



# American Restroom Association

**America's Advocate for Clean, Safe, Well-Designed Public Restrooms**

*An independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in 2004 - EIN # 20-3581202.*

## ARA eZine

The Dignity Edition

May 2021

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### "Dignity Demands It"

*by Tim Pyle, Executive Director*

It must have been on live TV, perhaps a sporting event, when I saw it. I'm one of those people who will do anything to avoid watching commercials.

The fact that I was actually watching a commercial is noteworthy. But the deep and measured buttery baritone voice-over grabbed me right away:



**"Dignity . . . this thing you can neither see nor measure, but that demands the return of small moments in attempts to steal."**

The company and product are irrelevant as the conviction of the sentiment didn't quite stack up to what they were hawking - but that word . . . DIGNITY . . . it stayed with me. Isn't that all the American Restroom Association is advocating for? Dignity for the parents of young children for never know when the call of nature will come. Dignity for the adult child of an aging parent who needs assistance in the restroom. Dignity for a transgender or nonbinary person who simply needs to do something we all need to do without all the fraught societal baggage. Dignity for the person with no place to call home. Dignity for the student who has to "hold it" to avoid school restrooms.

Each time someone is humiliated due to a restroom situation is a theft of that person's dignity. We demand that back.

The commercial ends with a wonderfully simple and powerful message - it's the reason the ARA exists for the American people - because **"Dignity Demands It."** Join us in our quest.

*(Click the word cloud graphic to see the entire commercial for Abbott Laboratories.)*

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## Dignity Literally Goes Out the Window

Why re-write when it's best straight from James Vincent at [theverge.com](http://theverge.com)?:



*'When replying to a tweet from Rep. Mark Pocan (D-WI) complaining about the company's union-busting tactics and the fact that some of its workers are forced to "urinate in water bottles," Amazon's official Twitter account responded: "You don't really believe the peeing in bottles thing, do you? If that were true, nobody would work for us."*

*"But people do believe these stories and for a very simple reason: there are numerous accounts of it happening, documented by employees and journalists around the world." [Click to read more.](#)*

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## Innovation = Dignity and Less Worry!

Innovation and a web of solutions is what it will take to solve America's 'Potty Problem.' One such innovator adding to that web is [Throne Labs](#). They have a vision where no one need worry about where they'll find relief each time they leave home. Their solution is a network of completely self-contained, off-grid bathrooms accessible through a phone app. Last restroom visitor reported a – ahem - 'subpar' location? That Throne is taken immediately out of service and a cleaning crew dispatched. Exterior security is remotely monitored. Hopefully, due to its standalone nature, Throne can cut through the local governmental red tape that gets in the way of making restrooms accessible. Throne is currently only available through limited partnerships to users in the Washington, DC area, but is looking forward to coming to your city soon. Best of luck, Throne!



**Looking for a Restroom? Google Results Incomplete**



Hey Google!

Well, at least that's what I say to my Google Home several times a day. And since I'm looking for an answer about Google Maps Development, I'll lead with that.

When I'm navigating out and about with Google Maps, I'm happy to crowdsource answers for you when you ask me, "Do you know . . .?" It's a great feature. The American Restroom Association encourages you to take it one step farther: Why not ask about the status of restroom availability and type? Men/Women, single-occupant, family/caregiver? Everyone who uses a restroom would find this information very valuable.

The US is not only lacking in clean, safe, and well-designed public restrooms, it is lacking in information about what restrooms do exist. Australia and the UK have made concerted efforts to fill these gaps with various government sponsored tools. In the US, we have no coordination. Those attempts by entrepreneurs at "toilet" apps here are lacking in coverage, details, and recency.

This is where Google Maps comes in. Our office receives several contacts a month asking where family/caregiver restrooms are as people travel with young children, elderly parents, or people of the opposite sex that they may care for. People with challenges like incontinence, Crohn's, Colitis, and IBS are desperate to have a quick way to identify the closest "conveniences."

The ARA stands ready to assist Google in "doing the right thing" to make this information available. Post-covid, this service is even more needed. Please let us know if you would like to avail yourselves of our resources in this effort. We'd be proud to help.

If you'd like to send your own version of this encouragement to Google. Here's the address. Let's pile it on!

**Google**  
**ATTN: Google Maps Team**  
**1600 Amphitheatre Parkway**  
**Mountain View, CA 94043**

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## **Logo Contest Ends May 31st - Submit Today!**

While working through our website refresh (see above) several members of the ARA Board of Directors independently noted, "Wow, given all we stand for today, our logo seems to be in direct opposition to where public accommodations are headed. Does our traditional 'man | woman' logo represent that?" Therefore, we've opened up a small crowdsourcing contest for new logo ideas. The payoff? A cool \$100. (Ok, it's not a mint, but hey we're a nonprofit!) What else can motivate you? The accolades that come with a win, of course. A couple of key considerations.

- Please don't submit copyrighted material; it won't survive our review anyway.
- The design should clearly elicit the idea of public restrooms rather than the residential environment.
- It should be flexible enough to work with other elements that might

**Your Logo  
Here**

represent parks, stadiums, cities, schools, regulations/codes, or our other advocacy areas.

- Colors should be within or complementary to our current color palate.

Lastly, there is no money in the budget for design, so vendors offering their services need not apply! Email submissions to [media@americanrestroom.org](mailto:media@americanrestroom.org). The extended deadline ends May 31, 2021. Good luck.



## Now Trending:

*Fresh stuff from the web and interesting items from the ARA Inbox.*

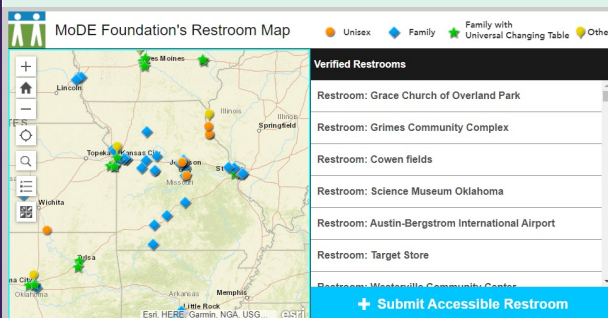
### Until Google Maps . . . RestroomMap.com

Check out the Missouri Disability Empowerment Foundation's Accessible Restroom Map. It's a fantastic effort to increase dignity and meet the needs of users looking specifically for unisex or single-occupancy, family restrooms.

"One thing this map can't do is build fully accessible restrooms. We hope more businesses and public facilities will create inclusive communities through restroom accessibility." Well said!

### "50 Genius Restroom Solutions To Problems That Often Seem Unavoidable" BoredPanda.com

Are you bored and looking for some interesting "click bait" to pass the time? Check out this long list of restroom solutions compiled by BoredPanda.com. The ARA's Executive Director, Tim Pyle, was interviewed to provide context to the pictorial content. Thanks to authors Inga Korolkovaite and Jonas Grinevičius for the exposure. Click the graphic and then scroll away the minutes!



Also, check out their [useful guide](#) on how to begin advocating for restroom improvements.



## Grace's hidden disability sign

Not all conditions are visible, please be patient with everyone using these facilities.

Thank you.

10 year old Grace Warnock from Prestonpans in East Lothian was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease in 2014. Crohn's is an inflammatory bowel disease that cannot be seen from the outside. Grace noticed people reacting negatively to her using accessible toilets and she decided that changing the sign would be the best way to help people understand that some disabilities are not visible and to urge them to 'have a heart'. The sign has been adopted by the Scottish Parliament, and Grace hopes that one day it will become the global symbol of accessible toilets.

Please note: The ARA makes no endorsement, representation, or warranty of any non-ARA information, service, or product detailed in this publication. All content is strictly offered in an informational capacity and readers are strongly urged to conduct their own evaluations of each. No direct compensation was provided for placement.

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Watch this space for more innovations for both consumer and commercial applications.

Have a new solution? [Contact us!](#)

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See what's happening and follow the ARA on our social sites:

[Instagram now on air!](#)



Office Hours: Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. ET

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[getinfo@americanrestroom.org](mailto:getinfo@americanrestroom.org)

**About American Restroom Association (ARA):** a nonprofit founded in 2004, ARA advocates for the availability of clean, safe, and well-designed public restrooms. Accomplishments include successfully advocating for enforcement of and revisions to the International Plumbing Code, congressional testimony on gender equity in public restrooms in US Federal Buildings, and representing the USA in educating international audiences at Summits and Conferences of the World Toilet Organization (WTO). ARA brings together an independent and multidisciplinary team from architecture, engineering, education, academia, and social work. Learn more at <https://americanrestroom.org/>.

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