

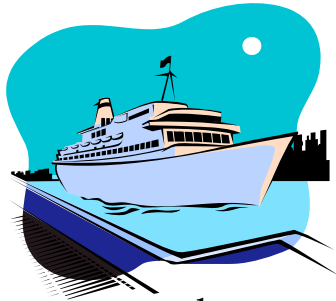


# Village Views

“The voice of the San Diego Fifty-Sixers”

Volume 16: Number 5

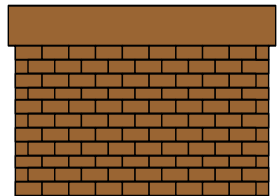
May 2009



In the absence of our esteemed president, Jonathan Sage, who is hopefully enjoying his cruise to too many parts of the world to mention here (I'll let Winnie and him, along with Lauren and Jim, share all the pictures and the details of their journey upon their return) I volunteered to write the cover page for the club newsletter this month. Although we are still on dry land, it doesn't mean that we can't share some adventures of our own with the presentation of the mid year releases from Department 56. Lisa Johnson will share with us all the new items that will be added to our “must have” list at our May meeting, and Bob Dallow will challenge us with one of his contests for our program. A new building awaits the winner. Bring your thinking caps....



We want to thank Chick Storey for his “Make and Take” presentation at the April meeting. Many of us learned how to make the intricate walls that Chick creates to use in his displays. Chick is always willing to share his techniques with fellow collectors, and to share his tricks of the trade.



The annual “Cheryle O'Connor Memorial Collector of the Year” award was presented to Jim Murphy at the April meeting, and Jonathan gave Jim a framed certificate, a check for \$100.00, and a special name tag reflecting this honor. Jim's information has been forwarded to Department 56 and entered in the national competition. Good luck Jim and thank you again for all that you do.



Annie

**MINDLESS MUTTERING...**

...by Bob O'Connor

Summer is here and many of the regular attendees are missing meetings and doing other things. I even missed the last meeting to attend my granddaughters fantastic musical program. Though I am happy to have seen her perform and I would do it again, I did miss a demonstration I really wanted to see, along with the opportunity to try my luck at duplicating what was shown. My point is, not only are we "missing in action" we are missing the action. The San Diego Fifty Sixer meetings are not just social gatherings but are a source for timely news about collecting and a venue for learning crafts and techniques valuable for creating outstanding displays. Last month Chick Storey demonstrated how he created his display that wowed even the most experienced displayers among us. His demonstration went beyond showing us how he did it to giving everyone who wished a hands-on lesson to make their own creation. It is programs like this that makes regular attendance worth while. Even when a games night is planned, be prepared to learn something about our hobby. Maybe it is his background as an educator, but Bob Dallow's brain teasers are educational as well as entertaining. I know one can't always get to a meeting but do you always need to miss them? I think not. Do yourself a favor, come on out and have some fun.



**Raffle Prizes**

- From **Canterbury Gardens:**  
Roundel Cottage.....Lauren Murphy
- From **Casual Living:**  
\$50.00 Gift Certificate.....Michele Brown
- From **City Lights:**  
9" and 12" Frosted Tree .....Lauren Murphy  
SV It's a Tough Choice.....Winnie Sage  
The Caricature Artist.....Lauren Murphy
- From **The Mole Hole:**  
Seasons Bay Creamery.....Karen Boynton
- From the **SD 56ers:**  
NP Bright Lights Blub Factory.....Karen Boynton
- From **Unique Gifts:**  
\$25.00 Gift Certificate.....Michele Brown
- From the **Sages:**  
Baseball Tickets.....Lauren Murphy

**DOOR PRIZES –Lisa Johnson of Dept. 56**

Pink Christmas Ornaments, Betty Reynolds; Grand Haven, Michigan Light House, Les Boynton; NP Passing Inspection with Flying Colors, Patty Burdick; A Boxing Day Tradition, Bob Dees; Santa Doll, Lauren Murphy to Chick Storey; Butterfly Hat, Chick Storey to Claire Caldwell; Craggy Cove Light House, Sharon Swildens; New England Village Sign – Fresh Paint, Karen Boynton

<b>SAN DIEGO FIFTY SIXERS' OFFICERS</b>		
President	Jon Sage	858-484-2533
Vice-President	Lauren Murphy	619-669-4949
Rec. Secretary	Annie Dallow	949-498-1356
Treasurer	Les Boynton	858-748-4291
Corr. Secretary	Shirley Bechtel	(858)549-2077
Publicity	Marge Bramfeld	(619)691-8424
Historian	Claire Caldwell	619-280-1048
Parliamentarian	Bob Dallow	949-498-1356
Hospitality	Mary Marshall	619-262-0351
Membership	Winnie Sage	858-484-2533
Past President	Karen Boynton	858-748-4291
<i>Village Views</i>	Bob O'Connor	760-789-3957



## Little Miss Sunshine

Lisa Johnson's son entered a writing contest at school, and Lisa was voted one of the 50 best moms in San Diego.

Neither Montse nor Bill has had the Swine Flu.

"The Murphys and the Sages are having a fabulous time on their cruise. The weather has been fantastic so far sunny, warm and calm seas. Even the crew is talking about how nice it has been. The food and service has been unbelievable. We have established our reputation as the "late night card game on the lido". We hope everyone is fine and we will see you in June," Winnie, Jon, Lauren and Jim.

Marge wrote" I'm doing fine despite the fact that the conversion did not work. I have decided to meet each challenge of the day head on and to try to not let things get me down. "

Wayne fell down the front stoop and injured his left leg; quadriceps.

Shirley Bechtel has been a little under the weather with pneumonia.

## News about Department 56

Itasca, IL — Giftware manufacturer [Enesco LLC](#) has acquired [Department 56](#), including its key portfolio of brands, from gift and tabletop company, [Lenox Corporation](#), which recently emerged from [bankruptcy after being purchased](#) by Clarion Capital Partners. Enesco's acquisition includes such known brands as Villages, Snowbabies and Possible Dreams, as well as key Department 56 holiday and licensed lines. This acquisition follows upon the [news earlier this week](#) of Enesco's pending acquisition of the Charming Tails line from Fitz & Floyd.

In closing this deal, Enesco also hired a substantial portion of Department 56's current employees, including its sales force, and acquired certain inventory and other Department 56 assets. The company intends to keep offices in both Minnesota and California.

"Department 56 is a very important and strategic addition to our family," stated Matt Bousquette, executive chairman of Enesco. "Department 56's stable of core brands and reputation are much-coveted assets in the gift industry. We look forward to having other great designers and brands join the company in the near future."

Peter Cameron, CEO of Lenox said: "We are very pleased to have found an appropriate home for Department 56 and its employees. We have great confidence that Department 56 will flourish as part of the Enesco family. This sale allows Lenox to focus on its core tabletop, designer partnerships and bridal businesses."

# Collectively Speaking

## ...BY BOB DALLOW

Be sure you're at this month's meeting on May 13 to view Lisa Johnson's slides of the new midyear pieces. It's a very short list – only 17 pieces including five gift sets. The

economic crisis is even impacting the miniature real estate market!

**Snow Village** introduces only its gift set and one accessory. *Richmond Holiday House* is a two-story brick building with lit candles in each window. There are two accessories included in the box – a small red car and *Dad's Little Helper*, a boy and his father lugging in the family's Christmas tree. Like all of the gift sets it is limited to the year of production, and is a true bargain at \$79. *Out For A Drive* is the separate accessory. It's a car...or actually your choice among three cars sold separately in pink, green, and blue.

**Dickens' Village's** gift set is *Christmas At Regent's Park House*. It is a narrow three-story building in gray with green trim. The included accessory is *Park House Carriage*, a two-wheeled gray version with a brown horse. A red-coated coachman accompanies his buggy. There are two other buildings and two accessories in Dickens' which has the most new introductions. The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary remaking of the Original Set of Seven continues with a new version of *Jones & Co. Brush & Basket Shop*. Are you listening, Sue? It's an extremely attractive light building with blue trim. Baskets hang above the windows. A related accessory, *Sweeping Up* features a man and dog cleaning up in front of the store. *48 Doughty St., Home to Charles Dickens* is the final building. That man was his own mobile society! The brick residence is four-stories high. A related accessory is a walking couple with a baby, *Dickens Family Stroll*. How do we know it is Dickens? Because the box tells us so!

**New England Village** adds only the gift set *Welcome to Windham Country Inn*. This is perhaps the most attractive building in this collection. A wrap around porch highlights the entrance. A light brown roof tops a light blue three-story building. Lots of windows are among the architectural strengths. *Arriving At Windham* is the contained accessory, a horse-drawn sled with a brown horse, a driver and an arriving couple.

**Alpine Village**, like a year ago, adds a new accessory to its Christmas Market subseries. *The Gingerbread Booth* resembles last year's offering, and is accompanied by a vendor and child.

**Christmas in the City** introduces *The Prescott Hotel* as its gift set. It's an attractive three-story building in brown brick with gray accents and roof. A green awning over the entrance proclaims its name. The enclosed accessory *Welcome To The Prescott* includes a doorman dressed in red and a blue car. The other new building *Yankee Stadium 2009* is in recognition of the new ball park that opened this year. It's well-done façade, but with the other 154 buildings in the collection all circa 1930-1949, it definitely does not fit in.

**North Pole** extends the new facilities for its caribou clients. *The Reindeer Stables, Comet & Cupid* is the third of the four stables. The named reindeer provide two new accessories for the herd. The new gift set, *The North Pole Penguin Visitors' Center*, is a blue-roofed building with penguin decorations on the walls and roof. Included accessories are a gate and tuxedo-wearing birds in *Penguin Parade*.

**Halloween** adds the *Voodoo Lounge Nightclub*, a building that resembles a New Orleans edifice after an atomic attack or perhaps an earthquake. There is a separate accessory, *The Zombies*, a trio of gaunt musicians on drums, bass, and trumpet.

## How Other Clubs Do It

Many times we learn things as we read newsletters from other clubs around the country. Here's the latest news from the Belch Valley Villagers.

The club had a spectacular party to celebrate its two week anniversary. As it ended 96-year-old Clara Carbuncle fell down the front steps, landing in the plastic punchbowl from the 99 Cents store, which she had been carrying. She fell into the bowl, which was ironic because she had spent so much of the evening imbibing from it. Other club members were able to extricate her and returned her to the rest home in time for her to attend her AA meeting.

There was one incident at the party. Officers had to censure 400 pound Ernestine Guilfoil for devouring all the desserts while others were still eating their salad course. Ernestine was last seen leaving with a "doggie bag...contents unknown."

After the event three of the male members gathered at a nearby "Gentlemen's Club" for a final nightcap. All was going well until Pierre Lavosier recognized his underage daughter dancing with a brass pole. He charged the area to confront the young woman using the name Krissy Kringle. By the time the dust settled, each of the members had been charged with assault with a deadly weapon (the pole) and disorderly conduct. All were released on bail. Krissy is in the hospital recovering from a polonoscopy, and hopes to go home once she is able to turn over again.

Honors were bestowed on Bradley Belch, a descendant of the town's founding fathers. He actually has done nothing to benefit the club, but tradition dictates that Belch family members be recognized. It is anticipated that future recipients will include Bertram Belch, Bart Belch, and Lucinda Belch-Belch, Bart's incestuous sister.

A joint luncheon was held with the West Burp Collectors at the local McDonald's. The dozen participants from each of the clubs consumed three dozen Big Macs with super sized fries and 28 shakes. That came out to one meal for each person present and an additional twelve burgers for Ernestine. The group's next meeting will be held at the offices of the local chapter of Weight Watchers.

Our club's favorite chef, Rachel Goodfingers had a slight kitchen mishap when she was preparing her famous Holiday Jalapeno Jelly. Now affectionately known as "Stump," Rachel severed two digits in her blender. She was not deterred, though, and after a two-hour visit to the ER, she returned to complete the task at hand. She has suggested that we should all be a bit careful in spreading the jelly.

Ezra Finkel invited everyone to his home to see his fabulous display. Unfortunately, he had not paid his electrical bill, so we were all left in the dark. Before she left, Ernestine ate three pieces of wax fruit from a bowl on the kitchen table. One member was heard exclaiming, "Best display I've *never* seen." Beth and Becky Gaye had a unique Christmas in the City

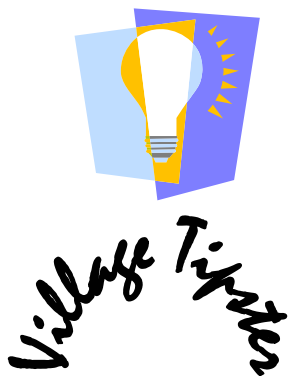
display. All of the accessories were females, starting with the Rockettes, and including women shopping, little girls playing, and a bevy of white clad nurses. When this unusual configuration was pointed out to the couple, Beth explained that they had realized the oversight at the last minute and quickly made a tray of chocolate men. However, they were visited by Ernestine yesterday, and when the girls returned to the kitchen after she left, all that remained were a few chocolate crumbs.

Another odd display technique was seen at the residence of Jerome and Petunia Flowerpot. They had used condoms to build snowmen. Petunia, who is expecting the couple's eighth child in eight years, says she never could figure what to do with them until she thought of this use.

Last week's Swap and Sell was seemingly a success. There were smiles on the faces of both buyers and sellers as they acquired new treasures or made storage room in their homes. The only one who appeared disappointed was Homer Guilfoil who didn't seem to understand the evening's concept, but he grudgingly took Ernestine back home anyway.

Members of other clubs who would like to receive our newsletter can contact us at:

Belch Valley Villagers  
ATTN: Lucinda Belch-Belch  
56 Belch Boulevard  
Belch Valley USA



## MORE KITCHEN MAGIC

This article is the second in a series of articles that suggest how various items found throughout the house can be used to help construct and enhance your display. Last month's topic of kitchen items will continue this month.

**Here are a few more ideas for using large wooden kitchen matches:** They can be used to make a variety of rustic fences (a split rail fence would be a natural), corrals, or just as fence posts with wire or string between the posts. Use them as support timbers for bridges. Handrails for stairs are another possibility. In New England Village, or, if you have a western-themed part in your village, the matches could be used for hitching posts.

How about using wooden matches to make a campfire?

First, lightly char small pieces of the matchsticks. Next glue the pieces to a small piece of red or orange cellophane, and arrange them to resemble a campfire. Finally, by placing the "campfire" over a partially hidden flicker light, you would complete the effect. Applying some glitter to the charred matchstick pieces might further enhance the look. Place some standing and sitting people around the fire, and the scene is complete. There is a place in any village where a campfire might be a welcome addition.

If you think of wooden matches as construction material, the possibilities are endless as to how they could be used. **Wooden fireplace matches**, which are quite a bit larger than kitchen matches, could be used when you need a beefier look for your construction.

**Wooden skewers also have multiple uses in your village.** The skewers can be used for many of the same applications as the wooden matches. The skewers provide more of a finished look than the matches and are generally longer. Fences, stair rails, trestle bridges and bridge supports are possible uses. Besides being construction materials for any number of things, skewers are great for

securing layers of Styrofoam together in a non-permanent way (no glue needed).

**Popsicle sticks** can be used for plank roads, boardwalks, and piers. Of course, you'll need to cut off the rounded ends first, but don't throw the ends away. The rounded end scraps can be used as tombstones in a churchyard or city/town cemetery.


**Look in your spice cabinet or pantry**, and you will find many items that can be used in your display. If you have a mill or grain elevator in your display, you might consider using cornmeal or flour as a groundcover in areas around the building. Baking soda can be used as snow (keep it off the buildings as it may discolor them). Paprika or chili powder can be used to represent a crushed brick walkway. Cocoa powder, ground coffee, and ground parsley are suitable groundcovers, too. The same can be said for many of the herbs and spices you might have in your kitchen.

Next month will bring more ideas out of the kitchen and, perhaps, we'll move on to other parts of the house.....

VERN

## **REAL or RUMOR**

I've had lots of calls in the last six months from collectors who want to verify one of a hundred different rumors they've heard regarding **Department 56**. So let's answer a few of these rumors/questions the way they do on television -- **REAL or RUMOR**.



**Melinda Seegers,**  
**Manager**  
**Consumer Service**  
**1-800-LIT TOWN**  
**[www.department56.com](http://www.department56.com)**

1. ***We heard that Department 56 has declared bankruptcy.*** That's a **RUMOR**. While **Department 56/ Lenox** did file for Chapter 11 in November 2008, the company was recently acquired by Clarion Capital Partners LLC ([www.clarion-capital.com](http://www.clarion-capital.com)). During that time, and going forward it is business as usual.

2. ***We hear that your company will no longer be producing any of the Halloween Village products.*** That is also a **RUMOR**. What you may have read or heard is that we are not going to produce any Halloween-themed giftware items. We will continue to design and produce the **Snow Village® Halloween** which continues to be one of our most popular Villages. We are concentrating our design efforts on the Villages, **Snowbabies™** and a select group of giftware items.



3. ***We are anxiously awaiting the 2009 Village mid-year introductions. Will they be announced in May?*** That is **REAL**. You will be able to view all the great mid-year introductions on the Department 56 web site ([www.department56.com](http://www.department56.com)) on May 15, 2009. While I cannot reveal any of the exact details, I can tell you that there are some great additions to some ongoing series, a couple of gift sets and even a late addition for your favorite Halloween series. (But you didn't hear that from me!)



4. ***I heard a rumor that some of my favorite characters, like the Grinch and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, are back. Is this true?*** This is **REAL**, but only as ornaments this time. If you go to our website, put the key word **Grinch** or **Rudolph** in the product search box to see the neat designs created for each series. Call us in the fall (once the ornaments have started shipping to retail stores), and we can help you find locations near you where you can buy them.

When you hear something that you're not sure is **real**, feel free to give us a call, we'll tell you if it's **REAL** or Rumor.

# San Diego Fifty-Sixers

PO Box 23285  
San Diego, CA 92193

Our next meeting will be on the  
**Third** Wednesday of the month,  
May 20<sup>th</sup>

May						
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	<b>20</b>	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

At the Sharp Spectrum Center Court  
8695 Spectrum Center Court  
6:30 social, meeting at 7:00



Directions: From either I-805 or I-163 take the Clairemont Mesa exit and proceed east, turn right onto Kearny Villa Road, at Spectrum Center Blvd. turn left. Sharp Spectrum Center Court is the first right after the Marriott Courtyard. When entering the Sharp property the parking lot is through the gate to the right.

The **San Diego Fifty Sixers** are members of the

National  
Council  
of 56 Clubs



## SAN DIEGO FIFTY SIXERS Calendar of Events - 2009

Month	Date	Event
May	20	Club Meeting / <b>Third</b> Wednesday- 6:30pm / Mid year releases and games
June	17	Club Meeting / <b>Third</b> Wednesday- 6:30pm / Canterbury Gardens
July	15	Club Meeting / <b>Third</b> Wednesday- 6:30pm / Games
August	26	Club Meeting / <b>Fourth</b> Wednesday- 6:30pm / Pot Luck & Power Point Presentation
September	23	Club Meeting / <b>Fourth</b> Wednesday- <b>7pm</b> / To be announced
October	28	Club Meeting / <b>Fourth</b> Wednesday- <b>7pm</b> / Annual Swap & Sell
November	18	Club Meeting / <b>Third</b> Wednesday- 6:30pm / Games
December		Open Houses All Month

**Please check the Calendar regularly. These programs are subject to change.**  
The board meets each month on the Wednesday before the regular club meeting. Any member is welcome to attend the board meeting. Meetings start at 5:30 pm at the Miramar Café, 7128 Miramar Road

### Cookie Elves – May

Annie Dallow, Sue Jones, Betty Reynolds, and Sharon Swildens will be presenting a plethora of homemade gourmet treats to whet your palettes. That's just another good reason to attend the next SD 56ers meeting.