

JUST SO YOU KNOW! . . . FEBRUARY 23, 2023

IDEAS, HINTS, AND OPINIONS

BY DAVID SPEARS

. . . 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 – See more abbreviations on last page.

. . . The 'Coach is Here,' by Bill Channell is new, many subjects!' • Jim Peter's, 'The Best YouTube Christmas Village Videos of 2022.' • Brian Vaill's, 'The Train Station,' current offering; 'CT Balsam, pickup trucks' • Thea Heyink with her 'The Creation Station,' • Phil & Sue Adsent column: 'Planning village for Christmas 2022,' auditions • 'From Italy,' look at Villages of the friends' • 'Christmas Corner' by Art Kilmer, Dec 18, 2022, 'Christmas Book Recommendations' • <http://thevillagecollector.com/>



• 'North Pole Christmas Shop' we saw this on *Lemax Addicts Facebook Page*. Jan. 26, 2023. Linda and I both were attracted, neither thought for NP. Maybe 'Dickens', or 'Christmas In The City' as a small shops in a fancy mansion. It is just an idea picture; no one yet planning on producing it (disappointment).



• Dept. 56 elf skaters, are now skiers, courtesy of John Rapacz. This year they drew attention at the base of our ski jump. John also made the jump over (twenty years ago). It is as good as new. Our foreground is carved and painted Styrofoam.

. . . Thanks to Jim Peters for answering. He confirmed the identities of *Homie* figure 'Willie G in Wheelchair,' and Lemax 'Shopping with Sparky' (a striped shirt dog). Sometimes I just need to know these things (so I ask readers).

. . . 'Ole Fashioned Chocolate Co.' Lemax, 2009-2021. The animations are baked chocolates inside and boxed chocolates outside; both on conveyor belts. Not my style of building, but I really appreciate the four workers inside. They look good, and appropriate, in the pictures. Also, chocolate is my favorite flavor – just so you know!

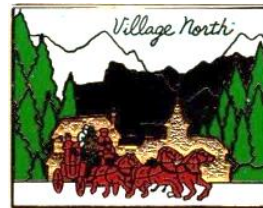
. . . *Tim Haney* is the **new** Department 56 VP of Product Development (as of October, 2022). He oversees the day-to-day operations of Department 56 in Eden Prairie, MN, as well as the licensing and design team based in Burbank, CA. The entire Creative team, including all the artists, graphics design team, packaging designers, web NCC team, marketing, sculpting and Consumer Services report to Tim. • Remember, after 25 years at Department 56, Creative Director *Rick Jackson*, **retired** at the end of 2022.



- MaryAnn said to me, "You have a real partner there!" These are 1,231 pop tabs from Carter Cavallin, pop tabs counted before being delivered. The young man was told our Village North club collects pop tabs and he has been saving, and donating, ever since. The *Ronald McDonald House* will receive them as part of our next donation. Thanks Carter!

Village North Collector's Club

Duluth, MN – Superior, WI



... How do you like the 'snow effect' on **village videos**? Snow on some is a bit large for us, but the idea of all of them is great. Jim Peters says video editing programs such as *Adobe Premiere Pro*, *Apple Final Cut Pro*, *Apple iMovie*, *DaVinci Resolve*, *Filmora*, and *Power Director* allow snowing effects. You can also go online and upload your photo or video clip to add a snowing filter. *VEED.IO* is one of several online services for that. Jim uses an app on his phone, *Musemage*, to create a nice snowing effect while videoing a scene. Jim provided this info; you can contact him on [The Village Collector](#).

... Our zoo; *Aerial Bridge by John McGraw*; parade(s); train (or street car); farm/rodeo animals; models of my cars (plus other vehicles) - these were things our visitors asked about this season. Reason? They were not found in our displays.

... 2022 4th Qtr issue of Village D-Lights was received January 30, 2023 in Duluth, MN. It looked like it had been hand delivered from the printer (perfect condition). Linda really liked the display of *Flo DeJean* from *The Island of Reunion*. It is mostly *Luville* items. This issue does wish us 'Merry Christmas' too many times – it is the end of January!

... "I write on calendars and make lists and I still have no idea what's going on." • On-line

... Standing underneath, I **cannot touch** actual 'Stop Signs' in Duluth. Reason, to be seen they need to be taller than the snowbanks.

... Mom, dad and their five-year old daughter; they were our final village display visitors of the season. I can say that with certainty, we began 'tear-down' right after they left. Offered refreshments, the child selected a brownie – twice! Mom and dad didn't know she even liked brownies.

... 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 • City Lights, Mankato, MN, Mary Zellmer, mzellmer@hickorytech.net • D56 Builders and Treasurers, Janesville, Beloit WI/Rockford, IL, Charlene Swansboro. • Region VI Representative: Debbie Oehme, region6ncc@ncc56.com.

... March 17, *St. Patrick's Day* • March 20, *Spring Begins* • April 1, *April Fool's Day* • April 9, *East-er*.

... I'm in the living room sitting in my recliner alone; I feel someone is watching me. I look around right to left; there, sitting in the bay window, four foot-high nutcrackers – all looking right at me. They are now looking at each other – just so you know!



- 'Steen's Maple House' work area features Linda's napkin trees; painted tree backgrounds, and her red Yarrow trees. Woodstock is helping pour the sap. We try to include the American Flag whenever possible in our displays.



... "Sometimes I shock myself with the smart stuff I say & do. Then, there are times when I try to get out of the car with my seatbelt on." • On-line



- Lemax Street Lamp 'post holder bases stands' - 5 Pack - I'd never seen these before. They appeared for sale on eBay (only in Europe); it means I don't know the cost. We use pins, tacky wax, etc., to secure lamps, but another 'fix' is always good. These snap on Lemax streetlamps and could be glued down (and painted to match the surface color) - good ideas.



- 1/64th Scale, Lockheed P-38J Lightning "Marge." Named in recognition of his girlfriend/wife; her name and image were on the fuselage of the aircraft. He, Richard Bong, was the U.S.A., Ace of Aces. Shot down 40 enemy aircraft during WW II. Born in Poplar, WI., (less than an hour from here). <https://www.treefrogtreasures.com/> 9 in. wingspan, 6 in. nose to tail. Note: My family members knew him growing up; I met Marge while they were finishing the Bong Memorial in Superior, WI. I mentioned the memorial in JSYK May 5, 2021 and May 21, 2021.



... Department 56 announced the **2023 Village Catalog** is available to order; 150 pages of full color photos featuring the new releases. The catalog also contains images of all active pieces in the Village lines Original Snow Village, Dickens, North Pole, Christmas in the City and Snow Village Halloween. We can expect to see the new designs in stores in a few months. <https://bit.ly/3XYpRjv>

... Jan 25, 2023 - "David, Thanks." Email went on to say " cruise," . . . " soaking up sun," . . . " approaching Aruba." Is that something you send to a friend in northern Minnesota, in January? Well, she did say she would "look at Larry Treadwell's display and narrative later."

... Have you noticed the **very nice** boat rack on the side of the D56, NEV 'Pierce Boat Works?.' I hadn't until it 'came apart.' Now I have to find someone who 'can see and work small.'



- Lady Linda (in blue) and Sir David (in black); on their way to 'The Garden Ballroom Annual Winter Ball.' This event must be an important; they came all the way from *Christmastime on Portobello Road* (in the little English seaside village of Greenwich Park). Remember, it was part of Larry Treadwell's story on page 3 of the last JSYK. This image is part of a vignette in our kitchen corner hutch.

- I'm thinking about expanding our zoo; conveniently, different 'zoo people' are now appearing on screen. This set is WBRITAIN 'Barrett and Sons Camel Ride with Britain's Zoo Keepers.' I haven't seen many folks on a camel; not sure I need the zoo keepers. <https://trainsandtoysoldiers.com/> \$99.00



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... Joe Meyers posted this information on the *NCC56 Facebook Page*, Feb 1, 2023: "To all the *Glow* members out there. Check out Melinda (Seegers) article in *The Glow* magazine this month." It is an informative article on the history of *Dept. 56* she wrote for 'The Golden Glow of Christmas Past' magazine. Note: The *National Council of 56 Clubs* and *Dept. 56* will have a presence at the *Glow* annual convention in August. Note: Joe Meyers is the Chair, Board of Directors, '*The Golden Glow of Christmas Past*.'

... A friendly reader wrote, "I'll keep my fingers crossed that you'll find a source for Father Brown. He's a cute one & would be a nice addition to any village." – I'm still looking if anyone knows a source/ID for the priest riding a bicycle. He is wearing a black robe.

... *Ms. Lit Town Facebook Live*, February 2, 2023: Melinda Seegers talked about the new SV '*Splitrock Lighthouse*.' She showed a framed picture from her living room of the actual Lake Superior structure. I like the '*Odd jobs before the snow*,' lighthouse keeper, accessory (as she did). Melinda mentioned it might be nice to have two. • SV '*The Grinch House*;' the flat decorations are ceramic. • SV '*Ready for New Year's Eve*,' the first D56 **New Year's** piece. Easily used as centerpiece after Christmas. • The new DV '*Zoological Gardens*' will be an **ongoing** series. She showed all the intro pieces for this, suggested two, ten piece fence sets (they'd form a circle). Showed a **2024** piece, the '*Giraffe Nursery*' (might be a bit different with a different name when released). Small giraffe has his head and neck out the building's 'half-door.' • **Next Facebook Live**, Thursday, March 2, 4 p.m.



- A **village signpost**; a new (to me) version will be available at the 2023 'A Christmas Story in the Nation's Capital.' This 43rd Annual Golden Glow Convention; will be held in Arlington, VA on August 16-19. This limited edition signpost commemorates the event. Four inches tall, black, weighted at the bottom. It features the *Golden Glow* logo designed by Sue Wille. Deadline for orders: Saturday, April 1; \$20.00. Available to be picked up only at the Arlington Convention. – I've always used such signs in our displays. I'm going to see if I can find someone to pick one up for me. As I heard someone say, "You can't have too many signs." Hope it will be my first new one this year.

... "I've learned that you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes. After that, you'd better know something." –H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

... **Welcome** to new readers – **Hi!** to all others as well. Hope to hear from each of you – once in a while.



- 'Christmas Village 2022 – Louisiana Theme.' These line dance images were in the 'Eastside Trailride' area of the above video. I was still trying to figure out where all the dancers came from when Linda took a look; she recognized them right away as horseback riders.

- Remember we were active country dancers, instructors; and a couple of times, competitors. We've *needed* these people for a display. - Display by ZolaZack08 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsoWHQEWHM4> – I'm looking for a source for the 'dancers.'



... It says in the *Village Idiots* info on the Feb/Mar *NCC Connection*, their member Marv Miller has a large collection of radios, including 'ham' radios. I'm wondering if he has a call sign. I could contact him if *WBOZAH* ever gets back 'on the air.' 'ZAH' is me – just so you know!

... As of February 21, 2023, *The Village Collector* has had a total of 360,982 visits; 239,651 unique visitors. <http://thevillagecollector.com/> - JSYK is among the several columns offered there.



. . . Debra Stone Heurung posted the above image on Facebook. It is one half of our 2022/2023 carnival. Deb is a friend who came to our *Village Open House* on January 21. It actually includes fifteen of our animated carnival pieces, my one 'mime' and twenty-four of many clowns. Def: mime: [noun] *an ancient dramatic entertainment representing scenes from life usually in a ridiculous manner.*



. . . I like the way our *North Pole* and *Alpine* villages 'bordered' together. What do you think? This is a portion of our current living room display. *Christmas In The City* is under this main table. • Linda took the picture.



- Linda is a 'book person, i.e., D56, CIC 'Jenny's Corner Book Store' has to be in our display most every year. As is *Ronald McDonald*, our *Village North* charity spokesperson, here leaving with donations. *Red Hat Ladies*; haven't seen them out in public for a while. Note - one of them is a 'Barbie.'



- How about the Dept. 56 Anniversary?? Clock at the carnival? Look close and you will see different *Homies* all over this scene; on the base of the 'Starburst'; in his wheelchair talking to a cowboy and another friend. Outside the fence features a Homie selling ice cream and several playing 'dice.' – Linda or I took the pictures on this page.



- D56 Dickens' 'Touche' – bought them the first time we saw them in a store (2018). Never found a place for them in a display. Just had to use them this time; in the very front of a shelf – Most folks had not seen them anywhere before. Many positive comments. • Upper left, Lemax façade, 'The Lanes Arts and Crafts.' Visitors liked it too. (H x W x D) 10.08 x 8.90 x **2.60** inches. 2019. Another Lemax façade, 'River Moors Christmas Street Festival' behind the D56 'Dursley Manor,' allowed two plus streets.

- All these items were noticed/commented on by our open house visitors: *Superman* on the roof the Dept. 56 Christmas In The City, 'DeFazio's Pizzeria' – usually on the newspaper building; young couple with carry-out pizza; and the always spotted Lemax 'Snow Angel.' I believe it was our first *Lemax Table Top Accessory*. It was the featured image in my 'Just so you know!' column in the first issue of *Village D-Lights*; February/March 2005.





. . . A check for \$7,000 was been sent to the *Minnesota Habitat for Humanity*! The money is from the online auction of 26 unique items celebrating Rick Jackson's retirement from Dept. 56. All who participated should be proud.

. . . Elizabeth is back with Brian – they're both **happy!** As a *d56club.com* member, I am happy as well.

. . . Additional abbreviations (I might use): AV – *Alpine Village* • CIC – *Christmas In The City* • DV - *Dickens' Village* • NEV – *New England Village* • NP – *North Pole Village* • SV – *Original Snow Village*.



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

- 2,610 is the number of words in this JSYK – not counting this line •