

JUST SO YOU KNOW! . . . SEPTEMBER 26, 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.

. . . Village D-Lights, 3rd Qtr, 2023; has not yet been received at this address in Duluth, MN; JSYK!

. . . 'The Village Collector' has been with us since 2017. Bill and Kathy Channell have continually worked to build and improve the following columns: David Spears, 'Show your village to the world' • Phil & Sue Adkins, 'Phil & Sue's 'From Italy, Villaging in Europe' • Mary Treadwell, 'Hauntsville' and 'A Dickens' Christmas' • Mark Frendo, 'Tips & Trix' •



- 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
- Region VI Representative: Debbie Oehme, region6ncc@ncc56.com. •

. . . October 9, 'Thanksgiving Day-Canada' – October 9, 'Columbus Day' • October 31, 'Halloween' • November 5, 'Daylight Savings Time Ends' • November 11, 'Veterans Day' • November 23, 'Thanksgiving Day' • December 8, 'First Day of Hanukkah' • December 21, 'Winter Begins' • December 25, 'Christmas Day' • December 26, 'Boxing Day' - Canada • January 1, 'New Year's Day' •

. . . **Correction** - The new *Enesco D56/ Jim Shore Gallery* actually **opens this year** on November 26, 2023 - **not** 2024. It is located between *Graceland* and the *Guest House* in Memphis, Tennessee (it will include a *Gift Gallery*). My thanks to Billy Edwards for the correction.

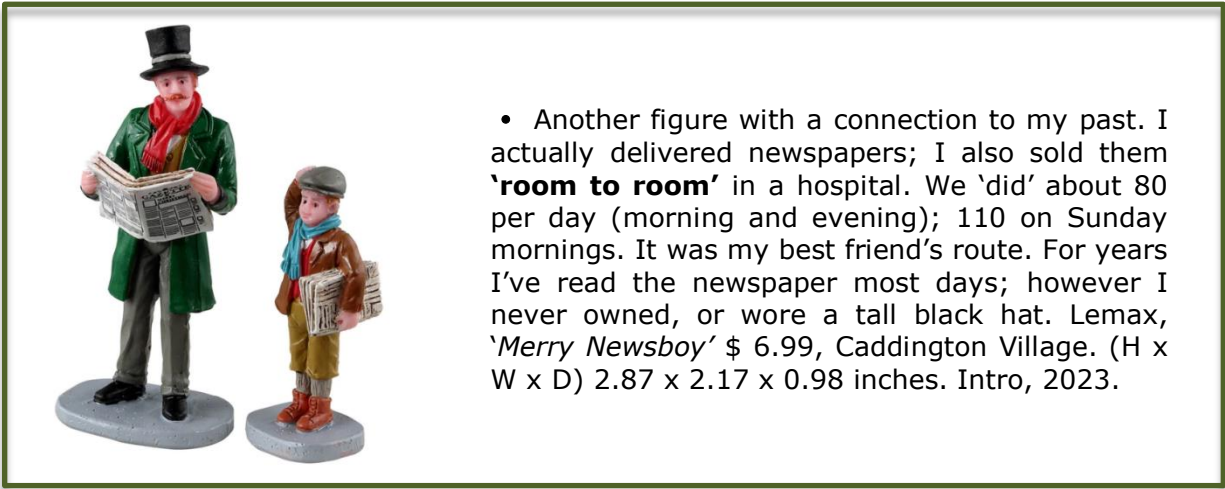


• I've been informed this is **Tim Haney**, the new *VP of Product Development*, Enesco/Department 56. He was at the *D.C. GLOW* event in August. Image from a Jeffery Kirchner *Facebook* posting.

. . . Ms. Lit Town *Facebook Live* September 7: Melinda Seegers talked about Halloween. She began with the 'Kraken House.' She likes the 2022 Dept. 56 intro more all the time. A big sea monster surrounds the *SV Halloween House*. \$250. • She purchased three different bases at *Target*: a pumpkin; a 10" x10" flat platform; and a tree stump. Each, \$5 or less. Melinda built small vignettes on all three. See this show on the *Dept. 56 Facebook* page. • She requested we all send her pictures of 'our' Halloween vignettes. There will be contest with prizes.

. . . Please **read** this: Things I write about, things I don't; you have to tell me what you want more of, or less of for that matter. If you don't 'talk' to me, I don't know what to say to you. Thanks!

• 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. •



- Another figure with a connection to my past. I actually delivered newspapers; I also sold them 'room to room' in a hospital. We 'did' about 80 per day (morning and evening); 110 on Sunday mornings. It was my best friend's route. For years I've read the newspaper most days; however I never owned, or wore a tall black hat. Lemax, 'Merry Newsboy' \$ 6.99, Caddington Village. (H x W x D) 2.87 x 2.17 x 0.98 inches. Intro, 2023.

. . . The next Dept. 56 Facebook Live Ms. Lit Town is Thursday, October 5th, 4:00 p.m. Central Time!!!

. . . Dept. 56 **Artist Signing** Events at NCC Associate Members this Fall: Sept. 30 – Paul Lundberg, 'Kris Kringl,' Leavenworth, WA • Oct. 21st - Kiri Namtvedt, 'City Lights,' San Diego, CA • 'Oct. 28th - Paul Lundberg, 'St, Nick's,' Littleton, CO • Nov. 4th - Scott Enter, 'Bronner's,' Frankenmuth, MI • Nov. 4th - Paul Lundberg, 'Millies Hallmark,' Phoenix, AZ •

. . . According to Jeff Foxworthy: "If you carry jumpers in your car and your wife knows how to use them, you may live in Wisconsin." – "If you design your kid's Halloween costume to fit over a snowsuit, you may live in Wisconsin." – "If you've worn shorts and a jacket at the same time, you may live in Wisconsin." – "If you've had a lengthy telephone conversation with some...one who dialed a wrong number, you may live in Wisconsin." – You could **also** live in Minnesota!

. . . "A smart person knows what to say. A wise person knows whether or not to say it." – Thoughts Wonder

. . . In a movie I recently saw a **yellow stop sign**, with black lettering; it got me looking. I found it wasn't until 1954 the stop sign became the bright red color, adorned with white letters. • I couldn't have been driving, legally, then. I received my 'learners permit' in 1955, just so you know.

. . . I've been reminded *Menard's*, *Kohl's*, *Fleet Farm* (and maybe other businesses) **don't exist** outside the mid-west. I'll try to say something about (explain) them occasionally. *Menard's* – expanded home improvement store; *Kohl's* – department store; *Fleet Farm* – expanded farm (?) store. They all offer some non-Dept. 56 'village stuff,' mostly Christmas, maybe some Halloween.

. . . Sitting in the car waiting for Linda; I was amazed how many men with **white hair** went in and out of the store. Linda cut my hair later that day. It was hard to see the little pile of my hair on the paper towel; i.e., white on white☺

. . . Congratulations to **Mirela Gab**. She won the *Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs* August Facebook vignette contest! She is a member of the 'Southwest Villagers of AZ' and 'Central Valley 56 Collectors.'

. . . www.robotimeonline.com/ showed me 'Pagoda 3D Wooden Puzzles.' Among them I like: 'Eiffel Tower,' 'Ferris Wheel' and possibly a couple of houses. Has anyone seen them 'in person?' If so, are they village/vignette useable?

. . . Stopped for my annual flu **vaccination**. In addition they said I also needed/received pneumonia, tetanus, and RSV 'shots' - say o'boy! • I'm fine now – thanks for your concern.

. . . Received our *Village D-Lights* **subscription** notice on September 14th. \$35.00 for one year (four issues) – \$65.00 for two years. Mailed our check that day.

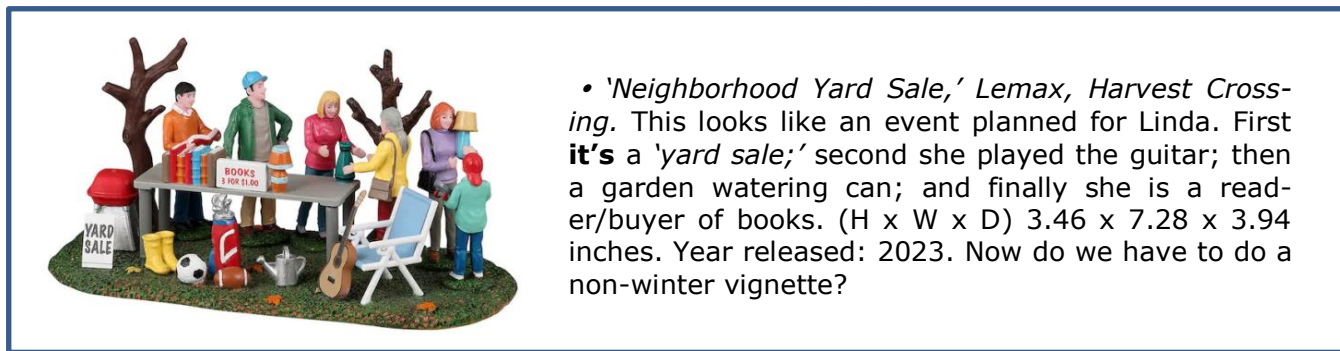
. . . The 'Viking Polaris' ship is set to cruise from **Duluth to Antarctica** taking 71 days with many stops along the way; it left Duluth on September 14th.

. . . Please read what I write; otherwise until next time. . . .

. . . 'black kittens 4 SALE' is a nice 'find' in a Fall festival. D56 Halloween offers a cute choice.



• "It takes no more time to see the good side of life than to see the bad." – **Jimmy Buffet**, the singer, songwriter, author, sailor, pilot and entrepreneur, died on Sept. 1, 2023. I enjoyed his music and fun. • He was the reason you see 'Margaritaville' as the name of this vignette. Façade and bus came home with us from the Dominican Republic; the rest purchased here (somewhere in the U.S.). Don't think we found any village size appropriate 'Parrot Heads;' Jimmy Buffet's devoted followers.



• 'Neighborhood Yard Sale,' Lemax, Harvest Crossing. This looks like an event planned for Linda. First it's a 'yard sale;' second she played the guitar; then a garden watering can; and finally she is a reader/buyer of books. (H x W x D) 3.46 x 7.28 x 3.94 inches. Year released: 2023. Now do we have to do a non-winter vignette?

• Found this on Facebook "Free-giant.com" Outdoor Use; Material, Polyester; No power needed. Size: Overall: 6.89 ft. x 7.87 ft. \$38.99 (on sale). Also saw overall size: 6.89 ft. x 15.75 ft. (no price shown). Note: This one is on a **garage door**. • We have two garage doors; a one car and a two car. Linda said "no" - I hadn't asked. Remember, we really don't 'do' Halloween.



... We have five Mattel Barbies in our village storage area. They are: 'Soccer Barbie,' 'Baseball Barbie,' 'Astronaut Barbie,' 'Ballerina Barbie,' and 'Pop Star Barbie.' 2 1/2 inches tall. Since the very popular new 'Barbie' movie came out, it should be a good time to have/display them.

... "No one ever made a difference by being like everyone else." - Online

... "I didn't get old on purpose, it just happened. If you're lucky, it could happen to you." – Andy Ronney

... On the shelf this afternoon (Sep 26) at 'Goodwill,' Duluth, MN: Dept. 56 NP 'Elves Bunkhouse' (no box) \$5.99 - Dept. 56, DV, 'Green's Park Nosegays' (with box), \$22.99. Linda spotted them.

... Time to begin our village display 2023 – I wonder how many times that will make us go up and down the basement stairs. Linda will tell you; she many more times than me.



• I've been told owner *James Gravely* wanted something classic to mark the entrance to the estates section of *Hauntsville*; he commissioned *Vulcan*, a local iron worker, to manufacture an archway. I'm guessing this is the entrance to the estate section of **Hauntsville 2023**. • Larry Treadwell said "I am 90% certain the *Hauntsville* display will be assembled, wired (OMG what a pain) and photographed and even the story written by October 1." Click on www.thevillagecollector.com, then *Hauntsville*. The site will also allow you to visit the previous displays; remember reading the words doubles the fun. Question: Do I know the couple at the above entrance? Answer: See page eight.



• *Michael's* - Sept 3, 2023. Linda bought some 'crafting tape' and neon paint (bright colors). • *Lemax Halloween Spooky Town* was out; maybe half was already sold out (display models only remained). Getting my attention: 'Creepy Rotten Candy' is a selling stand; (left) 'No chocolate for you!' little witch (cute) with puppy in costume – small and I liked them as a set (adding a pumpkin); (right) 'Curbside Pickup,' witch flying with her broom (the sign makes it fun).



. . . Our local *Michael's* store has the 2023 *Lemax Christmas* 'in back.' Their plan is to put it out after Halloween. Note: The clerk informed me; before I could ask.

. . . I saw a display sized (1 inch) **Bald Eagle** at the *Great Lakes Aquarium*. I told Linda I was going to buy it; she insisted I purchase three. At 80 cents each, I'm guessing it was a good idea.

. . . 'Just so you know!' – for my first columns in *Village D-Lights*, they expected 750 words, and one or two images – after eight years in *VDL* over 2,000 words, 4 or 5 images were requested. • Now email/online, approx. 20 plus images, 2,500 words in each column.

. . . "Why do birds fly south? *Because it is too far to walk.*" – Activity Village

. . . *Lemax Spooky Town* at *Fleet Farm* – All (?) of their new pieces, 2022-2023, are a **smaller scale**; that's buildings, table pieces and figures. There was nothing I 'had to have,' 'needed,' or even 'wanted.' • I did see a giraffe across the store aisle. I almost bought it for our planned new and improved zoo - almost.

• 'Pumpkin Snowmen,' *Lemax Spooky Town*. "Just like these charming jack o'lantern figures that hear no evil, see no evil, and speak no evil." HxWxD 2.09x1.3x1.06 inches. Intro 2023. Honestly, until I read the official description (above) I was wondering about the hand placement.



• "A cool dude!" - Linda and I feel he would look good coming out of 'Molly O'Brien's Irish Pub,' Dept. 56 'Christmas in The City' - Retired 2011. I realize his wardrobe is out of date; the tag says "American Civil War Mr. Dayfield, Young Civilian Man Standing." <https://trainsandtoy soldiers.com/> - \$42.00.

• I've always liked **Schroeder & Lucy**, sure wish I could have these two. They are part of a set, 'PEANUTS Illuminated Christmas Village Collection,' from The Bradford Exchange. Less than 1 3/4 inches tall. www.bradfordexchange.com/



• 'Teetering Tower' – Goofy, Donald, and Mickey - *Disney Traditions Collection* by Jim Shore. Two possible good uses for us; our parade down main street or in our carnival (or fairground). \$79.95. 8.75 in H x 2.25 in W x 3.75 in L.



<https://trainsandtoy soldiers.com/> "Britains Limited John Walker & Sons Ltd Scotch Whiskey Distillers. Born 1820 - Still going strong." \$150.00. Can't you just seeing him walking down the street in a display? I can!

. . . Across the table from me they ordered a veggie pizza - **with pepperoni!** - I didn't know what to say. I mean veggie, pizza and pepperoni in one sentence, really? They did eat it - *JSYK!*

. . . "We need rest. We need time. We need space. We need love. We need laughter. And perhaps most importantly, we need each other." - Mitchell C. Clark

. . . "When you're dead you don't know you're dead. The pain is only felt by others. The same occurs when you are stupid." - Online



• Robin Hervey says "A great club to belong to." This picture shows almost all of the 19 members of the *California 56 Collectors* at 'Roger's Gardens,' Newport Beach, CA. on Sept. 6. Looks like they were all enjoying themselves on a very nice day. • I recognize a good share of the people. Pretty sure we've even had lunch/dinner with more than a few at a gathering (or two). Linda and I say 'Hi!' to each of you.

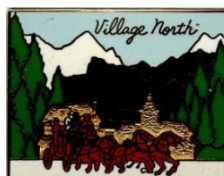


• These Lemax facades look good, 3 in row, and they are simply sitting on a shelf in the store. The deer in the 'front yard' can't even ruin it. I can imagine this 'Holly Jolly Hotel' as part of a Christmas in The City display. (H x W x D) 11.22 x 11.22 x 3.94 inches Year Released: 2023 • The ad says, "You don't have to be a guest to enjoy all the amenities that The Holly Jolly Inn offers. Anyone can make a reservation for tea with Santa or check out the corner bistro for a quick bite. Beautifully decorated inside and out, The Holly Jolly Hotel is a hub for visitors and villagers alike."

. . . The word is Duluth will soon have a 'Chick-fil-A.' Never eaten at one, but I've heard good things. I noticed Dept. 56 Snow Village offers a Chick-Fil-A piece. www.countrynmoregifts.com has it on sale for \$800.00 - down from \$1,200. I don't know what to say.

. . . 'Olson's Christmas House,' 214 E. Main Street, Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin (near Madison), is closing. They have a **large stock** of Dept. 56. For information on what they have, contact: Judy Olson-Sutton jsutton@madisoncollege.edu - 608-692-5839 (Judy's direct line). Thanks to Debbie Oehme, Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs, Region 6 Representative, for confirming this information.

Village North Collectors Club



Duluth, MN/Superior, WI

. . . Yes, we live in Minnesota; however the recently released 'Minnesota Vikings Woody Wagon' just didn't get my interest. First, I really don't appreciate the look; second, 1:18 scale (10 3/4 inches) too large; and third, three payments of \$36.66 each (plus \$17.99 shipping etc.) – good thing I don't like it anyway. • We really don't need another automobile; just ask Linda.



. . . This display offers most **everything** I'm looking for this Fall season. By Norman J Redpath, Collingwood, Ontario, it offers: Grilled Cheese, Apple Bobbing, veggies, Apple Barn, Corn Maze, pumpkins, Wine & Cheese Market, people, kids, animals and great Fall colors. Enjoyed it on the *Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs Facebook* page, Sept 14, 2023.

. . . "Gardening is the work of a lifetime: You never finish" – Oscar De La Renta

. . . Dept. 56 posted a "cute little video" to get us excited about a **Grinch-y holiday**. I know nothing about the Grinch, but I smiled at the video. I spotted them on *Facebook*, Dept. 56 page.

. . . For regular readers: the *deer* only were seen once in our yard in the last 30 days. • We are being visited daily by *Cedar Waxwings* busy eating our mountain ash berries. The *Hummingbirds* are getting fewer and fewer; migration is here.

. . . I dreamed there was an *elephant* in our backyard. When I looked again, I realized I was wrong, it was a *rhinoceros* 😊.



• Saw the Dept. 56, 'Whale Tale Pub & Inn' in a online display. We haven't made an **addition** to our *New England Village* 'collection' in a while – maybe it's time. I like it! Nice color, simple shape; not sure what a "Whale Tale" is, but that's OK. Introduced December 2001, retired December 2003. - 4.5 in x 5.75 in x 10 in. \$85.95. • I'm sure someone can answer my question; what is a Whale Tale?

. . . "You may not always see the results of your kindness...but every bit of positive energy you contribute to the world makes it a better place for all of us." – Pooh lovers

- 'A Christmas Tale' is a Lemax village Christmas figurine that features a young boy sitting on a park bench. The boy is reading 'Twas The Night Before Christmas' to his young puppy, who's wearing a blue collar. Both are clearly enjoying this lovable Christmas story! Approx. size (H x W x D) 1.89 x 1.77 x 1.65 inches - Year Released: 2021



... "You will presently be playing with a full deck" • Jan Lauritzen, Village Addicts Anonymous, Los Angeles, CA

... "I've learned that my daddy can say a lot of words I can't." age 8 • H. Jackson Brown Jr.



• Our friend Carol 'gifted' us this Dept. 56 'Halloween Village Express Van.' She found it at a local 'Savers.' We are not really Halloween people, but we like these vans. We have several from gatherings, stores and events. **Question:** Can anyone explain to me how the paint peeled in the places shown?

... **Answer** to question on page 4 - They are *John and Sarah Ribcage*, *Hauntsville's* least frightening couple. • Larry Treadwell informed me '**Hauntsville 2023**' is complete and will be posted by October 1st on '*The Village Collector*' web site. Please let Larry know you appreciate his talent and hard work.

... Another 'JSYK' shared with others. Sure hope you find something fun and/or interesting.



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.

• 3,268 is the number of words in this JSYK – not counting this line •