



The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club Member News

September, 2026

Notes from the Editor: As summer winds down, things will start getting a little busier with the return of our snowbird friends. The club will also be having some temporary venue changes, so don't forget to check the schedules and make your bridge reservations. This month in the Member News we enjoy meeting Linda Meng. We have a challenging bridge play of the hand quiz from Harry Messenheimer, our Education Chair. We have our monthly trivia from Nancy Tessier, humor from Mary Jo Johnson, and a book review from Buck Buchanan. Nancy did nice a follow-up article on The Little Dog Ranch. There is a new bridge cruise coming out in 2027 – see flyer for details. We also have a list of Rank changes. Kudos to all who have advanced in rank.

Meet the Players – Linda Meng By Nancy Tessier



Say hello to Linda Meng.

I recently stopped by the Monday evening lesson for newer bridge players (under 150 master points). Bruce Thiher would be teaching the avid students about leading your partner's bid suit, etc. As Bruce said, his goal is to keep lessons clear, concise and direct. Like a good school teacher's goal - master one point and then move on to the next. He finds Monday night attendees to be enthusiastic and eager to master the fine points of this complicated and challenging game.

Linda Meng and I then chatted. She has been playing about 18 months and is "hooked" and "addicted" to the game. A friend had just finished one of Deb Brunoehler's classes and said it was "lots of fun". Linda then started her bridge career. She has already accumulated 65 master points. And she plays three or four times a week but never online. Linda is also a mentee in our mentor/protege

program. The social aspect of the game makes her happy. She enjoys all the friendly, smart and witty people she meets.

Linda grew up in Florida but lived in Colorado 13 years prior to moving to The Villages 14 years ago. She recently went on a 17 family member cruise. And way back when, she was a deputy sheriff (yep, gun toter) in Manatee County. Her favorite arrest was a man who left his wallet at the scene of the crime. And high speed chases with lights and sirens, were one of her favorite events.

VDBC Member Rank Achievements

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

Silver Life Master Dave Winer

Bronze Life Master Jennie Cleary
Susan Krier

Regional Master Ken Clites
Sharlene Dillon
Wade Dillon
Paul Glover
Carole Raver

Sectional Master Brian Bellardo
Marybeth Harris
Hank Pitts

Club Master Steve Adamson
Joel Matalon
Cindy Morozko
Harry Oslislo

Junior Master Lynda Colaizzi

Play of the Hand Quiz

By Harry
Messenheimer

Grand Slam: 7 ♣ by South

♠ J 10 8
♥ A 6 3
♦ A Q J 9
♣ K J 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A K 9 7
♥ K 5
♦ 10
♣ A Q 10 9 6 4

Opening lead is ♥J.

Opponents were silent during the auction.

How do you plan to play spades and/or diamonds to come home with the 13th trick?

Solution: You have a 60% chance to make it. After drawing trumps, play the ace and king of

spades. If the queen drops doubleton or singleton (10% chance) you are home.

If the queen did not drop, play a diamond to the ace. Then play diamonds, taking the 50% ruffing finesse against East's hoped-for king. If it works, you are home.

Note the importance of giving yourself the extra chance rather than choosing a finesse at the outset.

The Villages Sectional at Sea 2027

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 per person, and include the following:

- Unlimited beverages
- Unlimited casual and specialty dining meals
- Wi-fi (4 devices)
- \$100 per person shore excursion credit
- Crew appreciation (gratuities)
- Unlimited digital photo images
- Travel protection

First 50 to sign up will get free round trip transfers to Port Canaveral! These cruises are a great way to obtain silver points, and offer the chance to socialize and relax with other bridge enthusiasts. For more information, contact: John Sobel at Go Away Travel 954-349-2800 or email BestBridgeAtSea@GoAwayTrav.com

We Did It! - 2026 Top Ten Fundraiser for ACBL



The Little Dog Ranch - A Visit That Touched My Heart

By Nancy Tessier

I recently visited Cheryl Garrity who operates this wonderful dog rescue/hospice/re-home organization out of her home in Fruitland Park. To say I was amazed would be understating the wonderful work she does. A non-profit organization, she “saves” small dogs - most with health issues or in their senior years. They come from shelters, people who have moved, strays, people who have passed and vets who refuse to “put them down”. Cheryl comes to their rescue.

There are currently 23 “kids” as she calls them. She lost Bongo, a blind baby, yesterday. Lily is getting accustomed to her new home as a 3 day new resident. Pita has been there since May of 2022. And everyone gets along - I guess older dogs don’t care about arguments.

Food bowls are lined up with a name on each and any dietary specialities. Breakfast is at 8:30 and dinner at 4:30. Pill boxes are labeled. Cards about medical care are lined up. On her volunteer list are 43 “cuddlers” who visit daily. “Wranglers” organize the two daily cuddle sessions (12:30 to 2:00 and 2:30 to 4:00).

Some pooches are re-homed - like Zuli who had no legs after being neglected and never groomed. The mats killed her legs but she has found a new home with a man with mobility issues.

And 5 chickens. And a cat named Toby that the vet refused to euthanize. He “supervises” from high atop a counter. Donations are gratefully accepted. Call Cheryl at (970)-875-4316. Her non-profit number is 87-4804231.



September Trivia

By Nancy Tessier

Let's talk September. The kids are back to school and it is almost harvest time. Fall is here and so are some fun facts.

September is derived from the Latin word *septem* meaning seven. It was the 7th month of the old Roman calendar. In 1752 they skipped the dates from September 3 to 14 to properly align the current calendar with the sun's activities. I guess a lot of people missed their birthday that year.

We celebrate Labor day on the first Monday and Patriot Day on the 11th. The 27th is famous for Mexican independence and the founding of Google. September 11 will also start the Jewish holiday Rosh Hashanah (celebration of their new year).

And famous people will also celebrate: Beyoncé on the 4th, Prince Harry on the 15th and Will Smith on the 25th. Freddie Mercury was born on the 5th.

The birthstone of the month is the sapphire famous for the blue color. But it also comes in yellow, orange, green brown and purple. I like blue the best like Princess Diana's famous engagement ring.

And don't forget, September is National Happy Cat Month.

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

September 19th By Nancy Tessier

Why is September 19 special? It is TALK LIKE A PIRATE DAY.....HAR HAR HAR



The most famous pirate was Edward Teach, known as Blackbeard. He was “active” in the West Indies and American coast in the early 1700’s. Born in England around 1680, he made a name for himself with his large stature, wild eyes and rugged dirty appearance. guess they didn’t have washing machines on ships in those days.

He captured the French slave ship La Concorde and renamed her Queen Anne’s Revenge, flying the skull flag and a blood red flag on the mast.

It was then armed with 40 guns and 300 men after kicking the slaves off at port. He was feared and ruthless. He would put smoking fuses in his thick

black beard to make it appear he was on fire with smoke encircling his thick tangled hair.

In 1718 he was killed in battle (20 stab wounds and 5 gunshots). His head was placed on the mast of the ship until reaching shore where it was placed on a pike at the entrance of Chesapeake Bay as a warning. His days of roaming the seas were over but the legacy lives on as the most famous pirate.

Still want to be a pirate for Halloween?

Belated Birthday Wishes

We wish **Gigi Letendre** a belated Happy Birthday! Gigi was 97 years old on July 22nd. Gigi is a member who plays duplicate bridge two or three times per week, in both the 1500 limited games as well as the open games. We wish Gigi a wonderful upcoming year, and much joy at the bridge table with her partners and friends!

Book Review – Atmosphere by Taylor Jenkins Reid By Buck Buchanan

“Atmosphere” was one of my favorite books this past year. It’s about eight fledgling astronauts in the space shuttle program in the early ‘80s. The book describes the

training undertaken by the astronauts and also gets into the personal relationships of the trainees. There is discussion of the pressure of historic missions, sexism in the 1980's workplace, and personal sacrifices. This book has been a popular choice for book clubs since it was released last year. Highly recommended!!!

Tips to Speed up Slow Play



1. Once the auction is complete, if you are on lead, select your lead and place it face down on the table before managing the Bridgmate or filling in your scorecard with the contract – you can do your paperwork while dummy is being arranged and declarer is planning their play.
2. Save post mortems and discussions of the hand for after the game.
3. Play in tempo
4. After the board is finished, shuffle and put cards back in the tray before writing down scores.

A correction...or not

By Nancy Tessier



I like to keep facts correct, but should we print a correction? Recently a fellow bridge player called my attention to a "mistake" in the newsletter. It was in reference to the Ed Sullivan Show. I said it was on the air in the 1970's - she disagreed saying it was the 60's.

Actually the U.S.'s longest running variety show aired in June of 1948 and ran through 1971. Edward Sullivan was born in New York on September 28, 1901 and died from throat cancer on October 13, 1974. He was a life long smoker. In high school he was a gifted athlete. He was a columnist in New York and Chicago before going into radio. And then he had his own variety show where he would "only engage performers on the basis of their talent." Buddy Holly and The Crickets aired in 1957, and The Beatles in 1963. After getting to know Elvis Presley he claimed "this is a real decent, fine boy".

So to set the record strait, who is correct about the "mistake" in our newsletter?

BE THE FIRST PERSON TO FIND SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO BE "CORRECTED" IN THIS ARTICLE. THE FIRST PERSON TO CONTACT ME WILL WIN A WONDERFUL PRIZE. MY EMAIL IS NANCYBROOKS2020@GMAIL.COM.

Condolences

The club is saddened to hear that Dave Stentz, a longtime member and former Board member, passed away recently. Dave's daughter is having a Celebration of Life for him on Thursday, September 3 from 4 – 7 PM. It will be held at 3233 Hampton Lane, The Villages.

The club would also like to share this note from Adrienne Koltenuk regarding Jeff Koltenuk:

I would like to thank so many of you in the bridge club for your attendance at Jeff's funeral/Celebration of Life and your thoughtful cards and notes sent to me after his passing. In addition, I need to thank you for the kindness and thoughtfulness you gave to Jeff and me during what turned out to be his final months. Continuing to be able to play bridge is what kept Jeff's happiness level high in spite of his health. I will forever be grateful for your support.

Sincerely,
Adrienne Koltenuk

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 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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GO AWAY TRAVEL PRESENTS:

THE VILLAGES DUPLICATE PLAYERS SECTIONAL AT SEA

February 15-21, 2027

Please join us as we sail round-trip Port Canaveral to the Eastern Caribbean on the Sky Princess. 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:

Port Canaveral ♦ Celebration Key ♦ Day at Sea ♦ Amber Cove
♦ Grand Turk ♦ Day at Sea ♦ Port Canaveral



SPECIAL OFFER ONLY FOR RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGES:

**THE FIRST 50 TO SIGN-UP WILL GET
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Call/Text: 954-349-2800
E-Mail: BestBridgeAtSea@GoAwayTrav.com

CAT	CABIN	DOUBLE	SINGLE
MB	MINI SUITE	\$2,800	\$4,275
Mini Suite is 243 sq. feet with a 36 sq. foot balcony and a tub/shower combo.			
BB	BALCONY	\$2,250	\$3,250
Balcony is 174 sq. feet with a 36 sq. foot balcony and a stall shower.			

***Prices are per person, cruise only, based on either single or double occupancy and include the following:**

Unlimited beverages, unlimited casual and specialty dining meals, Wi-Fi (4 devices), \$100 per person shore excursion credit, crew appreciation (gratuities), unlimited digital photo images, and travel protection.

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.