

# JUST SO YOU KNOW! . . . . MAY 7, 2023

## IDEAS, HINTS, AND OPINIONS

BY DAVID SPEARS

. . . Remember there is no planned 'location,' or 'order,' for content in my columns. In other words, I have no idea what I'm doing.

. . . May 2, 2023, the date Village D-Lights, Qtr. 1, 2023 was received at our home. - Yes, it was **Quarter 1**. 'Celebrating The Alpine Village, 1986 - 2021' is the cover story.

. . . 'The Village Collector' has been with us since 2017. Bill and Kathy Channell have continually worked to build and improve the web site. Remember you can find the following columns: David Spears, 'Just so you know!' • Jim Peters, 'Show your village to the Station' • Thea Heyink, 'The Creation 'Phil & Sue's Christmas Village' • 'aging in Europe' • Art Kilmer, 'Christmas Corner' • Larry Treadwell, 'A Dickens' Christmas' • Mark Frendo, 'Tips & Tricks.' • Bill did mention the 'Coach is Here' isn't back - yet.



• National Council of 56 Clubs Region VI: *Northern Lights Collectors Club*, Twin Cities, MN, Tom Iacoviello, tiacoviello@yahoo.com • *Village North Collectors Club*, Duluth MN/Superior, WI, Adelaide Cline, amcline@chartermi.net • *D56 Builders and Treasurers*, Janesville, Beloit WI/Rockford, IL, Charlene Swansboro. • Region VI Representative: Debbie Oehme, region6ncc@ncc56.com.

. . . May 14, *Mother's Day* • May 20, *Armed Forces Day* • May 22, *Victoria Day* • May 29, *Memorial Day* • June 3, *National Repeat Day* (I said "Repeat Day") • June 6, *D-Day, WWII* • June 14, *Flag Day* • June 18, *Father's Day* • June 19, *Juneteenth* • June 21, *Summer begins* • June 28, *Paul Bunyan Day* • July 2, *Canada Day (Dominion Day)* • July 4, *Independence Day* • July 7, *Chocolate Day* • July 20, *Moon Day* • August 17, *Linda's Birthday* •

. . . Ms. Lit Town Facebook Live, **Melinda Seegers**, next on September 7, 2023, 4:00 p.m. • Reminder, no June, July and August shows.

. . . The 43<sup>rd</sup> *Annual Golden Glow Convention*; Arlington, VA on August 16-19, 2023. <https://goldenglow.org/convention> • 'A Christmas Story' in the Nation's Capital. Note: Additional tours and workshops starting August 12. The NCC will be there.

. . . The Dept. 56 Club web site is still 'down.' Brian Viell, and his wife Elizabeth, remain patients in a rehab hospital. While in the hospital, they are working on plans for a new display. It will be built around *Dept. 56, Christmas In The City* - it should be fun for them; and helpful to others when upgrading displays. • <https://d56club.com/> (when they are back on-line).

. . . For regular readers; the **deer continue to return** to our yard on East Toledo Street, now a herd of six; no obvious bucks. None of them are afraid of neither me nor the dog next door (a crippled, aged Dachshund). The next step; the newborn fawn they leave at 'David's Deer Day Care.' That should be sometime in the month of May; I'll let you know when; with a picture if they let me.

*Village North Collectors Club  
Duluth, MN/Superior, WI*

. . . **Due** June 1, 2023 - individual clubs articles and activities for the *Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs June/July Club Connection*.

. . . **No** Department *56 Mid-Year Village* catalog for 2023. Since the releases were so few in number, D56 also did not produce a mid-year catalog for 2020, 2021 or 2022. - I also miss the mid-years.



- This is Dept. 56 Possible Dreams, 'Life is a Picnic,' It looks familiar! • Linda and I were on our **first date**, near Superior Bay, end of Park Point, Duluth, MN. We were on grass, sitting on a blanket; picnic basket; similar food; not cocoa, but drinking wine from Mason Jars. No white hair, no beard, no straw hats, pretty sure I wasn't wearing shorts. Year 1990. Married 1994 • Possible Dreams intro October 2022, \$120.00, 8in H x 8.5in W x 10in L.

... *Michael's, Joanne's, Hobby Lobby* – fairy garden pieces are appearing on the shelves in these stores and others. Linda spotted nothing special, but she'll keep looking. We usually find garden 'things' we can use in our village displays as well.

... 'Why can't humans hear a dog whistle?' 'Because dogs can't whistle.' • Online

... 'Sometimes I talk to myself and we both laugh' • Online

... 'Matlock' - Andy Griffith as lawyer Ben Matlock; 'In The Heat of the Night' - Carroll O'Conner, as Police Chief Bill Gillespie; both have been added to my recent TV viewing. I'm enjoying the old stories, the actors; the color is almost B&W TV.

Powered by Google Translate is now available for use on [The Village Collector](#) web site. As Bill Channell says, "**Yes – One World – One Village!**" I'm sure I will find a fun use for the feature. How many languages? – Over 100!

... 'Yesterday a clown held a door open for me. I thought it was a nice jester.' • Online

- As I usually do, I carried the necessary stuff to our Village North Collectors Club meeting in a black **event goodie bag**. I call it my briefcase. The words on it say "NCC Comes Home to D56 - 2008 NCC National D56 Convention - 'June 26-29, 2008, Bloomington, MN'" – It even includes a white on black image of the 2008 Motorcycle event 'emblem.' The tag says I was number #312; that must mean we registered late. • The 'bag' is used all the time and it still looks good – just so you know!



... He says he has the **full Lemax zoo** collection; plus twelve other animal species. His planned display will also feature two petting zoos, a safari ride, an aquarium, and his dinosaur park. Jim Peters will let us know when he posts the display on *YouTube* – I can hardly wait. Remember, Linda and I are planning to expand our zoo.

... Dept. 56, '120 Volt Village Replacement Bulbs' – 50 bulbs - \$65.00. I not sure I've replaced 50 bulbs since buying my first house in the early 90's. Except maybe, when we've changed to color or LCD bulbs. This would be a lifetime supply from Dept. 56.

... "I will never regret getting older. I know too many people who never had that privilege." • Online

• Abbreviations (I use): NCC – National Council of 56 Clubs • JSYK – Just so you know! • TVC – The Village Collector • VDL – Village D-Lights • D56 – Department 56 • VN or VNCC – Village North Collectors Club • AV – Alpine Village • CIC – Christmas In The City • DV - Dickens' Village • NEV – New England Village • NP – North Pole Village • SV – Original Snow Village. •



• John Stoner said, "The house is custom made by me. Its 1/24 scale and I used several dept 56 pieces to make it more realistic." • Building his own 'Christmas Story House,' John used some D56 pieces to pull it all together. I found the 'Leg Crate,' Bumpus Dogs, BB gun,' Leg Lamp,' 'Pink Nightmare,' and the Cardinals. To find more, look for the 20 image posted on the NCC Facebook Page, March 24, 2023. • Debbie McLeod posted to John, ".....very cool.....you're definitely the master of this stuff!" • I agree!



'Pastor On His Bike'  
- Luville -

Can someone help me with answers to these questions?



• Above, l-r, I call them 'Father Brown,' 'Loving couple,' and 'Couple in water.' I've asked before, I'm asking again; **can anyone ID them**, actual name and manufacturer and/or source?

• For those of you following along, in the March 17, 2021 JSYK, I was looking to add to my 'Village People.' I now have a choice of 'American Indians' to go with my (already possessed) 'Construction Worker,' 'Soldier,' 'Cop,' and 'Cowboy' for our version of the 'Village People.' All **we are missing** is 'The Biker/Leather Man.' He should be about 1¾ inches tall and not fancy. Suggestions are much appreciated. Hint: Sing 'YMCA.' – Thanks!



• 'Christmas Village 2022 – Louisiana Theme.' These line dance images were in the 'Eastside Trailride' area of the above video. • Remember we were very active country dancers, instructors; and a couple of times, competitors. I'm **still looking** for a source for the 'dancers.' Display by ZolaZack08  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsoWHQEWHM4> Yes I know they are horseback riders.





• The picture on the left was on an email ad I received from 'TreeFrogTreasurers.' I noticed the rock, flower, leaves and the woman; wrote asking them to confirm her ID. As I suspected, she is Rosie the Riveter. • They only sell the Rosie on the right. She represents American women who worked in the factories and shipyards during World War II. <https://treefrogtreasures.smugmug.com/>



• 'Joseph Edward Tea Shoppe' and 'E Tipler Agent Wine Spirits;' two Dept. 56 Dickens' Village pieces that could have a connection to Linda and several of our friends. i.e., tea and wine are popular with them. "Tea from the Far East," and "Libations for All!" - Both sound interesting to me. The houses look like they belong on a side street in a Dickens' display; maybe near the waterfront. We could even add 'Our Best Vintage Sir,' - he must be Mr. Tipler.



Northern Lights Collectors' Club



Crystal, MN – Central MN

... 'The Village Collector' • Number of *unique visitors* since rebuild March 6, 2023 – 7,278; total visits 14,237. Bill is adding more and more information all the time. Note: I check in every day. Many of my past columns can be seen there, JSYK.

... [Village Photos \(thevillagecollector.com\)](http://thevillagecollector.com) – I just noticed among the many images offered on the site are a couple images of our displays – *just so you know!* Note: Many other fun images as well!



• Introduced last year, 'Santa's Elf Parade' could be the next addition to our parade. Six elves, led by Mr. and Mrs. Claus, going down the street in Caddington Village by Lemax. (HxWxD) 3.31 x 7.48 x 1.18 inches. \$17.99 Note, they say two are dressed in "seasonal Penguin costumes." I think they have funny feet.

... Maleah Fairley Bufford won the National Council of 56 Clubs 'March Music In Our Schools' vignette contest! You can view the display on the NCC Facebook Page.

. . . 'The Village Chronicler' - website and *Facebook Page*; both by Richard Puckett; built to share all the Dept. 56 knowledge he has compiled. <https://TheVillageChronicler.com>

. . . "I've learned that you always find time to do the things you really want to do." • H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

. . . Next *Village North Collectors Club meeting*, Wednesday May 17, 5:00 p.m., *Fosters Sports Bar* in Hermantown, MN. Linda and I both plan to be there. Members will be discussing our summer picnic (Kandi/Rod's), Halloween tour (3 houses), and Christmas dinner 2023.

• 4 ¼" is the tallest; I wish these ladies were all two inches shorter - then they would make fun additions to our Southwest display. This is a *Disney Encanto Deluxe Figure Play Set*, \$26.99. I'm still looking to see them 'in person' - just in case.



. . . "I wish I knew then what I know now." • Online

. . . Larry Treadwell says - "I can tell you now that *Hauntsville 2023* will be built around a forest glen where Hecate and her sister witches will cast their spells and fly on their brooms. I've heard from Crookshanks, one of their cats, that a special brew is being prepared for sale at the pub and I've been invited to share a pint and perhaps get a lesson on broom flying as well." • More of Larry's *Hauntsville 'pre-story'* is now posted on [www.thevillagecollector.com](http://www.thevillagecollector.com); "Hauntsville," "Inside the Mind of a Village Collector." It's always interesting reading.

. . . Remember to **use distilled water** when you have village accessories that use water with a pump. Sediments in tap water can build up and cause blockage.



• Our photo log says March 2019 at *Setzers*. Linda and I stopped to visit Debbie Oehme. Debbie, now *National Council of 56 Clubs Region 6 Representative*, was then the reason we visited *Setzers*. Don't remember how much money we spent, but the bags were full. OK, I just counted - we purchased eighteen D56 accessories that day. Not one house! Remember, we just stopped to say 'Hi!' *Setzer Pharmacy & Gifts*, Roseville, MN.

• Department 56, North Pole Series, 'The Happy Gnome Pub' - The Pub is something I need. My gnomes need somewhere to go to socialize; this could be it. Remember Linda won't allow my gnomes anywhere near her Fairy Garden. I came across images, including this one, taken at the *Sweet Town Chicago* event in 2018. Not sure which home it was in on the tour.



- I just received this question:

***"Is there a web site that has lists of all of the D56 village items that can be downloaded into a data base? I have a very large collection and want to use it for inventory, organization, and reference. I'd also like to be able to remove pieces I don't have, add pieces I've made or bought that are not D56, and add the storage location of the pieces (bin no., item no. within bin). I saw the Village Chronicler D56 History Lists, but didn't think these would work for this purpose."***

Sounds like a good plan to me. Please let me know if you have any suggestions to help out.

. . . Everyone now sells those small 'Christmas Market' shops. The non-D56 versions are pretty inexpensive. I've found them from *Lemax, Luville* and others companies, at *Menard's, Kohl's, Hobby Lobby, Michael's etc.* Dept. 56 has 'shops' in different villages (*Alpine* 'til 2021 and now a *Dickens'* sub-series). I've always liked them for what they offer; a variety of things to eat, buy or do. Most are colorful, some are lit, and the best thing, they are small. Some are different sizes (scale) but I think I can work that out. A few are animated – those cost more. You can add a food truck or two (in the proper market). Note: We have at least ten 'shops' and four trucks.

. . . U.S., Canada, the Philippines and the Netherlands all have clubs that are members of the National Council of 56 Clubs.

. . . Looking at the current Village D-Lights I really had no choice but to think about the D56 *Alpine Village*. We got a late start 'collecting' Alpine pieces. It became Linda's favorite village; I really like it as well. There are several, or more, Alpine pieces we wish we had. The one I'm most sorry I never 'pulled the trigger' on, is the '*Bavarian Concert Hall.*' I measured to see 'who' would fit inside; who would make a nice Alpine crowd; what accessories would go with it; I even shopped. I did everything except make the purchase. Now what am I to do?

. . . This year there will be an **election** for the offices of President and Vice President of the *National Council of 56 Clubs*. Current President Brandon Taylor and Vice President Anna McPherson are eligible for re-election. Nominations will be accepted until July 1st at 11:59pm EDT. Information is available to member clubs.

- "Connecting collectors to clubs, and clubs to each other for over 30 years." Find information about the *National Council of 56 Clubs* at: <http://www.ncc56.com/>. The site includes contact information for possible clubs in your area. – Linda and I are longtime members of the *Village North Collectors Club* •



. . . Robin wrote, "*Our friend from the Land of 10,000 Lakes (Minnesota) has released his most recent edition of "Just So You Know!"*" I know Robin and Pablo are travelers; they must have driven through Minnesota and saw "*10,000 Lakes*" on our auto license plates (other-wise how did they know). • I truly appreciate Robin sharing *JSYK* with all the members of the *California 56 Collectors club*.



*Questions, comments and/or suggestions are always welcome. You can contact David and Linda at: [spears.duluth@juno.com](mailto:spears.duluth@juno.com), 105 E. Toledo St., Duluth, MN 55811 or (218) 724-6148.*

- 2,798 is the number of words in this *JSYK* – not counting this line •

#### Comments

*"Thanks for sharing! I devour JSYK as soon as it appears in my email box."* - Jim

*"First, thanks for all you do for village collectors. It really is an Act of Friendship to share your findings and thoughts. I always enjoy reading what you write and learn something new from it."* - Marianne