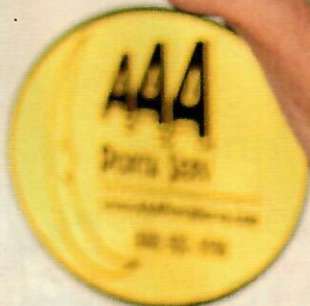


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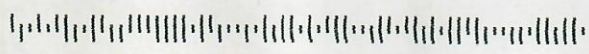


## A STANDING OVATION

Ross Ambrose's cleaning crew comes ready to rock at Florida's Wane Festival

Page 30

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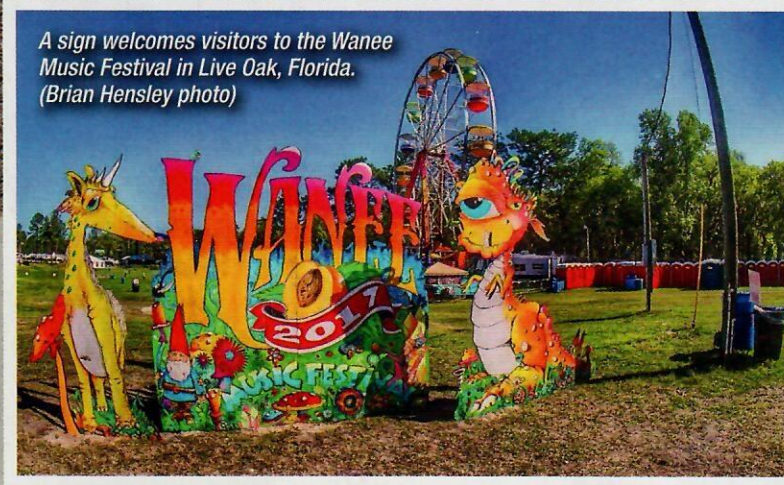
The same-old, same-old doesn't fit well in this Missouri company's business strategy Page 16

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Technician Ryder Mock uses the Pathfinder Spray Cleaning System from Satellite Industries to wash restrooms. Restrooms are from Five Peaks, PolyPortables and Satellite Industries. A PolyJohn Enterprises sink is in the foreground. (Photos by Rob Herrera)



A sign welcomes visitors to the Wane Music Festival in Live Oak, Florida. (Brian Hensley photo)



**THE TEAM**

AAA Porta Serve services a 6,000-square-mile area in north central Florida from its headquarters in High Springs and storage yards in Live Oak and Branford. Owner Ross Ambrose has a staff of eight — Darren Fout, Ryan Fout, Jamie Hinkle, Stephen Lewis, Steven Lopez, Howard Stewart, Dustin Fletcher and office anchor Katie Kleefisch. All helped with the Wane Festival between route work along with 13 temporary workers pulled from a network of helpers they've developed over the years. It's something of a coveted position, Ambrose says. "We make it fun and we take care of the crew and the only way you get to work with us is if somebody who's done it vouches for you."

**THE JOB:** Wane Festival  
**LOCATION:** Live Oak, Florida  
**THE PRO:** AAA Porta Serve

# A Standing Ovation

A big cleaning crew from AAA Porta Serve comes ready to rock 'n' roll at Florida's Wane Festival

BY BETTY DAGEFORDE

**COMPANY HISTORY**

The company was founded in 2000 by Woody and Kathy Jaeger as a retirement project. In 2014, when they were ready for retirement, they sold the business to Ambrose, who often helps at festivals. He had been working in production management for film and television, and says a lot of the skills are the same — logistics, customer service, managing people. The company has about 1,200 portable restrooms and 20 percent of their work is events, 40 percent construction, and 45 percent agriculture, tourism, military and mining.

(continues)

*A large crew of employees and temporary workers served the music festival. They are shown with a 2017 Hino truck from Engine & Accessory Inc. (Photo courtesy of AAA Porta Serve)*



### MAKING CONNECTIONS

AAA has worked every event at the music park near Live Oak for 14 years, for clients that include different promoters — Live Nation in the case of Waneé Festival — and the park itself for perimeter campgrounds. They store units there year-round and have on-site cleaning facilities and septage storage tanks. But Ambrose says they never take their position for granted. “We keep the customer happy and we work really hard,” he says. “We provide a lot of new equipment, we make sure things work, we solve problems and we bill fairly.” They also keep a staff on site at larger events.

### THE MAIN EVENT

In the woods along the Suwannee River, the 600-acre Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park & Campground hosts a number of events during the year, including the April 14-16, 2016, Waneé Festival featuring 25 rock and jam bands. About 12,000 people attended. Last year’s lineup included a tribute to Butch Trucks, a founding member of the Allman Brothers Band, which hosted the event from its inception in 2005 until 2014.



*Above: The crew from AAA Porta Serve sets up this camp headquarters for the Waneé Festival. Food and refreshments are provided and the workers consult aerial maps of the park before heading out on service rounds.*

*Left Kros urinals from Kros International are utilized to take pressure off of almost 300 standard and handicap restrooms from Five Peaks, PolyPortables and Satellite Industries.*

### BY THE NUMBERS

The company supplied 280 standard and 15 wheelchair-accessible units (Five Peaks, Satellite Industries, PolyPortables), 10 Kros urinals, 15 hand-wash stations (PolyJohn Enterprises, PolyPortables), 12 220- to 300-gallon holding tanks (Satellite, Five Peaks, Kentucky Tank) outfitted with company-built 10-gallon strainer boxes, and two Progress Solar Solutions STL-1000 solar light towers. They also had a contract to clean restroom and shower trailers supplied by another PRO, and provided RV servicing companies the option to use their storage tanks.

**“I’ll ask people when they come out, ‘Did we meet your expectations?’ They look at me funny but when they say, ‘Yes, it was way better than I expected,’ I know the guys are doing their job.”**

**ROSS AMBROSE**

### LET’S ROLL

Ambrose likes to get events set up early. Prep began on April 3 and everything was in place by April 15.

“We try to get our units in place before the rest of the festival gets busy,” he says. “So, before you get 10 crews in there and people driving around trying to do things, putting up art installations, et cetera, we’re already out the way.”

Company-built and Liquid Waste Industries trailers and an Avon Equipment 220 mini-loader outfitted with a forklift attachment were used to move units around. Two banks of 40 units and three banks of 10 were placed around the main performance areas, along with urinals and hand-wash stations. Banks of four to six, and in some cases 12 to 15, were placed around camping areas. Units were also set up at ticketing and check-in areas, parking lots, vending locations and 49 private campsites. Holding tanks were

*(continues)*

backstage trailers and food vendors who were also given four units for their private use. Along with their familiarity with the park, the team kept track of everything with a master list and high-resolution aerial photos blown up from Google maps.

Starting Monday, the 24th, units were pumped, cleaned and reshuffled for the next event.

## FIELD OPERATIONS

The company maintains a base camp at the park. Ambrose moved in Monday and by Thursday was joined by most of the team, who brought tents and stayed for the duration. Ambrose made sure they were well cared for.



Howard Stewart moves a PolyPortables restroom using an Avant Equipment mini-loader with a forklift attachment. (Steven Lopez photo)



**Above:** Technician Dustin Fletcher pumps a Kentucky Tank holding tank at the festival. A strainer box built by AAA Porta Serve is seen on top of the tank. It is used to keep rags and kitchen debris out of the holding tank.



**Left:** Ross Ambrose adjusts the timer on a Progress Solar Solutions STL-1000 solar light tower provided for the Wanee Festival.

"We have microwaves, refrigerators, grills, burner stoves, a commercial coffee maker, and an on-demand hot-water shower we created in a portable restroom, so we're quite comfortable," he says. He brought in a cook to make breakfasts and dinners, and provided bottled water, snacks and sandwich-making supplies.

After a final meeting to go over assignments and work procedures — everything from a reminder to be patient to what to do with lost items (sterilize and return to owner or take to lost and found) — the team was ready to go. When they weren't doing scheduled services, the crew used Polaris utility vehicles to check units throughout the park. They communicated using Motorola HT750 two-way radios with an on-site FCC-licensed repeater.

**"We try to get our units in place before the rest of the festival gets built. So, before you get 10 crews in there and people driving around trying to do things, putting up art installations, et cetera, we're already out of the way."**

ROSS AMBROSE

## KEEPIN' IT CLEAN

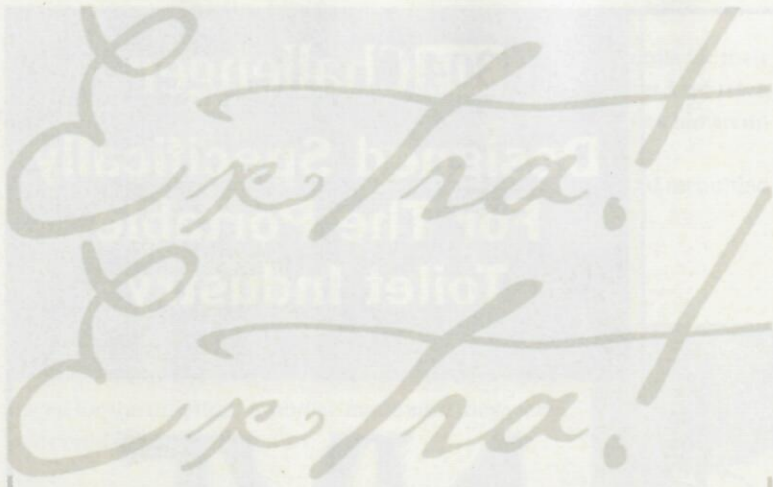
The company conducted a limited campground service on Wednesday, but starting Thursday the daily schedule began with a 7 a.m. cleaning of campground and performance area units, followed by private units and holding tanks, then another servicing of the campground and holding tanks around 4:30 p.m. The 100 units in the performance area were serviced a second

time in the break before the evening acts. It was a short break, but the team had it down to a science, completing the job in 35 minutes Friday night and 23 minutes Saturday.

"We stage the trucks and the crew," Ambrose says, "and then a group starts pumping, a group takes care of trash and paper, another sprays the ground down. When the crowd shifted back in, they were as fresh as they were in the morning."

The company used Surco Portable Sanitation Products deodorant products. And Live Nation opted to pay for more expensive Georgia-Pacific high-density coreless tissue paper to avoid running out. Waste was transferred to AAA's on-site storage and later pumped out by a hauler — three 3,000-gallon tanks from Kentucky Tank and a 21,000-gallon frac tank, plumbed together to create one access point. Technicians also employed the Pathfinder Spill Cleaning System from Satellite while servicing.

(continues)



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Vacuum trucks have Jurop/Chandler, Conde (Westmoor Ltd.) and Masport pumps and were built out by Abernethy Welding & Repair, Best Enterprises, Engine & Accessory and Imperial Industries:

- 1999 Nissan UD – 700-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tank
- 2007 Chevy Kodiak 5500 – 300-gallon waste/125-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank
- 2008 Ford F-550 – 700-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater steel tank
- 2008 Dodge 3500 – 400-gallon waste/125-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank
- 2011 Dodge 5500 – 600-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank
- 2015 Chevrolet 3500 – 400-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater aluminum tank
- 2016 Dodge 5500 – 800-gallon waste/200-gallon freshwater steel tank
- 2017 Hino 195 – 900-gallon waste/300-gallon freshwater stainless steel tank

#### IN THE SPIRIT

Ambrose has a very direct method of checking customer satisfaction. “I’ll ask people when they come out, ‘Did we meet your expectations?’ They look at me funny but when they say, ‘Yes, it was way better than I expected. I know the guys are doing their job.’” Another clue is the snacks, drinks and compliments the guys received from campers.

Ambrose says the team really enjoys being part of this event. They all have a sense of humor and enjoy the camaraderie. “It’s a lot of work, but it’s fun. And when you know the crowd appreciates you, it’s nice.” ■

#### MORE INFO

**Abernethy Welding & Repair, Inc.**  
800/545-0324  
[www.abernethywelding.com](http://www.abernethywelding.com)

**Best Enterprises, Inc.**  
800/288-2378  
[www.bestenterprises.net](http://www.bestenterprises.net)  
(See ad page 19)

**Engine & Accessory, Inc.**  
800/327-5431  
[www.rampstar.com](http://www.rampstar.com)

**Five Peaks**  
866/293-1502  
[www.fivepeaks.net](http://www.fivepeaks.net)  
(See ad page 17)

**Imperial Industries, Inc.**  
800/558-2945  
[www.imperialind.com](http://www.imperialind.com)  
(See ad page 39)

**Jurop/Chandler**  
800/342-0887  
[www.chandlersequipment.com](http://www.chandlersequipment.com)

**Kentucky Tank, Inc.**  
888/459-8265  
[www.kentuckytank.com](http://www.kentuckytank.com)

**Kros International USA LLC**  
855/576-7872  
[www.krosinternationalusa.com](http://www.krosinternationalusa.com)

**Liquid Waste Industries, Inc.**  
877/445-5511  
[www.lwiinc.com](http://www.lwiinc.com)  
(See ad page 12)

**Masport, Inc.**  
800/228-4510  
[www.masportpump.com](http://www.masportpump.com)  
(See ad page 3)

**PolyJohn Enterprises, Inc.**  
800/292-1305  
[www.polyjohn.com](http://www.polyjohn.com)  
(See ad page 47)

**PolyPortables, LLC**  
800/241-7951  
[www.polyportables.com](http://www.polyportables.com)  
(See ad page 48)

**Satellite Industries**  
800/328-3332  
[www.satelliteindustries.com](http://www.satelliteindustries.com)

**Westmoor Ltd.**  
800/367-0972  
[www.wesmoorltd.com](http://www.wesmoorltd.com)