



The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club Member News August, 2025

Notes from the Editor By Jennie Cleary

One of the most interesting things about being involved in our VDBC Member News, is getting to know our members. We have such a terrific variety of backgrounds and talents! This month we feature an interesting profile of Marc Rissman, a published poet. We also have Nancy's bios on Harle Phelps and Doug Smith. There is a short bidding quiz, and one of Buck's book reviews for all of you readers. And Diana Richards' son has published a mystery novel available on Amazon! As always, we thank our intrepid reporters Buck Buchanan and Nancy Tessier for their efforts in reporting member news, and coming up with interesting articles. If you have a special anniversary or birthday coming up, a trip report, or any other item you'd like to share with your bridge friends, please send in your info to Buck, Nancy or myself. Email addresses are at the end of the newsletter.

Marc Rissman



Many of us know Marc Rissman from seeing him at the bridge table. But we keep finding out more about him each time we talk with him. So how did he get started playing bridge? He walked in on a lunchtime bridge game at work and became interested in what they were playing. His boss then taught him how to play and ended up taking him to some tournaments for beginners. Marc continued on with bridge, and has now reached the rank of Bronze Life Master.

Marc is also a talented writer who won the national contest for poetry sponsored by the ACBL Bridge Bulletin and has seen several of his poems published in the Daily Sun. He is the coordinator of the Villages Poetry Club and has published two books of poems, Walnut Fudge and S'more and A La Carte Poems, available for sale by him.

Going back several years, Marc grew up in the Chicago area. He attended Butler University in Indianapolis, IN, where he was co-captain of the cheerleaders. After graduating he began his teaching career in Indianapolis but soon left to teach high school math in Australia for four years, one of the best experiences of his life. He tells us he will gladly talk to anyone (for hours) about all the wonderful experiences he had while living in a small country town outside Sydney and in Perth, on the west coast.

When he returned to the U.S. he decided to start a career in computer programming, which he remained doing until he retired. His jobs took him from Indianapolis to Phoenix, AZ and eventually to Boca Raton, FL. It was in Florida where he met his wife, Donna, whom all of us know because of her baking skills and crafts. They have been living in the Villages since 2011.

Congratulations Patricia Skelton

By Buck Buchanan

Congratulations to my partner, Patricia Skelton, who topped 2,000 masterpoints this past week. Patricia tells people she has been charged with taking care of two elderly Villages men. One of these is her father, who just turned 90, and the other is me, who turns 90 next year.

Patricia really takes good care of her father, who is almost totally disabled. She drives him wherever he needs to go, gets his prescriptions, gets his groceries, does his laundry, and just about everything else he needs.

The amazing thing is Patricia works full-time as an engineer for Lockheed. That doesn't leave much time for bridge. I play with Patricia on Friday, and she drives several miles out of her way to pick me up to drive to Eisenhower. She gets me coffee and whatever sweet they are serving. Then when we get to our destination, she gets out of the car and comes around and helps me out. An amazing woman!

Meet Charles Goren

By Nancy Tessier

Charles Henry Goren was born in Khotyn, Ukraine to a Jewish family in 1901 and died in 1991 in Encino, California - age 90. The family emigrated to Canada in 1903. Charles earned a law degree from McGill University in Canada in 1923. After 13 years of law practice in Philadelphia he decided to have a career playing in bridge tournaments. Milton Work, an American authority on card games, was impressed with Goren and hired him to write articles about bridge. Work popularized the 4-3-2-1 point count system by 1928. Goren's articles appeared daily in 194 American newspapers. He also wrote monthly columns for McCall's and Sports Illustrated. (I never knew bridge was a sport).

Goren dominated the competitive bridge circuit and became world champion at the Bermuda Bowl in 1950. He played competitively until 1962. In 1936 he published his first book "Winning Bridge Made Easy and Contract Bridge Complete". (I wonder about the EASY part). A television show "Championship Bridge with Charles Goren" was broadcast from 1959 to 1964. He appeared on "You Bet Your Life" with Groucho Marx and the television game show "What's My Line".

Goren often played with Omar Sharif, the famous actor in movies such as Funny Girl and Dr. Zhivago, also a well known and respected player. Goren worked to continue the opening four-card suit practice as well as improving his point count system. He thought the four card system led to more four-four card fits and resisted the five-card system we use today.

Blood Debt - By Bryan Michael

Diana Richards tells us that her son Bryan has become a writer and his first book is out on Amazon. She said "As a mother I am so proud of him because he has always wanted to write. This book took a long time in the making." The book is entitled Blood Debt, and is the gripping first novel in the Miller Family Thriller series—where secrets run deep, betrayal is deadly, and survival comes at a brutal cost. Best wishes to Bryan on his debut novel!

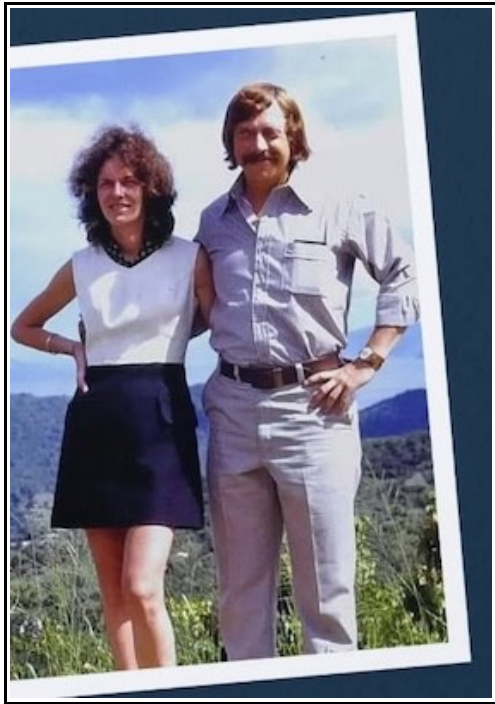
Bryan forwarded us some information on his book release:

- You can sign up for my newsletter here. This gives out a free copy of the first two chapters. You will then receive emails on new releases, etc. Link: subscribepage.io/B9GZVI
- My website has some info, too. <https://www.bryanmichaelauthor.com/>

When They're Not Playing Bridge

By Nancy Tessier

Harle Phelps



Harle claims she majored in bridge at college before her 28 year elementary teaching career. In September of her last year teaching, she only needed 90 more days until retirement. As a Christmas gift to herself, retirement started after the fall term. She was “dragged” to a party where she met her husband of 57 years. They have a son Michael - no not THAT Michael Phelps. Harle has many amusing stories. One involved her girls bridge game (mental health night), a work emergency, calling her husband away from home and having a policeman step in to babysit. Always with a smile and a great new outfit.....Harle.

Doug Smith



Doug is the Director responsible for the delicious peanut butter and chocolate chip cookies we enjoy at break time. He and his wife, Charlene, were delighted to attend granddaughter Alexa's graduation from the Naval Academy recently. She will be entering flight training soon. Doug's son Britton (also a Naval Academy graduate) was in the submarine service. Doug's career involved medical devices. As ten year Villages residents, their relocation to The Villages started with a visit to friends.....does this sound familiar to many of us? Doug appreciates all the opportunities to play bridge and all the Club has to offer. Gemma, their miniature schnauzer, brings joy to them everyday.

Bidding Quiz

By Marty Bergen (From November 2023 Bridge Bulletin)

With both sides vulnerable, what would you, the opener, rebid with these hands?

1C ?	Pass	1S	Pass	
	<u>Spades</u>	<u>Hearts</u>	<u>Diamonds</u>	<u>Clubs</u>
Board 1:	4	KQJ	AJ9	Q8432
Board 2:	AK	J2	7632	AT653
Board 3:	6	AKQJ	Q2	K75432

Answers:

Board 1: Bid 1 NT. After a 1 spade response to a minor, if opener has a minimum opening bid with a singleton spade, he may need to rebid 1 NT.

Board 2: Bid 1 NT. A 2 Diamond reverse promises an excellent hand (usually 17+ HCP), so that's out. So, despite your very weak heart holding, you must rebid 1 NT.

Board 3: Bid 2 clubs. You hate to conceal your lovely major suit, but you're too weak to reverse. The clubs are weak, you hate partner's spades, and your Q diamonds should be regarded as a "dubious" doubleton.

Book Review - Undaunted Courage, by Stephen Ambrose

By Buck Buchanan

All of the books I've reviewed in the past year have been recently published. However, it seems there has been a dearth of really good books this year.

Not to worry. I've read over 1,000 books in the last twenty years, and I record each one in an Excel file on my computer. I grade them "Excellent", "Very Good", "Good", and "Fair". ("Poor" books do not make the list.).

One of my very favorite books of all time is "Undaunted Courage", by Stephen Ambrose. Definitely an "Excellent". It is the story of Lewis' and Clarks trek across the US in 1803. At the time, the area west of the Mississippi River was a complete unknown.

Captain Meriwether Lewis was the Secretary to Thomas Jefferson, who appointed Lewis to lead a voyage up the Missouri River and on to the Pacific Ocean, and back. That sounds remarkably simple, but no one knew what the territory west of St Louis comprised. Were there animals that would attack them; bears, wolves, mountain lions, snakes, spiders, etc?

And what about Indians? Some tribes (e.g., the Sioux) were vicious. They have been known to attack and scalp people. And the terrain and the weather... were there mountains, large bodies of water, blizzards, cold weather, and what else?

Lewis and Clark spent six months preparing for the trip and assembled a small cadre of frontiersmen. The book is a fantastic summary of the daily problems they faced. You have probably read about their encounter with Sacajawea, who was the Indian wife of one of the frontiersmen on their trip. She spoke several Indian dialects and managed to maintain peace with the various tribes.

I highly recommend this book.

The Lighter Side

By Mary Jo Johnson

All the organs of the body were having a meeting, trying to decide who should be in charge.

"I should be in charge," said the brain, "because I run all the body's systems. Without me, nothing would happen."

"I should be in charge," said the blood, "because I circulate oxygen all over. Without me, you'd all waste away."

"I should be in charge," said the stomach, "because I process food and give all of you energy."

"I should be in charge," said the legs, "because I carry the body wherever it needs to go." "I should be in charge," said the eyes, "because I allow the body to see where it goes."

"I should be in charge," said the rectum, "because I'm responsible for waste removal."

All the other body parts laughed at the rectum and insulted him. In a huff, he shut down tight.

Within a few days, the brain had a terrible headache, the stomach was bloated, the legs got wobbly, the eyes got watery, and the blood became toxic.

They all finally decided that the rectum should be the boss.

Moral of the story: Even though the others do all the hard work, the ass hole is usually the one in charge. 🤔

Photo Corner

Zebra and Wildebeest – Tanzania

Jennie Cleary



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



Go Away Travel
BRIDGE CRUISE SPECIALISTS



THE VILLAGES DBC AND GO AWAY TRAVEL PRESENT:

THE VILLAGES DBC SECTIONAL AT SEA

March 15–22, 2026

Please join us as we sail round-trip Tampa to Key West and the Bahamas on Celebrity's Constellation. 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 ★ Key West ★ Bimini
★ Nassau ★ Day at Sea ★ Day at Sea ★ Tampa**



****BUS IS SOLD OUT****

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
A1	AQUA	\$2,925	\$5,200
C1	CONCIERGE	\$2,675	\$4,700
V2	VERANDA	\$2,525	\$4,400
O1	OUTSIDE	\$2,275	\$3,900

**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 October 15, 2025. Cancellations made between October 16-December 11, 2025 will be subject to a 50% penalty. Cancellations made on or after December 12, 2025 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.