

Opinion

A community forum for viewpoints from around the world to your backyard

The Clinch County News

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TALL TALES

By Lem Griffis

I went into the showroom and priced some of the small cars, and found the price of them to be about the same as the large cars. I asked the salesman why the price of them was the same as the large ones. He said, well, this day and time, if you want economy you have to pay for it.

Some folks at my place were going fishing, and asked me what they should do if the boat sank. I said, go to the bottom, build up a fire, send up smoke signals, and I will go after you.

A young man waited at the church door for the preacher to come out. He stopped the preacher and asked him if he thought it right for a preacher to collect for another's mistakes. The preacher said, no, he did not think it was right at all. The young man said, well, how about you giving me back the ten dollars I paid you for marrying me and Dollie three weeks ago.

I got so many spankings while I was a boy until I can still go to a fortune teller and have my mother's palm read.

Truthly yours,
 Lem Griffis

Our letters to the editor are intended to be a free and open forum for local and area citizens to comment on items of general public interest. If you wish to write a letter to us, please type it or write legibly, double-spacing preferred. Letters are subject to editing for length, good taste and newspaper style. Subjects of a personal nature are generally not acceptable. Endorsements of political candidates are also not acceptable during a campaign. All letters must be signed but names may be withheld under certain dire circumstances. Please include a daytime phone number and address. You can also e-mail us a letter at clinnews@windstream.net, or visit our website at www.theclinchcountynews.com.



The trusty Robbins Bathroom Report

I'm not a doctor, but I'm pretty sure everyone has to use the bathroom eventually.

And sometimes, the urge to purge yourself of bodily fluids comes in the most inconvenient of places – while you are on your way somewhere else, away from the safe and comfortable confines of your favorite bathroom.

But finding a decent restroom facility while on the road doesn't have to be a hassle.

For the past three decades, I have been conducting a research study on this topic, visiting restroom facilities throughout this nation, grading them on the following criteria: 1. Their sanitary conditions; 2. Their supply of needed equipment; 3. Availability and convenience; and 4. Other miscellaneous factors, such as interior design, what type of vending machines are on the wall, amount and quality of graffiti, and other factors.

Thus, I present **The Robbins Bathroom Report**, to assist those who, for far too long, have had to play a cruel guessing game when searching for a proper bathroom facility.

Below are the report's rankings, using my own, original grading scale. The grading scale

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goes from A to F, with A being the best, and F being the worst.

Hospitals – A+
 When I was in college, a friend and I were travelling home when my navigator signaled the intense need for a bathroom. I attempted to pull into a convenience store.

"No, no," he objected. "Take me to a hospital." Alarmed, I hurriedly followed the signs to the nearest hospital, thinking my friend was in need of emergency bladder surgery. I should have known better.

This friend was notoriously finicky, even in the most dire of states, and would only relieve himself in the most cleanly of places. He later told me that hospitals have crack janitorial staffs that almost always keep the bathrooms spotless and sanitary.

Sure enough, during my study, I found hospital janitorial staffs to be the most astute in their field. Their bathrooms are top-notch in terms of sanitary conditions, operable equipment, and emptiness.

Airports – B+

This recommendation comes with a qualifier: The smaller the airport, the better. And this ranking could be rather distorted by the Fort Smith, Arkansas airport, which has the most luxurious public restrooms in the world. On the wall outside their bathrooms, there are plaques from where they have won numerous awards. If in the area, I would suggest a visit, even if you don't have to use them.

Again, smaller airports rank very high; larger airports, not so much.

Hotels – B-
 Unlike hospitals, which get high marks across the board, the quality of a hotel public restroom is often determined by the quality of the inn itself. Cuz's Stay-A-Night-or-Hour is not as likely to be as immaculate as a Westin. Most of the well-known chains have restrooms adjacent to the lobby that are uniformly solid and vacant.

Fast-food restaurants – C-
 A dicey lot. If the

manager is behind the counter, chances are, the bathrooms are adequate. But don't count on any privacy. Warning: The bathroom doors at Krystal are about a foot wide – hardly navigable after upsizing a meal there.

Convenience stores – D+

An even larger gamble. As a former participant in the convenience store arts, I know the person that is selling you the convenience store hot dog is often the same person scrubbing the toilets – not a licensed custodian.

In your yard – B

For men, using your yard is perfectly acceptable, and expected. For women, not as accepted, which I consider sexist.

In someone else's yard – F

This is not recommended. For some odd reason, people don't particularly appreciate strangers using their yard as a toilet, and often use firearms to illustrate their dissatisfaction.

The best way to utilize this report is to cut it out and tape to the windshield of your automobile for quick reference when the urge hits you.

Happy toileting!
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Good Morning

Editor's Note: This essay is an excerpt from local author Roy Rhodes's new book "Half Wit-Half Wisdom," available on Amazon.com. The News will publish excerpts from the book for the next few weeks.

This is radioing the way it's supposed to be, perhaps the way God intended it to be.

Lonnie: Good morning, Frankie. Tell us what they're having for lunch at the schools today.

Frankie: Do you want that first or do you want me to tell you about the donkey basketball game?

Lonnie: You'd better go with the menu first. We don't want to change things up and start confusing everyone.

Frankie: O.K. At the elementary school they're having a hamburger with lettuce, tomato, and pickle... I mean, pickle!

Lonnie: Start over again now. You're going to have to get it right.

It's 7:25 a.m. and I'm in my car when I switch on the local radio station for the Frankie and Lonnie Show. I don't think they call it that yet, but maybe I can plant a seed.

Lonnie owns the radio station. Frankie works at the high school. Five days a week, Frankie dials up

the station and for the next 15 minutes, the two of them joke, laugh, and poke fun at each other in the guise of discussing what's happening in the school system.

I don't think this is what the Quality Basic Education folks had in mind when they made the rule that school systems had to improve communications with the community. The Frankie and Lonnie Show is much better than anything that would come out of a bureaucrat's mind.

Frankie: Tonight is Senior Night at the basketball game, and we'll be notarizing all our Senior ballplayers and cheerleaders.

Lonnie: You'll be what?

Frankie: Notarizing our Seniors. Their names are called out over the P.A. system, and they come out to center court with their parents.

Lonnie: Notarizing them?

Frankie: I already said that.

Lonnie: Shouldn't that be recognizing them? Frankie: Huh?

Lonnie: You said notarizing them. Shouldn't that be recognizing them? Frankie: I did? Well, you knew what I meant.

Lonnie (laughing hys-

Roy Rhodes

GUEST COLUMNIST



terically): No, I didn't and neither did our listeners.

Lonnie can be unmerciful when he wants to be. Hey, you try getting to work before 7:30 a.m. to go on the radio and get every little word right. What is good about the Frankie and Lonnie Show is that it is unscripted, good-natured fun that serves up some community calendar info to boot. Whoever thought that listening to a guy read school menus could be entertaining.

Frankie: ...and a peanut butter cluster with milk.

Lonnie (almost drooling into the microphone): What's a peanut butter cluster?

Frankie: You know, those little cookies with chocolate poured over the peanuts.

Lonnie: That's a peanut cluster. You said peanut butter cluster. Frankie: Well, that's what it says here on this thing I'm reading from. Lonnie: O.K. What is it?

For the next several minutes two grown men argue the points of the

Great Peanut Butter Cluster Controversy. I'm telling you, this is entertainment.

My all-time favorite Frankie and Lonnie Show story was the time Frankie tried to teach Lonnie to say the name of one of the teachers at the high school. Her name was Ellice (uh lease).

Lonnie: Ellis?

Frankie: No, this is a girl's name. Ellis is a boy's name. It's E Lease. Lonnie: E Leash?

Frankie: No, E Lease. Lonnie: E Leash. No, wait. Uh Leash.

Frankie: NOOO! E LEASE!

Lonnie: Got it. El Ease.

Me (to the car radio): Aaaaarrggghhh!

I didn't say it never gets intense on the Frankie and Lonnie Show. As my prospects for winning the Nobel Prize for Literature dim, a bright, new goal shimmers on the horizon. My agent is currently negotiating a guest spot for me on the show. Can I read the school lunch menus? Huh, can I guys? Just once!