



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

VOLUME XXXVII 🌿 ISSUE 2 🌿 FEBRUARY 2017 🌿 [www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com)

Heads Up, Treasure Hunters! Community Yard Sale is Feb. 25!



Photo: Susan DeLuca

Essentials for a garage sale: donuts, coffee, and unusual items for sale. Bloomingdale Residents Jeff and Joanne Weiner show off one of the many unusual antiques they had at their garage sale in January. See details about the community's upcoming sale on page 12.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt." *Charles M. Schulz*

## This Month



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## WINNER

**2013 & 2014**  
**Hillsborough County**  
**Neighborhood**  
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## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



### JOY BOISSELLE

#### Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette

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# Tampa Bay Times

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

The Gazette is delivered free to Bloomingdale residents on the first Saturday of each month.

## YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

### Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Road - Valrico, Florida 33596 - (813) 681-2051

Email: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com

Website: www.BloomingdaleHOA.com

BHA Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Offices of Bloomingdale Special Taxing District:

3509 Bell Shoals Road

Valrico, Florida 33596

#### Directors at Large:

*Mary Galin*

*Billy Hightower*

*Bobbi Ferraro*

*Beth Smedley*

*Joanie Wilson*

*Charlie Woodcock*

**President:** *George T. May IV*

**Vice President:** *Daniel Berkowitz*

**Secretary:** *Suzy Watts*

**Treasurer:** *Sean Donahue*

25th Annual

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There is a \$2 entry fee, per carload, to enter E.G. Simmons Park.  
This fee goes directly to Hillsborough County Parks & Rec

**Tampa Bay Times**  
tampabay.com





## Yard of the Month



Yard of the Month is sponsored by Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale. Send your Yard of the Month nominations to: [InBloomingdaleNews@gmail.com](mailto:InBloomingdaleNews@gmail.com) or call (813) 681-2051

Winners will receive a \$25 gift card redeemable at Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale



**Marc & Jacqueline Lago**

307 Bloomingfield Drive, Brandon, FL 33511 (Bloomingdale Estates)

## Bloomingdale Real Estate Update

*(Editor's Note: Real estate columnist Ronnie McLaughlin's moves from Michigan, New Jersey, Dubai, and eventually to Valrico, helped her find her niche in residential real estate. She has lived in Bloomingdale for six years with her husband and two children, a son attending University of Florida and daughter at Bloomingdale High School. A productive Realtor, she is also active in the Bloomingdale High School PTSA and Girl Scouts.)*

### To Roof or not to Roof

This month's featured neighborhood, Bloomingdale Cove, and a majority of other Bloomingdale neighborhood homes have either already replaced their roofs or are edging towards needing a new roof. Roofs are the most important large expense for your home. A new roof helps maintain your home's beauty and durability. Many worry about how to choose a roofer and how to pay for the project.

When it was time for our roof to be replaced, we interviewed three roofing companies and joined with three of our neighbors who needed roof replacements, to assist with negotiating power. As a group, we wanted a roofer with good online reviews, one who offered proper permitting and one who cleaned-up the nails and roofing debris – and one who offered reasonable pricing. I recommend that you do the same or ask a Realtor for recommendations.

The best way to pay for a roof is through your savings. "At Year 15, start planning and saving for a roof replacement," advises Alex Sanchez, Certified Roofers & General Contractors, Inc. Other options include opening a low interest credit card, using the equity in your home to open an equity line of credit or taking out a personal line of credit from your local bank. Fifth

Third Bank Valrico offers a personal line of credit that requires no closing costs and a small \$35.00 annual fee. Another great option is to finance through the roofing company. A few companies like Sanchez's company, offer six months same as cash and long term financing through an outside vendor.

### Neighborhood Snapshot Bloomingdale Cove

Bloomingdale Cove is located at the end of Culbreath Road just south of Cimino Elementary. The neighborhood boasts 253 homes averaging 2,157 square feet. The community features a pond and a private park, which residents share with another Bloomingdale neighborhood, Somerset. The park holds a basketball court, picnic tables, a small playground, and walking trails that lead to the Alafia River. Fourteen homes have second floor bonus rooms, perfect for a home office or media room. Twelve homes sold over the past year at an average sales price of \$240,292 and \$110.20 per square foot. Half of the homes that sold were pool homes. Seven of the twelve homes that sold had three car garages. It has a mandatory HOA and enforceable deed restrictions.



By Ronnie McLaughlin

The Chadderton Real Estate Group  
Keller Williams Realty

813-601-5659

[ronniemclaughlin@kw.com](mailto:ronniemclaughlin@kw.com)  
[www.chaddertongroup.com](http://www.chaddertongroup.com)







# BHA COMMUNITY CORNER



**DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!**

## 2017 Membership Starts Strong

Please consider joining and strengthening the one organization that advocates for the entire community of nearly 5,000 homes and 23,000 residents. Your membership funds are returned 100 percent to the community. So far, resident response has been strong.

Every member and dollar matter. Your membership funds all special programs and services including this newspaper, a part-time staff, the annual Santa visit, the annual community yard sale, the community clean-up, which will be expanded to spring and fall, and the fall festival. The BHA is an IRC 501(c) (4) non-profit organization, run entirely by volunteers who live in your neighborhoods.

To help with planning and budgeting, join today or at least within the next 60 days. Make checks payable to the BHA and mail to 3509 Bell Shoals Road., Valrico, FL 33596, or stop by the office and drop off your check. An easier method is to use our PayPal option. Go to [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com), look for the PayPal link and follow the simple instructions.

ALL membership funds go back to our community, and all residents are welcome at our monthly board meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Bell Shoals office.

**Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc.**  
3509 Bell Shoals Rd. • Valrico, FL 33596 • [bloomingdalehoa.com](http://bloomingdalehoa.com)  
Please correct name below if different. BHA Membership Notices are mailed to the owner on file with the Hillsborough County Tax Collector. Recent changes may not be reflected here.

**2017 BHA MEMBERSHIP**  
\$35.00 to Join or Renew!  
Return This Card With Payment

**YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS**

2017 Membership	\$35.00
Community Scholarship Donation	\$
Total Enclosed	\$
Check Number	

**Note: The BHA no longer has an active post office box address. Please update your automatic bill pay if applicable.**

## BHA EVENT CALENDAR

If you have events pending in our community, email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com), or call 813-681-2051. We will help you promote your event on our Facebook page.

**Monday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m. / Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Monthly Trustee Meeting,** Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Call 813-684-6667 for information.

**Tuesday, Feb. 14, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting,** Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome. Call 813-681-2051 for information.

**Thursday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m. / Bloomingdale Area Community Council** chaired by Hillsborough County Deputy Jim Brodie, Bloomingdale Community Station, 3622 Erindale Drive, 813-635-8040. Learn about safety and security issues affecting our community.

## BHA BRIEFS

### JANUARY BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS AND OTHER BOARD NEWS

Dep. Jim Brodie attended the monthly meeting. He replaces Dep. Luke Hussey as the Erindale Sub-Station Community Resource Officer. A former Bloomingdale resident, Brodie assured the board he will work hard to improve safety and security in the area.

Two seats remain vacant on the 12-member board as well as three alternate positions. Residents are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings to see if joining the volunteer board is something they would consider.

### 2017 SCHOLARSHIP DATES/DEADLINES SET

Important dates and deadlines for the \$2,000 Bloomingdale Community Scholarship in honor of former Bloomingdale Senior High School principal, B.J. Stelter are as follows:

**Now** - Scholarship applications available at [bloomingdalehoa.com](http://bloomingdalehoa.com).

**April 1** - Scholarship Deadline, No exceptions.

**May 9** - Winner announced at monthly BHA board meeting.



### BOARD MEMBERS ATTEND BLOOMINGDALE AVENUE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT MEETING

On Jan.17, the BHA, again, attended a public meeting concerning a zoning change for a planned development on Bloomingdale Avenue north of Springvale Road. At the last meeting, applicants for the zoning change pulled the request.

This time, the developers brought engineers, statistics and three options to the table. Development options are for the construction of 71 single-family homes up to 5,000 SF each, 58 duplexes at 1,000 SF each or 116 townhomes. If approved, the developer would choose the option. Conversely, the BHA and other attendees presented their concerns including traffic congestion on Bloomingdale Avenue, motorist safety and the inability to widen Bloomingdale Avenue to accommodate current traffic congestion now.

The zoning officer will make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners who will vote for or against the project at the next Board of County Commissioners Meeting. Vote results will be published on the BHA Facebook page.

### NEIGHBORHOOD STANDARDS CAMPAIGN STARTS

This Month, the neighborhood standards committee and county code department kick off the first of several neighborhood "sweeps." Working together, the group will drive through neighborhoods with no mandatory HOA oversight looking for violations of the "Neighborhood Standards" introduced last fall. The standards are based on current county ordinances and are enforceable through the county code violation system.

The goal, first, is to educate and inform. Many residents are unaware they are in violation of community and county standards. Violators will be cited or warnings given depending on the offense noted. In all cases, sweep members will attempt to communicate with residents in person prior to any action being taken.

The "sweeps" will continue throughout the year.



Wanted: A Forever Home and Family

Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center has the Right Pet for You

Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center (PRC), the county's animal shelter has many cats and dogs looking for their "forever" homes. At your county shelter, dogs and cats are surprisingly affordable – at one location – open seven days a week. Each comes fully vetted with a complement of services (adding up to a savings of hundreds of dollars). While some fees may apply, PRC adoption packages can save "prospective parents" anywhere from \$250 - \$400.

The PRC, located at 440 N. Falkenburg Rd., is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. View adoptable pets online at [HCFLGov.net/Adopt](http://HCFLGov.net/Adopt).



Provided By The Pet Resource Center



For information, call  
(813) 744-5660 or visit  
[HillsboroughCounty.org/Pets](http://HillsboroughCounty.org/Pets)

The PRC's First Saturday Celebration is today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. In honor of Valentine's Day, all ready-to-go "sweethearts" will be available for a \$14 adoption fee and will receive a free engraved heart-shaped ID. Ready-to-go pets are spayed/neutered, microchipped, vaccinated against rabies, and receive a Hillsborough County license.

Lupe



Lupe is a happy 2-year-old (1697604).

Zoey



Zoey is a playful 7-month-old (1697381).

Tooby



Smiling Tooby is a sweet 4-year-old boy (1691657).

Dianne



Dianne is a 5-year-old girl with beautiful green eyes! (1699723)

Gracie



Gracie is a curious 2-year-old (1700292).

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**PLEASE CHECK THE BHA COMMUNITY CORNER FOR ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS RIGHT HERE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

## EVERY SUNDAY!

**T Marie's Valrico Sunday Market / 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. / 3407 Lithia Pinecrest Rd., Valrico** / Our market under the Grandfather Oaks is a weekly event that offers fun in the sun, fresh shopping, and serves as a gathering place for families and friends to bond, mingle, and buy local. We will have live entertainment, unique vendors ranging from fresh produce, homemade foods, jewelry, home decor, woodworking, gift items, kid and pet friendly products, and more. For information, call 813-530-0922.



**Florida Licensing on Wheels / Feb. 7 / 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. / Bloomingdale Library / 1906 Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico** / Florida Licensing on Wheels brings the following motorist services directly to the customer: first time licenses, convert out of state license, renewals, replacements for lost or stolen license, address/name changes, ID cards, reinstatements, emergency contact information registration, vehicle registration renewals, disabled parking placard issuance and renewals. Fees may vary. Visit the GatherGoGet website (gathergoget.com) for a complete listing of documents needed. For information, call 813-273-3652.

**The Florida State Fair / Feb. 9-20 / Florida State Fairgrounds / 4800 U.S. Highway 301 North, Tampa** / Mark your calendars! The Florida State Fair attracts up to 500,000 people in 12 days. Each year Florida residents create exhibits for Aquaculture, Horticulture, Woodcarving, Needlework, and more. Bragging rights are still won for the prized bull, best pie, and the most beautiful quilt. Being an Independent Midway, all rides are selected by the Fair Authority to provide visitors with all the thrills and chills they've come to expect. As the first State Fair of the year, we get all the latest and greatest in fair foods such as the Pizza Cone, Redneck Burger, Bacon Ice Cream, and more! It's affordable family fun at its best! Nobody does it better than the Florida State Fair! Visit [www.floridastatefair.com](http://www.floridastatefair.com) for events, tickets, and details.

**The Village Players Present Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap / Feb. 10-11, 17-18, 8 p.m.; Feb. 5 & 12, 3 p.m. / The James McCabe Theater / 506 N. 5th St., Valrico** / The scene is set when a group of people gathered in a country house cut off by the snow discover, to their horror, that there is a murderer in their midst. Who can it be? One by one the suspicious characters reveal their sordid pasts until the last, nerve-shredding moment the identity and the motive are finally revealed. Visit [www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com](http://www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com) or call 813-643-8292 for information.

**Veterans Assistance Seminar / Feb. 23, Noon to 1 p.m. / The Bridges Retirement Community / 11350 Bloomingdale Ave., Riverview** / The Bridges Retirement Community is hosting a Veterans Assistance seminar to educate wartime Veterans and their survivors about a benefit through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

"Improved Pension with Aid and Attendance." This benefit can help offset the cost of living in a retirement community for a wartime Veteran or his/her surviving spouse. Veterans who served 90 consecutive days on active duty, including one day during a wartime period, may be eligible to receive up to \$1,794 per month for assisted living expenses. Lunch will be provided at this free seminar. Seating is limited. Call 813-413-8900 to reserve a seat.

**Daddy-Daughter Dance / Feb. 25 / 7:30 p.m. / Campo Family YMCA / 3414 Culbreath Rd., Valrico** / Dads, throw on your favorite tie and come enjoy a special evening of dinner and dancing with your little princess at our Daddy-Daughter Dance! From photo opportunities to moving your two left feet with Daddy's Girl, you and your daughter are sure to create a special memory that will last a lifetime.

Everywhere members: \$20/pair, \$5/additional daughter  
Here members: \$28/pair, \$7/additional daughter  
Non-members: \$35/pair, \$8.75/additional daughter

Sign up online at [https://apm.activecommunities.com/tampaymca/Activity\\_Search/father-daughter-dance/3608](https://apm.activecommunities.com/tampaymca/Activity_Search/father-daughter-dance/3608).



## UPCOMING

**Florida Strawberry Festival / March 2-12 / Festival Grounds at Alexander and Reynolds Streets, Plant City** / Each spring the Florida Strawberry Festival rolls out the red carpet to welcome visitors from all over. Guests enjoy agriculture, commerce, industry, livestock, fine arts, horticulture exhibits, and crafts. And, it's the perfect time to enjoy eating ripe strawberries. Open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Admission: Adults (ages 13+), \$10; Children (ages 6-12, \$5; Children (ages 5 and under) FREE. Discount tickets are available at Publix: Adults (ages 13+), \$8; Children (ages 6-12), \$4. For more information visit [flstrawberryfestival.com](http://flstrawberryfestival.com).





## The Commissioner's News

### By Commissioner Stacy White Board of County Commissioners District 4



On Jan. 9, I had the pleasure of participating in a community meeting with the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District and Hillsborough County staff. In the community meeting, we gathered concerns from constituents in Bloomingdale and board members of the Special Taxing District about hazardous sidewalks in the community. I was able to have county staff get out and start site inspections immediately for the hazardous slabs that are raised more than 2 inches. My office was informed that county staff will have in house scope of work, project estimates, and project timeframes available to me early this month. This means county staff will have the

projected data they need to get to work on repairing the more hazardous sidewalk slabs.

Recently, I met with the engineering firm working on the Bell Shoals widening project, and they did have some very positive updates. Although we are still in the property acquisition process, construction for phase 1 of the widening project is estimated to begin in July of this year. Phase 1 construction will include widening of the bridge that crosses the Alafia River between Waterford Run Drive and River Rapids Avenue. It is also my intention to advocate to keep the aesthetics of the native plant habitat intact and maintain the beautifully landscaped neighborhood entrances as we move forward with the Bell Shoals widening project.

As always, it is my pleasure to serve as your County Commissioner, and if you have any further questions about the topics mentioned in this column, please feel free to reach out to my office anytime.

*(Editor's Note: Commissioner Stacy White represents District 4, which includes our Bloomingdale community. He was elected to the Board of County Commissioners in 2014 and Chairman of the Board in November 2016. A Valrico native, White seeks to improve communities like ours. Prior to his election, he served the county as a member of the Hillsborough County School Board.)*



FEBRUARY 2017

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BEFORE

## PHYSICIAN-SUPERVISED WEIGHT LOSS



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By Miriam Leech, BSTD Staff



Hillsborough County Commissioner Stacy White listens to resident concerns at the Jan. 9 Bloomingdale Special Taxing District (BSTD) Board of Trustees meeting.

Ben Kniesly, Manager of Real Estate Acquisition Eric Watkins, and Manager of County Neighborhood Relations Wanda Sloan.

SIDEWALKS

At a previous meeting on Jan. 4 between the Commissioner, BSTD President Dave West, and Merit, Inc., Property Manager Rick Pitrowski, White was presented with a comprehensive report prepared by Merit that listed all of the locations of unsafe conditions of the sidewalks with accompanying pictures. At the Jan. 9 meeting, the Commissioner stated those pictures had already been forwarded to the appropriate County officials.

While cautioning the attendees that revenue versus expenses is always of concern to the County Commissioners, White committed to get right to work on the sidewalk issue and explore creative options for finding funding to fix the most critical areas. White further committed to working with the Risk Management department immediately to find a way to correct those areas that pose the greatest safety issues. The sidewalk report showed 17 locations where the pavement is raised 3 inches or more above ground level.

BELL SHOALS ROAD WIDENING

Project Manager Ben Kniesly presented updated details of the Bell Shoals Road widening project.

He reported the following:

- The construction project will be put out for re-bid, with a target start date of July.
- Property acquisition has been completed from Boyette Road north to Glenhaven Drive, with construction to begin at Boyette and continue north past Bloomingdale Avenue.
- Approximately 35 properties still must be acquired to complete construction, with projected acquisition completion in early 2018.
- When completed Bell Shoals Road will be four lanes with a median, similar to Boyette Road.
- Once started, construction is expected to take 3 years.

Kniesly told attendees that there is money and there is compensation for the impacts the road construction will have on Bloomingdale. “I want to put back what works for the community,” he said adding, that workshops with the BSTD and County officials are planned for revamping four Bloomingdale entrances affected by the widening.

This was accompanied by a pledge from Commissioner White that as policy he agrees that the

On Jan. 9, the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District hosted a standing room only crowd for the visit of Hillsborough County Commissioner Stacy White at their regular monthly Board of Trustees meeting held at the Bloomingdale Community Offices.

Residents, members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) Board, and members of various community homeowners’ associations (HOA’s) were on hand to ask the Commissioner questions regarding the condition of the sidewalks in Bloomingdale, as well as the impacts of the Bell Shoals Road widening project on the community.

The Commissioner was accompanied by several County officials, including County Engineer Mike Williams, Project Manager

County needs to replace entrances and landscaping that are impacted or lost as a result of the construction. White told attendees, “I will be an advocate for Bloomingdale to make sure it is made whole again.”

For more information on the Bell Shoals Road widening project, including scope, schedule, and budget, visit <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/government/county-projects/transportation-projects/bell-shoals-road-widening>.

Sidewalk Update

At publication, the BSTD President Dave West received an update from Commissioner Stacy White’s legislative aide, David Garcia, regarding the sidewalks in Bloomingdale. The department head who oversees sidewalk repair sent his own team out to our community. They are preparing an analysis to bring to Commissioner White on what needs to be corrected immediately, how much work can be done by County personnel, and how much work can be subcontracted out to vendors. That report should be completed in early February.

Be sure to check back here for continuing updates!

The BSTD Board of Trustees encourages residents to continue to report sidewalk issues to the County:

Hillsborough County Public Works  
Department Director, John Lyons  
813-307-1868  
PWCustomerResolution@HCFLGov.net



At the standing room only meeting, concerned residents had many questions for Commissioner Stacy White regarding sidewalk conditions and the Bell Shoals Road widening project.

Photos: Miriam Leech



### SURVEY SAYS...

The BSTD is looking for *YOUR* input! In November, the tax assessment increase referendum did not pass. The Trustees are faced with difficult decisions on where budget cuts must be made for the coming fiscal year. As good stewards of your tax monies, the Trustees would like to hear from the residents as to what you see as priorities for our Bloomingdale community.

Please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSTD2017Survey> to complete a six-question survey. The results of the survey will help guide the Trustees as they plan for 2018. Survey questions include the following:

**1. Within Bloomingdale, which of these general areas do you see most in need of attention?**

- ( ) Maintaining and replacing existing turf throughout the community
- ( ) Repair and replacement of failing irrigation systems
- ( ) Planting new annuals each season (flowers and plants)
- ( ) Maintaining perennial plants as they are
- ( ) Reworking existing flower/plant beds to add new flowers/plants
- ( ) Other

**2. What do you believe should be the BSTD's top priority?**

- ( ) Maintaining and replacing existing turf throughout the community
- ( ) Repair and replacement of failing irrigation systems
- ( ) Planting new annuals each season (flowers and plants)
- ( ) Maintaining perennial plants as they are
- ( ) Reworking existing flower/plant beds to add new flowers/plants
- ( ) Other

### BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

# BLOOMINGDALE

3509 Bell Shoals Road  
Valrico, Florida 33596  
(813) 684-6667 Office  
(813) 684-2358 Fax  
BSTD@verizon.net

[www.bloomingdaletaxingdistrict.org](http://www.bloomingdaletaxingdistrict.org)

Hours: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

David P. West, President  
Mark Horst, Treasurer  
Russell Jones, Trustee  
Chris Papp, Trustee

Mark Vargo, Trustee  
Tom Leech, Trustee  
Jay Kittle, Trustee

FEBRUARY 2017



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Expires 3/4/17 BG

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Blankets

Valid on incoming orders only.  
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# BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Deputy James Brodie  
and C.S.O. Sandy Capitano

## AREA LAW AND ORDER

The new year is upon us and we are hitting the ground running. Between Dec. 20 and Jan. 20, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office conducted 93 traffic stops in the Bloomingdale and surrounding area known as J04 Zone. This large area includes Bloomingdale down to Lithia.

In the Bloomingdale area, there were eight auto burglaries and three residential burglaries. Criminal mischief incidents have increased as well.

Remember to **lock** the doors to your home, **secure** your garage doors and lock up your vehicles, as this will help to keep you from becoming a victim.

Residents, don't leave firearms in your vehicles. Secure them safely in your home instead. Weapons stolen from unlocked vehicles during "car hopping" break-ins can end up in the hands of children – and, nothing good happens when kids have guns.

## BE ON THE LOOKOUT!

In recent days, there were a couple of incidents in the Bloomingdale community, where "distraction" thieves were hard at work. One person will distract the homeowner outside talking about some type of work they want to do, such as lawn or tree work, while the other quickly enters your home and steals your valuables. Most of the items stolen have been jewelry and cash.

Report these incidents and any other suspicious activity to the Sheriff's Office immediately at **247-8200**. If possible, try to get a vehicle description and tag number.



## 19 YEARS AND COUNTING

This month marks 19 years since the Sheriff's Bloomingdale Community Station opened on Bell Shoals Road in 1998. The first line of defense against crime in our community is you – the homeowner. Without the citizens of the Bloomingdale community continuing the great job of keeping one eye open at all times, it would be much harder to ensure our community continues to be a safe place to live and work.

## YOU ARE INVITED!

We at the Bloomingdale Community Sub-Station would like to invite someone from each community to attend our monthly Bloomingdale Area Community Council Meeting as a representative for your neighborhood. Our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month; this month's meeting is Feb. 16 at 7 p.m.

This group works directly with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to identify community concerns and to find solutions to all types of problems. Residents interested in information on the council can call the Bloomingdale Community Station at 635-8040, or come by the station located at 3622 Erindale Drive.

## TOP CRIME

Burglaries of unlocked vehicles continue to be the leading crime of opportunity for our residents as well as surrounding residents outside the Bloomingdale area. Keep those doors locked so you don't become a statistic.



## WELCOME, DEPUTY BRODIE!

The community bids farewell to Dep. Luke Hussey (far right), but welcomes Dep. Jim Brodie (second from left) as our new Community Resource Deputy at the Erindale Sub-Station. The officers were recognized at the January Bloomingdale Area Community Council Meeting. Also Pictured are Major Robert Bullara, Det. James Howell, and Bloomingdale's Code Enforcement Officer, Christine Zien-McCombs.



## HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE OPERATION MEDICINE CABINET, MARCH 4

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, in conjunction with Home Instead Senior Care of Brandon, will be providing area residents a way of properly disposing of dangerous, outdated, unwanted prescription medicines and drugs. Protect your family and your environment! Do not flush medications or put them in the trash! Collect your old medications and drop them off for proper disposal.

This special event will be held with the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association's Annual Clean-up event on March 4 from 9 a.m. to noon. Collection boxes will be set-up at The Parks on Recreation Maintenance Facility, 1629 Natures Way.







A Humorous Look at  
Everyday Life by Ellen Bess

Ellen Bess has been writing for nearly as long as she can remember. Her humor columns have appeared in newspapers and periodicals in North Carolina, Georgia and central Florida. She lives with her husband, Frazier, a retired high school Chemistry teacher, one cat and two dogs (all rescues) in Bloomingdale West.



## In Pursuit of the Party Animal

Do you like watching brightly plumed birds and wild animals cavorting in their natural habitats? Did you know you can enjoy this hobby without slogging through tick-infested forests or driving through one of those depressing preserves where the animals roam "free" and smack your car around if the spirit moves? Really? You want to see wildlife? Go to a cocktail party.

Cocktail parties are the "Animal Planet" of society and if you want to watch these creatures in action, all you have to do is stand quietly and observe.

Look! Over there by the bar! It's the "Brightly Spangled Social Climber!" You can tell by the electric red dress, five pounds of jewelry and the high-pitched screech emitted whenever the host opens his mouth. Other identifying marks include the extended pinky finger when feeding or drinking and the manner in which it alludes to a mysterious, but aristocratic, ancestry, even though it thinks that the "Mayflower" is a type of daffodil.

Another interesting, but slightly more dangerous, example of cocktail party wildlife is the "Superficial Charmer." Known for his dreadful posture and inflated ego, he can usually be found slumped into a chair or propped along a wall looking bored. This critter spends years perfecting a boyish grin, tousled hair and a talent for making each woman believe

she is "special." He will gaze into the eyes of selected prey and murmur insincerities like, "You... are... amazing," or "I've been watching you all night," none of which he will recall in 5 minutes. I understand that there is a movement afoot to have this species embarrassed into extinction. Yay.

Then there's the "Overbearing Toucher." While somewhat irritating, they are generally harmless. The male will playfully greet others of its gender by knocking the wind out of them with a well-placed thump between the shoulder blades and calling, "HOW YA DOIN', BUDDY?!" The female greets both males and females with desperate hugs and a shrieked, "How ARE you?!" Irrksome, but non-venomous.

Now, if you're very quiet and look closely, you will spot the "Futile Chameleon." This gentle creature spends the entire cocktail party trying to blend in with the walls or furniture. Neither the male nor female is a party enthusiast and can typically be found at one only because (a) they didn't want to hurt the hostess' feelings or (b) someone else thought it would be "good" for them, brought them along and then deserted them to go "mingle." Approach these shy individuals slowly, but with genuine interest. While they are timid, I have found that one sincere conversation with them is worth more than an entire evening with any of the other species.

Happy hunting.

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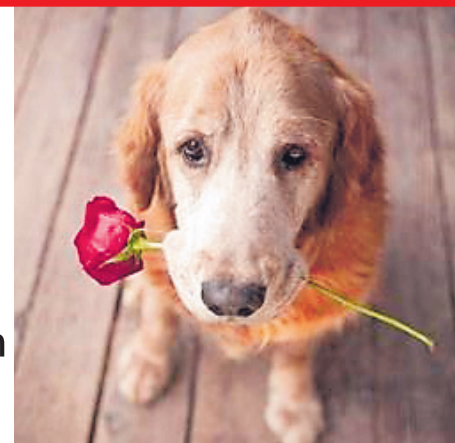
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UPCOMING  
EVENTS



The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association



Visit our Facebook page or see the Bloomingdale Gazette for updates.

BHA Community Office: 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33596  
Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (813) 681-2051

Email: bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com • BloomingdaleHOA.com



Let the treasure hunt begin – This year's community garage sale takes place Feb. 25, 8 a.m. until...

The BHA will advertise in multiple media outlets and post signage throughout the community. Residents need only provide the BHA with your garage sale address, post signage inside your community to your sale and conduct the sale. Too easy, right? Residents are encouraged to sell at least until noon.



Photo: Susan DeLuca

Garage Sale Tip: An organized sale will maximize your profits.

UPCOMING  
EVENTS



The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association

2017 Annual

Clean-Up Day

March 4, 2017

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. OR until bi



Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance  
1629 Natures Way (behind Alafia Elementary)

Visit our Facebook page or see the Bloomingdale Gazette for updates.

BHA Community Office: 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33596  
Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (813) 681-2051

Email: bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com



The BHA's ever-popular annual community clean-up will be Saturday, March 4. Volunteers will be on site as well as our returning partners the Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance program, UrbanErecycling, AMVETS, and new this year, Legal Shred, a dedicated shredding service. Legal Shred will be shredding material, which will be posted on Facebook and in the March 4th edition of the Bloomingdale Gazette. Residents are expected to expect a two banker's box limit for shredding material.

Clean-up Items Accepted

UrbanErecycling will accept the following: computer keyboards, laptops, desktop computers, scrap computers, telecom equipment, rack servers, cell phones, laser printers, battery backups, ion lithium batteries, circuit boards, and computer cables.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office "Operation Medicine Cabinet" will accept: drug items, Patches, Powders, Liquids (properly sealed), Inhalers, and Veterinary supplies.

Hillsborough County items include: Refrigerators, ovens, water heaters, Stoves, chairs, tables and mattresses) and Construction debris (such as concrete, bricks, etc.).

**Not Accepted:** Box-style older televisions, microwaves, computers or radios (except as noted above.), yard waste, hazardous materials including paint, oil, and waste from commercial activities.





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ingdale Gazette for updates.

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arch 4, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Ten commercial trash roll-  
nty Sheriff's Office Operation Medicine Cabinet  
ocument shredding company. There will be a limit  
Gazette. For planning purposes, residents should

desktop computers, tower computers and servers,  
s, flat screen monitors and **flat screen TVs (only)**,

' will accept: Pill bottles, Boxes and/or packaged  
rinarian Prescription Drugs.

steel and other metals, Furniture (such as couches,  
icks, glass and roofing materials), and tires.

s (UrbanErecycling will take flat screen TVs and  
ant, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals



## Attention Bloomingdale Seniors!

### IMPORTANT DATES

**January 15 - April 1**  
Applications accepted.

**April 1**  
Application deadline (firm).

**May 9**  
BHA Board meeting  
and announcement of  
scholarship winner.



The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association  
is proud to sponsor the

## Bloomingdale High School \$2,000 Community Education Scholarship

### REQUIREMENTS:

#### Candidate

- **Must be a resident** of the Bloomingdale community.
- Must be a graduating senior accepted at a 2 or 4-year college or university. Proof of acceptance is required.
- Weighted 3.2 GPA

#### Candidate's Parent/Guardian

- **Must be a resident** of the Bloomingdale community.
- Bloomingdale Homeowners Association 2017 membership **dues must be paid prior** to the scholarship application deadline. Membership drive begins January 2017. **Deadline is April 1, 2017.**
- Proof of residency is required.

#### Selection Criteria

- Community service
- Extra-curricular activities
- Well-written essay
- Academic Standing
- Reference letters

Scholarship information will be available January 15, 2017  
online at BloomingdaleHOA.com, at Bloomingdale  
High School and at the Bloomingdale Community Office.



BHA Community Office: 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33596 • Monday- Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
(813) 681-2051 • Email: bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com • BloomingdaleHOA.com

 BloomingdaleHOA

For information on these upcoming events, contact the BHA at 813-681-2051  
or via email at bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com.



## Around Our Community...

### BLOOMINGDALE ACE HARDWARE FINDS A NEW HOME

By Miriam Leech

After 17 years in the same location, the Bloomingdale Ace Hardware store opened the doors to its brand new location on Bloomingdale Avenue on Jan. 4.

With a new layout and fresh look, the store feels much larger than its 9,400 square feet of space—slightly smaller than the old location in Bloomingdale Square. “The new location offers us much better visibility and accessibility,” says owner Bruce Korte. “We have new customers coming in who say they never knew we were in this area.”

Korte explained that about 2 years ago he faced the choice of either closing the store or finding a new location. He was able to purchase the property right around the corner from the old store, and no longer has to worry about a landlord or paying rent.



Store Manager Angela Braunecker helps customers at the more efficient checkout area of the new store, where she has worked for 3 years.



With more visibility and accessibility, Bloomingdale Ace Hardware is attracting new customers daily.

The store has many new products, including expanded gift items like flags, chimes, and landscape decorations. There is a large Yeti product display, and a Helpful Hub for the purchase of keys, special orders, and store services. The open layout lends itself to easier shopping, and the checkout area is much more efficient.

The new Bloomingdale Ace Hardware is located at 505 East Bloomingdale Ave. Store hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Bloomingtondale Ace Hardware owner Bruce Korte shows off the Helpful Hub, one of the features at the new store's Bloomingdale Avenue location.

Photos: Miriam Leech

### CHICK-FIL-A OPENS AT CREST POINTE

By Miriam Leech

On Jan. 26, the much-anticipated South Brandon Chick-fil-A opened in the Crest Pointe Town Centre at 2010 Bloomingdale Ave. Owner Tammy Holmberg, pictured, was on hand giving out Chick-fil-A cows and cards for a free breakfast treat.

The festivities began 24 hours before the grand opening with a First 100 pop up party in the restaurant parking lot. The pay-off – the first 100 adults through the door won a year of free Chick-fil-A meals.



Campers prepared food to treat those in need at local charities including Meals on Wheels, while also putting together 10,000 meals to support Feeding Children Everywhere. Additionally, Holmberg fed all five houses of children at A Kids Place, and ran a children's book drive to benefit the Campo Family YMCA literacy program that she helped establish.

The 5,300-square-foot restaurant has a two-story interactive indoor play area, dual drive-thru lanes, and a heritage interior design that boasts lighting made from recycled Coca-Cola bottles and peach baskets. With a full-service menu, including breakfast until 10:30 a.m., the restaurant will be serving up chicken from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Like all Chick-fil-A locations, it will be closed on Sundays.

### T-MARIE'S BRINGS SUNDAY MARKET TO VALRICO

Photos: Wendy Knipp

TMarie's is offering a weekly marketplace for the public to discover local businesses and artisans. Open Sundays 10 a.m.-3 p.m. through May, the market is located at 3407 Lithia Pinecrest Rd. For information, call 813-530-0922.

Dusty and Laura Swanson offer unique aromatic 100 percent natural soaps at Swanson Soapworks, [www.swansonsoapworks.com](http://www.swansonsoapworks.com).



Errol and Dianna Bishop delight the taste buds with Hey Mon! Caribbean Cooking Magic sauces, [www.heymonsauces.com](http://www.heymonsauces.com).



Rodney Brammer, Jr. is a registered beekeeper who showcases his homemade wildflower honey derived from his own bees. Call 850-341-4424 for information.



**WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE Y: WELLNESS PROGRAMS ARE NOT ONLY FOR MEMBERS**  
*By Wendy Knipp*

Campo YMCA is more than just a gym for running on treadmills or a place to swim on a hot day. In addition to offering great classes for members, one way they give back to the community is by offering wellness programs open to the public.

Silver Sneakers is a program for adults 65+ that uses planned physical activities and social interaction to help participants gain better control of their health. Individuals must qualify through their health insurance and more than 60 health plans support it nationwide. Campo is proud to be one of the thousands of gym locations across the country that offer this plan.

The Diabetes Prevention Program is available to adults who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Participants meet weekly to discuss lifestyle modifications with a trained coach. It's a fee-based program open to non-members. Some insurance plans cover the fee.

The Dementia Support Group is free and open to non-members. This group meets once a month and provides support to families dealing with a loved one's memory loss.

The Youth Cancer Survivor program offers 12 weeks of free sessions for cancer survivors ages 5-18. The LIVESTRONG program is for adult cancer survivors and includes 12 weeks of free sessions and 3 months of family membership.

Campo's Community Campaign will take place from March 1- May 31. It raises money to support many of the programs that give back to the community. Donations are used to teach children how to swim, help cancer survivors have a place to heal, send thousands of children to summer camp, provide thousands of needy children with backpacks filled with supplies, and hundreds of kids have received sports scholarship.

To donate or for more information, contact Dwight Kerr at [Dwight.kerr@tampaymca.org](mailto:Dwight.kerr@tampaymca.org) or call 813-616-0321.

The Diabetes Prevention Program is one of many programs that Campo YMCA offers to the public.



Photo: Wendy Knipp

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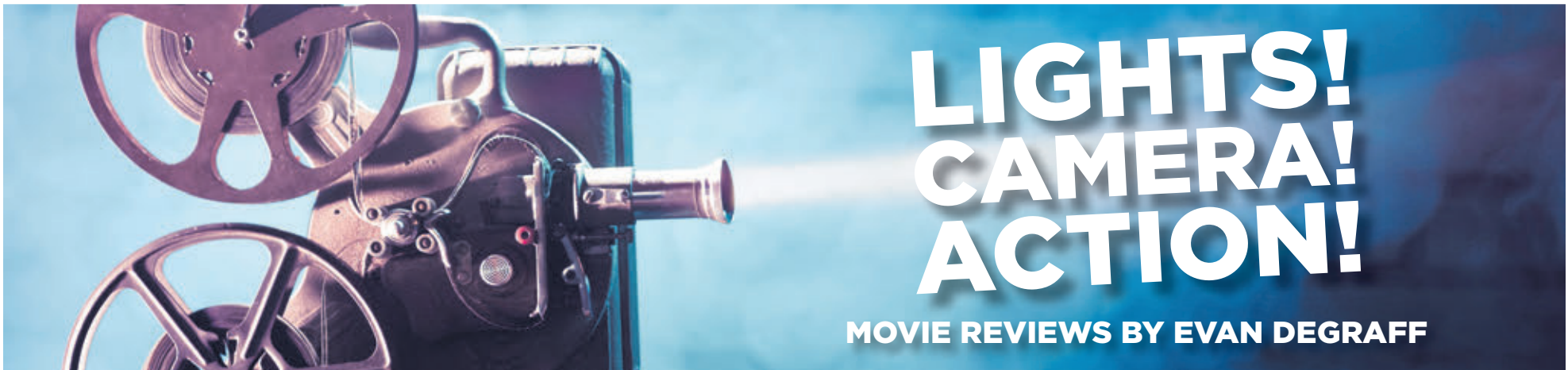
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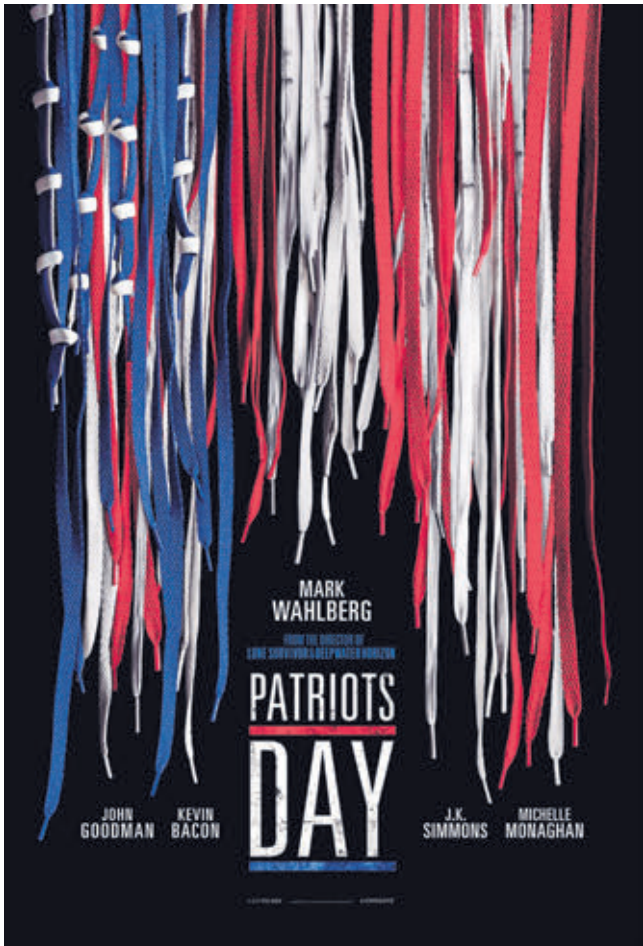


*Evan DeGraff is a Bloomingdale High School student and Bloomingdale resident with a passion for movies. Each month, he will review a current movie release. He hopes one day to follow in the footsteps of acclaimed movie critics the likes of Siskel and Ebert.*

**THIS MONTH: LA LA LAND, PATRIOTS DAY, AND ARRIVAL**



La La Land is a beautifully shot and edited movie that completely captures the tone of 1950's musicals. Written and directed by Damien Chazelle, leads Ryan Gosling, as aspiring Jazz pianist Sebastian, and Emma Stone, as struggling actress Mia bring this romantic comedy to life. The storyline centers on how the two eventually come together as they try to make their Hollywood dreams come true. Their performances earned them both Oscar nominations, two of 14 total for the film. While the acting is first class, the soundtrack makes this movie shine. This is one of the best, if not, the best movie of the year. It is a dancing 5 out of 5 pianos.



Movies that tell stories from real-life can be tough to watch – Patriots Day is one of those movies. Director Peter Berg reunites with his Deepwater Horizon lead actor Mark Wahlberg for another hard-hitting film. Patriots Day tells the gut-wrenching story of the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing from the perspective of Police Sgt. Tommy Saunders, the only character not pulled from real-life survivors and first responders. Berg kept the tension high and I found myself emotional at different times during the film. The idea of patriotism is used often, but as an audience member, I was not beat over the head with the message. The film was respectful of the stories it told and to the heroes and victims of the day. I give this movie a 4 out of 5 American Flags.



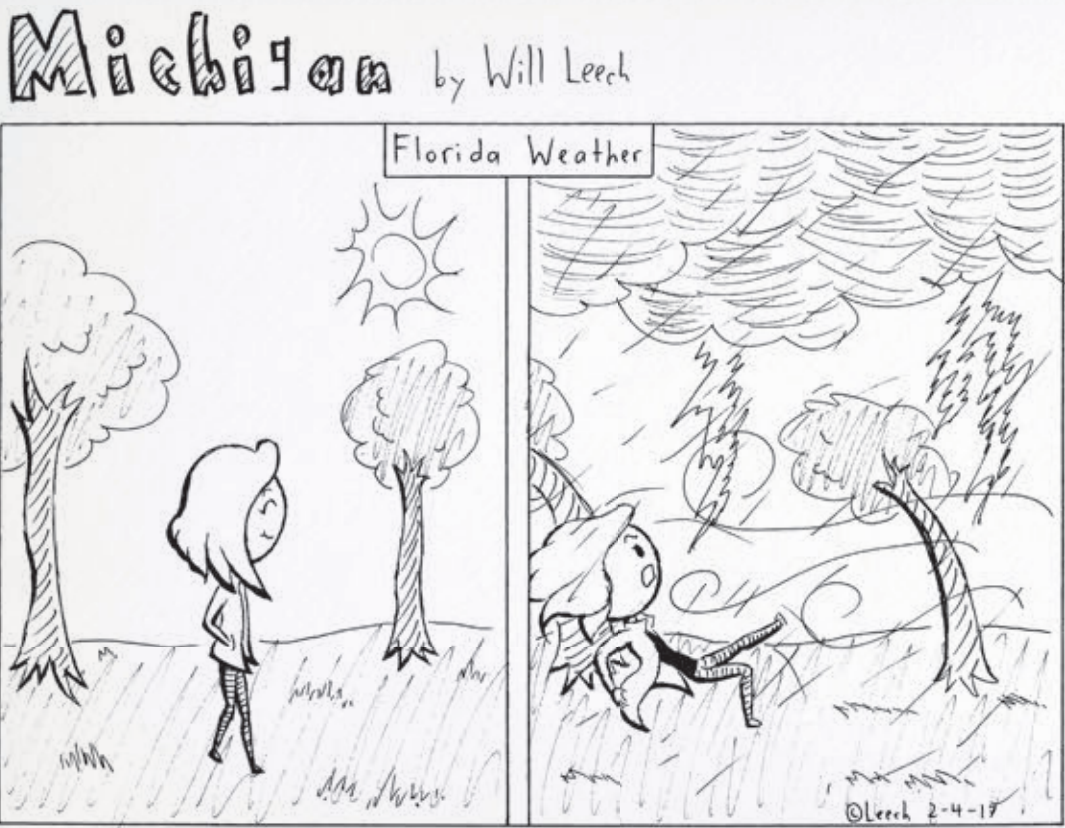
This is the best movie I saw in 2016. From the second I walked out of the theater, Arrival had me thinking about life and the true meaning of this movie. A stellar cast headed by Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner and Forest Whitaker tells the story of alien ships landing on earth and our attempts to interact with them in a positive manner. The film is breathtaking from the simple color pallet to the visuals to the overall cinematography to the storytelling. Although she didn't receive an Oscar nomination, Amy Adams turns in a superb performance as a linguist attempting to communicate with the alien force. Again, this is the best movie I saw last year and it can still be seen in theaters. I give this movie 4.95 out of 5 aliens.





Michigan

Comic strip artist Will Leech is a Florida State University freshman. Through his creation “Michigan,” he shares his view of the world around us.



Into the woods, we go...  
Rule 28 “Ball Unplayable”

By J.D. Carino (Bloomington CC campus)

You hit your drive 240 yards with a five-yard right hand turn into the woods. Fortunately, knowing the rules provides an option not known to most.

A player who declares their ball unplayable has three options. The first option is to go back to where the original ball was last played but lose 240 yards.

The second option is to take a drop two club lengths from where the ball is currently located. In this case, still four yards in the forest. The ball (yellow) is behind the middle tree, the flag (red) on the other side of the trees.

Any questions or for lessons, visit [CochraneGolfSchools.com](http://CochraneGolfSchools.com) or call J.D. (813) 957-3205.



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# BLOOMING IN BLOOMINGDALE

Photo Provided By: Peter and Eileen Kadzielewski

## ...HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

*Editor's Note: A column for our green and brown thumb gardeners penned by local garden experts and amateurs from the Valrico Garden Club (VGC). To learn about the VGC, contact Mary Kay McMahan at 813-684-6323, email danmcmahan@aol.com or visit Facebook/Valrico Garden Club.*

### Not Just a "Let the Good Times Roll" Celebration, But a Plant, Too

By Gwen Graverson

While February may be best known for Valentine's Day, you can't overlook the month-long celebrations which include President's Day, Groundhog Day, Super Bowl Sunday and this year's Mardi Gras, which falls on Feb. 28.

Speaking of Mardi Gras, did you know that there are plants that go by the same name?

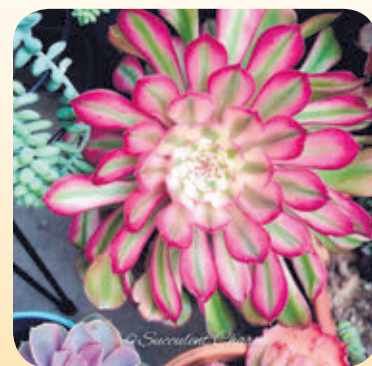


www.greatplantpicks.org

Mardi Gras Abelia is a pink-tinged beauty with green and white variegated leaves. Butterflies and hummingbirds are attracted to this plant especially when the flowers start to bloom from late spring through the fall. The average height is 2.5 to 3 feet and the spread is about the same.

Plant Mardi Gras Abelia 5 to 6 feet apart, in well-drained soils with full sun. Shear it one or two times a year to maintain a denser plant, and use a slow release, high nitrogen fertilizer in the spring. It's a very versatile and hardy plant with good resistance to insects, disease, frost, drought, and heat.

Another "party" plant is Aeonium 'Mardi Gras' – a succulents with rosette of yellow and green variegation combined with vivid rose to rich burgundy which offer a very striking accent. These succulents need bright light for optimum growth, but can handle cooler temperatures. Caring for succulents is the focus of next month's column, Terrarium Gardens.



### Who you gonna call?

UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County  
Solutions for Your Life:

Staff and Master Gardeners are available to answer questions, by phone or in person, from homeowners about their landscapes. They can assist you with lawn and pest problems, what to successfully grow in landscapes or vegetable gardens, and when and how to water effectively. Insect and plant samples may be taken to the Help Desk for identification and for solutions to problems. Soil samples can be tested for a nominal charge to determine pH.

Help Desk Hours: Monday – Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Telephone 813-744-5519, E-mail hillsimg@ad.ufl.edu, or stop by the UF/IFAS Extension Office (Hillsborough County), 5339 County Rd., Seffner.

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Events listed may be subject to change. Check with your school to confirm event dates and times prior to attending.

## **FEB. 10 – FAIR DAY, NON-STUDENT DAY** **FEB. 20 – PRESIDENTS DAY, NON-STUDENT DAY**



### **ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY**

Feb. 8 – McDonald's Spirit Night

Feb. 24 – All Pro Dad, 7 a.m. in the Media Center

### ***Float Away with a Great Book***

3rd Nine Weeks Media Center Reading Challenge – Meet the Media Center Goal for your grade level by March 10 and you can earn: A Soda Float Party in the Media Center or A Soda Float Scented Scratch and Sniff Bookmark. Complete your AR points or your Minutes on MyOn. Check your MyOn account for details.



### **CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL**

Feb. 9 – SLAM (Student Literacy & Media) Showcase, Media Center, 2:30- 7:30 p.m. During conference night, come walk through the media center and view the SLAM projects submitted by K-5th graders.

Feb. 23 – Spring Picture Day

### ***Cimino Recognized as Five-Star School***

On Jan. 9, the Florida Department of Education announced “Five-Star Schools” in the Tampa Bay area for the 2015-2016 school year—our very own Cimino Cougars were among the local schools on the list. To earn the distinction, a school must show that it has achieved all benchmarks and criteria in five categories – Community/Business Partnerships, Family Involvement, Volunteerism, Student Community Service and School Advisory Council. The school must also earn a grade of “C” or above. Way to go Cimino!



### **BURNS BRUINS BANTER**

Feb. 6-9 – Valentines Sales

Feb. 6 – Conference night, 4:30 p.m.

Feb. 8 – Soccer vs Shields @ Bloomingdale HS, 6 p.m.

Feb. 14 – Soccer vs Barrington @ Newsome HS, 6 p.m.

Feb. 17 – 6th Grade Band Pictures, 9 a.m.

Feb. 22 – Soccer vs Eisenhower @ East Bay, 6 p.m.

March 2 – Soccer vs Rodgers @ Riverview, 6 p.m.

### ***Put Your Name in Lights!***

Celebrate your special occasion or achievement with a personal “Name in Lights” message on the Burns electronic



### **BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS**

Feb. 7 – Boys Basketball Districts @ Strawberry Crest, 4 p.m.

Feb. 7 – Boys & Girls Lacrosse vs Sickles, 5 p.m.

Feb. 9 – Boys Lacrosse vs Tampa Catholic, 6 p.m.

Feb. 10 – Boys & Girls Lacrosse @ Durant, 5 p.m.

Feb. 14 – Baseball Pre-Season, 4 p.m.

Feb. 14 – Boys & Girls Lacrosse vs Newsome, 5 p.m.

Feb. 16 – Softball @ Lennard, 7 p.m.

Feb. 17 – IncrediBULL Games, 8 a.m.

Feb. 20 – Flag Football Tryouts, 10 a.m.

Feb. 21 – Boys & Girls Lacrosse vs TBT – 5 p.m.

Feb. 21 – Softball & Baseball @ Sickles, 7 p.m.

Feb. 23 – Melissa Snively Meeting, 6 p.m.

Feb. 24 – Softball & Baseball vs Brandon, 7 p.m.

Feb. 27-28 – FSA Writing

Feb. 28 – Boys & Girls Lacrosse vs Newsome, 5 p.m.

Feb. 28 – Softball & Baseball @ East Bay, 7 p.m.



### **BULL BRIEFS**

#### ***IncrediBULL Game Volunteers Needed***

On Feb. 17, Bloomingdale High School will host six high schools, three middle schools and one exceptional center for its annual IncrediBULL games. This is a Special Olympic field day for our disabled students.

Your help is needed. First, we need adult volunteers to help with registration, lunch, and overall supervision. Second, we need sponsors for our athletes. We anticipate over 200 student athletes. Contact Donna Hart at donna.hart@sdhc.k12.fl.us for information.

#### ***University of Florida Summer Programs***

The University of Florida is currently accepting applications for their summer programs for high school students. Summer programs cover an array of topics from biomedical research to humanities. Costs range from \$350 to \$2,000 depending on the program, and need based scholarships are available. Applications for the summer program are due March 17. For information, visit [www.cpet.ufl.edu](http://www.cpet.ufl.edu).







## The Rajun' Bull Band Auction is Back; Promises Something for Everyone!

By Amy Fluty

On March 4 from 4-8 p.m., the Bloomingdale Rajun' Bull Band will hold an auction at the school to benefit the band and Crimson Guard. This year's auction features three sections: multiple raffles throughout the event, a silent auction from 4-6 p.m., and a live auction from 6-8 p.m.

There will be many themed baskets and other items to bid on such as entertainment, sports, dinner/restaurants, home services, and more. Items in the live auction have a minimum value of \$500. Refreshments and desserts will be available during the evening too.

Maintaining an organization of over 250 students takes considerable commitments of time and money. Proceeds pay for upcoming trips, maintenance of uniforms and instruments and will help the Bloomingdale Rajun' Bull Band and Crimson Guard continue the excellent work they have been doing for the past 30 years.

We still want donations. Contact Dann Berkowitz at [bdalebandboosters@gmail.com](mailto:bdalebandboosters@gmail.com) to learn how to help this great group of students. Specific items of interest are event tickets, electronics, gift cards/gift certificates, home services, vacation items, relaxation and self care packages, and family activities.

The Bloomingdale Band Boosters is a tax-exempt organization and your donation will be tax deductible. Mark your calendar for March 4 and get ready for a night of fun and great prizes! Thank you for supporting the Bloomingdale Senior High School Rajun' Bull Band and Crimson Guard.



## Preparing for Life Beyond High School

By Abigail Hernandez, Student Reporter

When preparing for life after high school, the decisions and hardships you face can be difficult to deal with alone. Deciding which schools to apply to, finding scholarships, and keeping up with your graduation requirements can be overwhelming. Luckily, there are many resources available to juniors and rising seniors that can make navigating the road to graduation and beyond a little easier.

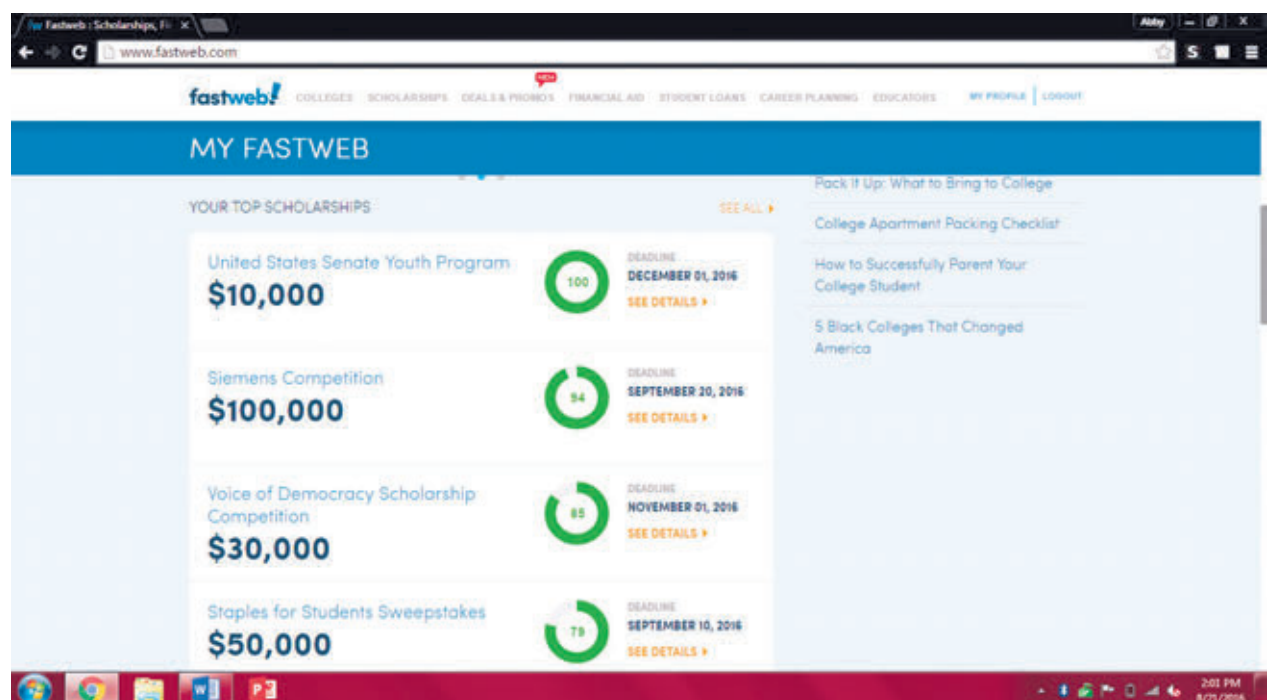
For many, the first step to mapping their future starts with their school's guidance department. At Bloomingdale High School, the guidance department is very active and boasts its own website at [www.bloomingdaleguidance.org/](http://www.bloomingdaleguidance.org/). On the site, students can find their counselor, research topics from financial aid, to essays writing, to the application process, local area and other scholarship opportunities and more. In addition, the site includes different graduation tracks including high school to career choices, and technical and community college information.

While this may be enough for some, another great resource is Fastweb at [www.fastweb.com/](http://www.fastweb.com/). This site is touted as the leading online resource for finding scholarships, career advice, financial aid information and the college search process.

I found Fastweb particularly helpful for scholarship searching, tracking and applying. Fastweb includes the following:

- A scholarship-matching site that gives you scholarship opportunities that you are eligible for based on the personal and education information you provide.
- Updates with new opportunities regularly.
- Sorts through your matches by deadline, amount awarded, or provider.
- Separates your matches into groups (Will Apply, Will Not Apply, Might Apply, etc.).
- Scholarships can be as simple as filling out your personal information or as difficult as creating a project.
- Sign up is for students OR parents.

As with any upcoming event in your life, start planning early.







The Bloomingdale Bulls Cheerleaders headed to The University of Florida on Jan. 28 to compete in the Florida State Championship Cheer Semi-Finals against six other highly competitive squads. The girls worked hard all year to earn this honor and earned 3rd place for their efforts. Only the top two teams continued on to the State Finals. No matter the finish, we are proud of our Bloomingdale Bulls Cheerleaders. Congratulations on an awesome year!

The cheerleaders pose for a picture before heading to the competition in Gainesville.

Photo: Nikki Monroe



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## Sam Skinner Announced as Coach Minahan Award Finalist

By Deidre Morgan

At an awards dinner held Jan. 16 at The Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City, Bloomingdale football player Sam Skinner was named one of five finalists for the Coach Bill Minahan award. The finalists for the award were nominated by their coaches for their hard work on and off the field, their perseverance through tough times and a love for the game.

Bloomingdale Head Coach Max Warner nominated Skinner for his leadership during the season and his impressive performance on the football field with 11 sacks and 5 fumble recoveries. Sam also has a 3.2 unweighted GPA and has extensive community service hours.

Warner said, "Sam is a first class young man and we are proud of his service and he has been a great example for the Bloomingdale Football Program." Along with a trophy for the winner, which was Daniel Morales of Spoto, each finalist received a \$1,500 scholarship for college.

The award is a special one for football players in the area. Coach Minahan played football for the University of Tampa and coached high school football for 38 years. His career began at Plant High School and he later coached at Jefferson and Jesuit High Schools. It was at Jesuit where he took the Tigers to their first ever State Football Championship win.

In later years, Minahan suffered from kidney failure and through the generous donation of a donor family, he received a kidney transplant that not only saved his life but also inspired him to help others with organ and tissue donations. To learn more about Coach Minahan and his foundation, visit [lifelinkfoundation.org](http://lifelinkfoundation.org).

Congratulations to all finalists and especially Sam Skinner who continues to make Bloomingdale High School and the community proud!

Sam Skinner with Bloomingdale Head Coach Max Warner was one of five award finalists at the Coach Bill Minahan Award Dinner last month.



Photo: Melanie Skinner



## District Champs Again!

On Jan. 20, the powerful Lady Bulls Soccer team won the 4A district 9 championship with wins over Lennard HS 8-0 in the semifinals and King HS 5-1 in the finals. Under the leadership of Coach Heather Iverson, the Lady bulls finished a stellar regular season at 11-1-1 and district play at 6-0. With back-to-back District titles under their cleats, the team moved on to Regional quarterfinals play where they defeated Countryside HS 2-1 on Jan. 26. Moving forward to regional semi-final play on Jan. 31, the team faced St. Petersburg HS. In overtime, the team suffered a heart-breaking 2-1 loss, which halted their state title bid.



District Champs: Lady Bulls celebrate the win on Jan. 20, move on to Regional Play-offs.

Courtesy Photo: @ladybullsoccer



Sophomore Alyssa Conarton (no. 20) scores the winning victory against Countryside at the Class 4A regional Quarterfinal on Jan.26.

Courtesy Photo: Scott Purks/ Tampa Bay Times

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## Four BSHS Athletes Sign on National Signing Day

Photo/Brief By Deidre Morgan

Feb. 1 was a big day at Bloomingdale High School for four athletes moving on to play their sport at the collegiate level. National Signing Day, usually the first Wednesday in February, is the first day that a high school senior can sign a binding National Letter of Intent for a college sport with a school that is a member of the United States National Collegiate Athletic Association. Family, friends and coaches gathered to watch Sam Skinner, Southern Illinois University (Football), Colin Errity, Davidson College (Football), Dalton Carde, Southern Illinois University (Football) and Kaden Miller, Midland University (Swim) sign their NLI's. Congratulations to all these great student-athletes and their families, Go Bulls!





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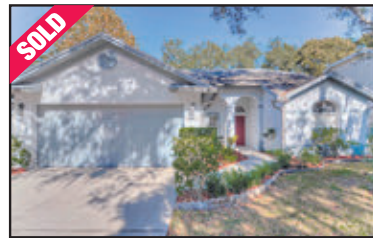
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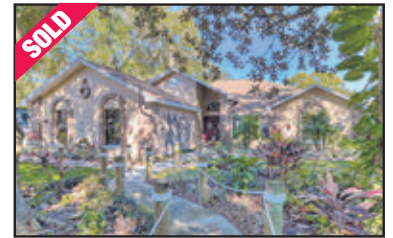
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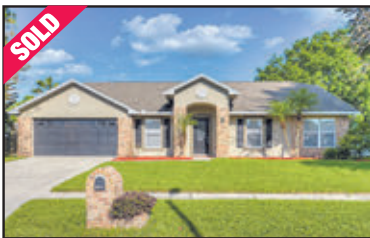
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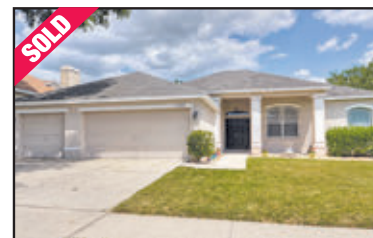
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4404 Merrick Run Ln.



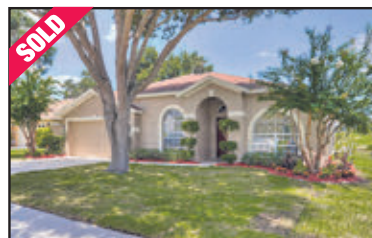
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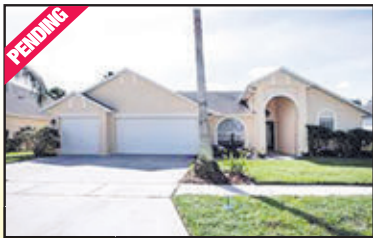
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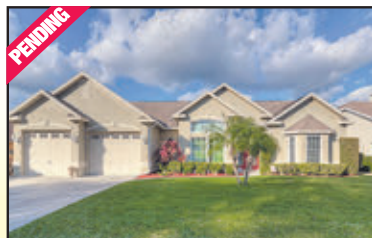
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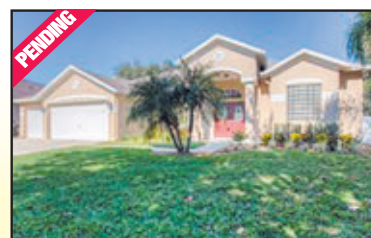
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