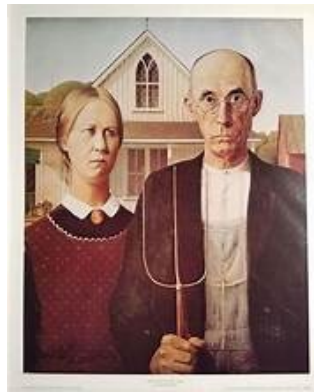


# MEMBER NEWS FOR THE DUPLICATE PLAYERS OF THE VILLAGES AUGUST, 2024

## Bruce Thiher

Most Americans are familiar with Grant Wood's famous painting, "American Gothic". It depicts a sour-faced farm couple standing in front of an Iowa farmhouse with a Gothic window.



What you may not know is that Bruce Thiher, our well-known Director, lived in this house. He at the time was Postmaster of Eldon, Iowa. He was able to rent the house at a favorable rate, because tourists would continually visit the site, sometimes shining their headlights on the house and sometimes even knocking on the door asking to see the house. There was even an article in the New York Times about the house, with a picture of Bruce. This is a link to a similar article, with a picture of Bruce, in the Arizona Daily Sun:

[https://azdailysun.com/a-house-a-woman-a-man-with-a-pitchfork-and-an-icon/article\\_4b2ca485-8e8a-56db-b567-3c52e5e86e3d.html](https://azdailysun.com/a-house-a-woman-a-man-with-a-pitchfork-and-an-icon/article_4b2ca485-8e8a-56db-b567-3c52e5e86e3d.html)

Bruce became a Life Master in 1975. He retired from the post office in 2003, arriving in The Villages in 2010. He has directed in The Villages for ten years.

Another interesting thing to know about Bruce is that he is an accomplished singer. He sang in church choirs for ten years. We hope we get to hear him sing at Sharon Morse.



Bruce Thiher

## **Bridge Tips For Newer Players**

1. A good lead is the top of a sequence; QJ10, etc.
2. Be aggressive in bidding games and conservative in bidding slams
3. If you are declarer playing in a suit contract, get the opponent's trump out.
4. Remember the bidding while you are playing.
5. Watch your opponent's discards and your partner's discards.

# Trip Reports

## Africa

Patricia Skelton returned in early July from a two-week trip to Kenya and Tanzania. She said it was the best of the many trips she has taken:

Jambo, Jambo

I traveled to East Africa for my first Safari. I got to shoot lions; I used my camera. Actually, I used my iPhone 15pro and it took great pictures. My better half, Norman Phillibert, accompanied me after I drug him by his toe nails, He had a blast. This is officially my favorite vacation ever. We started in Nairobi, Kenya and loaded our suitcases into a Land Rover to spend 9 days doing safari's. We visited Masai Mara, Serengeti, and Amboseli. We traveled the whole time by the Land Rover and the stories about "African Massages" is very true. I recommend you fly between the reserves if possible. To describe the roughness of the ride, my iWatch registered over 20000 steps a day and I never left the vehicle.

This is a vacation to see Animals. Everyone wants to see the big five: Lions, Elephants, Buffalo, Leopards, and Rhinos. We saw lots of Lions: Males, Females, Maneaters, whole prides, etc. We saw lions sleeping, playing, "doing it", and we almost saw a kill. We saw even more elephants. They were my favorite. They were eating, playing, fighting, "doing it". We did have a close encounter with a male elephant that caused our guide to put the Land Rover in reverse and tell us to be quiet. Incidentally, we all got very, very quiet. We saw a few herds of buffalo. We only saw one Leopard in a tree. I only saw his legs and tail hanging down. I counted it. About the Rhino - I am sad to say I did not see any.

Beyond the big five, there are so many other interesting animals. The birds are fascinating: Crested Crowns, Ostrich, Secretary birds, Superbs, etc. I found this just as much fun as the big five. Giraffes, Topies, Wildebeest, warthogs, and more make great pictures as well. We saw Zebras migrating in the Serengeti of Tanzania, it must have been a dazzle of about 2000 or more. My recommendation is to remember to put down the camera and just enjoy all the animals, even the small ones.

Last, don't forget the people. There are 125 tribes in Kenya and only one still practices traditions: The Masai. There were several Masai men working at our camps and hotels. Norm kept asking them how many wives they have? Only one had 2 wives.

Make sure you learn a few words in Swahili. I do this every time I travel to a foreign country.

Jambo - Hello

Asante - Thank you

Hakuna Matata - No worries

I strongly recommend this vacation and Gate 1 did a wonderful job.



Patricia Skelton





## **Mongolia**

After returning from Algeria and Tunisia in May, George Sonnichsen and Carol Payette recently set out for a month long adventure to Mongolia, South Korea and Japan. Carol tells us: Starting from the US we flew to Seoul and on to Ulaanbataar, Mongolia, the coldest capital city in the world. From there we continued on to a remote camp in the southern Mongolian Gobi desert, where we slept three nights in a round, windowless ger with walls of felt made of sheep wool. These tents are used by the nomads. Fifty percent of Mongolians today still live in gers because they are easy to build, take down and move around, usually on camels, when their area becomes overly grazed. Large flocks of goats roam freely. Cashmere on the hoof. Herds of horses and sheep abound.

At one time, Genghis Khan founded the Mongolian Empire the largest contiguous land-empire in history. It stretched from Poland to Korea to Siberia and the Gulf of Oman and Vietnam, and consisted of 22% of the world's land mass. Bactrian camels, snow leopards and the endangered Przesalski horses call Mongolia home, and in prehistoric times, dinosaurs loved the 250 days of sun a year. The Gobi desert is the largest dinosaur fossil reservoir in the world.

The vastness and beauty of this special place leaves an indelible mark on our memories and souls...



George Sonnichsen



## Happy Birthday

### Addie Adler

On July 21, Addie Adler celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday at Eisenhower Rec Center with 120 of her best friends. Cocktails, dinner, dancing, and entertainment for all!!

Addie is well-known for her cruises. For the past several years, Addie has taken a four month around-the-world cruise, beginning in January. Happy birthday Addie!



Addie Adler



Addie with Buck Buchanan and his wife Mauri

### **Buck Buchanan**

If you happen to see Buck Buchanan on August 22, wish him a Happy 88<sup>th</sup> Birthday! Buck is our intrepid Member News reporter and the driving force behind its publication, as well as the writer of the Hand of the Week column you see each week in the Eblast.

### **Scott Scobell**

Best wishes to Scott Scobell. Scott turned 88 on July 22. Happy Birthday Scott!



## **Gigi Letendre**

Congratulations to Gigi Letendre who celebrated her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday recently. Jean Knight and Elle Belt, brought a cake to share with their fellow bridge players at the Monday afternoon 1500 game at Laurel Manor. Gigi is amazing....spritely, happy, physically fit, a good bridge player, mentally alert and quite the fashion plate We should all be so lucky! We are glad that GiGi had a spectacular day and we wish her an even better year ahead.



Gigi Letendre



## Condolences

Loretta Harp passed recently. Loretta moved here twenty one years ago, and was one of the finest players in our bridge club. She and her husband Buddy, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force lived in Guam where she met and played bridge with Bruce Thiher. After Loretta moved to The Villages, she convinced Bruce to settle here too.

### Bridge Poem

Author Unknown - Submitted by Marie Figueredo

He'd just bid a grand slam without any trump!  
I'd figured someone might have started with none,  
But not my own partner, the son of a gun.

When I saw him show out, I gave up all hope,  
I mumbled some comment like, "Partner's a dope.  
To bid a grand with no trumps, you know I was thinking,  
that my partner surely must have been drinking!

He played out the hand with theatrical flair.  
He pulled all their trumps and didn't stop there.  
He ran all my diamonds, right down to the deuce.  
I couldn't believe he could be so obtuse.

When the board was complete and the dust had all settled,  
I apologized to partner for acting so nettled.  
I asked how he knew to bid grand slam with a void.  
He answered politely, but was clearly annoyed.

Partner explained, as he tallied the score,  
"You promised seven tricks and I had six more.  
Seven notrump was no good, if I can be candid,  
For all of your diamond tricks would have been stranded."

The moral of this deal is not so fantastic,  
If I may offer advice, without sounding bombastic:  
Don't lose your temper; try to stay cool,  
And trust that your partner is not always a fool!

## **Bridge Cruise**

Marilyn Williams is organizing a bridge cruise which will take place in February 2025. See the flyer at the end of the newsletter. The prices are all inclusive...drinks, Wi-Fi, gratuities, taxes, port charges, travel protection, bridge games, and round trip transportation from The villages to/from the cruise port. Marilyn said they did this in December last year and it was really a fun time!

A big thanks 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. 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](mailto:BuckandMauri@aol.com) or Jennie Cleary at [wkc44@comcast.net](mailto:wkc44@comcast.net)

**See Bridge Cruise Flyer – next page**



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THE VILLAGES DBC AND GO AWAY TRAVEL PRESENT:

# THE VILLAGES DBC SECTIONAL AT SEA

**February 9–16, 2025**

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### SPECIAL OFFER ONLY FOR RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGES:

**BOOK BY SEPTEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> AND WE WILL INCLUDE 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	\$2225	\$3800
C1	CONCIERGE	\$2100	\$3600
V2	VERANDA	\$1950	\$3325
O2	OUTSIDE	\$1775	\$2950
I1	INSIDE	\$1700	\$2825

A deposit of \$500 per cabin is required and is fully refundable until the final payment due date of October 31<sup>st</sup> 2024.

**CALL & BOOK NOW! Contact John Sobel at Go Away Travel**  
**PHONE: 954-349-2800 | EMAIL: BestBridgeAtSea@GoAwayTrav.com**

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.