

# WORKING

## Jobs We Wish We Had (and some we don't)

What some other people do for a living can surprise you.

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Illustration by Claudia Newell

### Sand Castle Builder

For real.

Sand sculptor Lucinda “Sandy Feet” Wierenga, 45, creates sand castles for events for big companies, such as Nokia and Coca-Cola. A former self-described “beach bum,” she used to make castles on the beach with her ex-husband for fun and competitions, but a career was born in 1987, when a San Antonio, Texas mall commissioned a \$20,000 sand sculpture.

### State Park Manager

Patrick William Wells, 53, lives rent-free on a lush island and gets paid about \$40,000 a year to tend to the wildlife, patrol and maintain the sites, and run tours and education programs at the U.S. government's nearly 300-acre Lignumvitae Key Botanical State Park. The park is uninhabited, and there's no Starbucks. When Wells wants a little company and nightlife (and perhaps a latte), he motors over via boat to the mainland.

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### Celebrity Stylist

Jeanne Yang, 35, shops and dresses such stars as George Clooney, Mel Gibson, Ashton Kutcher...well, you get the picture. And she actually gets paid—up to \$3000 a day. Inside scoop: Guys lie about their shoe size; women lie about their dress size.

### Now for the less-than peachy jobs...

### Terror Watcher

Washington, D.C. cop Stephen Bias, 35, sits in a dark room 50 to 72 hours a week watching 100 TV monitors from surveillance cameras positioned around the city, looking for signs of imminent terrorism. His salary's pretty good—\$50,000—but he says the pressure is enormous. Who would

want to be responsible for overlooking a possible attack? Bias, who is single and says he has no time for a personal life, isn't complaining, though. He feels it beats what he used to do, which was busting hookers.

### Survivor Taste Tester

John Kirchoffer, 40, heads the team that thinks up and tries out the *Survivor* TV show's challenges, including eating bugs and other alternative food sources. The worst culinary creatures consumed were possibly the giant horned beetles in Thailand, which the Thai do eat. Kirchoffer advises that the best way to cook a tarantula is boiled. "They go down much easier that way," he says.

We assume he's paid. We don't know how much, but we hope it's a lot, a whole lot.

### DiaperCounter

Martha Aguirre, 34, counts upwards of 2000 dirty—yes, dirty—cloth diapers a day for a diaper service in Berkeley, California—from about 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at \$21,000 a year. It's not all bad. Aguirre says she has a lot of friends at work.

