



Village Views

“The voice of the San Diego Fifty-Sixers”
Volume 16: Number 9 September 2009

Real Time Display Smack-Down

Last month, Lauren proposed holding a real time display contest for our September meeting. The club will provide two teams with identical buildings, accessories, trees, Styrofoam, and common display tools. The teams will be given a time limit to complete their displays, and a panel of judges will critique their displays and announce the winners. Did I forget to mention that it's going to be boys against girls? We're going to have our own "Project Display". As you know some days "You're In", and some days "You're Out"! Do you want to know "Who's display reigns supreme", then don't miss our own "Iron Displayer San Diego"! Personally, I don't think the girls have a chance!

We had a great turnout for our yearly Pot Luck dinner. Thanks to everyone for bringing some really great dishes. Once again, the San Diego Fifty-Sixers showed that not only do we know how to eat; we also know how to cook. The slide show presentation of last year's open houses didn't go exactly as planned. Someone forgot the CD on his desk and had to go back home to pick it up. Did you know the Prius can go 80mph? Eventually the show got going. I hope it inspired you to start on your 2009 display.

It was great to see Bill Littlejohn from Sharp Hospital and his family at the meeting. After the slide show, we presented Bill with a check for \$500 representing the club's annual charitable contribution. Bill expressed Sharp's gratitude for our contribution and assured us the money will be put to good use. Speaking of charitable contributions, did you know that since we modified open houses to sponsor a charity, we have raised over \$5000? Good job!

I'm pleased to announce this year's nominating committee. Carol Orlando is the chairperson with Winnie Sage and Phyllis Newton on the team. At the October meeting, Carol will present the committee's slate of officers, and then additional nominations, if any, will be taken from the floor. The vote will be held at the November meeting.

Join us on September 23rd at **7:00PM** for our first ever Boys vs. Girls Display Smack-Down. Wait until you see who are on the teams. Go boys! The girls are going down! See you on the 23rd.

Jon

MINDLESS MUTTERING...

...by Bob O'Connor

Sue and I enjoyed our vacation very much. I want to thank Winnie for taking the job of producing the newsletter off my mind. Winnie you did a wonderful job.



We are coming into my favorite time of the year when the creative juices flow and villages just seem to appear out of nowhere. Yeah, right! Okay so it takes some effort, some time, and a little help from our friends. This is where club participation pays off. A good example is Cityscape. With the club member's assistance a two or three day job was reduced to a couple of hours. Any help you may need with your village set up can be had with a couple of phone calls. Another source of assistance available is from our suppliers. It is of course their business to sell village pieces and decorating supplies, but they also have many years of experience in setting up displays and are eager to help you make your village exactly what you want.

If you are undecided about having an open house or you think your efforts don't measure up, remember two things. Your village is for your pleasure; we just like to share in it. And we aren't coming to criticize your efforts we want the socializing and the food, interesting, tasty, different and unique dishes from your culinary talents. (Or just throw together some crackers and cheese, or chips and dip. we'll come to see what you created).

RAFFLE PRIZES

From Canterbury Gardens:

C. Cope & Co. Tin Jobber.....Winnie Sage

From Casual Living:

\$50.00 Gift Certificate.....Donna Poole

From City Lights:

Snow Laden Sisal Trees.....Winnie Sage
 Family Canoe Trip.....Sharon Swildens
 Persian Rugs for Sale.....Carol Hout

From The Mole Hole:

Cobblestone Square and Road.....Sherri Struthers

From the SD 56ers:

Wagon Wheel Pine Grove.....Carol Hout

From Unique Gifts:

\$25.00 Gift Certificate.....Karen Boynton

From the Sages:

Padres Baseball Tickets.....Claire Caldwell

DOOR PRIZES from Lisa Johnson

Black Purse, Sherri Struthers; Girl on a Rock (California Gold), Chick Storey; SD 56er Sign, Carol Hout, Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, Kathy Heitzmann; Bubble Light Ornament, Janice Taylor; Angel Ornament, Dave Struthers; Strolling Down Howard Street Accessory, Maggie Storey; Lampshade Night Light, Karen Boynton; Dessert Plate, Millie Warner; "Life" Plaque, Norma McColley; Picture Frame, Carol Orlando; Santa Christmas Tree Ornament, Bob O'Connor; Snowbaby Kissing Snowman, Mary Marshall; Tree Spreading Knife, Annie Dallow; Purse and Shoe Ornaments, Montse Hohnhorst.

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	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
Village Views	Bob O'Connor	760-789-3957

San Diego Fifty Sixers invade San Antonio

The Region 8 Roundup was the destination of choice for several members of our club this summer. Among them were Vern and Michele Brown, Jim and Lauren Murphy, Mary Marshal and Betty Gibson, and Bob and Sue O'Connor. The roundup had seminars, contests, make and takes, and assorted fun and games to occupy our time. There was a banquet with a raffle afterwards to raise money for the charity "Wings" (a financial support group for women with breast cancer).

On the day prior to the roundup there were several tour and shopping options. One had the choice of a trip to Fredericksburg or a bus tour of San Antonio including The Alamo, a Mexican market, and the River Walk. In the evening there was a ghost tour of San Antonio.



A very interesting part of the roundup was the display contest. Every gathering has one and they are getting more and more talented entries. This one had the most quality displays I have seen. A couple of them are here representing the range of creations from the spooky to the serene.



I highly recommend participating in gatherings whenever possible, not only for the knowledge you may acquire but for the fun of mingling with collectors from all over the country. One obvious treat is sightseeing and visiting other cities and towns while traveling in this great nation of ours.

Collectively Speaking

...BY BOB DALLOW

I am first and foremost a Department 56 collector. There is no doubt about that! No other village manufacturer creates the detailed, quality

items that Department 56 does. But one company cannot produce every accessory that a collector "has" to have. And we all want our villages to have unique items that differentiate our displays from those we saw at the last open house.

Having said all that, let's spend this month talking about Lemax. We've been using Lemax characters for several years, and currently have well over 100 of them scattered throughout the City. Most of them fill gaps in the Department 56 collection. For example, although there are ten churches in the City, there are no clergymen; Lemax has produced four. Until last year,



there were no nuns in the City. We have used several different Lemax nuns, as well as the sisters in Alpine Village. And then there is Chinatown. The first Oriental building was *Wong's in Chinatown* in 1990. The next was this year's *Golden Ox Market*. The first D56 Chinese characters have just been released. Yet, if you have ever visited our Cityscape, you know we have quite a large Chinatown. Where did all those people come from? King & Country's "Streets

of Old Hong Kong" and Lemax. And wait until this November when you will see almost a doubling of our Chinatown. And where is it coming from? Lemax. Want a sneak peek? Take a look at the Subway station above.

Where can you check out the products available from Lemax? Locally we have had considerable success at Michael's, although sometimes the inventory gets depleted quickly. In this season of TV reruns, you can often find me at my keyboard where I heartily recommend two sites that have always had whatever I was looking for, as well as several pieces I hadn't even realized that I "needed." Check out both www.dollhousestrainsandmore.com and www.lemaxvillages.com. There are obviously other sources, but none with as many current and retired pieces. Lemax Villages has over 1500 items, and Dollhouse's tally exceeds 1600.

Lemax's scale is very similar to Department 56's, and like D56, Lemax has created several different village lines. In addition to all the trees and other accessories, here are the villages:

Spooky Town
Caddington Village
Carnival and Zoo
Harvest Crossing
Plymouth Corners
Santa's Workshop
Vail Village

Halloween addicts (and your checkbooks) beware!
Similar to both DV and CIC
Rather self-explanatory, don't you think?
Akin to New England Village
Maritime pieces that (with care) can fit in DV, CIC, NEV
HO! HO! HO!
Wax up your skis!

OPEN HOUSES: Sign up with me to join the holiday fun. We have nine open houses currently scheduled for October, November and December. Please join us to book your date. Call me at 949-498-1356, or send an email to lazysundaze@aol.com.

Bob

While I encourage you to investigate both web sites yourself, here are some random pieces that caught my eye.

I'm not a big Halloween fan. I get my orange and black enjoyment in Ramona and Jamul, but for those who have everything ghoulish that Department 56 has made, there's more out there among the 375 pieces in Spooky Town. Consider a *Mummification Chamber*, *Undertaker's Machine*, or *Skull Archway*. There are morgues, crypts, and mausoleums. Among the "people" are vampires, zombies, and mummies. How about a *Vampire Hunter* or *Witch's Coven*? And for those of you with a British background, you can have a bloodie good time with a *Blood Mobile*, *Blood Bath*, or the *Blood Bank*.

Department 56 had a short-lived Carnival collection. A wide variety of booths and frightening rides can embellish your carnival. There is a traditional carousel as well as more death-defying experiences like the *Zinger* (pictured at right). Some of us have created zoos with a particularly impressive one on Meadowrun Way. Up in San Clemente, the D56 zoo has expanded with Lemax figures. Among the animals available, some of which move within their cages, are elephants, giraffes, pandas, and zebras.



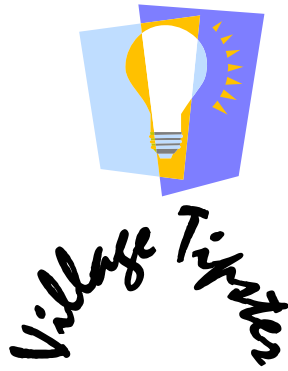
Within the figurines there is a tremendous diversity. In addition to people, there are several animals. The domesticated group includes the usual variety of farm animals ranging from pigs and sheep to ducks and chickens. There are a number of horses, and a large selection of wagons, carts, and carriages. Wild critters include a pack of wolves, some bears, deer, and a majestic eagle. The characters are dressed to fit different periods. Some are clearly Dickensian, and others are rustically attired for New England or Alpine Village. More contemporarily clad individuals can be found throughout our City.

Did someone say North Pole? Have you ever wondered how many convoluted positions elves can get into? Wonder no more. Just take a tour of the little people on the Lemax web sites. And don't forget their colorful buildings and, of course, trees. You can never have too many snowy North Pole trees!

Have you noticed that I haven't mentioned buildings yet? Where do I begin? Caddington Village is the biggest, and has the most intricate designs. There are balconies, porches, unique window patters, and vivid colors. Like Department 56, the most frequent buildings are churches, each with its own design. There are a number of different fire departments, police stations, and post offices. All in all, you can find at least one of virtually every building you would expect in a major city, whether it is London or New York. Each of the Lemax villages has impressive structures. *Block and Cleaver Butcher Shop* (pictured at right) is from the Vail Village series. Yet, as you look at the four-story building it is easy to picture it in the City. Like many of the Lemax buildings, it is priced at under \$30.



Department 56 is, and probably always will be, the premiere quality village. But they can't make every piece for every village. If you are looking for a specific item, take a few hours, hit the Internet, and look at what Lemax has to offer.



ALL THROUGH THE HOUSE – PART SIX

This article is the sixth in a series, suggesting ideas for using common household items to help create or enhance your village displays. The kitchen was the topic of the first four articles. Over the next few months, we will take a look through the rest of the house, ending in the garage.

Last month, we used a selection of toy figures to create a Macy's balloon parade. This month, we will consider the many other uses for **toys and games**.

North Pole Village has plenty of buildings that are obvious choices for additional accessories. Crayola Polar Palette Art Center looks great with a **crayon fence** or **coloring books** for a background. Lego Building Creation Station is a natural for a **Lego** fence, walkway, or just have stacks of different colors and sizes of Legos as an outdoor storage or warehouse area.

Hot Wheel's Custom Car Shop could certainly have a parking lot full of **Matchbox cars**. If you have a damaged car, no longer suitable for the parking lot, you can remove a tire to use as a **backyard swing**. Just tie yarn to the tire and hang it from a bare branch tree.

The Acme Toy Company, Arctic Game Station, and North Pole Board Games Factory each could be enhanced with **game pieces** and other small toys. Jolly's Jigsaw Puzzle Workshop could have its entire yard made from a **jigsaw puzzle**.

A **shoe horn** would make an unusual path to Pointy Toed Shoemaker. **Buttons** would make great stepping stones to Santa's Tailor Shop, Northwind Knitters or Custom Stitchers. Buttons could also be attached to fences to enhance these buildings. Colorful spools of thread or yarn could be stacked as fences or for storage nearby.

Letters to Santa Sorting Station might have a **path made of postage stamps**, leading to the door. Stamps could be used as decoration on a fence around the Sorting Station, too.

When Department 56 introduced *Gumdrop Trees* and *M&M Trees*, a whole new creative idea was inspired.

Why not make our own **unique trees**? Just by gluing decorative items to a bare branch tree, you have a one-of-a-kind tree of your own creation for your village. Some of the items previously mentioned can be used to adorn a tree. Legos, stamps, game pieces, or buttons all could be used to fashion interesting trees. If you start with a lighted tree, you could glue translucent buttons over each light to create an interesting effect. Of course, you can always create your own lit tree by adding a string of mini lights to a sisal or bare branch tree.

Next, here are a few ideas with wider application (beyond North Pole).

I dislike trees that have the white resin bases. I remove the bases. Cut off the top of a large t-pin and hot glue it to the trunk of the tree. The pin should project about $\frac{3}{4}$ " beyond the bottom of the tree. Add a second pin to the opposite side of the tree and you have a **tree that can be placed anywhere** on your Styrofoam base. **Staples**, right out of the box, can be used to make steps. Just break off the right length and paint to the desired color.

More next month.....

VERN



Little Miss Sunshine

"Montse started back to SD State today. Unfortunately one of her classes this semester ends late on Wednesdays so she probably won't be able to make most of the fall meetings. But I plan on coming and will try to make up for her absence, but I know I will never be able to do that. Otherwise all is well," Bill.

Karen Boynton had surgery last week; she had a pain in her---; Karen said she is feeling better.

Phyllis Oatman had Carpal Tunnel surgery last week and is home and doing well. Phyllis says "Ed is doing a wonderful job taking care of me."

Jim Murphy was in a hospital in Flagstaff with a severe attack of gallstones, which is interesting because his gall bladder was removed five years ago. Jim had surgery to have the stones removed.

Dorothy Dees had a little set back and went into the hospital for a few days but now is improving very slowly day by day at the La Jolla Nursing & Rehabilitation Center located at 2552 Torrey Pines Road. La Jolla, CA 92037. 858-

824-9426

Dinner and a Movie

OK so it was a slide show, still a very enjoyable show indeed. Thanks to Jon Sage we had entertainment to go with our potluck dinner last month. As we have done for many years we kicked off our village creating time of the year with a review of last year's open houses. While we enjoyed the culinary or shopping talents of our club members we took another peek at the great ideas and techniques seen at last year's open houses. Reminding us again of what ideas we are going to steal...I mean borrow for our own displays. For many of us it creates the urge to start building our tabletop kingdoms. Bob Dallow is making a list and checking it twice for all the good little...whoops wrong story. Bob Dallow is gathering names and dates for open house 2009. Will you be on his list? I will be for the eleventh straight year and I have enjoyed each one of them. Maybe it is your turn to get in on the fun. Your village could be next year's star. Of course if you are too shy or if life is just getting in the way of your efforts, plan on visiting the open houses that will be presented. Half the fun of creating our little worlds is sharing them with others.



San Diego Fifty-Sixers

PO Box 23285
San Diego, CA 92193

Our next meeting will be on the fourth Wednesday of the month, September 23rd

September						
		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			

At the Sharp Spectrum Center Court
8695 Spectrum Center Court
6:45 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		
September	23	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 7pm / To be announced
October	28	Club Meeting /Fourth Wednesday- 7pm / Annual Swap & Sell
November	18	Club Meeting / Third 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 for September
Sherri Struthers, Marge Bramfeld, Karen Boynton, Winnie Sage

Don't miss our first ever Boys vs. Girls Display Smack-Down
September 23rd at **7:00PM**
Be there to cheer on your favorite team