The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club
Member News
November, 2026

Notes from the Editor: Welcome back to all our snowbird friends! You were missed this summer. The club continues to be having some temporary venue changes, so be vigilant and check the venue before each of your bridge games. This month in the Member News we enjoy meeting Ray Holzworth and Steve Shapiro. Harry Messenheimer, Education Coordinator, has a bidding quiz for us to try and gives us the dates of some bridge classes coming up. Buck Buchanan shares one of his good books, we have November Trivia from Nancy , Mary Jo has a really good joke for us this month, and we congratulate those who changed rank. Gary Segal will be giving some Civil Discourse presentations, and there is an Amazon adventure trip report. Wishing everyone a good month and a Happy Thanksgiving.

Meet the Players
By Nancy Tessier

Ray Holzworth



Say hello to **Ray Holzworth.** From his youth in Augusta, Georgia to college in Florida and a career in the semi-conductor industry with a master's degree in San Jose, Ray moved to The Villages in 2022. His first visit was in 2011 while searching ten places in Florida to retire. The Villages was the last one on the list and he chose our little piece of heaven.

Ray has three children.He enjoys bridge, pickleball, golf, chess and card games. And girlfriend Lorna, who he met on the pickleball court, keeps him grinning. He is

also accomplished: He and his father hiked (a segment at a time) the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to West Virginia. And a fun fact - in Georgia you could get a driver's license at the age of 12 if you "had to work on a farm". Well, a friend's dad got him a license so the boys could drive motorcycles…on the farm.

Steve Shapiro



Say hi to **Steve Shapiro**. You can find him at a bridge table…he plays often, having amassed over 2000 master points in a short period of time. A graduate of the University of Virginia, Steve was in business as a CPA.

His son lives in Tokyo, Japan (working with Amazon). A favorite travel destination, Steve enjoys the bamboo forests, ancient cities, and the bullet train whisking him by Mt. Fuji on the way to Kyoto. Or perhaps the 17 course meal at a 300 year old restaurant near Nagasaki. And enjoying his new granddaughter.

Steve also has this claim to fame - enjoying a "smoke" with Bruce Springsteen when he was 17.



A doting grandfather, Steve shows off his beautiful new granddaughter, Sena.

Fall 2026 Education Opportunities

Harry Messenheimer, Director of Education, will be leading the following classes in November. Classes will be held from 9:00 – 11:00 at O'Dell rec center, $5 at the door. Harry is a certified ACBL teacher, and these classes are a great learning opportunity.

November 3:	Visualizing the Unseen Hands
November 10:	Exercises in Declarer Play
November 17:	Exercises in Defense

November 24: Tips for Play and Defense.
If you have any questions, please contact Harry at
HarryMessenheimerBridge@gmail.com

VDBC Member Rank Achievements

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

Ruby Life Master Gordon Pfeiffer

Silver Life Master Patricia Thompson

Regional Master Saju Nurjehan
Scott Tirrell

Sectional Master Ellen Bernhagen

Club Master
Sherry Brumley
Carrie Harless
Robert Milan
Greg Needham
Jennifer Valdman

Junior Master
Trudy Bezrutch
Joe Bognaski
Oscar Ernst
Maureen Fors
Dan Healy
Robert Milan
Greg Needham
Joseph Sierra
Jennifer Valdman
Cindy Van Lom
Debbie Wilson

Alzheimer's Association
By Nancy Turner

We received the following from the Alzheimer's Association, for those who would like to know what their donation funded:

DO WHAT YOU
LOVE TO END ALZ
Alzheimer's Association

Nancy, your Do What You Love to End ALZ™ event may be behind you, but the

impact you made is still very much alive. We wanted to reach out with something simple: thank you.

What you did, choosing an activity you love and turning it into a fundraiser for the fight against Alzheimer's, is not a small thing. Every dollar you raised is working right now. It's funding researchers who are inching closer to treatments that can slow, stop, and one day prevent this disease. It's keeping our 24/7 Helpline staffed around the clock, available in more than 200 languages, for caregivers who don't know where else to turn at two in the morning. It's supporting families in your community who are navigating one of the most difficult journeys a family can face.

In 2025, the Alzheimer's Association committed a record $112.2 million to research, the most in our history. For the first time, there is now a blood test for Alzheimer's disease cleared by the FDA, a milestone that changes how early we can detect and act on the disease. None of this happens without people like you.

We are grateful beyond words. The fight continues, and you are part of why we believe we can win it.

When you're ready to rejoin the fight, we'll welcome you back. There's always a place for you at Do What You Love to End ALZ.

With deep gratitude,

Your Do What You Love to End ALZ Coaching Team dowhatyoulove@alz.org

Book Review – A Change in Altitude, by Anita Shreve
By Buck Buchanan

A really good book. Perhaps the best I've read this year. It starts out with three young couples; a Dutch couple, an English couple, and an an American couple. The American couple is comprised of a male medical doctor named Patrick who has been assigned to Kenya in Africa to help with tropical diseases, and his wife and the main person in the book, a woman named Margaret.

The three couples decide to undertake a climb up Mount Kenya, the highest mountain in Africa. Margaret is the least experienced climber and is keeping the others slowed down. During a harrowing and difficult ascent on a glacier, a horrific and fatal accident occurs, claiming a life. The other climbers, including Margaret's husband Patrick to some degree appear to blame Margaret for the death. Most of

the rest of the book is the relationship between Patrick and Margaret. Reviewers have called the book a “dramatic saga”, and “part whodunit, part adventure story”. Excellent book.

Condolences

The Club is saddened to hear of the October 14 passing of MaryAnn DeRoche. A service was held at on October 24 at 10:00 at St. Teresa's Church, Belleview Florida.

The Club is also saddened to learn of the October 15 passing of Elaine F. LaCroix. The obituary can be found at this link: https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/concordmonitor/name/elaine-lacroix-obituary?id=62817448

The Villages Sectional at Sea 2027

A reminder that a new Sectional at Sea will be taking place February 15-21, 2027 on the Sky Princess. Ports of call are in the Eastern Caribbean, including Celebration Key, Amber Cove, and Grand Turk. **See flyer at the end of the newsletter for details.** Prices are all inclusive....drink package, gratuities, taxes, port charges, travel insurance, and Wifi.

First 50 to sign up will get free round trip transfers to Port Canaveral! For more information, contact:

John Sobel at Go Away Travel 954-349-2800 or email BestBridgeAtSea@GoAwayTrav.com

Thanks, Marilyn Williams

Teaching Game – Less than 20 MP

The club used to offer a <20 MP teaching game Thursday mornings. It is a wonderful way for new players to get a feel for playing the game, and players are allowed to ask questions and receive a little help from the Director. In addition, a short lesson is given prior to the game. And, masterpoints are given out! Attendance had dropped off during the summer, so the game was discontinued, but if there is enough interest, hopefully it will resume this Fall. If you have interest, please contact Harry Messenheimer, our Education Chair, at HarryMessenheimerBridge@gmail.com

Bidding Quiz

By Harry Messenheimer

South Deals
N-S Vul



♠ A 9
♥ —
♦ Q 10 7 4 2
♣ A K Q 10 8 3

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
			1 ♣
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	4 ♦	Pass	?

It looks like you have a sure slam in diamonds, perhaps even a grand. What do you bid now?

Answer: You don't know if partner has both the ace and king of diamonds. Bid **five no trump** to ask her. She will bid 7 diamonds if the answer is yes. Otherwise she will stop at six.

This is known as the **Grand Slam Force.** It has nothing to do with ace or key card asking conventions. It applies when you only need to know if partner has 2 of the top 3 honors in the trump suit.

North bids 7 diamonds with this hand:

♠ 7 3
♥ K J 10 4 2
♦ A K J 8
♣ J 6

Source: Bridge columnist Steve Becker

Exploring the Peruvian Amazon: An Eco-Cruise to Remember

By Jennie Cleary

My husband Bill and I recently took a riverboat cruise through the Peruvian Amazon, exploring the waterways of the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve with Aqua Expeditions. Our small ship carried about 30 passengers and a crew of 28.

Each day brought a new adventure. We headed out in small, motorized skiffs to explore the river and surrounding jungle, searching for wildlife, watching birds, fishing for piranha, visiting Amazon villages and markets, kayaking, and taking walks through the rainforest. Our guides were local men who had grown up in the small villages along the river and later received formal training as naturalists. They were terrific at spotting wildlife, often seeing birds and animals that we would never have noticed on our own.

We saw a large variety of wildlife, including pink river dolphins, two types of monkeys, sloths, giant river otters, caimans, and an incredible assortment of colorful birds. The pink dolphins are endangered fresh water dolphins found in the Amazon. They get their pink color from visible blood vessels near the skin's surface. They are beautiful and graceful, and fun to watch in the water. Our favorite moment was spotting an anaconda! The anacondas are the largest and heaviest snakes in the world growing up to 30 feet long and weighing up to 550 pounds. They kill their prey by wrapping their bodies around the prey and squeezing until the animal stops breathing.

There was never a dull moment back on the ship, either. Our onboard activities included a cooking class, a lecture and tasting devoted to chocolate (which, much like wine, is graded according to its qualities and characteristics), and a class in making pisco sours, Peru's famous cocktail. We were also entertained by our guides, who turned out to be talented musicians. They performed as a group called the *Chunky Monkeys*, and we had a lot of fun listening to their music along with some dancing and cocktails.

But one of the most fascinating aspects of the cruise was learning about the culture and traditions of the people living in the small Amazon villages. Our guides shared stories about how villagers make their living, their beliefs in shamans and traditional healers (and their fear of modern medicine), and the superstitions that have been passed down through generations. For example, we learned that a pregnant woman who is close to giving birth should avoid looking at a sloth, in case her baby is born looking like one!

We visited several villages, and the children ran out to greet us, and our group gave them gifts of school supplies passengers had been encouraged to bring. There are no roads in the area, everything is accessible only by boat, so if there is no school in

a small village, the kids travel by small motorized canoes to the nearest school. Families appear to live off the land, eating fish, fruit, some vegetables they may grow themselves, and making an occasional 2 day canoe trip to the nearest town to stock up on supplies such as fuel for the boats.

We enjoyed the sense of adventure, cultural immersion and wildlife exploration on this cruise, and would consider using this tour company again.



Sunrise in the Amazon



Bill enjoying a pisco sour



Village children

Civil Discourse Presentations
By Gary Segal

As part of Civil Discourse, I will be delivering the following presentations. Topics are:

1. Man's Search for Meaning – Viktor Frankl was a concentration camp survivor, who lost his entire family during WWII. This presentation will focus on his development of Logotherapy, which he found most beneficial in explaining why some survived the camps and some did not. Logotherapy is also an

effective psychotherapy when working with potential suicide patients – and as a means of keeping them alive and leading to a vibrant life.

a. The presentation will be delivered on:

i. Monday, November 23, Hacienda Rec Center at 10:00 AM, repeated

ii.Monday, November 30, Colony Rec Center at 10:00 AM

2. Self- Esteem in Children and its Manifestation into Adulthood and Later Years – This is the culmination of 7 years of research into Gary Segal's PhD work. The presentation will focus on how Self-Esteem is first formed in adolescence and how it may change over the lifetime. Participants will have an opportunity to map their own self-esteem development from early childhood through the years to where you are today.

a. The presentation will be delivered on:

i. Wednesday, January 6, Everglades Rec Center at 10:00 AM

I hope you can attend and bring a friend too.

November Trivia

By Nancy Tessier

Black Friday/Cyber Monday

In 1869 there was a gold market crash and it was nicknamed "Black Friday". Then in 1950 a huge after Thanksgiving traffic jam was called "Black Friday" by the Philadelphia press. It was not until the 1980's that Hess Department Store in Allentown, Pa. made the phrase stick as it referred to being in the "black" with holiday sales.

On November 28, 2005 a press release from the National Retail Federation used the term "cyber Monday" to promote on-line shopping. I guess it worked - Amazon is thriving. I am waiting for a delivery right now.

November Dates

November 1 is National Cinnamon Day and World Vegan Day
November 3 is National Sandwich Day
November 4 is National candy day
November 5 is National Donut Day
November 6 is National nachos Day
November 21 is National gingerbread Cookie Day
(A month filled with lots of eating)
And of course Thanksgiving
Monopoly was introduced in 1935

The first Mercedes was driven in 1900
In 1755 Lisbon had a huge earthquake killing over 100,000 people
1989 saw the Berlin Wall come down
In 1871 Stanley found Livingston
1978 The mass suicide of over 900 people at Jim Jones People's Temple in Jamestown, Guyana
Elizabeth married Philip in 1947
The book Black Beauty hit the stores In 1877
In 1871 British sailors threw over 150 slaves overboard due to lack of drinking water-insurance proceeds were paid for "drowning" but not "death while on ship"

In 1924 the first Macy's Day Parade was held with live zoo animals
Princeton played Yale in 1870 for the first football game

The Lighter Side

By Mary Jo Johnson

A young Naval Officer was in a terrible car accident, but due to the heroics of the hospital staff, the only permanent injury was the loss of one ear. Since he wasn't physically impaired he remained in the military and eventually became an Admiral. However, during his career he was always sensitive about his appearance. One day the Admiral was interviewing two Navy Master Chiefs and a Marine Gunnery Sergeant for his personal staff. The first Master Chief was a Surface Navy type and it was a great interview. At the end of the interview, the Admiral asked him, "Do you notice anything different about me?" The Master Chief answered, "Why yes. I couldn't help but notice you are missing your starboard ear, so I don't know if that impacts your hearing on that side". The Admiral got very angry at this lack of tact and threw him out of his office. The next candidate, an Aviation Master Chief, when asked this same question, answered, "Well yes, you seem to be short one ear." The Admiral threw him out also. The third interview as with the Marine Gunnery Sergeant. He was articulate, extremely sharp, and seemed to know more than the two Master Chiefs put together. The admiral wanted this guy, but went ahead with the same question. "Do you notice anything different about me?" To his surprise, the Gunnery Sergeant said, "Yes. You wear contact lenses." The Admiral was impressed and thought to himself, what an incredible tactful Marine. "And how do you know that?" the Admiral asked, The Gunny replied, "Well sir, it's pretty hard to wear glasses with only one ear."

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? Contact Jennie Cleary at **wkc44@comcast.net** or Nancy Tessier at **NancyBrooks2020@gmail.com** Nancy and Jennie are also able to help with write-ups if you send us the basics.



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CAT	CABIN	DOUBLE	SINGLE
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Valid passport required. A deposit of $500 per cabin is required and is fully refundable until the final payment due date of October 31, 2026. Cancellations made between November 1-30, 2026 will be subject to a 50% penalty. Cancellations made between December 1-31, 2026 will be subject to a 75% penalty. Cancellations made on or after January 1, 2027 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 $750 per person, non-refundable bridge fee will apply.