

Toilet seat museum in need of new curator

Ninety-six-year-old Barney Smith of Alamo Heights, Texas, is known around those parts as the King of the Commode for his life's work: more than 1,300 decorated toilet seats, all displayed in the retired master plumber's Toilet Seat Art Museum. But now, he concedes, it's time to put a lid on it: "I'm beginning to feel like I'd rather be in an air-conditioned home in a chair, looking at a good program," Smith, who is bent with arthritis and uses a cane, told the *Associated Press* on May 22.

Inside the metal-garage museum the collection includes toilet lids decorated with a chunk of the Berlin Wall, a piece of insulation from the Space Shuttle Challenger, Pez dispensers and flint arrowheads, along with the toilet lid from the airplane that carried Aristotle Onassis' body back to Greece after his death.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

Smith told his wife, Louise, that he would stop at 500 pieces, but that was 850 lids ago.

"If I would have just read my Bible as many hours as I spent on my toilet seats, I'd be a better man," Smith said. Louise died in 2014, and Smith took a fall recently and broke some ribs. Now he's looking for someone who will keep the museum intact: "This is my life's history here."

COMPELLING EXPLANATION

Claiming the shooting was an accident, Angelo Russo, 55, told police in Tatura, Victoria, Australia, he tripped over an eggplant during a dispute with a man who had run over his dog, which caused the gun Russo

was carrying to go off, striking David Calandro in the head and killing him.

Calandro and a friend had gone to Russo's farm on Feb. 18, 2017, to buy some chilies, 9News reported, but as he drove away, Russo's dog, Harry, began barking and chasing the vehicle. Calandro swerved toward the dog to "spook him," the friend told a Victorian Supreme Court jury May 23, but swerved too far, running over the dog instead. Russo pleaded guilty to manslaughter May 25.

CRIME REPORT

• Three men were arrested May 20 after stealing a 25-foot-long shed from a foreclosed property in Lebanon, Maine, and dragging it down the street

behind their pickup truck, according to the *Portland Press Herald*. Matthew Thompson of Lebanon, Timothy James of Pembroke, New Hampshire, and Robert Breton of Milton, New Hampshire, were spotted in the act by a concerned citizen, who alerted Maine State Police. In addition, Thompson was found to have crystal meth and prescription pills that were not prescribed to him. All three were taken to the York County Jail and held on \$5,000 bail.

• Patrick Gillis, 18, a senior at Highlands High School and a volunteer firefighter for Pioneer Hose Fire Department in Brackentridge, Penn., told police he "just wanted to respond to a fire" on May 21, when he was arrested for starting a blaze in a vacant duplex where he used to live.

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported that witnesses told

investigators Gillis was seen at the home before the fire started, then returned as a firefighter to help put it out. He admitted to setting a piece of paper on fire and putting it in the microwave, then leaving. The Allegheny County Fire Marshal's Office estimated damage at \$150,000, and Gillis was charged with arson.

BRIGHT IDEAS

• Toronto police constables Vittorio Dominelli, 36, and Jamie Young, 35, had to call for backup in January during a raid on a marijuana dispensary after allegedly sampling some of the evidence. CTV News reported the officers called for help after they began hallucinating, one eventually climbing a tree. In a May 23 press release, Toronto police announced the two officers had been suspended and now face criminal charges in the incident.

• A senior prank went unexpectedly wrong for high school student Kylan Scheele, 18, of Independence, Missouri, when he was slapped with a three-day suspension May 23 and barred from participating in graduation after putting his high school up for sale on Craigslist. Scheele said it was meant to be a joke. "Other people were going to release live mice ... I thought, let's do something more laid back," he told Fox 4. The ad for Truman High School listed attractive amenities such as newly built athletic fields, lots of parking and a "bigger than normal dining room." A lawsuit filed against the school district by the ACLU of Missouri failed to reduce the punishment.

Send your weird news items with subject line WEIRD NEWS to WeirdNewsTips@amuniversal.com.

Hotel

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Plans for the project have been submitted to the Warren County Tax Assessor's office and an appraisal has been set at \$9.73 million.

Current property taxes on the empty lot are \$6,685 annually. After development, estimated annual property taxes are projected to be \$157,585.

For his investment in Warren County, Hunt has requested a property tax rebate from both local governments through the Industrial Development Board.

IDB director Don Alexander presented the deal, called Tax Increment Financing (TIF), to members of the city Finance Committee in hopes of gaining approval.

"This Hilton property is as nice of a facility as this area can command," said Alexander. "This is going to be something we can be very proud of. It's something that I would have no hesitation inviting my relatives to come in and stay."

Alexander estimated, using the county's appraisal on the project's plans, the annual property taxes after development to be \$157,585. Left unchanged, city government would receive \$81,018 and county government \$76,567.

Under TIF, \$138,345 is considered "available tax increment" and by the agreement, that amount would be rebated at a rate

of 70 percent to Hunt Properties, 29 percent to Warren County Schools and \$1,383 to IDB for an administrative fee. The agreement would be for 20 years.

"He wanted a higher percentage, but we negotiated that down," said Alexander. "We also wanted Warren Schools to get 29 percent. Tennessee Code Annotated lets us get a service report fee so that's why we took 1 percent to handle all the paperwork."

At the estimated amount of \$138,345, Hunt Properties would have \$96,841 of its property taxes returned, Warren County Schools would receive \$40,120, and IDB \$1,383 annually.

Alexander reminded officials the city of McMinnville will soon have a 5 percent hospital-ity tax on local hotels, and is currently in the process of designating that tax to the Tourism Development Board at 100 percent.

Alexander estimated,

on \$109 a night room rate and an 80 percent occupancy rate for 360 days each year, a 74-room hotel will generate \$115,758 a year in additional taxes for the city. Likewise, Warren County government has a 5 percent hotel tax and it would also receive \$115,758.

"Keep in mind, this is just the hotel tax and it's already greater than the incentive for him to bring in his facility," said Alexander. "We haven't thrown in anything like sales tax or any other taxes. We haven't thrown in the fact this could be a catalyst for bringing in entertainment venues, ball teams, and nursery shows. The list goes on and on."

Finance Committee members unanimously approved the property tax relief. The measure will be sent to the full Board of Mayor and Aldermen for its consideration. If the deal is approved, Alexander will then turn his attention to obtaining Warren County government approval.

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WARREN COUNTY ELECTION NOTICE

Our office is located in County Administrative Office Building
Address: 201 Locust Street, Suite 3
McMinnville, TN 37110
Telephone (931) 473-5834; Fax (931) 473-3984
Email Address: warren.commission@tn.gov
Website: warrentnelections.com
Office Hours: 8 - 4:30 Mon thru Thurs, 8 - 5 Friday

THE NEXT ELECTION IS AUGUST 2, 2018 - STATE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WILL HOLD PRIMARIES TO SELECT NOMINEES FOR GOVERNOR, U.S. SENATE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. BOTH PARTIES WILL ALSO ELECT A STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMAN AND COMMITTEEWOMAN IN THEIR RESPECTIVE PRIMARIES. THE WARREN COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION WILL ALSO BE HELD ON AUGUST 2ND IN CONJUNCTION WITH STATE PARTY PRIMARIES. PARTY AFFILIATION IS NOT REQUIRED TO VOTE IN THE COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION. FURTHER, IF A VOTER CHOOSES TO VOTE IN A STATE PRIMARY, THEIR CHOICE OF PARTY WILL HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO EFFECT WHATSOEVER IN WHICH CANDIDATE THEY CAN VOTE FOR IN THE COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION.

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS JULY 3, 2018. A VOTER CAN REGISTER:

- 1) IN PERSON
- 2) BY MAIL--MUST BE POSTMARKED BY THE DEADLINE
- 3) ONLINE BY GOING TO www.GoVoteTN.gov

QUESTION ABOUT YOUR REGISTRATION STATUS? CALL OUR OFFICE 473-5834 OR USE THE "VOTER REGISTRATION LOOKUP" OPTION AT: www.GoVoteTN.gov

NOTICE TO ELDERLY OR VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES

Pursuant to TCA 2-3-109(e), elderly and/or voters with disabilities who are assigned to vote in inaccessible precincts in Warren County, Tennessee, have the right to vote at the Election Commission office on Election Day, August 2. A voter voting for the first time pursuant to this provision must provide written notice to the Election Commission no later than July 23rd that he intends to vote at the Election office on Election Day.

Any registered voter may vote early from July 13 - July 28th in the Early Voting Room at the rear of the County Administrative Building at 201 Locust Street, McMinnville. No reason is required to vote early.

Sample ballot and hours for Early Voting will be published in the July 8th edition of the Southern Standard. The same can also be viewed on our website, www.warrentnelections.com

WARREN COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION
BILL WEBB, CHAIRMAN; PATRICIA DAVIS, SECRETARY; BILL LEE, CHARLES YANCY AND BEN NIXON, MEMBERS; DONNA SMITH, ADMINISTRATOR

Join us for ice cream this Friday

What could be more fun than a barrel of monkeys?

Many things probably, including a free banana split, the chance to win a gas grill, and a discount subscription to the *Southern Standard*.

The newspaper is going bananas and holding Customer Appreciation Day this coming Friday, June 22. Free banana splits will be served from 1 to 3:30 p.m. The banana splits are adored by children and adults alike.

In addition, there will be heavy discounts on subscriptions. This includes a one-year subscription for just \$68, or 45 cents an edition, for new subscribers. It costs that much for delivery 155 times a year so you're essentially getting the paper for free.

When it comes to door prizes, all visitors are encouraged to register. The three main door prizes are a gas grill, cooler, and ice cream maker.

Other prices for new subscribers include six months for \$40, three



Joyce Jacobs is happy to receive a \$50 check for winning *Southern Standard's* weekly Word Match contest. The contest appears in the newspaper every Friday. Joyce is standing in front of a bulletin board promoting the paper's Customer Appreciation Day this coming Friday, June 22, from 1 to 3:30 p.m. There will be free banana splits and rock-bottom subscription prices.

months for \$26, and a one-year online subscription for just \$40. Any current subscriber who would like to add three months to their subscription can do

so for \$26. Thank you for your support of local news. The *Southern Standard* covers Warren County like no other.

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