



The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club Member News October, 2025

Message from the Editor: The October issue of Member News features a profile of Bob Matthews. Bob was President of our club for several years. Many of us remember what a great job he did, particularly during the Pandemic - we always looked forward to his weekly messages. We have several interesting trip reports, and our monthly humor from Mary Jo Johnson. Last month we asked people to send in pictures of themselves back from their "younger days". You'll see the pictures, and names are identified at the end of the newsletter. Buck wrote a wonderful article on the flowers we so much enjoy in The Villages. Also, the club is saddened to hear that Tim Pederson passed away after a lengthly battle with ALS. Details of the church service are listed later in the newsletter.

Bob Matthews By Nancy Tessier

Why do all Englishmen sound so dignified?



One who might meet the standards of a gentleman may just be Bob Matthews.

He hails originally from Derbyshire which is situated in the midlands of England. In his many faceted careers he taught fine arts, ceramics and math and met his wife Janet while working at the same school. Together they share four children who are spread, along with nine grandchildren between England, Florida and South Carolina.

Along the way Bob was 'recruited' into the British army and

was still serving when he arrived in the United State in 1999. Following retirement from his military role he moved on to fly for a medivac organization based in Florida.

Bob and Janet lived in an RV for eight years traveling through several of the southern states before they 'found' The Villages looking for a place to have lunch.....and long story short, (one we all know), 4 days later they purchased a home here.

Bob assists Janet when she teaches the Thursday morning bridge class at Truman. They also enjoy when possible, working as bridge directors for different cruise lines. Their last voyage was from New Zealand to Bangkok stopping off in Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and several other countries along the way.

Their next planned trip will be the Panama Canal and Central American destinations.

Always with a smile, Bob is truly a gentleman to know.

Condolences

Our friend and bridge club member Tim Pederson passed away on Wednesday, September 10, after a hard fought battle with ALS. We received the following message from his wife Joan. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Tim's family and friends.

"Some of you may not have heard that Tim ended his 7-year battle with ALS on Sept 10.

He was under hospice care at home for the last 4 1/2 months for which I am extremely grateful to them especially for the meds that helped with pain. I am very happy he is in heaven with Jesus and is whole and ecstatically happy!

I am also very grateful for all those who helped us in various ways along this journey...too many to name, but you know who you are, and I pray God rewards you for such loving kindness."

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE memorial service will be held October 2, 2025 at:

Live Oaks Community Church
C.R. 103 (Behind the Walmart on 466)
Oxford (The Villages) FL

2:00 PM with reception following.

In lieu of flowers, a contribution can be made to:

I AM ALS
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
P.O.B. 14135
Washington D.C. 20044

“I look forward to seeing you but, if you are unable to attend in person, you may click on a link I send you on the morning of the service and live stream it into your home.”

Titanium Bike Needs New Home

Buck Buchanan

Last Month, Buck Buchanan mentioned he had a bike that he wanted to give away, and that he would do so provided someone made a donation to some charitable organization. Buck says that Steve Shapiro recently acquired the bike, and made a very generous donation to the Wildwood food pantry. Buck has another bike, (a high end titanium model – Serotta Concours, photo below). Please contact Buck if you are interested and would make a charitable contribution.



Trip Reports

Erlich-Becker British Isles Cruise

Merle and Barry Erlich and Gail and Steve Becker journeyed to the British Isles on a Viking Ocean Cruise in August. They started out with a three days in London where the Beckers had time to visit with their son and daughter-in-law before embarking to other sites in England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and Bergen, Norway. Although there was only one sea day, they did find some time to play a few hands of bridge before afternoon tea!



Johnson/Angione Cruise

Mary Jo Johnson and Dale Angione recently returned from a 10 day cruise on the *BREAKAWAY* of the Norwegian Cruise Line that left from Trieste, Italy. There were no sea days and every morning the ship was docked at a new destination where passengers could disembark to explore and enjoy interesting architecture, culture, historic sights and food.

The ports of call were Split, Croatia where many scenes from the series, Game of Thrones were filmed; Day 2 was the walled city of Dubrovnik, Croatia; Corfu, Greece was the next stop where the 120 room Achilleion Palace (including 2 outbuildings) was built by Empress Elizabeth of Austria; Messina, Sicily was the next port; then it was on to Naples; Rome; Pisa/Livorno/Pompeii; Cannes was to be the next port but high winds prevented the ship from leaving the port so

unfortunately they didn't get to see where the Cannes Film Festival is held; LaPalma, Mallorca was the next to the last stop; and the cruise ended in Barcelona, Spain.

They met many interesting people from all walks of life and locations.....Australia, Germany, Israel, Canada, England, Ireland, other states, etc.

Dining in the Manhattan Room the very first night, a couple was seated next to them. MJ and Dale introduced themselves and said that they were from FL, to which the other couple replied that so were they. We went on to say The Villages, FL and you guessed it.....the other couple was from The Villages also. It truly is a small world.

Below you can see the ladies in Corfu and in the Ice Bar on the Breakaway.



Two Million Flowers!! By Buck Buchanan



Mauri and I both love the flowers here in The Villages. The other evening, we took a drive up to Glenview Country Club. Along the road in, and especially around Savannah Circle, the beds of flowers were simply spectacular—splashes of color everywhere you looked. Bright impatiens in every shade, cheerful marigolds, petunias, and begonias—it was like driving through a living painting.

It made me wonder: who is responsible for all this beauty? So I picked up the phone and called The Villages main office. Before long, I found myself speaking with Chris Ryzoc, the Landscape Manager for The Villages District Property Management. He couldn't have been nicer, and he gave me a detailed look behind the scenes of this enormous operation.

Here's what I learned:

- Four Planting Seasons. January, April, July, and October. Each season brings a fresh wave of color—half a million flowers every time. That's where the “two million flowers” number comes from over the course of a year.
- Who Plants Them. The Villages employees don't do the planting themselves. Instead, five different contractors each manage a designated area. They even

follow rules about design—taller flowers in the middle, smaller ones along the edges, so everything looks just right.

- The Growers. Beneath the contractors are the growers and subcontractors who actually plant the seeds and raise the seedlings until they're ready to be planted around our community.

- Water and Weather. Every flowerbed is irrigated with buried pipes. I had always assumed the summer heat was the biggest challenge for these plants, but Chris set me straight. He told me frost is the real enemy. Just two or three nights of frost in the winter can kill off dozens of flowers. Irrigation, as it turns out, can make all the difference.

So the next time you're out for an evening drive or a morning walk, take a moment to really look around. Whether it's a bed of pink impatiens glowing in the shade, or a burst of red salvia catching the sun, know that all of it is carefully planned and tended.

I hope you enjoy the two million annual flowers in The Villages as much as Mauri and I do. They truly make this place special.

Happy Birthday

By Bill Cleary

I decided it was time to share some information about Jennie Cleary (Editor of the Member News) and my wife.



Jennie is from Rochester, NY. She attended Monroe Community College and Clarkson University on a scholarship and she received a degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering.

Her career was with the NYSDOT working in the Construction, Design, and Traffic Divisions, and later heading up the IT Division.

One of her claims to fame was that she served as the first female Engineer-in-Charge of a construction job for New York State DOT.

Jennie and I were married in 1985. We lived out in the country near Sackets Harbor NY. Jennie became curious about what went on at an Archery shop near our house. It didn't take her long to join the Archery league and later became successful at various archery tournaments.

After Archery, Golf became her passion. More than once I would come home and find areas on the lawn where she had shoveled away the snow, so that she could

practice her golf swing. Playing at our local country club she twice became Club Champion and Watertown City Champion. After moving to The Villages, golf was on her menu for a while, but then she discovered "Bridge". She is a student of the game like I don't believe. She loves the challenge of the game as well as all of the Bridge people.

If you see Jennie on September 30th, wish her Happy Birthday.

Book Review - The River is Waiting, by Wally Lamb

By Buck Buchanan

About twenty years ago, I read two wonderful books by Wally Lamb — "She's Come Undone" and "I Know This Much is True." Both were unforgettable. After that, I lost track of him. I figured maybe he'd retired... or worse. But it turns out he's still writing, and his latest book just got a big recommendation from Queen Oprah herself.

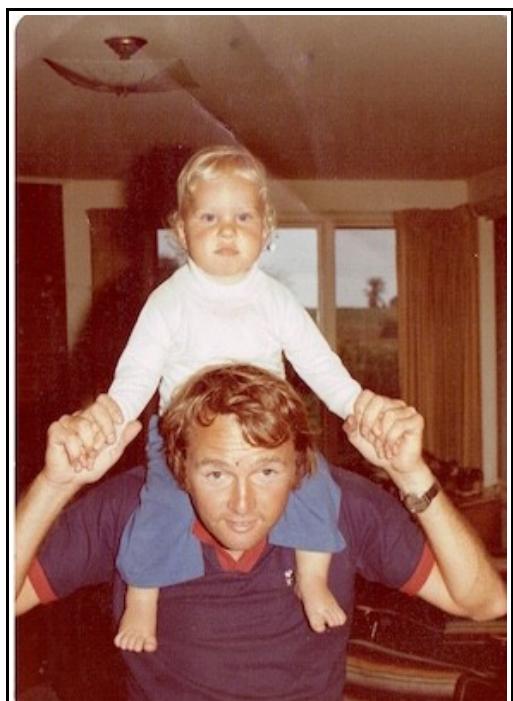
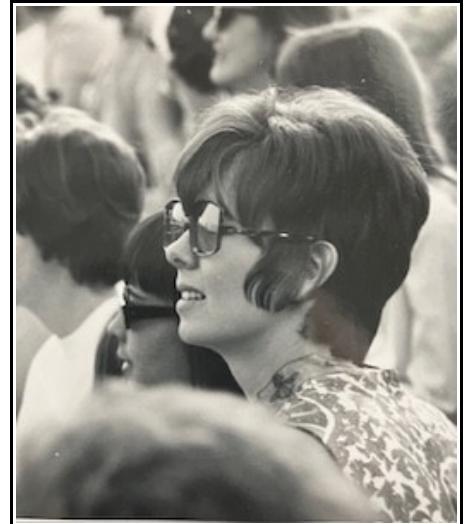
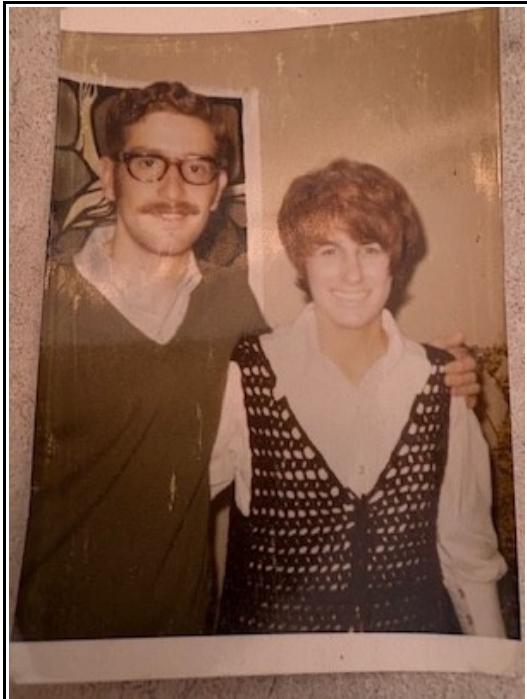
It's called "The River is Waiting", and let me tell you, it's quite a read. I should mention up front — this isn't one of those light beach books. Parts of it are pretty heavy, and there are a few scenes that are, well... let's just say they aren't for the faint of heart. But if you like a story that really pulls you in and makes you think, this one fits the bill. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if it ends up winning an armful of awards, including Book of the Year.

The story follows a young couple from Connecticut, Corbin and Emily, who are raising twin boys. Sadly, things take a tragic turn when Corbin struggles with addiction to drugs and alcohol. There is a terrible accident, and Corbin ends up serving three years in prison.

A good part of the book follows Corbin during his time behind bars — and that's all I'll say about the plot. I don't want to spoil anything. One more thing — before you dive in, you might want to look up a review on Amazon by a woman named *Nilufer Ozmekik*. It's a bit long, but she really captures the heart of the book. If you decide to read "The River is Waiting", let me know what you think. I'd love to hear your take on it.

Nostalgia

Can you guess who the following members are? Answers at the end of the newsletter!



□





The Lighter Side

By Mary Jo Johnson

If a bottle of poison reaches its expiration date, is it more poisonous or is it no longer poisonous

Which letter is silent in the word “Scent”, the S or the C

Do twins ever realize that one of them is unplanned?

Every time you clean something; you just make something else dirty.

The word “swims” upside-down is still “swims”.

If people evolved from monkeys, why are monkeys still around?

Why is there a 'D' in fridge, but not in refrigerator?

As I've grown older, I've learned that pleasing everyone is impossible, but pissing everyone off is a piece of cake!

I'm responsible for what I say, not for what you understand.

My tolerance for idiots is extremely low these days. I used to have some immunity built up, but obviously, there's a new strain out there.

It's not my age that bothers me, it's the side effects.

As I watch this generation try and rewrite history, I'm sure of one thing: it will be

misspelled and have no punctuation.

As I've gotten older, people think I've become lazy. The truth is I'm just being more energy-efficient.

I want to be 18 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas.

My mind is like an internet browser. At least 18 open tabs, 3 of them are frozen, and I have no clue where the music is coming from!

Hard to believe I once had a phone attached to a wall, and when it rang, I picked it up without knowing who was calling.

My wife says I keep pushing her buttons. If that were true, I would have found mute by now.

Nostalgia Answers

Top Row – left to right: Barry and Merle Erlich; Marilyn Williams, circa 1970

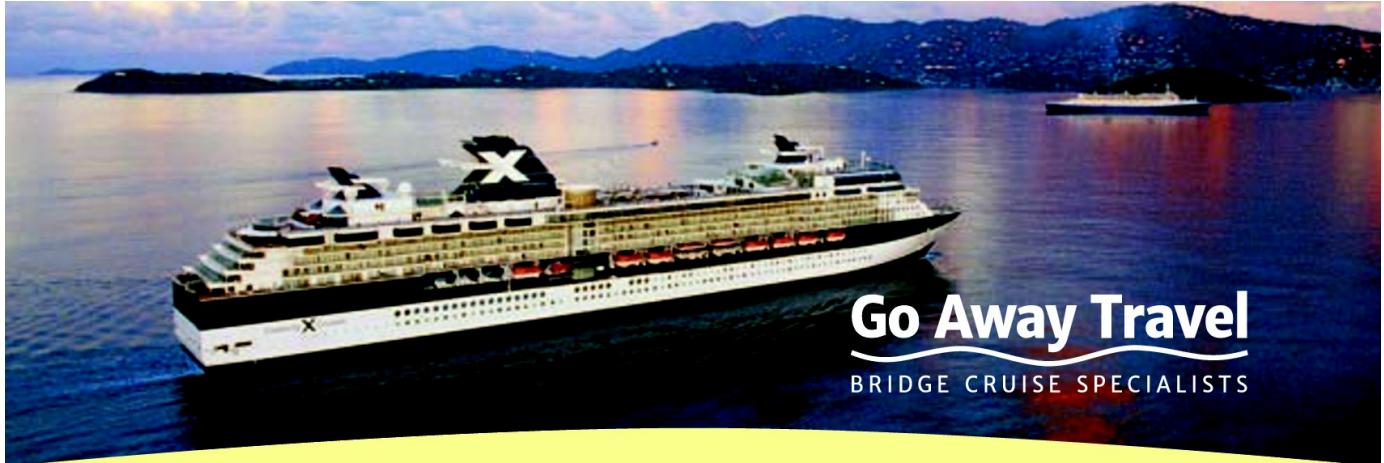
Second Row – left to right: Jon Williams, R&R in Honolulu during Viet Nam war; Bill Cleary

Third Row – Buck and Mauri Buchanan

Fourth Row – Jan Masterson; Nancy Tessier

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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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**

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.