

JUST SO YOU KNOW! SEPTEMBER 2, 2024

IDEAS, HINTS, AND OPINIONS

. . . **Correction!!!** The next 'Ms. Lit Town Facebook Live' will be on September 5th, not the 7th. Those cyber gremlins must have changed the date for me, or??. – Thanks Bernice!



• "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 part of the *Village North Collectors Club*, an NCC member club. •

. . . '*The Village Collector*' has been with us since 2017. Bill and Kathy Channell have continually worked to build and improve the following columns: David Peters, 'Show your village to the ly, Villaging in Europe' • Art Treadwell, 'Hauntsville 2023,' 'A Dickens' Christmas' and 'Christmas in the Game Preserve.'



. . . *Jim Shore* signing event, Saturday, October 21, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. at *Cynthia's Hallmark* (Nat'l Council of Clubs Associate Member), Greenfield, IN.

. . . "Chillin' with my Gnomes!" – I'm wondering if Linda thinks I need a shirt with those words. Saw it worn by the staff of *Cynthia's Hallmark*, Greenfield, IN; it was on their web site. www.cynthiashallmarkstores.com – It says they are the largest *Hallmark Store* in the country.



• 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, David Spears, spears.duluth@juno.com • Region VI Representative: Debbie Oehme, region6ncc@ncc56.com •

. . . The October 'Ms. Lit Town Facebook Live' will be Thursday, October 3, 4 p.m. CST.

. . . I just realized no 2024 Mid-year Dept. 56 village releases means I have less 'new stuff' to write about. My loss??

. . . "Do not put flammable material in the ash tray." • Subaru owner's manual.

. . . The *National Council of 56 Clubs* is planning a **Virtual Gathering** for 2024. Per NCC President Brandon Taylor, "We are having one in the fall. There is no information at this time. We are working on it as we speak." • Linda and I might have 'virtual' capability by then (and understand how to use it).

• Abbreviations (I frequently 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. •

. . . '*Connection At Sea*' 2025 • September 15-19, 2025. This sailing consists of one day at sea and two port days. Contact Nathalie Liu at Nathalie@tripmatters.net or (949) 386-8325. Sponsored by *The California 56 Collectors*, with the *National Council of 56 Clubs*, aboard Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's *Navigator of the Seas!*

. . . 2005 – Bob Obenland **re-elected** as *Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs President*. I think it was the year I ran against him - I didn't win!; JSYK!

. . . "Sometimes it takes me all day to get nothing done." – came with a picture of Snoopy

. . . In September www.thevillagecollector.com will introduce a **new** column, "Village Trains." Trains are my friend; I look forward to the added info. You know I will be a regular reader.

. . . **National Council of 56 Clubs Vignette Contest:** I have been asked where to find it. The contest info is now on the [NCC Club Connection](#) (the NCC online 'magazine'); it is currently not on [Facebook](#). To enter, or if you have questions: Anna McPherson, vicepresidentncc@ncc56.com. Note: The buildings in the vignette must be Department 56; accessories can be of your choosing.

. . . The 'sticks' stuck in hamburgers and other served food items; I keep thinking they have a use in displays. So far I have no idea what it will be. Some are simply straight and wooden, i.e., large toothpicks. Others are 'plastic' and might have simple 'ball' on one end; others have what looks like an open knot on one end (the top). I keep keeping them; the pile is getting pretty large. ???

. . . Today I wore my 'Spirit of 56 On The Bay' shirt to an ice cream social, *JSYK!* It looked good!

. . . [Village D-Lights](#) update - No new information available. We received the most the recent *VDL* issue, '2023 Qtr. 4,' on March 12th 2024. Note: our subscription is still good.

. . . 2004 – Judith Price, Dept. 56 **retired** as *Ms. Lit Town*. Melinda Seegers was named to replace her.

. . . 'Once Again the "BERs" are Here' - Happy "BERs" from [The Village Collector](#). • We received a www.jacquielaolson.com/ card from Bill and Kathy reminding us. *September, October*, so forth.

. . . The *National Council of 56 'Club Connection'* • The next deadline for club submissions is **October 1, 2024**.

. . . "The first NCC Annual Convention was held in conjunction with Bachman's 1994 Gathering. It opened with a Friday night rally and "Parade of States." It was set up like a political Convention with State plaques." Posted by Billy Edwards, NCC Facebook page, August 26, 2024. • A nice memory even though I'm pretty sure Linda and I weren't there 'til '95. We have memories of the political thing and the 'Parade of States.' I believe photos exist somewhere in our house.

• *Lemax Addicts*, August 18, 2024 - Jennifer Wolford wrote: "Ok. I am at Homegoods and found some COOL houses. Which one is your favorite?" • Well, I picked this black, scary, three story house. I have no idea of the size, cost or availability. But that's OK; remember we don't have a Halloween Village. I suppose we could brighten it up a bit and use it in a Dickens' or even CIC village display. Note: Alright, now we have to visit our local Homegoods store.



. . . I bought the new 'Model Railroader' magazine dated September 2024 – There was no village pictures/stories; apparently it's too early for Christmas☺.

. . . Remember, the [O Gauge Forum](#) still exists online. And it has an area for Dept. 56 trains. (o-gaugeforum.com)

. . . I've lost 12 pounds since the 4th of July, *JSYK!*

. . . NCC Associate Member 'Cynthia's Hallmark' and 'Hoosiers 56ers' host 'Collectors in the Cornfield,' October 4-6, 2024. Contact: Cynthia's (317) 462-6749 or Hoosiers, Peter Joseph, pe-tejoe2@yahoo.com.

• Lemax 'Harvest Crossing' 2024 - <https://houseofholiday.com/> - my thoughts on a couple of the new fall items on the site.



• If you know me, you understand I'm always interested in things with a personal connection. In this case the 'Red Barn Veterinary Hospital.' It is a 2024 Lemax, Harvest Crossing intro. (WxHxD): 7.52 in. x 5.91 in. x 5.35 in. houseofholiday.com/ • Why me and vets? 'Veterinary Tech' was my first job in the MN ANG. The only 'live' animal experience I had was 'shots' for German Shepard sentry dogs (they didn't like it). Other than that we inspected 'food places;' all the way from farms and packing plants to stores and restaurants. But it did say *Vet Tech* on my ID •



• You may remember, my first last name was Johnson. To me that means this 'Autumn Field Trip' belongs at our house. Just read whose *Park Hill Elementary* class this is. Also it has kids, a lot of apples and Mrs. Johnson taking a picture (woman photographer). New for 2024! (WxHxD): 4.25 in. x 3.94 in. x 3.62 in. Table Accents, Harvest Crossing, Lemax. By the way, it is "Annie's Apple Orchard." We can always use a few more fall (no snow) people •

. . . Changing headlights on a 2010-2014 *Subaru Outback*; we drive a 2014. Changing the low beam headlight is job you almost must take to a dealer or body shop. The short story, you take off part of the front bumper; the entire task takes about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour for an experienced person (approx. \$75.00). The bulb is \$25.00. Yes, \$100.00! - Changed the bulbs myself on our two previous Outback's. We still like the car.

. . . "**Imagination** grows by exercise, and contrary to common belief, is more powerful in the mature than in the young." -- W. Somerset Maugham

- Information from the blog of Tim Haney, VP of Product Development @ Enesco/Dept. 56. 'Gather 'Round For Thanksgiving' is the starter piece of the 'Snow Village Harvest' series, a 2025 introduction. It is the first Village dedicated to fall. The four Snow Village Halloween items from this year will be moved over to Snow Village Harvest packaging in future years. 'Gather 'Round For Thanksgiving;' 'Touchdown, Turkey, Pie;' 'Make & Take Scarecrow Shack;' and 'Nana, I'm Stuffed' are the four pieces. Note: No snow!



... Andrew Nelson, recently promoted *Creative Director for Enesco*, designed the logo and packaging for the new Dept. 56 'Snow Village Harvest' series.



- This is *Feline Noir Debut, 2024'* on the Dept. 56 Halloween Accessories page on the web site. I like the look of the *posing* black cat; the 'Happy Halloween' sign would be a nice addition to your Halloween vignette. It was introduced in 2023. 3.74 in H x 1.97 in W x 2.24 in L. • Do I have this correct? Will there be a new 'Feline Noir' each year? They did call this one a 'debut.'

- 'Road Test,' Dept. 56. Shiny red wagon made in the North Pole, elf tested and Santa approved! October 2023. 1.75 in H x 1.5 in W x 3 in L.



- '56 Wagon Factory,' D56, NP. I think it looks like a fun place to work. The wagons remind me of riding downhill in front of our house on 8th Ave. East. We had several neighborhood wagons and many races. Santa's uses his best at the factory for special wagons. 6.33Hx4.17Wx5.55Lin.

- 'Miniatures & Mini Things' - Facebook, August 21, 2024. • He said "My wife made the figure of the little girl" who certainly is what got my attention. So well done. The lion's water is a bit of acetate with tacky glue to look like running water. The pond water is acetate with glue to add the ripples. How great these displays are always impresses me. • Remember I have a very artistic wife, but neither of us has wanted to attempt to 'do' people. Probably explains why we have purchased so many.




. . . Don't forget the Dept. 56 **Memphis Gathering** being planned for 2026. Sure hope I'm *not too old* to attend. I've really only driven through the area in the past; and we look forward to seeing the many friends we've met at previous gatherings.

. . . The Dept. 56 'Village Estate Sale Auction' appears on the Dept. 56 web site. Each of the ten bundles includes multiple items they call "hidden gems in our archives." Bidding is open for one week. Each time there are new 'bundles' to be bid on. <https://department56.com/> - I find the 'how much is bid for what' very interesting. As I write this, the highest bid: eight buildings, five accessories - \$800.00 on August 24. There was one more day to bid on this auction. - Look for the 'Bid Now' spot on Estate Sale screen.


. . . There were 127 clubs in the *Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs* as of August 28, 1994. *Northern Lights* was among the 36 clubs represented at the meeting. Thanks to Billy Edwards for sharing this info.

. . . Tom Iacoviello and Sue Chretien were selected 'captains' on Bus #4, 2012 'My Kind of Town' *Tour of Homes* in Chicago. The criteria "delightfully pushy."- VDL Dec/Jan 2013. I like them both.

. . . *Village North* newsletter, October 21, 1998 - "Linda and I had over 100 folks visit our village last 'season.' - that is not counting the 214 people, 12 elves and one gnome that live there."



- Left - Lemax 'Lunch at the Park' (H x W x D) 4.57 x 4.09 x 3.62 inches, 2020. For our occasional 'summer vignette' - colorful and cute.
- Right - 'An Attic Of Christmas Memories' was something that happened at our house, but it wasn't old movies. We had a small collection of black and white photos, but mostly it was the Christmas tree decorations - we could hardly wait to bring them down. This piece, introduced Oct. 2023, Dept. 56 *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, did get me remembering.



Department 56 2024 Artists Signing Events. Join artists at a retailer to get a signed piece. Seven *Nat'l Council of 56 Clubs Associate Members* were selected this year for these events. If you can't attend an event, many retailers will have your items signed and will ship to you.



Scott Enter

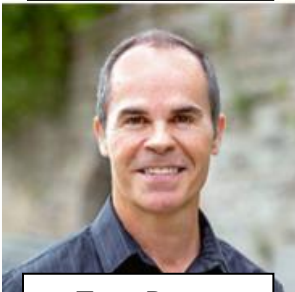
• Scott Enter – Saturday, September 7, 11:00 a.m.-3 p.m. CT
'Good Things For All Seasons,' 334 S. Main St., Grapevine, TX 76051



Kiri Namtvedt

Kiri Namtvedt – Saturday, Sept. 14, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. CT.,
'All Through The House,' 11316 Huron Lane, Little Rock, AR 72211

Kiri Namtvedt - Saturday, November 2, 10:00 am. – 2 p.m., ET,
'Bronner's Christmas Wonderland,' 25 Christmas Lane, Frankenmuth, MI 48734



Tom Bates

Tom Bates – Saturday, October 19, Times TBA, **'City Light Collectibles,'** 1212 Knoxville Street, San Diego, CA, 92110.

Tom Bates - Saturday, October 26, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. MT.
- **'St. Nick's Christmas & Collectibles,'** 5221 S. Santa Fe Dr., Littleton, CO, 80120.



Ann Dezendorf

Ann Dezendorf – Saturday, October 19, 2024, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. - **'City Light Collectibles,'** 1212 Knoxville Street, San Diego, CA, 92110.

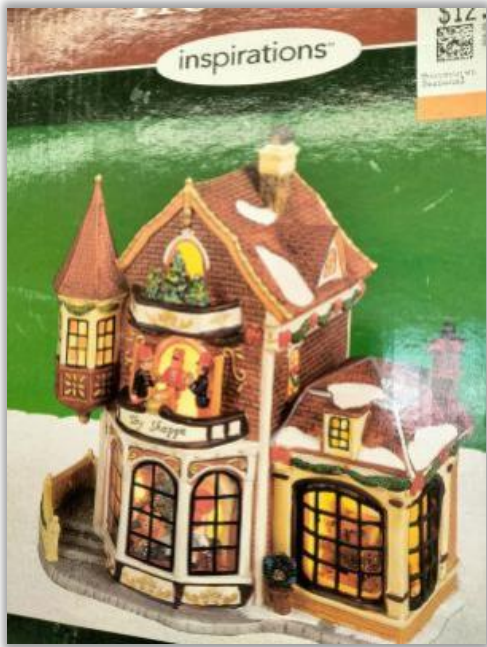


Paul Lundberg

Paul Lundberg - Friday, November 1, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. - **'Madeleine's Gifts,'** 1245 Hurstbourne Pkwy., Louisville, KY 40222

Paul Lundberg - Saturday, November 2, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. MT, - **'Millie's Hallmark Shop,'** 5027 Elliot, Phoenix, AZ 85044

There may be other D56 artist signings at dealers; the ones above are those advertised for The National Council of 56 Clubs *Associate Member* dealers.



- Linda found five village houses at our Savers store. They are porcelain lighted houses from 'Santa's Workshop Collection.' The 'Toy Shoppe' pictured is part of the *Interior Series*; they also had representatives of the *Towne* and *Victorian* series. She said they seemed to be *Lemax* sized; she didn't open any boxes so had no opinion on quality. It said "\$29.99, 1999, Indoor Use Only" on the packaging. \$12.99 is an example of the current selling price.



- 'Jonathan's Houseboat on the Bay' has an unusual look, but it is on water. Not sure about the 'rope tree' on the top deck. Their ad says "it's painted red, white, and green for the holidays." Not sure, but think I missed the white. The boat does have many possible locations to pose our many seagulls (in storage). 2021, (WxHxD): 9.45 in. x 6.22 in. x 4.41 in. *Lemax, Plymouth Corners*. Will have to compare looks with our Lemax and Dept. 56 boats/ships.

- Lemax, Plymouth Corners, 'Northstar Cape Harbor Master House.' I especially like the 'Pilot Boat;' even if it doesn't look like the version in our Duluth/Superior harbor. The busy shape is fun and it is very colorful. I'm guessing that's the 'Harbor Master,' with the binoculars, high on the top deck. New for 2024. (WxHxD): 6.89 in. x 10.04 in. x 6.3 in. • "A solitary boat rests by the quay, . . ." (wharf, jetty, dock; I had to look it up). • Minnesota is often called 'The Northstar State' - this building is called 'Northstar Harbor Master' - shouldn't it be with us?





- I like the bright colors of the outfits, the 'table and chairs,' the sword; not sure about the yellow feather. But it is the *monkey* that got my attention; is he actually playing cards? This is 'Buccaneer Poker,' a Lemax Table Accent. Approx. size (H x W x D) 2.76 x 5.91 x 3.35 inches. Released: 2007, Retired: 2014.



- Left - I like the hat! The couple appears as part of 'Santa's Castle Gala'. I appreciate something different; I'm guessing/hope they are Mr. and Mrs. Claus; him with a fun headpiece. • Right - More folks coming to enjoy "holiday melodies, dance, and laughter - a true holiday fairy-tale scene!" (H x W x D) 9.65 x 10.83 x 6.69 inches. 2024 - Lemax, 'Santa's Wonderland.'



... 'A Peek Inside' - Tim Haney, VP of Product Development @ Enesco / Dept. 56 web site. I'm not sure when this blog appears on the D56 web site; but when I find it I've always learned something interesting.

... I was reading on the Dept. 56 web site; it mentioned "*The piece was designed with two crenelated towers flanking the front entry.*" I looked it up: crenelated means; fortified, defended, notched, indented. They were talking about the very rare Christmas In the City "*Cathedral Church of Saint Mark,*" 1991 intro, Limited Edition. Scheduled for a numbered run of 17,500 pieces, production was stopped after 3,024 pieces; caused by production problem during the firing process. • I most always find interesting things when I have to look up the definition of a word.



- Left - I am always on the lookout for items that 'should' be of display interest to our friends the Smiths. She has a collection of 'wine connected' items. I'm thinking the Lemax 'Chambon Winery' would be good for her.
- Right - He has no interest in this stuff, but he does like non-every

day things. Maybe the Lemax 'Smith Memorial Hospital Ambulance' might get his attention. I mean it does have their last name printed on the sides.



... Happiest collecting moment? Linda and I *shared* the display 'People's Choice' award at the *Detroit Gathering* in 2010. We tied for the award with Bob Richardson. Sad to say: "Robert G. Richardson, age 93, of Norman, Oklahoma passed away on Wednesday, April 3, 2024. Robert was born in Sapulpa, OK." • Thanks to NCC friends Debbie and Brandon for helping me confirm info.

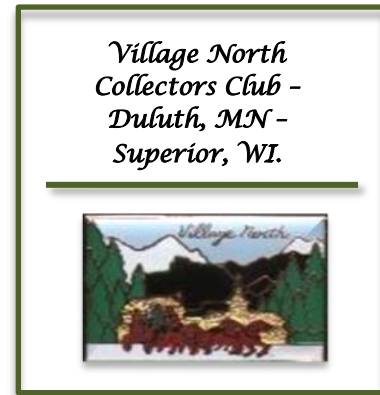
. . . Remember there is no planned 'location,' or 'order,' for 'content' in my columns. In other words, I have no idea what I'm doing.

. . . www.collectionsetc.com - 'Cat Christmas Nativity' includes a manger, the holy family, the three wise-men, an angel and a shepherd in this nine piece set. 4 ¾ inches tall, \$24.99. They are all kittens (except the manger). I like cats but not usually as holiday decorations; this one I like.

. . . "Just found a note from the Chicago Gathering 2012. It was a list of the names of folks conducting seminars we attended. It included Linda and David Spears, Miles Wood, Joe Meyers, Jeff McCann, Linda Roberts, Pat Ehrenreich, Tim Stephenson, Jill Schlung, Will Holt and Melinda Seegers. Note: We had to go to the one by David and Linda on both days." • JSYK Jan 27, 2022

. . . September, that means 'Hauntsville,' Larry Treadwell's *Halloween Adventure*, will be with us soon. You will find it at: www.thevillagecollector.com I look forward to the images and the wonderful words. You can still see 2023 Hauntsville on the same web site.

. . . He came down our street *in his* backpack. His name, Azul; a blue Parrot with South American heritage. The fire department recently had to retrieve the bird from a nearby tree; that got him in several 'selfies.' It had flown away from its owner Jessica. You can find 'parrot backpacks' on Amazon. I know, I looked – really!!



. . . If you got this far I can guess you at least looked at all the pages. If you read anything you liked or disliked, you must let me know. I need responses to pay me for all the work I do. How did that sound, sincere or ☺ ?



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.

• 3,466 is the number of words in this JSYK – not counting this line •

• Comments •

"And JSYK, I'm pretty sure you would like gelato if you like ice cream!!" – Lynn

"Thanks for all the time and effort you put into sending them out. Much appreciated....." B

"Thanks for another interesting issue." . . . Hope you feel better soon. Take care." – Barb