

JUST SO YOU KNOW! OCTOBER 10, 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,' October 1, 2022, "Best Christmas Village Videos of 2016". • Brian Vaill's, 'The Train Station,' current offering; 'The Observation Car' • Thea Heyink with her 'The Creation Station' projects • Phil & Sue Adkins, Northampton, England. Present column: 'Planning village for Christmas 2022' • 'From Italy,' Peppe Apuleo, 'New Purchases for my next Christmas Village' • <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.

. . . Beginning Monday, the 17th, The Village Collector will have two weeks of Halloween. During this time, there will be **special** "Halloween" pages. Find at: <http://thevillagecollector.com/> It will be there thru October 31st, Halloween. **Also** during that time, they'll have the second year of 'Giggle & Boo;' laughs and fun for the young and young-at-heart crowd.



• 'Central Park Carriage' - Issued: December 1989 - Retired: December 2001. Size: 7¼ x 2¾ x 3¾ inches. Department 56, Christmas In The City. This carriage has always attracted me; think it looks good, neat, fun. We bought ours in 2004. I just noticed it says "a couple takes a romantic horse drawn carriage ride through the city." I'm quite sure our version has two kids as passengers. I'm going to have to take a second look. I find it big and bulky, but we still display it every year.

. . . 'Curbside Pickup' is a **common sign** today. This Lemax Spooky Town accessory features a witch flying in for her pickup. It has been popular at the local Fleet Farm; in mid-September only the display model remained; and they wouldn't sell it Note: October 4; it is now gone; no, not me. ☺

. . . Frankenstein and Igor are the figures of 'Monster Coffee Break,' Lemax Spooky Town 2022, Set of 2. Frankenstein has a cup of coffee; **Igor**, a donut and a smile on his face. Tallest 'person' is 3 inches. \$7.99 at Fleet Farm. Yes we bought this, not yet sure why.

. . . 'Esmeralda The Great' presents her levitation spell. Linda thinks she will make an **interesting addition** to the Harry Potter display. The witch performs her enchanting spells under a draped archway with eerie green lights. A body actually rises from the coffin. Lots of other creepy stuff included. The 2021 Lemax Spooky Town Table Accent intro sells for \$34.99. I know 'cause we bought one at Fleet Farm. Approx. size (H x W x D): 5.04" x 6.38" x 4.33."

. . . "Old age comes at a bad time." – San Banducci



- In our home we have an actual 'boot rack' holding six pairs of my cowboy boots. Country dancing was my use for all. Seems we should need 'Boot Country,' Lemax Harvest Crossing, to use in a display at our house (I gotta buy new boots somewhere). As a snowless building, it can easily be on display year-around. I hardly noticed the wreath up high on the front. Note: We really don't have a use for a saddle or the horse parking stall.

- The Mexican Santa has a candy cane in his holster, an attractive sombrero and is carrying a colorful piñata. With the beard, I knew right away who he was. His 'suit' makes me want to say **Feliz Navidad**. I saw two versions: 'Jim Shore Heartwood Creek Collection,' 3.4 inches; and a second mentioning 'Santa's Around the World Collection,' 7.25 inches. They look very similar (the smaller one is an ornament).



- A Pierrot inspired version of a clown in authentic Victorian costume. Looking things up, I believe I discovered Pierrot is a pantomime clown; origin in the late seventeenth-century Italian troupe of players performing in Paris. 'Victorian Clown with Flowers' and 'Victorian Clown' could have a new home in our clown village. Note: the flowers are held behind his back (I saw another picture). Both are hand painted pewter, made in the UK. 2 ¾ and 3 inches tall. \$36.00 each. <https://www.treefrogtreasures.com/>



. . . "Fun to read the new 'Christmas Corner' column by Art Kilmer. It is easy to enjoy his style and appreciation of the Christmas holiday. I look forward to being a regular reader of his column. Welcome to Art and family." • On The Village Collector web site.

. . . CONGRATULATIONS, **Lisa Johnson**, Dept. 56 Representative. She is the 2022 NCC President's Award Winner! It was presented by Brandon Taylor, NCC President, at a Dept. 56 event held at 'All Thru The House,' Little Rock, AR, in September.

. . . Just found in our file cabinet: 'U.S. Government Motor Vehicle Operator's Identification Card' – 21 May 1968 – (for) Passenger vehicles, 5-9 passengers; Truck, Cargo ½ ton; Ambulance – authorized to drive on the **Flight Line**. Name on the card: mine! It's amazing what I keep.

. . . Our Village North Collectors Club just decided to have a '**Halloween Tour**' this Fall. Not on Halloween, you understand, but still a three home 'get-together' with food. We are part of the tour, but remember, we don't 'do' Halloween. Note: Linda already has our dozen plus pumpkins along the driveway and I see bright orange inside on the big window sill. Are we beginning to 'do' something Halloween?



- The words '*Pumpkin Snowman*' **made no sense** to me; *pumpkin snowman*?? We just purchased the Lemax Spooky Town accessory (with that name) anyway. He's three pumpkins high (2.5 inches) wearing a green scarf and black top hat. He doesn't look friendly, but I still liked him (so did Linda). \$5.99 at *Fleet Farm*. Introduced in 2022. The ad says "*He's such a favorite; you'll see him hanging around at Christmastime too.*" • Remember, we don't 'do' Halloween.

- She also liked '*Fearsome Flowers*' (above). The colorful buds with teeth drew her attention. A 'danger' sign gives you a hint of what they are. And, I understand they drink whiskey; they are not for picking and bringing in the house. (H/W/D) 1.89 x 2.76 x 1.69 inches - Released: 2022.



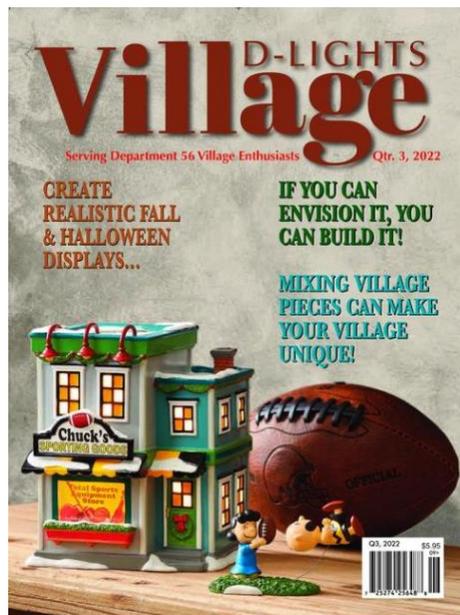
- '*Great Pumpkin Carving Party Sculpture*;' ten Peanuts characters, eleven if you count the ghost. I don't know all their names (or I would have included them). They are all in, on, or around, a very large pumpkin. Linda wanted to show me a Halloween something on Facebook; turns out I had already scanned it for this next *JSYK*. The pumpkin glows, makes spooky sounds. It shows Halloween traditions: from pumpkin carving; to trick-or-treating; to bobbing for apples; even costumes. - 9 L x 5.5 H x 7.5 D. <https://www.bradfordexchange.com/> Requires 3 "AAA" batteries.

- Brian Olson just finished this 'wall art.' His calling card says "*Interior / Exterior Murals - Brian Olson Studio.*" I saw it in the Kenwood Shopping Center, Duluth, MN. Brian was commissioned to paint it on the side of '*Play It Again Sports.*' I plan to 'blow-up' a similar image and use it as a 'village-sized' wall or background in a display. We like to have **different and local things**. This is '*one of a kind*' and is located two blocks out our back door. For actual size, see the shopping cart.



. . . Brandon Taylor put a reminder on the *NCC Facebook* page. He called it '*Stone Soup.*' It reminds us to **boil slate** (and any other items possible) when you bring them inside to use in a display. They can all carry small bugs you just don't want in your home. Sounds like a plan to me.

- Posted on the NCC Facebook Page, September 19, 2022 by Phil Renninger: "*Village D-Lights Quarter 3 is at the printer. We got some football, some Memories, some Fall, some Christmas, lots of display tips, and timely contributions from NCC56 and Ms. Littown. And a spectacular winery vignette. Don't miss out on this one. Call 800-765-1690 to subscribe.*"



- 'Bone, James Bone,' D56 Village Halloween Accessory - Introduced October 2021, 3.375 H x 2 W x 2.75 L inches - \$32.20. I loved the name; liked the idea; not sure I truly like the couple. Maybe spooky/different isn't for me.



- Lemax 'Book Wagon' may **not be practical** during our snowy winters, but it is different than the D56 'Little Free Libraries,' (they are elevated, enclosed boxes). Approx. size 1.50 x 2.76 x 1.22 inches. Year Released: 2019. It even says "Take a book, leave a book." And, it also features green grass. I like it! If I find it on a store shelf, I will buy it.

. . . Does COSTCO **sell anything 'village?'** We now have one in the 'neighborhood' but have not yet visited the store.

. . . D56 'Ms. Lit Town Facebook Live,' 1st Thursday of the month, 4:00 p.m. CST. **Next show,** November 3. Subjects and quest not yet announced.

Northern Lights Collectors' Club



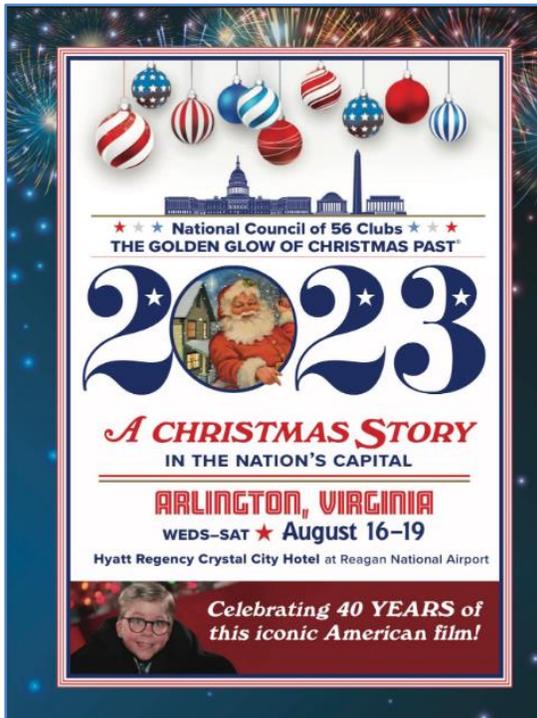
Crystal, MN - Central MN



- Apparently I'm now interested in beginning, or enlarging, our collection of Dickens' street vendors. Pictures of the Dept. 56 'Coffee-Stall' keep attracting my attention. And, I'm not at all a **coffee drinker**. I understand it was a popular drink in that era. \$52.50, Intro May 2003. Two piece set, 2.5 H x 1.97 W x 3.45 in L; 2.5 x 2 x 2.5 in.



. . . *Lemax Addicts* – ‘Mike’s Christmas Village’ – August 6th – that would be where I saw the ‘inside’ image of people in a library (**above left**). In September, the picture of the new Lemax & Norman Rockwell Christmas Village ‘Public Library’ was in an ad. Is it just me or is the ‘big’ picture the inside of the Rockwell library? If so, how did they take the picture?



• I look forward to learning more about the 2023 ‘A Christmas Story.’ Four days in Arlington, Virginia in August; it could be a **lot of fun**. It is certainly one of those trips you could easily find many reasons to come early and stay late. Sponsored by ‘The Golden Glow of Christmas Past,’ and the ‘National Council of 56Clubs.’



. . . I’ve made fences, docks, boardwalks and using popsicle sticks. Aging makes them look good in our displays. I just reread Alan Rogers’ ‘Scratchbuilt’ Column #3 - July 11, 2022, “Let’s Build a Barn!!!”. With his stained coffee stirrers, and aluminum can roofing, he showed me how to go to **another level**. You can see Alans’ columns at: <http://thevillagecollector.com/>.

. . . Since May 20, 2017, *The Village Collector* has had a total of 318,767 visits; 215,953 unique visitors. <http://thevillagecollector.com/> - JSYK is among the several columns offered there.



. . . Robin Hervey posted image/words for David Spears via Linda Spears FB Account: The subject of the NCC contest was: "**first village piece**" #sept2022vingettecontest – I wrote: "A Coca Cola Town Square Collection piece, 'Clara's Christmas Shop,' was part of my first purchase of village houses. I'd begun an accidental collection of Coke 'stuff' and decided a building, or three, should be added to the shelves - and so it began. When Linda and I were married, I had 14 buildings, two being Dept. 56 New England Village; I thought something was needed not featuring a Coke logo. There might have been a dozen Town Square people. Our present Dept. 56 group, the Village North Collectors Club, began about this time; we joined! We still have the original buildings, the total is now somewhere over 180. Oh yes, 'accidental collection:' at work I always had a Coke on my desk; someone found a Coke bottle from Japan, left it on my desk; after that any found bottle (bottled away from Duluth) would end up in my office. Soon it spread to other Coca Cola items. From a single Coke bottle at work to storage worries at home – it goes on. I was fortunate to add a wife to enjoy all this with me. Note: 'Sleighride On The Bay,' Event Piece - Green Bay Gathering-2006." – David Spears

. . . The 'Drummond Ranch' is the **only piece** in 'The Pioneer Woman' collection at Walmart, Hermantown, MN. It says 2022 on the box, pretty sure I remember it from last year. 'Ree' is the female star of the series/village. ('Ropin' Ree & Ladd;' and 'Ree bakes a pie,' are the figures we have.) No sign of other buildings, or figures/accessories for this season. No 'Mercantile Building' Billy mentioned. – No space, or signs, for additional pieces from this line. This was a late September visit. Nothing else mentioned on store stocking list. Note: We have relatives in Drummond, WI. Still not sure we need this barn. ♦ 'Ropin' Ree & Ladd;' was a gift from Mary H. from Cloquet.

. . . Walmart Holiday Time stuff: 'Visiting The Horses,' 'Snowball Fight,' 'Feeding the deer,' 'Holiday Cows,' 'Santa carries gifts,' 'Santa and Snowman,' 'Child walking dogs,' 'Coffee Shop,' 'Cocoa Shop,' (both pretty small), they also had a church and the usual Walmart building. There were also some trees and a couple of lights. More shelf space, with ID/price labels, so there will be more. ♦ The toy department had Hot Wheels 'MarioKart' set of four. 'Mario,' 'Donkey Kong,' 'Diddy Kong,' 'Orange Yoshi' are the drivers. They sure look like **they belong** in our carnival or amusement park. \$19.97.

. . . 'Fortnite Squads' at Kohl's; I'm thinking maybe a couple of them **could be** used as 'kids in costume' in a Halloween vignette. Other than that, nothing I could see for them – yet! No, I didn't buy any.

. . . Lemax Store Display 2022 Intratuin Duiven, Duiven, Netherlands (hope the store name and location are correct). I really **enjoyed the visit** all around the very large village. I see new ideas each time I watch the video. mikeschristmasvillage.com/lemax-store-display/ It is well worth a look.

. . . "I'm on my second guardian angel. The first one quit and is now in therapy." • On-line



- We are always looking for people **doing something** other than just standing there. The two girls having their fortunes told could easily fit into different scenes/situations; they would add interest and activity. Bet we could even find a good use for the fortune teller. *Lemax 'Fortune Teller,'* Intro 2017, retired 2018. (H-2.48 inches).

... "New Purchases for my next Christmas Village" - Article #1, September 27, 2022, [Villaging in Europe by Peppe Apuleo](#). Lemax buildings he has added this year are: 'Dutch Cheese Festival And Farmers Market,' 'Alpine Winter Shop,' 'Tis The Season Shops,' 'Santa's Freeze Zone,' 'Christmas Cheer Bottling Company.' Peppe included Lemax words, and comments of his own, on <http://thevillagecollector.com/>. Note: He selected three of the new facades; I like them all for looks and use of display space – just so you know!



... Don't these cats look like they **belong together?** 'Sorry? Not...,' (left) seems to be having snowman fun all by himself. Not so much the snowman. - Just imagine the 'fun' if the cats from 'Stray Cat Strut' (right) joined him. All D56, 'Sorry' is new.



... Some of my **thoughts** about *Lemax* at *Michael's*. 1). They had many new pieces (buildings) that are smaller than what I'm used to. Some may even look out of place with stuff from previous years. Several of them looked good to me anyway - made no purchases. 2). I like all of the 2022 *Lemax* 'Table Accents,' especially the 'Cookie Decoration Station.' 3). The cost of the buildings, accessories and figures has gone up (in my mind, a lot). 4). It is the 1st of October and very few items remain from *Lemax* 'Spooky Town.' What little remains is 40% off. Note: we purchased three 2022 *Spooky Town* pieces at *Fleet Farm*.



- 'Santa's Rooftop Bash;' two young ladies were appreciating the 2022 *Lemax* building as I walked up. I immediately **liked it** for the same reasons they were talking about; the color combination, the 'tallness', and the four animated 'spots.' Also showing was: elves in many windows drinking egg nog; snowman and reindeer dancing on the (low) roof around a twinkling tree; a couple moving reindeer; two snowman celebrating on the (high) roof. Looks like a party place to me. Our local *Michael's* now has all their Christmas *Lemax* on display (stock available). It is in two different locations in the store?? Approx. H 11.42 x W 9.25 x D 5.71 inches. Note: In this picture I took, the two snowmen are missing from the high roof. \$189.99

. . . Over there, in our living room; four, 54 quart, plastic tubs. "Halloween" is our label on each of them. Not included in these containers; the five or six *Spooky Town* houses, and several of the larger *Lemax* 'table accessories' on a shelf downstairs. We don't do Halloween – just so you know!

. . . Saw this information posted on the *National Council of 56 Clubs* Facebook page on October 4: The label on the envelope said "MISSENT TO MALAYSIA." The contents, *Village D-Lights, Qtr. 2, 2022*. Cherie Sana wrote, "Finally got this issue of *Village D-Lights*. It has travelled more than I have. Don't know how Malaysia was confused with Canada." • The 2nd Qtr. 2022, *Village D-Lights* **arrived** in Duluth, MN on July 13. Note: I have not yet seen 3rd Qtr. issue - just so you know!

. . . The ENESCO web site has a long list, with images, of **2023 Dept. 56** introductions. It is intended for the use of dealers to give them a 'heads-up' of the new products. We have found this info in past years and it is usually correct. I have able to 'click' to it a couple of times; but right now it isn't working for me. Here it is, and good luck:

[Enesco Business USA | Wholesale Gifts for Holiday & Everyday | Department 56 Shop](https://www.enesco.com/wholesale-gifts-for-holiday-everyday-department-56-shop)

. . . Bernice – congratulations on your 30 years with *The Garden State Village Collectors Club*.

. . . Reminder, **VillageFest 2022** will take place from Monday, **November 14**, 2022 for two weeks – through Cyber Monday, **November 28**, 2022. See <http://thevillagecollector.com/>

. . . A quick 'Hi!' is much appreciated. I need your response(s) to keep going. Thank you!



• 'Split Rock Lighthouse,' st/2, Dept. 56, Snow Village, Intro October 2022. It is located 130 feet above Lake Superior, 20 miles north of Two Harbors, MN. Built in 1910, it is one of the most photographed and visited spots in the Minnesota. This lighted building is 10.83 inches high. The original is fifty miles from our home in Duluth. We have visited the lighthouse several times. Note: Thanks to Billy Edwards for the 'heads-up.'

. . . You should already know, but just in case, we have a lot of clowns in our village. Actual clowns, not just strange people. Lemax came out with the 'Creepy Clown Academy' this season, We prefer our clowns fun and friendly so, no thanks to 'creepy.'

. . . 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.

• 3,402 is the number of words in this JSYK – not counting this line • 23 images •