

JUST SO YOU KNOW! NOVEMBER 14, 2022

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 *'Show Your Village To The World,'* Oct 26, 2022, "Short Teaser Promo Trailers for Your Video" • Brian Vaill's, *'The Train Station,'* current offering; "CT Balsam, pickup trucks" • Thea Heyink with her *'The Creation Station,'* Northampton, England. Present Oct 30, 2022 • Phil & Sue Adkins, column: *'Planning village for Christmas 2022'* • *'From Italy,'* Peppe Apuleo, Oct 25, 2022, *'Lemax Passion – Christmas Villages'* • *'Christmas Corner'* by Art Kilmer, Nov 11, 2022, *'My Grandpa was Santa.'* • <http://thevillagecollector.com/>



. . . 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.

. . . "Looking for houses to use outside for a Halloween display? I spotted two cookie jars and a candle holder at Saver's. All **looked like houses** decorated for the season. The jars were 'village size' and brightly colored. The holder was pretty small, but I'll bet we could find a use for it. Of course, we do very little Halloween." - August 17, **2017 JSYK**

. . . Irene Bronner, matriarch of *'Bronner's CHRISTmas Wonderland'* in Frankenmuth, MI, died on Sunday, October 16 at the age of 95. Irene and her husband, Wally Bronner, started the world's largest Christmas store in 1951. We met Wally on a couple of MI. visits.

. . . Please remember to comment, question, or reply, to what's written in this column. I need your input to keep things going. Thanks for the responses I've received in the past.

. . . 1st person reported **receiving** the Qtr. 3 Village D-Lights on October 17. We received our copy on Oct 18. Two of our Village North Collectors Club members also received theirs the same day.

. . . Four **raccoons posing** with three garbage cans; one is wearing a red 'Santa' hat. We made the buy because we thought they were cute. Titled *'Raccoons.'* \$4.99 ♦ Three 'people' on two horses; we thought they would make a good addition to our 'ranch area.' They are called *'Woman On Horses,'* \$6.99 - we're sure they're children. Not fancy, but add 'action.' Both are *FG Square*, ours are from *Menard's* in Hermantown, MN. Note: The size differences in their accessories/figures this year is great; example - people are from a bit over an inch to five plus inches.

. . . Thursday, October 13, 1st night **in the garage** for our car. The *Outback* has had to *'live outside'* since early spring. Linda *'straightened up'* our three-car garage so we now have room inside (for our only car). Gardening, village supplies and 'stuff' take up a lot of room.

. . . Big wall of 'small people' Christmas **ornaments** at *Fleet Farm*; stopped there again, found out they are from *Hallmark*. Many fun people, most all are cartoon characters and super heroes. Maybe not normal street people for our displays but I'm sure we can all find a use for many of them.



. . . "We all do better when we all do better." – Paul Wellstone, U.S. Senator

. . . "I've learned to get the right answer; you have to ask the right question." • H. Jackson Brown, Jr.



. . . *'A Magical Christmas Village'* – Nov. 4, 8 p.m. ET/PT, *Hallmark Channel* – Stars: Alison Sweeney, Luke Macfarlane, Marlo Thomas – "A woman tells her young granddaughter, *Chloe*, that her miniature Christmas village can magically grant holiday wishes. As *Chloe* begins setting up the figurines, real-life events seem to mimic the scenes she creates." Missed it, no cable at our house – hope to see it before the season ends. Please let me know if you saw it.



. . . I watched 'Unboxing the Department 56 Christmas in the City Skyline' by BigCrabCake (on YouTube). Now I seem to want all the Dept. 56 'tall' buildings. Before seeing the narrated 'unboxing' video, with the buildings all lined up, I just liked them; now I need them. Thank you?? - Linda says we are very short on storage space (and then the money). <https://d56club.com/board/12/general-discussion> Note: Davidg is me on the D56 Club Forum.

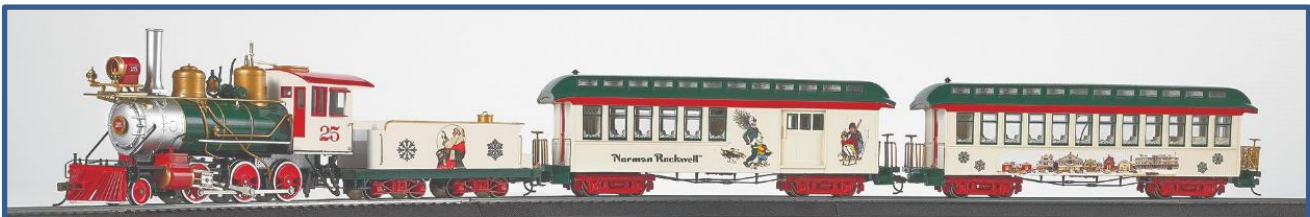
Dept. 56 October 2022 intros. June 15, 2023 est. release date.

. . . The 'Zoological Gardens Lions' (male and female) and 'Zoological Garden Elephants' are designed for the Dickens' Village Zoological Gardens. They should fit right into our 'Duluth Zoo' display. I believe they fall into the category "you can never have too many . . ." Lions 2.7 inches H; Elephants, 2.3 inches H. Price not available to the public on the ENESCO site.

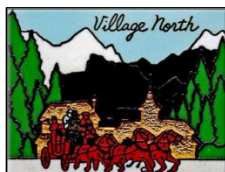


• 'QR code' for 'The Village Collector.' When you check it out, please tell Bill I sent you.☺ A friend got it to work on his phone (for me). Linda has a Tracfone, I have nothing (except the phone on the wall). I can't use any code things.



• 'Norman Rockwell's American Christmas Train' set; this version of the On30 train by Bachman would add a good holiday look in a village display.

Village North Collector's Club



Duluth, MN – Superior, WI

. . . Village North activities: Oct 29th, Halloween Party/Tour; Nov 9th, President Kandi (and husband Rod) off to Texas for the winter; Nov 16, meeting, Fosters, Hermantown, MN; Dec ??; Dickens' display at Aftenro; Dec 21, Christmas Party, Blackwoods, London Rd, Duluth; Jan ??, Tour of Homes.



- This is an October 2022, Dept. 56 introduction. I give Dept. 56 credit, the 'Candy Cane Snowmobile' looks similar to a *Ski-Doo* we had on our porch in the 60's. My roommate worked for the company; he was a test driver. Of course it was yellow and black and didn't say "Santa" on the side. It is said Harold J. Kalenze patented the first snowmobile in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada in 1911. This red and white version is primarily designed for Santa's North Pole use. 2.1 inch H.

... Does anyone use 'roundabouts' in a display? I could see one in any 'village,' even North Pole. The reason I ask now? They have recently constructed several actual new ones in our area; and more are planned. • Roundabout: a circular intersection in which road traffic is permitted to flow in one direction around a central island. • Hope to see a few roundabouts in displays this season.

... 'The Village Crier' The Garden State Village Collectors Newsletter, October, 2017. I was checking some past NCC info, and I spotted it; the first time part of JSYK appeared there. I'm very happy, and proud, I'm still 'there.'



- *Ulysses S. Grant*: West Point graduate June 30, 1843. U.S. Army service progressing to the highest rank since George Washington, Lieutenant General of all armies; 18th President of the United States 1869 to 1877. <https://www.treefrogtreasures.com/> \$45.00 ♦ My interest, *U.S. Grant Elementary* was my school, 1st thru 6th grade. I also wrote a paper on President Grant's cabinet as a freshman at *Univ. of Minn. Duluth*. Note: the school is now *Myers-Wilkins Elementary School* and I received a C- on the paper. Maybe I don't need this as a **memory piece**.

- **Learning** to skate? At *Central Field* we had the shoulders of friends; and falling. I used a lot of both. This 'Old School Skating Hack,' would have been a help. I would have been happy to use a 'sturdy chair' instead of falling. Height, 2.09 inches. This is an Oct. 2022 Dept. 56 intro; est. release Jun, 2023. Cost not yet available to the public on the Enesco web site.



- 'Lit Movie Premiere Lights' - We've always liked/used the D56 spotlights. Most of the time we hide them; behind trees, figures or even covered with snow. These new lights are **designed to be seen** (not just black plastic with wires coming out). Set of 2 and they are adjustable. 4.5in H. Oct 2022 introduction - June 15, 2023 estimated release date - no cost available on Enesco web site.

... A novel reason you might **want to join** an NCC club "To fulfill your lifelong desire to save every piece of Styrofoam that comes into your life." Robin Hervey, National Council of 56 Clubs Membership Chair.

... "If one door closes and another one opens, your house is haunted and you need to run." • On-line

... Our *Village North* October 29 Halloween Tour of Homes was cancelled. Reason - Linda and I both tested positive for COVID. Linda first, me a week later. For us it was very much like having a cold. Don't worry, you can read this safely, we are no longer infected.

- 'Winter Game of Catch' Dept. 56 Dickens' Village "Neat action on the dog reaching for the snowball thrown by the boy." 2.25in H x 1.42in W x 2.91in L. Intro. October 2022, est. release date Jul 1, 2023. No cost available on Enesco web site.



. . . **Holidays:** Nov 1 - *All Saint's Day*; Nov 1-2 - *Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead); Nov 6 - *Daylight Savings* time ends; Nov 8 - *U.S. General Election Day*; Nov 11 - *Veteran's Day*; Nov 24 - *Thanks-giving Day*; Nov 27 - *Advent begins*; Dec 7 - *Pearl Harbor Day*; Dec 19 - *Hanukkah* begins; Dec 25 - *Christmas Day*.



- In the Oct 10 *JSYK*, I said "We are always looking for people doing something other than just standing there." Jim Peters told me that in 2020 he used the Lemax 'Fortune Teller' girls in this 'sidewalk chalk artist' display (we have the artist). He was kind enough to share the image. They do add interest to the scene, as does the gentleman with the red and white scarf (we also have 'him,' but can't remember his name). 'Christmas Treasurers' was a 2004, D56, CIC intro. Mr. Peters was kind enough to fill in that info for me.

. . . I've been told, "The *Lemax Rockwell Museum* series is the **best stuff** they (Lemax) have ever produced." Pieces can be purchased only at the museum itself (or online). It appears they've sold out except for one piece. https://store.nrm.org/gifts/main-street.html?product_list_limit=60

. . . Rick Jackson, Dept. 56 Creative Director, is **retiring** at the end of 2022. Tim Haney will be the new Creative Director/VP of Village Design.



- I should have noticed the 'Jelly Of The Month Club;' it was introduced by Dept. 56 in 2020. My wife, Linda, makes much jelly and jam every year. It's a **popular gift** for others and a welcome treat for the husband. Her only 'granny' connections so far are with youngsters of family, friends and neighbors. She loves them all. - 5.12 in H x 5.94 in W x 7.13 in L

- Snowman collectors should find this trio interesting. "The Finishing Touch" - Snowman & Grandfather holding Grand Daughter - would be a good addition to a collection. It is 2 ½ inches tall to the top of the hat. From the 'Trophy Miniatures of Wales.' <https://www.treefrogtsures.com/> - Consignment. \$75.00



- d56club.com/- the location of a Dept. 56 oriented forum. I joined in 2021, 'davidg' is me. My 'membership flag' (for the forum) is sitting behind me on our file cabinet.



Linda & David

Cassie is selling her house. So you'll have new neighbors soon. We wanted to give you a heads up. Thanks.

Megan, Cassie, Conway, Milly & Eli

- If you remember, I speak with 'Conway,' the **cat next door**. He regularly 'meows' with me from a bedroom window. Haven't heard him awhile; I was concerned. Then I found this note on the steps outside our kitchen door. Please note he even signed it -

I'm **sure** Conway will miss me too.



- The "Pedestrian Crossing" has a look that attracted me. Always thought these 'bridges' were nice in a display, not practical in real life. (The older I get, the less practical). Now I'm wondering if our On30 trains will fit through. Or our streetcar/trolley. Maybe I could raise it up just a bit. The ad says "Lighted Train Accessory, HO-scale with working lamps, realistic cobblestones, old-fashioned wooden walkway, and real metal wrought iron-look railings." 6" H x 8" W x 7-1/2" L, \$59.99 <https://www.bradfordexchange.com/easures>

- I have no idea who this lady and gentleman are. We both think they are a **good looking** and **interesting** couple. By the name, 'A Farewell Rose,' I'd say he is a soldier leaving his lover for war. With his 'look' and uniform; I'm guessing a Civil War Union soldier. It is a 2003 'Christmas Stocking Holder' Limited Edition Christmas set, limited to 500 pieces. <https://www.treefrogtreasures.com/>



... "This space intentionally left blank."

... Been thinking about **adding** Uber/LYFT service in our display. To do it correctly, the vehicles used should be 'electric' powered. I felt I needed some public charging stations to go with them. Did a bit of looking so I could 'make' them. I discovered we have 254 public charging stations in the City of Duluth – just so you know!

... **Thanks** to *Debbie Oehme* our Region VI Rep. She has agreed to continue in the *National Council of 56 Clubs* position for a second 2-year term.

... "Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia." - Charles Schultz

... November 14 looks like the day we will have our **first snowfall** that stays. Less than two inches, but no temps above 30 forecast for at least the next week. That means what we get will stick around. • First **slippery street** encountered this afternoon. I was going slowly; that enabled me to ride the curb and turn into the ditch. Missed the car stopped in front of us and no damage to our car.

. . . The Dept. 56 Retirements – Villages. This is the list as posted November 4th on the Dept. 56 web site. Note: the Retirement List no longer includes 'landscaping items' and "Cross Products." It means the list is much shorter and those items not listed 'could be' brought back if needed.

DEPARTMENT 

2022 Village Retirements			
Item #	Name	US	Canada
A Christmas Carol			
6007602	Visiting the Miners Home	\$160.00	\$208.00
Christmas in the City Series			
6007586	Luchow's German Restaurant	\$150.00	\$195.00
6007590	A Splendid Dinner	\$32.50	\$42.50
Dickens Village Series			
56.58753	Swift's Stringed Instruments	\$100.00	\$130.00
6007596	Battersea The Dogs' Home	\$145.00	\$188.00
6007592	St. Pancras Old Church	\$190.00	\$234.00
6007593	Oxford's Tom Tower	\$265.00	\$344.00
6007598	Firsts Steps For A Big Project	\$52.00	\$68.00
6007600	The Days Fresh Produce	\$32.50	\$42.50
North Pole Village Series			
6005429	Snowy's Diner	\$180.00	\$234.00
6007609	Kringle's Christmas Tree	\$180.00	\$234.00
6007613	Crayola Crayon Factory	\$245.00	\$318.00
6007615	Nina's Knit Mittens	\$112.00	\$151.00
The Original Snow Village Series			
56.54291	Village Phone Booth	\$20.00	\$26.00
6003141	Making Christmas Brite	\$40.00	\$52.00
6007622	Woodlands Family Church	\$165.00	\$214.00
6007623	Reindeer Gas Station	\$210.00	\$272.00
6007624	Hitching Post	\$135.00	\$175.00
6007629	The Peanuts House	\$225.00	\$292.00
6007630	Advent Wreath Countdown	\$65.00	\$84.50
6007636	It's Good Old Charlie Brown	\$42.50	\$55.50
6009716	Holiday Starter Home	\$250.00	\$326.00
6009779	2022 Santa Comes To Town	\$58.00	\$75.50
The Original Snow Village Halloween Series			
4051008	Halloween Party House	\$140.00	\$182.00
6007640	Trick or Treat Lane with Peanuts	\$225.00	\$292.00
6007643	Haunted Swamp Shanty	\$150./00	\$195.00
6007647	Snoopy's Treat, Not Trick	\$42.50	\$55.50
6007650	Tubing S.O.S.	\$35.00	\$45.50
6007789	Honey Hive	\$175.00	\$227.00
6007790	Calming The Bees	\$42.00	\$54.50
6007787	Day Of The Dead Pastry Cart	\$130.00	\$169.00
6007788	Bread Of The Dead	\$28.00	\$36.00
6009844	Rest In Peace, 2022	\$120.00	\$156.00

Dept. 56 (on web site) Retirement explanation: "The end of each year brings an end to some of our most beloved products, which are retired from production. Once that decision has been made, the mold is broken. This limits the number of products available and allows our artists to innovate and create new designs."



• Saw this little blue car; looked familiar, wondered what it was. I discovered its 'Sally,' the star of the Pixar/Disney movie series 'Cars.' It's a 911 (type 996) Porsche Carrera - no wonder I liked it (long time Porsche fan). This one is 1/43 scale, online for \$8.99. Looking for one to **buy** (in person).

. . . As of November 9, 2022, The Village Collector has had a total of 326,457 visits; 221,173 unique visitors. <http://thevillagecollector.com/> - JSYK is among the several columns offered there. TVC established May 20, 2017.



- People tell us we have a fun zoo. Lots of animals, animation and our homemade backgrounds and bases. But we are always willing to expand. The D56 "Zoological Gardens Gate," might add another entrance. Intro: October 2022 - Release June 15, 2023. 3.74in H x 1.02in W x 5.55in L. It says "Zoological Society" above the gate; maybe that makes it the entry for 'members only.' ♦ Special thanks to Tom I. He got our zoo started with some great penguins and polar bears.

• Dept. 56 Zoological Gardens •

- 'Zoological Gardens' - Dickens Village - Intro: Oct 2022. Opened in 1828 'The London Zoological Gardens' was intended for scientific study. Opened in 1828, the zoo was available for public viewing in 1848. The set of 2 includes the brick gate house and ostrich figurine. 6.4in H x 3.46in W x 5.63in L - Don't know why an ostrich is included.



- Had to double check; I needed to know why the elf had the '**scared look.**' Dept. 56 says "Testing every Jack-in-the Box is a hair-raising job" This fellow runs the test station and has to approve each one. 'This One Passes QC,' a North Pole Village, October 2022 introduction - Release date July 1, 2023. No price yet.

. . . Dept. 56, 'Ms. Lit Town Facebook Live,' December 1st, 4:00 p.m. CST. Melinda Seegers and Rick Jackson will be hosting an **online auction** after the show. It will feature 24 items 'found' in Rick Jackson's office. Proceeds will benefit *Habitat for Humanity*.

. . . **New packaging** will be introduced on the January 2023 *Facebook Live with MS. Lit Town*. I am genuinely interested and curious what Dept. 56 is planning (and why).

. . . *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, Nov. 11, 2022 featured Will Ferrell giving Jimmy a tour of his miniature "Perfect Christmas Village." Good to see a village display on a network TV show. Search "Jimmy Fallon Will Ferrell" on Facebook to view the video. Or go to the *NCC Facebook* page.

. . . "Note to self: Just because it pops into my head does not mean it should come out of my mouth." • Oct 23, 2020, JSYK

. . . **VillageFest 2022** opens Monday, November 14th - through November 28th - Look around, you might find me there. <http://www.villagefest.us/>

. . . "We do most of our own backgrounds, foregrounds, bases, trees, water, waterfalls, tunnels, mountains and other smaller items - just so you know!" • Oct 23, 2020, JSYK



- We don't **do** Halloween! I took these pictures to prove it. The tree stumps are in our living room; the other stuff is behind me on a desk top and file cabinet. There is also a small vignette on a living room table; plus one on the kitchen counter. We formally had a year around display at a local nursing home. We changed it four or five times a year. That was the reason we have Halloween – honest! Most all is *Lemax Spooky Town*. The pieces we have for that holiday all fits in four tubs.



. . . . Remember, we don't **do** Halloween!

. . . Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 19 for the National Council of 56 Clubs **'Fall Virtual Gathering.'** Check the NCC Facebook page or web site for details.

Northern Lights Collectors' Club



Crystal, MN – Central MN

. . . Have a nice **Thanksgiving!** Our family get-together invitation came today – JSYK!
. . . 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 me at: spears.duluth@juno.com, 105 E. Toledo St., Duluth, MN 55811 or (218) 724-6148.

- 3,238 is the number of words in this JSYK – not counting this line •