



Greg grew up in small town in eastern Nebraska and earned a degree in Math and Computer Science from Iowa State. He started his career at Bell Labs as a programmer in New Jersey and completed his career as a director of software system technical support in Columbus, OH. He and his wife raised 3 boys and

enjoyed assignments in New Jersey, Marshall Islands, Pittsburgh (PA), Sacramento (CA), southern New Hampshire, southern England, and Saudi Arabia as well as multiple assignments in Columbus, OH.

Beside duplicate bridge, both enjoy golf. Kathy is an active golfer in Scotland and belongs to the St Regulus Ladies Club at St Andrews. Greg hits the course much less now, as he is frustrated with his declining skills.

In 2 short years, they have traveled extensively beyond their weeks together in Scotland in the summer. Ocean voyages took them to the Bahamas, Caribbean, Hong Kong-Singapore, and Athens-Istanbul. River cruises down the Rhone in southern France and the Danube from Budapest to Munich were exciting as well. They especially enjoyed a week in Belfast in August 2024.



**Haggs Castle Golf Club,
Edinburgh, Scotland**



**Wine tasting at vineyard in
Southern France**



Belfast, Northern Ireland



Thailand

Learn Bridge in a Day

By Nancy Tessier

Thirteen tables of eager bridge students met recently to LEARN BRIDGE IN A DAY. The class was held at Lake Miona, arranged by our Education Coordinator Harry Messenheimer and taught by Life Master Cathy Fashingbauer, and each table had a “mentor” to help. Of course we had a spread of morning goodies and lunch was also provided. Good deal for \$15 including a book. I had a chance to chat with a few of the students and asked them....Why are you here?

I wanted to find something new to do
My parents played and always had fun so I wanted to learn this game
I played many years ago and need a refresher
My friend brought me
This is my 2nd attempt at learning bridge
I want to keep my mind active
My wife plays so I want to join the fun
I am new to the Villages and just learned samba so I thought I would try bridge
The challenge should hold off Alzheimer's
I need a new challenge
I saw the ad in the newspaper and thought it would be interesting
Golf is my priority but I need something to do at night

Did you know there are over 635 billion card possibilities?



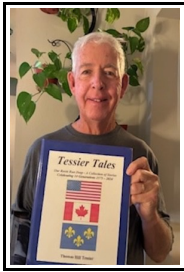
Harry and Cathy



Cathy and her students

HEY TOM, WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

By Nancy Tessier



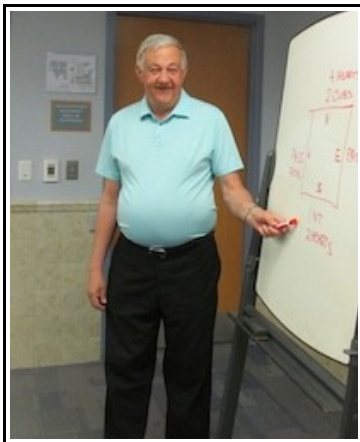
You may know Tom Tessier as the bridge club's treasurer. In 2024 he published a book entitled Tessier Tales, about his ancestors emigrating from France to Canada in 1664. They came to the United States in 1856 and worked in the mills in New York. The book covers 14 generations.

Tom said this would not have happened if it had not been for a writing group he joined in 2018 here in The Villages. "Members of my writing group helped me turn memories from scrapbooks and photo albums into stories. Writing is now my favorite hobby. "

The group always welcomes new members. It is called Memories to Memoirs, and they meet on zoom 1st and 3rd Tuesday mornings.

Condolences – Ron Burczewski

By Jennie Cleary



I received this note recently from Bonnie Orris regarding the passing of Ron Burczewski, a long time VDBC member:

"A quiet man, I got to know a bit about him as he played with JB Clark over the years. For years he rarely spoke, then he got so he would share stories with me when we were at his table . He was very smart, loved his family, had been a volunteer bridge teacher for many years at his local library before moving to the Villages, and loved The Phillies baseball team. I knew JB had died back in June. I was shocked to find that Ron died in July. I never saw it

mentioned in the weekly Blasts but maybe I missed it. Anyway I felt sad to think that he hadn't been remembered by the club when he played so regularly for the past 5 years, usually on Monday and Wednesday in the <1500 game. I thought it might be appropriate to mention his passing in an upcoming newsletter if it had not been announced before."

Thank you, Bonnie, for bringing this to the attention of the club. Our condolences go to Ron's friends and family. Ron will certainly be missed at the bridge tables. A link to Ron's obituary can be found here:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/352today/name/ronald-burczewski-obituary?id=58912954>

Sanibel Island Getaway

By Buck Buchanan

Mauri and I, a pair of Northerners, came south to Gainesville for school some sixty-odd years ago. Neither of us had ever set foot in Florida before, and we were eager to see what this new world looked like. In those days, we went sightseeing nearly every weekend—young and curious, filling our eyes with as much of Florida as we could.

One place people urged us to visit was Sanibel Island, a little jewel in the southwest part of the state. “The best shelling in Florida,” they said. They were right. Sanibel also has one of the most beautiful beaches you can imagine. Unlike most of Florida’s barrier islands that run north–south, Sanibel stretches east–west. That small quirk of geography makes all the difference. The Gulf currents sweep up from the south and deposit thousands upon thousands of shells along the southern beaches.

I’ll never forget our first day there. The beach was dotted with people down on their hands and knees, shuffling along in what they call the “Sanibel Stoop,” sifting through the shell piles. The shops nearby overflowed with seashells for sale, but the real treasures were the ones you bent down to discover yourself. But for Mauri and me, it wasn’t only the shells. Sanibel turned out to be one of the finest bird sanctuaries in the country. The J.N. “Ding” Darling Wildlife Refuge covers some 6,000 acres and, according to the brochures, shelters about 250 different species of birds. To us, it felt like every tree, shoreline, and stretch of sky was alive with wings.

We were only fledgling birdwatchers then—binoculars around our necks chasing the hope of 100 species on our life list. We never made it quite that far, but reaching the mid-80s felt like a triumph. What a joy it was to spot a great blue heron stalking the shallows, a roseate spoonbill flashing pink against the mangroves, or a bald eagle perched like a sentry high above the pines. The little ones delighted us too: the plovers, sandpipers, and terns that scurried along the water’s edge, as busy as any tourists with their shells.

The truth is, I can’t overstate it—the birdlife was abundant, colorful, and endlessly surprising. Every turn of the path brought something new: a flash of red from a cardinal, a snowy egret lifting gracefully into the air, or the chatter of warblers in the brush. For a young couple who couldn’t afford many entertainments, birdwatching was the richest pastime imaginable.

We loved Sanibel so much that we even went house-hunting. We found a lovely little beachfront cottage. Asking price: \$25,000. (This was the early ’60s.) We shook our heads—who could possibly pay that much for a house? I can’t help but wonder, all these years later, what that little place is worth now.

Nostalgia

We had two additional nostalgia submissions this month. Do you recognize this handsome young man?



And who is this cutie in the blue dress?



Answers at end of newsletter.

Book Review “The Secret Wife of Aaron Burr” by Susan Holloway Scott

By Buck Buchanan

Don't Miss the One!!!

Bobbie Meyers, who is one of my favorite co-conspirators when it comes to finding good books, called me last week and recommended “The Secret Wife of Aaron Burr”. She said I wouldn't be able to put it down. She was right!

This is a historical fiction based on the true story of Aaron Burr, a politician and hero of the American revolution, and his love affair with Mary, a slave and a woman of color. Mary, the main character in the book, was born Veeya in India, the child of an Indian maid who was raped by a British soldier. Her mother dies in childbirth, and Veeya is raised by her uncle. At age eight, Veeya is sold as a slave.

Her life from there is one slave situation after another. She works on a sugar plantation in the Caribbean, followed by a number of other slave situations. In the 1770s (this is a true situation), she gets purchased by a French woman living on New York. The French woman becomes enamored with Aaron Burr, who is a leading soldier in the Revolutionary War. Burr gets involved with Mary, and the remainder of the book focuses on Mary's relationship with Burr.

At any rate, the book is extremely readable, and I'm grateful to Bobby Meyers for recommending it. Have you read a book that might interest our readers might enjoy? I'd love to hear from you. You can either write a book review on your own, or you can send me the info and I'll write it

The Lighter Side **By Mary Jo Johnson**

You may not know this....Many inanimate things have a gender.

1. Ziploc bags are Male, because they hold everything in, but you can see right through them.
2. Copiers are Female, because once turned off, it takes a while to warm them up again. It's an effective reproductive device if the right buttons are pushed, but can wreak havoc if the wrong buttons are pushed.
3. A tire is Male, because it goes bald, and it's often over-inflated.
4. Sponges are Female, because they're soft, squeezable and retain water.
5. A hot Air Ballon is Male, because, to get it to go anywhere, you have to light a fire under it, and of course, there's the hot air part.
6. A Web page is Female, because it's always getting hit on.

7. A Subway is Male, because it uses the same old lines to pick people up.
8. An Hourglass is Female, because over time, the weight shifts to the bottom.
9. A Remote Control is Female. Ha! You thought it'd be male, didn't you? But consider this – it gives a man pleasure, he'd be lost without it, and while he doesn't always know the right buttons to push, he keeps trying!

Nostalgia Answers:

Tom Tessier and Sharon Swofford. Thanks for sharing!

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 Buck Buchanan at **BuckandMauri@aol.com**, Jennie Cleary at **wkc44@comcast.net**, or Nancy Tessier at **NancyBrooks2020@gmail.com**. Buck, 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.



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