



## The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club Member News

May, 2026

**Notes from the Editor:** As we enter May, many of our snowbird friends are leaving, and we look forward to their return later in the year. This month we meet two interesting players, Doreen Skok and Marilyn Schmidt. I really enjoyed reading an article Buck put together on a day trip to the Kennedy Space Center, which is very timely given the Artemis mission. We offer condolences to Ellen Miller on the passing of her husband Bob, to Susan Konig on the passing of her husband Bob, and to friends and family of long time bridge player Barbara Knight who passed away. Check out the Education update – we are so fortunate to have the top players in our club sharing their knowledge in the various educational seminars that are being offered. Nancy put together some interesting trivia regarding two high profile events - the Kentucky Derby and Mother's Day, and we finish up with Mary Jo's humor column. And its not to late to sign up for the October bridge cruise, if you have not already done so. Happy May, everyone.

### Meet the Players

By Nancy Tessier



**Doreen Skok.** Please let me introduce Doreen Skok, a snowbird from New Jersey. Her career as a history high school teacher highlighted her Ph.D. love of European modern and World War II history. She grew up in a 28 room house that had doors from the original Waldorf Astoria hotel. One of her school “friends” was Martha Stewart. She learned bridge from her parents as a teenager. Doreen and her husband later purchased a Frank Lloyd Wright home with extensive gardens where they summered. And Doreen is the longest sitting commission member of the local library. She has also travelled extensively. A fun fact: she tried out for Jeopardy but did not make the cut. So when you meet Doreen ask her about Martha.



**Marilyn Schmidt** started her Villages career with 20 master points 7 years ago. She is well over that now and is also a bridge instructor and mentor. From Massachusetts, her hobbies include knitting, golf and diamond art. She also played in the National Scrabble tournament in Orlando and got over 100 points for one word (very impressive if you know Scrabble)...and ran The Villages Scrabble group. Word games keep the mind sharp. Her career was as an attorney working with the elderly and disabled. (Scrabble quiz: cine to eemt ouy.)

## Education Update

**May – all classes at O'Dell Rec Center, 9:00 – 10:45 a.m.**

Gloria Bennett will be presenting a two-session webinar by the great Gavin Wolpert. Subject is “Bidding two-suited Hands”. Contact Gloria: [GloriaBridge123@gmail.com](mailto:GloriaBridge123@gmail.com)

Andy Sloan will be leading the very popular workshop “Hand Evaluation” on May 19. Contact Andy: [AndyLou1@icloud.com](mailto:AndyLou1@icloud.com)

## Condolences



We received word recently from Susan Garbarino that **Barbara Knight** passed away in March. Barbara had been a duplicate player for many years. Susan mentioned that everyone who knew Barbara commented on what a lovely person she was – a pleasure to be in her company as either her bridge partner OR as her opponent.

The club is saddened to hear of Barbara's passing, and we offer condolences to her family and friends. The following is a link to the obituary: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/herald-dispatch/name/barbara-knight-obituary?id=61176259>

The club also extends our sympathies to long time player **Ellen Miller**, whose husband Bob passed away recently. We are sorry for your loss.

The club is saddened to learn of the passing of Robert (Bob) Konig, husband of

long-time player **Susan Konig**. He passed away on Sunday, April 26. Sitting shiva/graveside services will be held in Rochester, NY. Condolences may be sent to: Susan Konig, 1068 Russell Loop, TV 32162

## **Kennedy Space Center**

**By Buck Buchanan**

Buck put together this interesting article not too long ago, and with all the news lately about the Artemis II moon mission, it is really timely.

“If I had just one weekend to spend in Florida, I know exactly where I’d go. No contest. I’d point the golf cart east (well, figuratively speaking) and head straight for the Kennedy Space Center on Cape Canaveral. It’s one of those places that makes you feel like a kid again — wide-eyed, curious, and proud to be an American.

Now, I remember the Cape long before it became the tourist attraction it is today. Back in the early ’50s, it was nothing but a windswept stretch of scrub and sand, with a few stubborn palm trees hanging on for dear life. You’d drive for miles and see nothing but seagulls, pelicans, and the occasional fisherman’s shack. Then one day, the world changed — 1958 — the Russians launched Sputnik, and suddenly the space race was on.

The early American attempts were... well, let’s just say “humbling.” Those Vanguard rockets had a bad habit of exploding right there on the launch pad. You’d see it on the evening news and just sigh. Then President Kennedy came along, stood tall, and told us we’d land a man on the moon before the decade was out. We all thought he was half-crazy — and then we believed him anyway.

In the early ’60s, Mauri and I decided to drive down from Gainesville to see this new “Cape Canaveral” for ourselves. The big Vertical Assembly Building — the VAB — had just been finished. That building is huge. You could fit a small town inside it. And get this — we were able to drive right up to it. No guards, no gates, no one stopping us. Can you imagine that now? These days, you can’t even sneeze near the place without three badges and a background check.

We went back a few years later, hoping to catch a rocket launch. I can’t remember which one — maybe an early Apollo test. We waited all day in the hot Florida sun, eating sandwiches out of the trunk, and then... launch scrubbed. Canceled. We had to pack up and head back to Gainesville. I’ll admit, it was a bit of a letdown, but that’s space travel for you — one part glory, two parts patience.

About twenty years later, we returned again — and boy, had things changed. The place was booming. Gift shops, tour buses, restaurants, the works. The Space Center had turned into a city. The old guard posts were gone, replaced by parking lots and ticket counters. But the magic was still there.

I'll never forget seeing the space shuttle up close. It was lying on its side so visitors could walk around it. My first thought was, good grief, this thing is enormous! Easily the size of a 747, maybe bigger. Standing underneath it, you couldn't help but feel small and awestruck. Inside, we could see the maze of wiring and switches that looked like something out of science fiction. It's a wonder those astronauts ever figured out which button did what.

Today, the Space Center has dozens of rockets on display, from the small ones that just cleared the treetops, to the Saturn V that carried men to the moon. There's a guided tour — costs about \$25, and it's worth every penny — and if you're lucky, you can even meet an astronaut. (Be sure to shake their hand — it's not every day you meet someone who's been to outer space.)

So, if you ever have a free weekend here in Florida and you've already had your fill of golf, bridge, and water aerobics, skip Disney and head to the Cape. Trust me, it'll remind you what it felt like when the world was reaching for the stars.”

## **Rank Changes**

Congratulations to those who have achieved a new ACBL ranking as of April, 2026!

**Diamond Life Master**

Edward Schwartz

**Ruby Life Master**

Karen Pekkanen

**Bronze Life Master**

Cindy Butts

**NABC Master**

Joanne Eakin

Sally Paul

Nancy Unser

**Regional Master**

Donn Neurman  
Norma Uphold

**Sectional Master**

Mary Dudly  
Carolyn Jones  
Mary Helen Schultz

**Club Master**

Anne Burnik  
Joel DeAngelo  
Norm Kopperud  
Stig Sundberg  
Jack Wilhelm  
Laura Wilhelm  
Chris Wright

**Junior Master**

Sherry Brumley  
Kate Domenick  
Myrna Smith  
Margaret Spina

**The Kentucky Derby****By Nancy Tessier**

On the first Saturday of May, the Kentucky Derby, also called the Run for the Roses, thoroughbred horse race is held at Churchill Downs, Louisville, Ky. The three year olds run the 1 1/4 mile trek in about 2 Minutes. The current fastest time is held by Secretariat in 1973 at 1:59.4 minutes. The idea for the race came from Meriwether Lewis Clark Jr. (grandson of William Lewis of the Lewis & Clark expedition) in 1872. The first race was held in 1875. For decades, black jockeys were prominent as they had trained and exercised their steeds. May 16, 1925 was the first radio announced race and May 7, 1949 was the first television broadcast. The current purse is a \$5 million prize and the horse is draped with a blanket of 554 red roses.

The “race” has a special atmosphere with elegantly outfitted women and overly decorated hats. You may see everyone enjoying a mint julep from a silver cup (bourbon, mint and sugar syrup). So riders up....flag is down...and off they go.

(Just a note, my grandfather Joseph D. Brown was a jockey in Southern California in the early 1900's. He later trained horses for movies and ran a country club in Los Angeles frequented by movie stars, political people and even Walt Disney).

## **Mother's Day**

**By Nancy Tessier**

The second Sunday of May is Mother's Day. Originated on May 10, 1908, Anna Jarvis wanted to honor her mother at her Episcopal church in West Virginia. Ms. Jarvis was a peace activist who cared for wounded soldiers of the American Civil War. In 1920, Hallmark Greeting Cards joined the celebration. The US Congress passed a law enacting Mother's Day in 1914. Today it is the biggest dining out day of the year. Let's not make mom cook and don't forget to get a reservation.

## **Book Review – The Book Club for Troublesome Women, by Marie Bostwick**

**By Buck Buchanan**

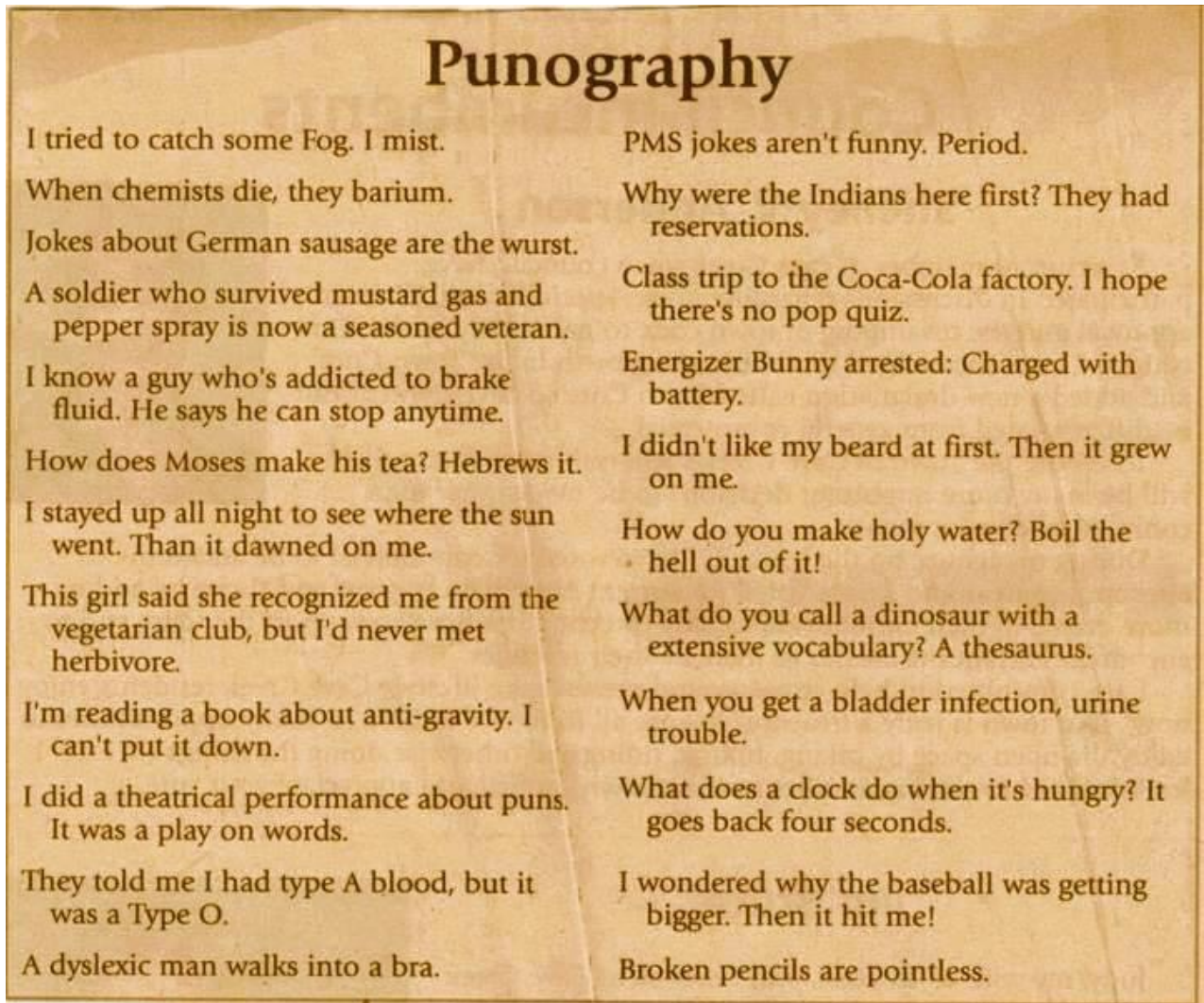
In 1963, Betty Friedan published a book entitled, “The Feminine Mystique”. It was quite a memorable publication. It was banned by many libraries, book stores, and schools. It basically discussed the life of the young American women following their college and marriage. Their life for the most part was fixing sandwiches, changing diapers, and a host of other menial tasks. It pointed out hundreds of other inequities that young married women faced. They could not open their own bank account, they couldn't purchase property without their husband's consent and hundreds of other inequities.

“The Book Club for Troublesome Women” takes place in the years following the publication of “The Feminine Mystique”. Four young college-aged women, all newly married are members of a book club. They have all read the “The Feminine Mystique” and they are wondering what they could do to restore equality to their sex.

This book offers a glimpse into housewives in the 1960's grappling with societal expectations, and captures the power of female friendship. Don't miss this book!

## The Lighter Side

By Mary Jo Johnson



**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.**

Marilyn Williams tells us: The cruise is filling up, and if you are interested, I encourage our Villages club members to sign up soon. They can get the information from the flyer at the end of the newsletter. Thanks! Marilyn



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I2	INSIDE	\$1,650	\$2,700

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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.