffy? Someone’s pulling it out. Ever wonder if your driver gets sick of driving? *MNM+E* talked to four industry professionals who make your meeting easier or special event shine—the ones who make good despite the bad and the ugly.

BY MORGAN HALASKA | PHOTOS BY EMILY DAVIS



TOILETS

Derek Pauling, president and co-owner, Biffs

You could say Biffs—or Biffy—is a household name, but for Derek Pauling, president of Biffs, it's especially true. Pauling co-owns the business with his sister, Heather Pauling, COO and VP, as of summer 2015, when the two bought out their father, making it a second-generation ownership.

As president of a company that deals with human waste, one of Pauling's goals is to improve Biffs' reputation as a portable restroom rental through its commitment to sanitation. "[Cleanup is] one area that we take a great deal of pride in," says Pauling, who describes some of the company's recent innovations. Traditional methods use a scrub brush and blue deodorizing liquid, but "that's actually making the unit dirtier," says Pauling. Biffs developed a new system, and now all the trucks come equipped with a high-pressure power washer and use an Ecolab disinfectant (which is particularly useful when "tip overs" occur). "We're trying to make it as not dirty of a job as possible," he says.

"Especially for events where the general public is using it, we try to keep everything new and fresh," Pauling says of user experience. Stand-by service offers staff on-site to clean and refill toilet paper during the event. Enhancing user experience is not only in the management of units, but also in the planning. "If there's alcohol [at an event], there's a lot more uses [of Biffs]," explains Pauling. The project management team helps clients assess needs based on factors like the number of attendees, duration of event and ground conditions for placement mapping.

Inevitably, something strange will happen. "People just do weird things," Pauling says. Found objects in Biffies range from the mundane (e.g. jeans, diapers) to the dangerous (pipe bombs in the tank) to the rare (glass eye). Pauling and his team once dealt with a recurring problem of squirrels venturing into the vent stack and drowning in the pot. People throwing away garbage in the toilet is a real problem, according to Pauling—those large objects can't be pumped out, so they are pulled out manually.

The intensity of the job is an aspect that Pauling thrives on. "It's such an important service in the field," Pauling says. "We're on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year because things happen. If your water goes down, you're gonna need us."