



## The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club Member News February, 2026

### Sarah and Norm Bush By Nancy Tessier



Sarah and Norm Bush are our Canadian friends who visit for “almost” 6 months each year. Sarah was born in England and emigrated to Canada at age 11, the oldest of four girls. After a boat trip crossing the Atlantic landing in Montreal, the family traveled west to British Columbia by train. Sarah was impressed by the friendliness of her new homeland. They have 2 children and 4 grandkids aged 12 to 16. Norm worked in the paper/pulp industry and they lived in North Carolina and Arkansas for five years before returning to Canada. Norm is currently on a six month special project in Thunder Bay Canada. It is really cold in Thunder Bay.

Sarah and Norm have travelled extensively throughout the world. They met at a party after a basketball game and will be celebrating 50 years of marriage this June. She was the victor of a five sport event in her twenties - tennis, squash, racketball badminton and ping pong. Way to go with the hand-eye coordination. Now she enjoys golf, pickleball and bridge.

A fun fact - Sarah and Norm had tea in Buckingham Palace with Brigadier Sir Miles Hunt-Davis. Norm’s grandfather, Edmund LeCouvie, hand carved a replica of The Cosmo clipper ship out of ivory as a gift from the Province of Quebec to Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip as a Coronation gift. It is on display in a glass case and as relatives of Mr. LeCouvie, they were granted a visit to view it. (They didn’t run into any royalty and exited with a tour of the basement).

History lesson: The clipper ship became popular in Baltimore around 1832 as a sleek and speedy merchant vessel. Also known as “flying clippers” earlier models originated before the Revolutionary War in Chesapeake Bay. The British used them for the tea and opium trade with China. They were also “popular” slave ships and could obtain a speed of 16 knots (18 miles per our). The use of the clipper ship peaked in 1853 and were only built until 1860. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1859 and faster steam vessels took over all trade routes. Another popular route was from the east coast to California for the gold rush in 1849. The only remaining intact ship is the "Cutty Sark" in a Greenwich museum.

Buckingham Palace, the official royal residence in the heart of London, is 830,000 square feet and has over 775 rooms. The original home, started in 1624, was given to The Duke of Buckingham and Normandy in 1703 (a royal title since the Norman conquest by William and Conquerer in 1066). He was a descendent of King Henry VIII. George III obtained the home in 1761 for Queen Charlotte who had 15 children. It sits on 42 acres of land in London and is famous also for the royal annual summer garden parties. The Royal Mall and fountain were built to honor Queen Victoria and leads to the front of the palace with the famous view from the royal balcony. The Germans bombed the chapel during World War II. The current Duke of Normandy is King Charles III. Summer visits are allowed when royalty is not present. I went on the tour a few years ago and was very impressed (to say the least). On display was a replica of Prince William and Kate's wedding cake and her wedding gown.

## **Educational Opportunity – Michael Berkowitz Seminar**

On Saturday, February 7, 2026, Michael Berkowitz will be presenting a live workshop here in the Villages at Lake Miona Rec Center. The workshop will cover Slam Bidding and also declarer play with a topic called Develop, Don't Grab. This is an all-day event, with a delicious lunch included. Check the VDBC website for the link to register online for this seminar. <https://www.bridgewebs.com/villages/?&acblno=7738951&clubno=217489>

Michael Berkowitz tells his life story, through bridge, every month in the ACBL Bulletin. His funny, instructive columns show how he has often learned important lessons the hard way. He is passionate about bridge and has worked in the bridge world writing, directing, and teaching.

Michael learned from the very best: his parents, both of whom are world champions. Michael believed that they would wince every time he missed an overtrick (they deny this). As a result, he understands how difficult it can be to get to the next level of bridge play without getting discouraged. His clear instruction allows students to make concrete steps forward without getting lost in pursuit of

perfection. In addition to teaching for Bridge with Larry Cohen, Michael is the Program Chair for the ACBL Education Foundation, a non-profit working to promote bridge for all. He lives in Salt Lake City with his wife Emily, his daughter June, and dog Yeti.

## **Tournament Roundup**

The Villages recently hosted an Open Sectional Tournament at La Hacienda Center. The tournament was a rousing success thanks to the hard work by our tournament organizers and all the dedicated VDBC volunteers.

A list of Master point winners can be found at this link:  
<https://live.acbl.org/masterpoint-winners/2601331>

Kudos to Donna Brown, tournament chair; Merle Erlich, co-chair; Nancy Turner and Wanda Jean Rainbolt who organized snacks, Thursday lunch, and treats. On behalf of our club - Thank you volunteers! From set up to take down, and everything in between, you pitched in to help make this tournament an overwhelming success!

## **Orlando Regional Tournament**

The Orlando Regional tournament was held at the Orlando Doubletree Seaworld in early January. Over 50 VDBC members attended throughout the weeklong tournament.

Bob Fashingbauer was high master point winner from The Villages with 27.59 MP. Larry Sumner and Pam Campbell were close behind at second and third with 24.75 MP and 23.27 MP respectively.

Congratulations to all who played and won those coveted gold and red points.

## **Barry Crane Award**

The ACBL member who has accumulated the most master points during the calendar year wins the Barry Crane Top 500 race. Crane, who was murdered in July 1985, was ACBL's top master point holder and was acknowledged by his peers to be unequalled as a master point winner and a match point player. His influence on the race was dominant for more than three decades.

The ACBL tally for 2025 came out on January 6, and there were 7 Villages duplicate players who placed in the Barry Crane top 500 for 2025! Kudos to all of you for fine play!

#180	Russ Pearly	596.40 points
#247	Jeff Koltenuk	540.54 points
#262	Wilson Day	530.69 points
#298	Andy Sloan	509.56 points
#312	Steve Shapiro	496.42 points
#339	Phil Benner	484.07 points
#449	Ann McClelland	437.07 points

## Rank Changes

### VDBC Member Rank Achievements - January 2026

<b>Ruby Life Master</b>	Bill Bazemore
<b>Bronze Life Master</b>	John Hoerber
<b>NABC Master</b>	Bob Paul
<b>Sectional Master</b>	Bill Pagels
<b>Club Master</b>	Joann La Perla
<b>Junior Master</b>	Veronica Corkan
	Jerry Ciaramitaro
	Alma Obinger
	John Peacock
	Bev Robinson
	Donald Robinson
	Darlene Rutkowski
	Char Soos

## Bridge Playing Opportunity

Buck Buchanan is looking for someone interested in playing on-line bridge with him. Eighteen hands. Afternoon preferred. You can email him at [buckandmauri@aol.com](mailto:buckandmauri@aol.com)

## **Help Wanted**

Buck Buchanan, our assistant editor, has retired. Buck turns 90 this year and is taking a step back. The Member News needs a replacement! Does that appeal to you, or do you know someone who might fill the bill? We could use someone to pass along any interesting information about members, or snap photos of bridge events. Our members also enjoy the book reviews. If you are a reader, and would like to share a review of a good book, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact Jennie or Nancy if interested.

## **Playing Cards**

**By Nancy Tessier**

The standard playing card suits of clubs, spades hearts and diamonds originated in France in the 15th century. Earlier German card suits were acorns, leaves hearts and bells. In Switzerland the suits were (and sometimes still are) acorns, flowers, shields and bells. The oldest suits on cards from Italy and Spain are coins, cups, swords and caiman style clubs all derived from the Middle East and North Africa. Back then, each suit insisted of 10 numbered cards and three ace cards - a king, a cavalier and a knave but no queen.

## **Book Review - Killer Angels by Michael Shaara**

**By Buck Buchanan**

Mauri showed me a magazine article listing the fifteen best historical novels. The No. 1 novel was *Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara. I have to tell you that *Killer Angels* is 40 years old. Not only that, but when I told Mauri I was thinking about writing a review of it, she tried to discourage me. She said it was too much war (It's actually more about people). The funny thing is, Mauri read it twice and absolutely loved it. I recently read it again, and it is a great read. If you haven't read it, read it and you'll love it, too.

*Killer Angels* is a Civil War novel, specifically the battle of Gettysburg in July, 1863. The Confederate army has begun to succeed under the leadership of Robert E Lee, and Lee has marched his Confederate troops into Pennsylvania. His goal is turn East once he gets past Gettysburg, which will put him in a position to attack Washington.

The flaw in his strategy is that he has hasn't planned on 80,000 Federal troops blocking his way in Gettysburg. A titanic three day battle follows. The first day battle is a wash, and on the second day, Lee plans to attack Little Round Top, the south end of the Union line, but General Joshua Chamberlain repels his attack. When his troops run out of ammunition, Chamberlain has his troops unsheathe their bayonets and lead a bayonet charge down the mountain.

The third day is the culmination of the battle. Lee has General George Pickett lead a mile-wide line of 40,000 Confederate soldiers into a line of well-fortified Union sharpshooters, and the result is a disaster for the Confederates. Of Pickett's top thirteen officers, seven are killed, and the remaining six are badly injured. Tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers are killed, and Lee has no choice but to begin a retreat which eventually leads to the Confederate surrender twenty months later at Appomattox.

It's a great book. Read it if you haven't read it.

## **The Lighter Side**

**By Mary Jo Johnson**

### **SENIOR TRYING TO RESET PASSWORD**

Windows: Please enter your new password

User: cabbage

Windows: Sorry, the password must contain 1 numerical character

User: 1 boiled cabbage

Windows: Sorry the password cannot have blank spaces

User: 50damnboiled cabbages

Windows: Sorry, the password must contain at least one upper case character

User: 50DAMNboiledcabbages

Windows: Sorry the password cannot use more than one upper case character consecutively

User: 50damnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssifYouDon'tGiveMeAccessNow!

Windows: Sorry, the password cannot contain punctuation

User:

ReallyPisseOff50DamnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssifYouDontGiveMeAccessNow

Windows: Sorry, that password is already in use.

## Photo Corner



**Swiss Team Camaraderie.** Team members Nora Shang, Judy Smith, Bev Willson and Jennie Cleary enjoy a fun moment at the Villages Sectional in January.

**A big thank you** to all who participated with their articles. If you have member news to report, have an interesting background or experience you'd like to share, have been involved in a fun activity or have a trip report, we'd love to hear from you. Pictures would be great! Do you enjoy a fun hobby? What's the most interesting thing that has ever happened to you? A significant day or experience in your life? What's the one place you'd like to see? A special birthday or anniversary coming up? Please send your articles to Jennie Cleary at [wkc44@comcast.net](mailto:wkc44@comcast.net), or Nancy Tessier at [NancyBrooks2020@gmail.com](mailto:NancyBrooks2020@gmail.com) Nancy and Jennie are also able to help with write-ups if you send us the basics.

**See the October 2026 Bridge Cruise flyer on the next page.**



**Go Away Travel**  
BRIDGE CRUISE SPECIALISTS



GO AWAY TRAVEL PRESENTS:

## THE VILLAGES DUPLICATE PLAYERS SECTIONAL AT SEA

**October 18-25, 2026**

Please join us as we sail round-trip Tampa to Key West and the Bahamas on the Celebrity Summit. You will have the opportunity to play and earn Silver Points two times every day in a card-playing area reserved exclusively for our group.



**ITINERARY:** Tampa ★ Day at Sea ★ Day at Sea ★ Key West  
★ Bimini ★ Nassau ★ Day at Sea ★ Tampa



### SPECIAL OFFER ONLY FOR RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGES:

**THE FIRST 50 TO SIGN-UP WILL GET  
FREE ROUND-TRIP TRANSFERS TO TAMPA!**

\*Prices are per person, based on either single or double occupancy and include the following: All taxes and fees, travel protection, bridge games, classic beverage package, basic Wi-Fi & gratuities.

CAT	CABIN	DOUBLE	SINGLE
A2	AQUA	\$2,675	\$4,750
C1	CONCIERGE	\$2,525	\$4,400
V1	VERANDA	\$2,375	\$4,075
O1	OUTSIDE	\$1,850	\$3,050
I2	INSIDE	\$1,650	\$2,700

**CALL & BOOK NOW! Contact John Sobel at Go Away Travel  
PHONE: 954-349-2800 | EMAIL: [BestBridgeAtSea@GoAwayTrav.com](mailto:BestBridgeAtSea@GoAwayTrav.com)**

Government taxes and fees, travel protection, bridge fees, classic beverage package, basic Wi-Fi and gratuities are included. Valid passport required. Deposit of \$500 per cabin is refundable until the final payment due date of May 15, 2026. Cancellations made between May 16-July 11, 2026 will be subject to a 50% penalty. Cancellations made on or after July 12, 2026 will be subject to a 100% penalty. If you do not reserve your cabin from Go Away Travel, you must register with us prior to the cruise. A \$900 per person non-refundable bridge fee will apply.