



## *William J. Sheldon*

August 20, 1944 – February 18, 2024

The Garden State Village Collectors have lost a remarkable member, a man who was so vivacious and full of happiness, compassion, generosity and creative expertise. From the day he joined us in 2013 he continually shared his knowledge and inspired us to improve our village displays. He was always there to lend a helping hand to all and never came to a meeting empty handed. Bill was a member of our Executive Board for many years and often contributed his display ideas to our newsletter. His display tips, holiday decorating ideas, and his techniques to hide wires, will remain with us forever. Our memories of the fun times we shared together with him will continue to lighten our hearts.

Bill proudly served our country in the U.S. National Guard. In his spare time he enjoyed dancing, often several times a week. He had an affection for all things related to Native American Indian culture as evidenced by the art and treasures he collected. During his career he created displays for many Department 56 retailers, gift industry events at the Javits Center in New York City, and at many Hallmark stores as well as running his own business, Designs by Bill Sheldon. His two children, son-in-law, and grandsons brought much joy to his life as did the friends he cherished. He truly was an inspiration to all.

Bill endured many challenges during his interesting lifetime, but the latest brutal obstacle handed to him last year was so overwhelming. He confronted his health issues with perseverance, grace and dignity, and always kept his sense of humor, having everyone laughing right through his final weeks. Bill had two wishes, first to live to experience his favorite holiday—Christmas—one more time; and second, to spend his final days in his home. He was so deserving of having both wishes fulfilled for him before he slipped away.

Surely, as the gates of Heaven opened to welcome Bill, he was armed with glue, snow, glitter, and his trusty Dremel tool. Hopefully he arrived knowing that his presence here will eternally be remembered. Until we meet again, he most likely is up there creating the most spectacular village display in the sky.