



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Stephanie Lenox
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Tiniest Toilet for Tots in Salem

Salem, OR—This week A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village unveils its newly renovated restrooms, complete with wildlife murals, environmentally-friendly foam soaps and a miniature toilet designed for some of the museum's youngest visitors.

Inspired by a trip to the Portland Children's Museum, Assistant Director Kim Baldwin saw an opportunity to make the Village's restrooms more than a functional facility.

"Using the restroom [at a children's museum] becomes a family experience, and we want to make sure that experience is pleasant," said Baldwin.

Both Baldwin and Teresa Worcester, Facilities Director at the Village, wanted to transform the rooms into an extension of the museum's playful character. Purchasing a toilet that fit the needs of young children was a critical part of their plan, they said. Individualized themes and color palettes for each helped them realize their vision.

"Under the Sea" is the theme in the boy's restroom, with portholes over the lowered urinals, cavorting dolphins and a panoramic view of the ocean floor. The girl's restroom features animal diversity. Murals depict an array of animals, including a zebra, giraffe, ring-tailed lemur, baboon, panda and a family of meerkats. Muralist Trish Selgrath unites the images with a wish to viewers: "May you come to love and respect diversity in life."

A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village

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The completion of the restrooms, a planning process that started over a year ago, adds a new dimension to the children's museum. "I think it's going to become an exhibit in itself," said Worcester. She looks forward to her granddaughter trying out the tiny toilet.

Money for the renovation came from a competitive grant that distributes the City's Transient Occupancy Tax funds to cultural institutions and tourist attractions. According to Worcester, the scope of work included cleaning and refinishing the floors, installing new partitions to the boy's restroom, adding water-saving automatic sink faucets to both restrooms, lowering sinks, replacing changing table pads and purchasing one 10-inch tall toilet.

A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village is a private nonprofit children's museum located in downtown Salem's Riverfront Park. Founded in 1989, A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village provides innovative and stimulating educational experiences that spark children's natural curiosity. The Village's mission is to provoke curiosity, inspire awe, foster enjoyment, encourage learning, and enable understanding in all youth.

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