



## The Villages Duplicate Bridge Club Member News

May, 2025

### Harry Messenheimer

By Jennie Cleary



Our Education Coordinator, Harry Messenheimer, is a Renaissance man of sorts. A lover of the symphony (his favorite is the Berlin Philharmonic), opera, birding, and gardening, he has a wide variety of interests. Harry spent his career in the Coast Guard, serving a number of tours in the far east, and also some time in Hawaii. Harry went on to obtain a Phd in Economics and was a professor of economics. When it came time to retire, he and his wife Robin returned to Hawaii, where he was able to pursue his interest in duplicate bridge, and also gardening. With hard work and imagination, he turned the acreage on his property on the Big Island into the Messenheimer Garden, a cornucopia of exotic palms, bamboo, orchids and other flowering plants, which became a favorite stop on local garden club tours. The garden was started from scratch in 2007, and by 2017 they had 102 species of palms and other tropicals.

Harry is an avid bridge player and became very involved with the Hilo Bridge Club. He called himself the Owner/manager/director/janitor/dealing machine operator/teacher (with lots of help from the members). He remains connected to the bridge club to this day, playing online with one of his Hilo bridge friends.

Harry and his wife had a “unique” experience when they lived on Hilo. Their house was located in Leilani Estates, near the base of the Kilauea volcano. In 2018, there had been small earthquakes and cracks on the roadways, signs that the volcano could be getting ready to erupt. On May 3, 2018, while Harry was on the street in front of their home, lava erupted from behind a nearby home. At the same

time, his wife Robin was inside the house starting some laundry when she smelled something burning. As she went to the front of the house to investigate, Harry was running down the driveway yelling that “we need to get out NOW!”. They quickly grabbed a few valuables, and got in their car to evacuate, when Harry remembered the Bridge Dealing machine. Bridge priorities! He ran back inside and grabbed the \$4K machine and they made their escape with minutes to spare. It was a scary time for them, and there was the inevitable sadness when their house and many of their belongings were destroyed. But they faced the situation with a positive attitude, buoyed by the love and caring shown by friends and neighbors.

Eventually Harry and his wife moved to The Villages in December 2021. Sadly, Robin passed away unexpectedly in 2024. We are fortunate to have Harry as Education Coordinator for our bridge club. We look forward to more of the outstanding teaching seminars and other learning opportunities he has arranged. Aloha!



Lava approaching Harry's Home



Lady Slipper Orchid from  
Messenheimer Garden

## **Alzheimer's Event**

Below are some photos from this event held on March 16. We had a great turnout of 106 players. The game raised \$1,405 for research to combat this dreaded disease. Many thanks to Nancy Turner and her crew of volunteers who made this such a success!



## Poetry Reading by Marc Rissman

Perhaps you bridge players will remember when the ACBL bridge magazine had a national poetry contest and our own Marc Rissman won. Now you can hear his poetry when he reads and discusses poems from his two books of poetry, Walnut Fudge and S'more and A La Carte Poems. He is presenting a program in Leesburg:

### INSIDE THE MIND OF A POET

Where: Leesburg Public Library, 100 E. Main St.

When: Thursday, May 15 at 3 PM

Join him for an hour of fun as he reads a variety of his poems and more!

## Patricia Skelton Receives Lockheed Martin Excellence Award By Buck Buchanan



Four years ago, I received a phone call from Janet Matthews. She said a new bridge player had moved to The Villages and was looking for partners. Her name was Patricia Skelton. She asked if I would play with her.

Patricia and I played and immediately had two 65% games, so she became a regular partner. The only problem is that Patricia is still working and is only available on weekends. Bummer.

Patricia recently received an award of excellence from her employer, Lockheed Martin. Patricia was recognized at an awards ceremony for impacting the Ocala

workforce by writing technical guides for engineers and technicians and mentoring her peers.

Lockheed Martin Missile and Fire Control recognized more than 200 employees on October 11, 2025 in Orlando for their contributions that demonstrated the company's values of Ethical Conduct, Respecting Others, and Performing with Excellence. Congratulations Patricia!

## Play of the Hand Puzzle – by Harry Messenheimer (Answer at the end of the newsletter)

East Deals  
None Vul

♠ Q 9 6 3  
♥ K 10 7 5 3  
♦ A 9  
♣ 10 8



♠ J 4 2  
♥ 9 8  
♦ J 10 3  
♣ A K Q 9 4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
2 ♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	Pass	2 NT
All pass			
1. weak			
Lead: ♦ 8			

Think before you play to trick 1. What card do you play and why?

## Enjoy the Springtime By Buck Buchanan

Easter is a special time for all of us. When Mauri and I lived in New Jersey, the arrival of Easter was a harbinger of good weather (and an end to frost and snow). Many Northerners think only they have access to four-season weather, but we in Florida always have a beautiful Spring.

When Mauri and I were students at the University of Florida, we loved to go birdwatching. It's a rewarding hobby (also affordable). Central Florida is a pathway for birds returning North from the Caribbean and South America. I love to sit in our lanai and listen to the birds. It is a real symphony. I know one man who can identify over a hundred birds by their call. We have a birdhouse next to our lanai, and for the past few years, we've always had a bluebird family nesting there. The mother and father bluebirds are constantly on the move, first building a nest and then feeding their chicks. It's always a thrill when the first baby bluebird exits the birdhouse. There are also two birdwatching clubs open to the public.

We've seen dozens of different types of birds in Spring near our house, ranging from the smaller warblers to much larger birds. One time we had a bunch of herons fighting over a fish that they had pulled from our pond, when all of a sudden, a bald eagle swooped down and grabbed the fish. I saw a large owl recently on Buena Vista, and there is a small pond near Glenview where there were about a hundred herons there. People stop by and feed them.

When Mauri and I were students in Gainesville (sixty years ago!!) , I would lie on a blanket in our backyard and watch the stars at night. Spectacular on a clear night with little or no moon. April of this year was a special time. Five of the eight planets were aligned along the ecliptic. With a good pair of binoculars and a clear sky, in the South you could see Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter. That was the last time you will be able to see them together, unless you are around in 2145. There is also a good Astronomy club in The Villages. It's free and It's open to the public.

Without a doubt, the Spring flowers are spectacular in the area. The Village management does a great job by planting flowers at all the intersections. There are, of course, several flower shows open to the public. Enjoy the Springtime!

## **When They're Not Playing Bridge**

### **By Nancy Tessier**



**Paul Matheson** Paul is a very familiar friend in our bridge community. He has served on the board, mentored players, taught classes, directed games, earned thousands of master points and been a good friend. And much more. His first hole in one on the 4th of July was when he was a teenager working as a caddy master. He didn't have to buy everyone

drinks as is the tradition as he was underage. He met his wife Gail at age 11 on a basketball court. Paul is a huge Patriots fan, coming from Massachusetts. His bridge career started in college after playing Wist with his family while growing up. Paul served in the army retiring after 5 years with a rank of Captain. During his service he spent a year in Vietman and won several commendations including the Bronze Star. Upon returning to the United States he worked with "Operation" Homecoming". This task force interviewed returning POW's, not an easy but essential task. Paul considers this one of the best highlights of his life.



### **Marie Figueiredo and Mike Tufariello**

We often see Marie and Mike playing together - they are brother and sister. Marie also plays with her husband who she met on the Jersey shore over 60 years ago after she broke a date with another "boring" guy. Mike met his wife in the Philippines and has been married 58 years. This strong Italian family had little growing up and worked hard. The parents were excellent role models. Mike was slow in growing tall and Marie and her sister would defend him against the neighborhood bullies. I was assured delicious Italian meals were served to the four children.

Maybe Marie will make us the 7 fishes meal? (That is a Christmas tradition).



**Doris McLaughlin** has just passed the 500 master point hurdle. Born in Pennsylvania, she travelled extensively with her career Navy husband and lived in the Phillipines and Japan among many other duty stations. Her daughter owns the electric bike shop Pedigo in Trailwinds near Publix. She is a retired governmental HR manager, has 3 children, plays golf, samba, bowls with a high average, gardens....well, as our nickname for her is "Doris Day" it is because you will never find her doing nothing. And she just adopted a cat named Ava.

# Trip Report

## Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania By Dave Winer



David and Marguerite Winer recently returned from their 7000 mile trip to the other side of the world. They are pretty experienced travelers, but think this was right up there as the trip of a lifetime. They started out in Sydney. The Sydney Harbor with all the lights, activity, restaurants, people, ships and bridges, and of course the Opera House, may be the most beautiful harbor in

the world, they say. ( Aussies pronounce it: seed-knee-ha-burr)!



That first evening in the Sydney Harbor was magical. Their hotel was close to the Harbor and the Queen Elizabeth Botanical Gardens. Still on a high after arriving, they went right to the gardens, and being avid birders, were amazed at the “new” birds they saw, such as the Australian white ibis and sulfur-crested cockatoo. Spending four days around Sydney, they went to animal preserves such as Bungarribee Wildlife Park seeing koalas and being able to feed kangaroos and wallabies (proper food provided by park rangers) and attempting to feed emus. They took an aerial tram

at Blue Mountain, going over rock formations 90 million years old.

David and Marguerite then joined their cruise ship, the Celebrity Edge, sailing out of Sydney Harbor south and west to Adelaide and Melbourne. Then on to Hobart, Tasmania, where they were able to see a Tasmanian Devil, which is ferocious and fast. It's said that they would chew through wood to get at their prey. Then on to

New Zealand, with beautiful rolling green countryside and countless sheep, visiting Dunedin, Christchurch, Napier, Tauranga, Auckland, and Bay of Islands. Their cruise ship sailed through wonderful narrow fjords; Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound and Dusty Sound. The towering peaks, foggy landscape and cascading waterfalls were truly awe inspiring. They learned about Māori culture in Tauranga and Bay of Islands, where a treaty was signed between Māori chiefs and European settlers. They were able to see the rare and protected kiwi bird as well as vast kiwi fruit orchards.

Alas, no bridge on this vacation, but a trip to remember.

## **Obituary – Dean Robinson**

**By Andrea Wolff**

Many of you may remember Dean Robinson, who was a popular teacher and Director in our club when I moved to the Villages in 2011. I believe he is mentioned in the history of the club as well. Dean recently passed away, and his obituary may be found here: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/grove-city-oh/dean-robinson-12338493>

## **Photo Corner**

**Bird in Flight By Patricia Skelton**



## The Lighter Side



## Answer to Play of the Hand Puzzle

By Harry Messenheimer

It's tempting to play low from dummy. That works if West started with the king and queen of diamonds. But what could go wrong? If East holds one of the diamond honors, she will win the trick and fire back a diamond. West will play low, making the ace of diamonds draw air. Good work if you foresaw that possibility.

Is West's diamond holding a guess? West's preemptive response might be from king-queen six times of diamonds. But if West also holds the ace of hearts her hand would be too good for the weak response. However, West might also preempt holding king (or queen) six times of

diamonds and the outside ace of hearts. Do you know which it is?

East opened the bidding with 1 club. If she held the missing ace of hearts, she would likely have opened the bidding 1NT (15 or 16 HCP) rather than 1C. Therefore, you can place the ace of hearts with West and a diamond honor with East.

Go up with the ace of diamonds at trick one. You have a sure second diamond stopper whether or not West unblocks her diamond honor.

Here was the entire deal:

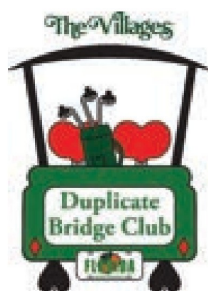
<p> ♠ Q 9 6 3  ♥ K 10 7 5 3  ♦ A 9  ♣ 10 8 </p>			
♠ 8 7 ♥ A 6 4 2 ♦ K 8 7 6 5 2 ♣ 5	<div> <div>N</div> <div>W E</div> <div>S</div> </div>	♠ A K 10 5 ♥ Q J ♦ Q 4 ♣ J 7 6 3 2	
<p> ♠ J 4 2  ♥ 9 8  ♦ J 10 3  ♣ A K Q 9 4 </p>			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 ♦ <sup>1</sup>	Pass	1 ♣	Pass
All pass		Pass	2 NT
<p>1. Weak Lead: ♦ 8</p>			

**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** or Jennie Cleary at [wkc44@comcast.net](mailto:wkc44@comcast.net). Buck and Jennie are also able to help with write-ups if you send us the basics.

**The Villages DBC Sectional at Sea – See next page.**



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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**



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### 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.