

## STREET TALK

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### Luxury Potties a Hit During Bush's Visit

by Amy Biegelsen

The setting was stunning and the tone genteel, but there was an awful lot of potty talk when President George W. Bush visited the Berkeley Plantation in Charles City County last week.

Although Bush was the big draw for the roughly 800 guests who attended his annual Thanksgiving address, two "presidential series" trailers housing portable toilets served as guest stars.

"I was very apprehensive about the bathroom facilities because at outside events you always wonder if they're going to bring the Porta Pottis," says Tish Tyler, a Richmond resident and paralegal who attended the speech. When "I walked in I was like, oh my God, this is nicer than my house!"

The facilities boasted marble countertops, climate control, cut-glass mirrors, oak floors and cabinets, and that all important just-like-home flush.

"They even had flowers at the sink and hot water," Tyler says.

Tommy Edmunds, vice-president of Edmunds Waste Removal Inc., has deployed his luxury fleet to weddings, golf tournaments, even for the military to use after Hurricane Katrina. While the presidential appointment may have been his most prestigious gig to date, it was also one of the most difficult to pull off, he says. Bush's Nov. 19 appearance was only finalized Nov. 16, leaving Edmunds with short notice.

Edmunds' family started off in the dairy business, but eventually shifted focus to the waste removal aspect of that industry. In 2000, Edmunds saw an underserved niche and jumped into the luxury portable toilet business. It typically costs between \$1,000 and \$2,000 per event to rent the upscale potties, Edmunds says.

Although his presidential series gets rave reviews, Edmunds says he can even take it further. The "prestige" model comes with a 42-inch flat-screen television mounted on the outside of the trailer. But what for?

"You'd be surprised," Edmunds says. When Chesterfield's longtime County Administrator Lane Ramsey stepped down this year, organizers at his retirement party used the television to broadcast a DVD slide show of Ramsey memories. They have also been the portable toilet of choice for Goochland Delegate Bill Janis' re-election campaign.

So, did Bush get to use the trailer?

"I don't think he did," Edmunds says.

Maybe he'll get another chance at Jenna and Henry Hager's wedding. **S**



Susan and Tommy Edmunds provide luxury portable toilet trailers, such as this one, for a cost of between \$1,000 to \$2,000. A flat-screen television comes optional.

Photo by Scott Elmquist