



Village Views

“The voice of the San Diego Fifty-Sixers”
Volume 16: Number 1 January 2009

Lighting Down Lives



A small but very efficient group of club members met at Children's Hospital on Saturday January 3rd to take down the 2008 Lighting Up Lives displays. We started at 8:00AM and by 10:30 the displays were down, the pieces were packed up, and the Murphy truck was all loaded. Thanks again to Marge and the whole 2008 Lighting Up Lives crew.



I want to take this opportunity to thank all the board members, committee members, and club members for the help and support you gave me in 2008. It was quite a year. We celebrated our 15th birthday, we mourned the passing of Cheryle O'Connor and Sandi Kuperstein, we expanded our Lighting Up Lives charity, and we visited the San Diego Three Railers. I am looking forward to great 2009.

Everyone is invited to Sage's for another open house on Sunday January 25th from 5:00 to 9:00PM. I have it on good authority that there will be cheese rounds.

Our January meeting will be held **Wednesday, January 21st at 6:00PM**. Lisa Johnson will be reviewing the new introductions.

Jon

MINDLESS MUTTERING...

...by Bob O'Connor



The first item of business that comes each year is the budget for the club. Since, thanks to Marge's efforts and the generosity of Sharps Hospital the single major expense for the club is the newsletter, it comes to me to try to make the newsletter as economical as possible without cutting down on the quality of communication. In an effort to save the most money for the club I try each year to get as many members as possible to take the Village Views electronically. Bear in mind we will always print a quantity of newsletters because several members do not have e-mail or are unable to receive such a large file in their system. We also send a "hard copy" to each of our suppliers so their entire staff is able to read the information included. If you decide to help save the cost of printing and postage all you need do is e-mail me at toolah@cox.net and ask to be included on the newsletter e-mail list. I will send everyone a copy via e-mail this month so if you do not receive one check to make sure I have your correct e-mail address. Because it is a separate list, those members who are already getting an e-mail issue will receive two.

The January meeting is an important one to attend. Besides discussing the aforementioned budget, we also welcome our new officers into office. It will give all members, new and old, a chance to congratulate them and to find out upon which committees you will serve, and or chair. Please check the calendar of events on page eight for meeting time and place as this year they may change each month.

We have no door prize or raffle prize winners for December because the month was full of open houses and did not contain a meeting. Of course everyone who attended the open houses is a winner. While you are thanking the members who held open houses, keep in mind where they purchased all those wonderful buildings and accessories they used to make the creative displays you enjoyed. As always take the time to thank our sponsors:

- Canterbury Gardens, Escondido**
- Casual Living, San Bernardino**
- City Lights, San Diego**
- Creative Memories (Millie Warner),**
- The Mole Hole, San Clemente**
- Unique Gifts, Temecula**

While thanks are being passed out we should give a big one to **Lisa Johnson** who besides giving us many door prizes to give out also makes sure our suppliers are fully supplied with all the items we want for our villages.

SAN DIEGO FIFTY SIXERS' OFFICERS		
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	Norma McColley	858-618-2455
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

Just a quick report from Bill & Montse: things are going very well in Spain.

"Yesterday we finally made it down to Barcelona and you just wouldn't believe the number of folks that were walking the streets. What an incredible city, in more ways than one. Montse's Dad continues to get better and better. He has done incredibly well after such major surgery. We wish everyone a very Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you all at the January Meeting."

Winnie and John are now empty nesters; the girls have returned to school and work.

Winnie, Carol and Lauren have started "Helping Hands." This is wonderful and our club should continue to do this. So please let us know if someone needs a "helping hand" during an illness or a life changing event.

Dorothy Dees is at home and improving daily.



OK folks it is January, time to cough up that pittance required to remain a member of the finest D56 collectors club in the nation. As in the past everyone who is paid by the end of the January meeting is entered in a drawing to win free raffle tickets (that could translate into a building or two for free.)

San Diego Fifty-Sixers 2009 Membership Renewal Form

Member Name(s) _____

Address _____

(Including zip) _____

Phone Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

Please circle one

Individual - \$24

Household - \$32

Corresponding - \$16

THANK YOU

Please fill out the above information. Address is needed only if you have had a change during the year or if the information on the roster is incorrect. Include area code with phone numbers and, if available, full e-mail addresses. Be sure to circle the type of membership.

Mail your dues to: San Diego Fifty Sixers, PO Box 23285, San Diego, CA 92193, or bring them with you to the January meeting (which you are going to attend anyway, right?)

Collectively Speaking

...BY **BOB DALLOW**

Let's start with Halloween as we begin our look at the new pieces announced last month by Department 56. It occurs, after all, before Christmas, so

it's only reasonable to begin our village tour with a look at bats, ghouls, and flying witches. There are four new buildings and 28 new accessories, combining the Snow Village and General Village accessories. Why, I continue to ask, are those separate categories since the only scary scenes always involve Snow Village?



Croak-N-Haggard Mortuary (left) is a great name for a building with that purpose. It is a limited edition of 8,000 pieces. This fairly respectable building (for Halloween, that is) features a unique lighting arrangement; one side has traditional lighting, but in the crematorium portion red lights indicate it's hot as Hell. Urns and coffins in abundance help to "decorate" the front yard. The corresponding accessory is *A Grave Undertaker*, a rather grim looking fellow with skull in hand. A skeletal arm rests on the side of the open coffin.

We finally discover where Gravely the Butler, who has appeared in many scenes, lives. Where else? *Gravely Estate* seems to be a rather large home for a butler, but with the skullduggery that takes place in this village, anything is possible. It features animated silhouette scenes which are easily visible since all the windows in this Victorian building are broken or missing. Bats hang from the eaves of this not too inviting mansion. The related accessory is, of course, the annual Gravely piece – *A Gravely Haunting 2009*. As he mows his lawn, the butler comes across a skeleton seeming to arise from under its tombstone.

Deep Woods Haunt (right) may be the most decrepit of any Halloween building – and that's saying a lot! It's nothing more than a shack in the swamp, surrounded by dying trees festooned with Spanish moss. *The Old Hermit in the Woods* is a stooped over figure accompanied by his dog, every one of whose ribs show through his scrawny body. To add to the drama, the hermit is carrying an ax that may have more uses than just to chop the firewood under his arm.



The final building is *Black Widow Dating Service* as a little sex and romance are coming to the grotesque members of this frightened (and frightening) community. It's a ramshackle building decorated with spider webs and other items that might entice a vampire or warlock. *Made For Each Other*, the related accessory, depicts an elderly gentleman bewitched by an attractive young woman. Unbeknownst to him, lurking behind the coy mannequin is an ugly crone. One never knows, does one?

Another continuing saga is depicted in *Grimslly's Family Crypt*, the sixth piece featuring this strange family, its home, and outbuildings. Its design is consistent with the architectural appearance of the other pieces in this subseries.

Last year the Rickety Rails series premiered, and four pieces will be added to that venue in 2009. The *Haunted Rails Dining Car* will attach to last year's engine's power jack; the newest car features broken windows, tattered curtains, and a spooky jack-o-lantern. Last year's skeletal conductor will be joined by a rather frightening waiter announcing that *Dinner Is Served*. The *Haunted Rails Crossing Sign* is unlikely to impede anyone with its broken gate; similarly, the liquid contents of the *Haunted Rails Water Tower* must be questioned as the wooden structure seems incapable of holding anything but spiders and dust.

Two additional accessories complete the pieces in the Snow Village portion of this collection. *Let's Go To The Moon* is a child's version of the Apollo 11 mission to the moon that occurred 40 years ago. More begging kids are also pictured in *Go Team! Trick-Or-Treaters* in their football-related costumes.

As we continue through the accessories, let's switch to those listed as General Village pieces. *Swampy Boat Ride* is an animated piece in which a man uses a pole to guide his small craft among trees on an oval pond. A second animated piece is *Up, Up, & Away Witch With Ghosts*. It is identical to an earlier version that just features the witch, but this time she is accompanied by specters.

Lazy Bones continues the story of an indolent skeleton. This time he's resting in a hammock with a buzzard and bats perched atop the support poles. *The Grim Reaper* is one of the finer Halloween figures. Holding a scythe in one hand and an hourglass in the other, the black clad figure smiles menacingly in a graveyard. Speaking of that final resting place, *Graveyard Shift* depicts two gravediggers in a scene reminiscent of "Alas, poor Yorick" from Hamlet.

Bats, buzzards, and owls will appear to soar over your display if you acquire the suspended *Creatures Of The Night*. A *Halloween Park Bench* is similar to other village benches, but this one features Halloween colors. *Gothic Gate Fence Sections*, with pumpkins and corn in the foreground, are intended to extend the gates of the same name that were introduced last year. *Hanging Ghosts* could be a set of six handkerchiefs. There are also *Spooky Shadow Oak Trees*, a set of two.

When it comes to electrical devices, the names tell the tale: *Halloween Street Lamps*, *Spooky Sidewalk Luminaries*, *Lit Jack-O-Lanterns*, and three strings of lights featuring oozing slime, pumpkins and the color purple.

Something New Has Been Added

WINTERS FROST is a new series that begins with three buildings, each of which comes complete on a base with attached trees and accessories. A sparkly blanket of snow is accomplished by the double painting of these lit pieces, which is followed by a glittered frost application. *Wooddale Church* (left) and *Calhoun House* (right) will be accompanied by *Nicollet House*. Each of these scenes of Minnesota buildings will sell for \$99.





OPEN HOUSE TIPS 2008

I often wonder if the folks at Department 56 had any idea when they began creating Villages that the result would be the wonderful displays designed by San Diego Fifty-Sixers. For the first quarter of 2009, the Tipster will revisit our Club members' handiwork, which we were able to admire on our Open House journey.

Annie and Bob Dallow welcomed us to their big City in November. You could search far and wide before finding as many buildings, people, vehicles, shrubs, animals, mailboxes, and streetlamps as there are in the Dallow display. The high density, hustle and bustle are apparent as you check out the City. It's the City after all. What else would you expect? To enhance the experience, the City is expanded by the use of a mirrored wall.



To add to our enjoyment, Bob, our Gamekeeper, had put together a contest, which made us really take a close look at the detail of the display. Superman, Batman, and Robin returned to the City with a host of other superheroes. Since the superheroes were part of the contest, we will have to wait until the January meeting to find out which heroes were there.

Leaving Christmas in the City, our next November stop was North Pole City. Sue and Bob O'Connor delighted us with a large North Pole display. The NP City planners had given much thought to creating neighborhoods, with groupings of residences, factories and Elf amenities.



The O'Connor's use of acrylic shelving loops, which hold their train tracks, gives us a chance to see buildings and elves, who work and play below. It's a very effective way to increase viewing space and get the tracks above it all, like the EL or aboveground transit systems in big cities.



Jon and I were happy to share our Original Snow Village with so many of you. Like our 2007 display, our current layout was strongly influenced by Jon's train track plan. It was a new design with the train and the city streets crossing a small ravine on bridges. The new plan gave me the chance to use more trees (You know I love that!) and elevations.

Guests at our open house seemed to especially enjoy the Lighting Up Lives event taking place at the Snowy Hills Hospital.



I was inspired by our annual event at Children's Hospital. My quest was to find small buildings, people, and the acrylic surround. A friend suggested using Monopoly buildings, which worked well with a little paint. The people and benches were N-Scale train items. I couldn't find acrylic; so I bought a set of number stamps that Megan could use with her preschoolers. She got the stamps; I got the packaging. Then everything came together.

More to come... *Winnie*

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Lighting up Lives 2008 is over.

The entire project was a success. From the 49 people who set up and built the displays and who sat out front of Rady Children's Hospital greeting and thanking those who dropped off art supplies as well as money, to the eleven hard working and dedicated people who braved the weather on Jan 3rd to take down the three displays.

Thank you all and remember any suggestion you may have for us for next year we would like to hear about them, but also remember I need them in writing so we don't lose or misunderstand what your suggestion is.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the Jan meeting.

Marge/Art



Winnie is giving a comprehensive tour of the 2008 open houses in her Tipster column so I will not get into any details here. Suffice to say again this year the open houses were the highlight of the year.

I think a lot of credit goes to the experience each host and hostess gained from belonging to the San Diego Fifty Sixers. We all share information gained from our travels to other areas of the nation. Be it from formal gatherings or travel for vacations or a family get together we seem to accumulate items and ideas that can translate into an interesting display. The person who garnered a particular idea may not be the one using it in their display, thus the value of belong to a sharing and knowledgeable D56 club.

Now is a good time for me to plug the idea that we seek out new members with whom we can share what we have learned and learn what they may have to share. We should also encourage former members into rejoining the ranks.

We now have a web site that is professional looking and regularly maintained by Alan Hamel to make our club more visible to the collecting public and a way to show what we can offer to new members. By the way Alan is a new member, showing another reason to attract new blood into the line of thoroughbreds at the San Diego Fifty Sixers.

San Diego Fifty-Sixers

PO Box 23285
San Diego, CA 92193

Our next meeting will be on the
third Wednesday of the month,
January 21st

January						
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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



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		
January	21	Club Meeting / Induction of Officers/ Lisa Johnson & New Introductions/Third Wednesday- 6pm
February	25	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 6pm
March	18	Club Meeting /Third Wednesday- 6pm
April	22	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 6pm
May	20	Club Meeting /Third Wednesday- 6pm
June	17	Club Meeting /Third Wednesday- 6pm
July	15	Club Meeting /Third Wednesday- 6pm
August	26	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 6pm / Pot Luck & Power Point Presentation
September	23	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 7pm
October	28	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 7pm / Annual Swap & Sell
November	18	Club Meeting /Third Wednesday- 6pm
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		