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BAKING A SCENE

GUINNESS RECORD HOLDER CREATES A HUGE GINGERBREAD VILLAGE AT LI CHILDREN’S MUSEUM B4

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Making your own

Inspired to make your own gingerbread houses at home? Jon Lovitch offers these three tips:

1. "The highest tip I offer is don’t try to get it done in one piece. If you try to get it done in one piece, it’s just going to keep falling apart and breaking.” Lovitch recommends putting the house together using icing and allowing it to harden until at least the next day before decorating it. Make it on Saturday and decorate it on Sunday for a fun weekend activity. “The day takes less than 10 hours, but I don’t want it to be something that’s taking up the rest of the weekend.”

2. "Buy or make extra icing. It’s a very sticky situation if you’re using a bit, allow them to be as solid as they can be before you decorate them.”

3. "Jack your fun. Don’t put pressure on yourself to achieve a preconceived notion of what your house should wind up looking like.”

Gingerbread Lane

500 handcrafted houses make up a sweet display at LICM

BY BETTY WHITENHOUSE bettywhitenehouse@newsday.com

The Guinness World Record holder for the biggest gingerbread village made entirely of edible ingredients has created a village for the Long Island Children’s Museum — 500 structures incorporating more than 1,400 pounds of icing, 2,000 sticks of gum, 900 candy canes, and 8,000 jelly beans.

Gingerbread Lane features stores such as The Yoga Yog, Bakery, Family’s Toy Co., and Panter and Dancer’s Academy of Dance. Creator Jon Lovitch of Forest Hills says he also included buildings with meaning for him, such as a pumpkin spice latte coffee shop, because he can’t get enough of that drink, and the Everyday’s Thanksgiving Cafe, which serves his favorite holiday meal around.

This is Lovitch’s 4th Gingerbread Lane display, so he works in the number 4 that visitors can try to find. For instance, the Fire House holds Engine 47 and Frosty’s Snow Cones has 47 flavors. And all the clocks say 7 o’clock — because when Lovitch was a kid, that’s when his favorite TV show, "Bonanza," would start.

MUSEUM SAYS “ABSOLUTELY”

Lovitch hooked up with the Garden City museum after the New York Hall of Science in Queens, where he had a holiday season gingerbread display for the past eight years, couldn’t reopen due to COVID-19. “That left us homeless as it were,” he says. Lovitch, who has a 2-year-old daughter, remembered a trip he and his wife, baby, and a veterinarian, took to the Long Island Children’s Museum to entertain Cecilia, and he thought the museum might be interested in taking on the exhibit instead. "They were like, ‘Absolutely. We’re happy looking for an anchor exhibit attraction,’“ Lovitch says.

With so many holiday activities on Long Island canceled, the museum jumped at the chance to host a display that is joyful but not based on touch, as many of the museum’s interactive exhibits are, says Manuson Mangon, museum director of communications and marketing. "It’s been a challenging year; we wanted to do something..."