



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

VOLUME XXXV ❖ ISSUE 1 ❖ JANUARY 2015 ❖ www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

Ongoing and Upcoming Construction and Special Projects Define 2015 By Mack Austin

A Progress Update



Several major construction and improvement projects have begun or are scheduled to begin in and around the Bloomingdale area. Most of these projects involve large amounts of heavy construction.

Staying informed can help you negotiate the challenges we will face as development continues. There will

be major traffic control measures in place to improve the safety of construction workers, pedestrians and motorists. For everyone's safety, obey these measures. Plan your trips and commutes to allow for extra time needed for potential delays and increased traffic.

These projects are important towards improving our community and we want them completed with minimal accidents and problems. Read the Gazette and check the community's Facebook page for new information, updates and public meetings notices.

Projects currently underway include the new fire station and the new Super Wal-Mart complex including five to six businesses and apartments all located off Bloomingdale Avenue.

A list of projects ongoing or scheduled to begin follows. Details included are accurate as of the paper's deadline. To learn more about development and construction projects in our area, visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org.

Continued on Page 11

Making Smiles One Bow at a Time By Kayla Hayes



Deborah Stasiak, Bloomingdale resident and owner of Jersey Girl Bows, made her community debut at the BHA's Fall Festival. Surrounded by a few Storm All Stars Cheer fans, she displayed a table full of handmade bows, spirit items, and key chains.
Photo: Joy Boisselle

Bloomingdale resident Deborah Stasiak, owner of Jersey Girl Bows, serves the community in a unique way. Stasiak and her 11-year-old granddaughter, Heather Heinze, create one-of-a-kind bows for a variety of holidays, charities, organizations and special events.

Some of their most popular bows are printed with local school logos and mascots (i.e. Alafia Elementary School, Burns Middle School, etc.) and are given as extra gifts to students who receive Honor Roll, Principal's Honor Roll and other academic achievements. Jersey Girl Bows sells hair tie bows for girls as well as smaller key chain bows.

Jersey Girl Bows is based at the Storm All Stars Cheer and Dance in Brandon, where many of the cheerleaders have a military parent. One of Stasiak's favorite projects is customizing bows for children of military members. The bows feature the member's branch of service and sayings like "My dad fights for your freedom." She, also, works with the gym owners to customize competition bows for the cheerleaders.

With the strong military connection at the gym, she explained, "Nine out of ten times a parent will surprise their military spouse by bringing

them by the gym so that their cheerleader can present the bows [personally]."

Stasiak works with Cheer Spirit Bows in New Jersey and Bling It On Bows in California for her bow printing needs. Bling It On Bows often donates the military-themed bows for Stasiak to give away at various charity and other events.

Heinze, who designs many of the bows, said, "Anyone can make a bow – it's what you do with the bow that counts." She saves her money to have bows printed to give away at places like Shades of Green, a military resort at Walt Disney World. Stasiak and Heinze will be visiting in January to pass out Disney-themed bows to military children.

"It really brightens up the military kids' faces," said Stasiak.

Jersey Girl Bows accepts any requests and can provide a cost estimate up front. "Our bows are especially great for PTA [Parent Teacher Association] and school fundraisers," offered Stasiak. "Please feel free to contact us to have a fabulous bow designed to your liking. You can also design your own."

For information, call Stasiak at 810-9104, or visit Jersey Girl Bows at the Storm All Stars Cheer Gym at 514 Corner Drive in Brandon.



Heather Heinze (pictured) and Stasiak gave out bows in December to spread Christmas cheer. This month they will be designing bows for military families and child abuse/bullying awareness bows to donate to charities for fundraising efforts.
Photo: Deborah Stasiak

This Month



MLK DAY
Page 3

BHA COMMUNITY CORNER
Page 4

COMMUNITY CALENDAR
Page 6

ARBOR DAY
Page 8

2014 YEAR IN REVIEW
Pages 12 & 13

SANTA VISIT
Page 14

ADORABLE PETS
Page 15

HCSO NOTES SOLICITATION
Page 16

INs & OUTs VANDALISM
Page 18

BEST OF THE BEST
Page 22

SCHOOL NEWS
Page 21 - 23

PLEASE RECYCLE



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others? *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

Bloomington Homeowners Association, Inc.
 3509 Bell Shoals Road - Valrico, Florida 33596 - (813) 681-2051
 Email: Bloomington.Homeowners@gmail.com
 Website: www.BloomingtonHOA.com

BHA Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Offices of Bloomington Special Taxing District:
 3509 Bell Shoals Road
 Valrico, Florida 33596

Directors at Large:

President: <i>George T. May IV</i>	<i>Billy Hightower</i>	<i>Joanie Wilson</i>
Treasurer: <i>Dennis Osborn</i>	<i>Mary Galin</i>	<i>Ken Smith</i>
Secretary: <i>Daniel Berkowitz</i>	<i>Beth Smedley</i>	<i>Suzy Watts</i>

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



JOY BOISSELLE

Editor - The Bloomington Gazette
 3509 Bell Shoals Rd.
 Valrico, FL 33596 - (813) 681-2051
 Email: InBloomingtonNews@gmail.com
 Website: www.BloomingtonHOA.com



TONY DEL CASTILLO

General Manager
Brandon & Southshore Times
 11268 Winthrop Main Street, Suite 101
 Riverview, Florida 33578 - (813) 661-2438
 Email: tdelcastillo@tampabay.com

Tampa Bay Times

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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

Kids R Kids Learning Academy

- 6 Weeks Through 12 Years
- Full & Part Time Options
- Open: M-F 6am to 6:30pm
- Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers
- APPLE Accreditation and CITA Approved Curriculum
- Security Code Access Entry
- FREE Internet Viewing of Your Child's Day
- Brainwaves Curriculum

- ABC Mouse Computer Technology
- Outdoor Playgrounds with Water Park
- Nutritious Meals & Snacks: Low Salt & Sugar
- Spanish & Music Included
- Trained Professional Staff, Certified in First Aid & CPR
- Extracurricular Programs

Happy New Year!

813-657-6200
www.krkvalrico.com
 4321 Lynx Paw Trail
Located across from Litbia Springs Elementary

813-526-7000
www.krkcirca.com
 5815 Kids Crossing Drive
Located between Stowers Elementary and Mosaic

Register Now For Winter
And Receive
TWO WEEKS FREE
and FREE REGISTRATION
 After 8 weeks continuous attendance. Limit 1 per family. Expires 1/31/15

The Significance of The Martin Luther King Holiday; A Resident's Perspective

By Rev. Mel Harris

Editor's Note: When asked to give his thoughts on the upcoming MLK Holiday, Bloomingdale resident Reverend Mel Harris was quick to respond with this eloquent piece. A Virginia native and, retired Air Force Master Sergeant with twenty-six years of honorable service, he is actively involved in numerous organizations, ministries and community service work.



Photo Credit: Rev. Mel Harris

Harris serves as Vice Chair of the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS of Tampa Bay, Chair of the Ecumenical Committee, and the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners recently appointed him to the Children Services Advisory Board. He is the current pastor of Destiny Baptist Church in Spring Hill. Having served his country all over the world, Harris has a unique perspective to offer on the importance of Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy and vision. Thank you, Rev. Harris. (Background information excerpted from Rev. Harris' official biography.)

The significance of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday is best absorbed through the prism of change - the realities of demonstrated love, faith, courage, and humility. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. deposited a spirit of compassion and service into the lives of all who would embrace his standard of a higher calling toward unconditional love and forgiveness.

With the slightest reflection upon his oratorical genius, we are left to ponder words such as these: "We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love." As we celebrate the holiday, we are encouraged to consider the greatest Biblical principle offered by a loving God - love and forgiveness.

On this special day, we pause to consider the dream Dr. King had for a diverse America where each ethnicity could enjoy the right to pursue a good life with liberty and justice for all. To quote Coretta Scott King: "We commemorate Dr. King's great dream of a vibrant, multiracial nation united in justice, peace, and equality, the leader who not only dreamed of a color-blind society, but who also led a movement that achieved historic reforms to help make it a reality."

By celebrating his life and contributions to America and the world, we challenge present and future generations to uphold a higher moral code of conduct toward all humanity. We challenge each other to truly become our brother's keeper.

Perhaps these thoughts are best concluded with words from Dr. King: "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."

MLK Day of Service is Jan. 19

Staff Report

While many Americans will enjoy a day off on Jan. 19 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, others will use the time to volunteer as part of the MLK Day of Service initiative - an opportunity for Americans to honor Dr. King's legacy through service and volunteerism. Instituted as part of President Barack Obama's "United We Serve" program, volunteers are encouraged to make a difference in their communities and perhaps gain inspiration to continue their service throughout the year.

This year's theme is "A Day Of Service - A Day On, Not A Day Off." Across the U.S., hundreds of thousands will heed the call to service and reach out to help others.

A recent federal study showed 62.6 million Americans volunteered through an organization and 138 million informally volunteered in 2013. Those volunteers amassed an amazing 7.7 billion hours of service to others. Research further indicates that service to others is a priority for many Americans.

There are many ways to serve in our community and the surrounding area. Close to home, volunteers can mentor youth, work with food collection agencies, fundraise for charities, tutor, provide transportation or labor, and provide professional expertise and skills. To find a volunteer opportunity, visit www.volunteermatch.org and www.serve.gov. Search Tampa, Brandon, or Valrico.



*"A Day Of Service - A Day On,
Not A Day Off."*

Bloomingdale Real Estate & Housing Update

By Ryan Brantley



The Chadderton Real Estate Group
Keller Williams Realty

813-924-8187

Ryan@RyanBrantley.org

www.chaddertongroup.com

It's a brand new year with changes abounding in the real estate world. According to the Greater Tampa Association of Realtors, home sales have increased 14.3 percent during the last year with the median sales price of single-family homes rising 2.9 percent. This is great news for the overall economy but changes in 2015 could hinder homebuyers.

Lawrence Yun, chief economist with the National Association of Realtors predicts mortgage rates will rise to 5 percent in the next year and to 6 percent in two years. These rising mortgage rates are negative to the housing market and bad news for future homebuyers.

Freddie Mac economists also anticipate homebuilding to rise by 20 percent, which will likely help total home sales to climb by about 5 percent. On the other hand, home appreciation will likely have slowed to 4.5 percent from 9.3 percent last year.

In the Bloomingdale area, we are hopeful for another busy year. After 22 houses sold in November, December closed 19 homes. Priming the market for the new year, 15 new listings hit the market in December.

The bottom line: if you're thinking of making a change, do so early in the year before mortgage rates climb.

* MLS statistics include Bloomingdale East and West valid Dec. 1-27. Sales not entered into the MLS did not count in these statistics.



Talk Around Town: New Year's Edition!

Compiled By Kayla Hayes

Welcome to "Talk around Town," a place to share your opinions and be heard. Each month, our reporters will ask residents a question; some questions are light-hearted, some are serious.

This month's question:

"What are your new year resolutions?"

Geneva Gavin

"To try to eat as healthy as I can and go to the gym on a more regular basis. I go to Crunch Fitness on Lithia Pinecrest Rd." Photo: Geneva Gavin



Gary Lindow

"One would be to do kind, small things for people on a daily basis, and to play better golf so that I stop embarrassing myself. I play Monday, Wednesday and Friday at Buckhorn Springs."



Trey Lipsey

"I enjoy reading, so I would say to read a new book once a week. I'd like to read a mixture of fiction and non-fiction."



Photos, unless otherwise noted: Kayla Hayes

BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK! 

2015 Annual Membership Drive Starts Jan. 15

Please consider joining and strengthening the one organization that represents the entire community of over 5,000 homes and 23,000 residents. Many initiatives are planned this year, and we need your support.

Check your mailboxes after Jan. 15 for the BHA's annual membership drive letter and scholarship donation request. Your mailer will contain a letter, front and back, with details about the Association's role, events, and other programs. A green membership card and a return envelope is also included.

To help with planning and budgeting, join today or at least within the next 90 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.

However, the easiest way to join is to use our PayPal option. Go to www.bloomingdalehoa.com, look for the PayPal link in the lower right corner and follow the simple instructions.

While membership increased in 2014, the Association hopes that 2015 will be a record-breaking year. For a look back at your community's and Association's events and activities, see the *2014 Year in Review* on pages 12 & 13 in this issue.



BHA BRIEFS

BHA December Board Meeting Highlights

Discussions continued regarding the update of deed restrictions for sections of the community in non-mandated neighborhoods. Comments from board members regarding the lawyer-prepared draft document led BHA President George May to plan another meeting with BHA attorney Dan Pilka. Information regarding this time-consuming and long-term project will be forthcoming as plans solidify.

This initiative requires resident majority vote for approval in each separate neighborhood section, i.e. Section D1, H3, etc. When available, the BHA will post the proposed draft document online at the community website for resident review and comment.

Budget planning for 2015 was scheduled for Dec. 17. Board executive officers will meet to prepare a 2015 draft budget for board review at the January board meeting.

May and Mary Galin met with Metropolitan Planning Organization and several county commissioners after the monthly board meeting. Issues discussed included Lithia Pinecrest and Bell Shoals Roads and Bloomingdale Avenue road improvements and funding requirements. This will be a priority for the BHA in the coming year, including keeping residents informed. Specific improvements include street light additions, bus stop cutouts, high visibility crosswalks, signal light timing, and the replacement/renewal of sidewalks.

Remember, monthly BHA board meetings are open to all. The board needs four new members. Interested residents are asked to attend a few meetings to see if joining the BHA board is a "good fit" for them. Contact 813-681-2051 for more information.

BHA EVENT CALENDAR

If you have events pending in our community, email bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com, or call 813-681-2051. We want to help you promote your event.

Monday, Jan. 12, 6:30 p.m. / Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Monthly Trustee Meeting, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. The BSTD is seeking new trustees to fill vacancies. Call 813-684-6667 for information.

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome.

Thursday, Jan. 15, 7 p.m. / Bloomingdale Area Community Council chaired by Hillsborough County Master Deputy Curtis Warren, Bloomingdale Community Station, 3622 Erindale Drive, 813-635-8040. Learn about safety and security issues affecting our community.



2015 Annual Clean-Up Day

March 7, 2015

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **OR** until bins are full
Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance Facility
1629 Natures Way (behind Alafia Elementary School)

Featuring:

Five - 30 cu.yd. commercial trash bins!

AND


Our Clean-Up Partners:

UrbanErecycling - accepting electronics and more
Operation Medicine Cabinet - accepting outdated meds
and sponsored by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office

Check the Bloomingdale Gazette for a complete listing of items acceptable for drop-off!

This event is made possible in part by a grant from the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners.

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 • www.BloomingdaleHOA.com

 BloomingdaleHOA

Flyer: Beth Smedley

Correction: In last month's thank you to volunteers, we forgot a special resident, Vi Osborn. Osborn has been a fantastic volunteer for nearly 10 years. We regret the error.



The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) Community Clean-up Day is Saturday, March 7 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. **(or until trash bins are full)**. This event is for Bloomingdale residents only.

There is no charge for this service, but residents must sign in with their name and address. No businesses or contractors may make use of this service.

Due to last year's overwhelming response, five commercial trash bins will be available, two more than last year. The collection site is on Natures Way at the Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance Facility near Alafia Elementary School. Like last year, the BHA will partner with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Operation Medicine Cabinet and UrbanErecycling.

UrbanErecycling will accept the following electronics for recycling purposes: computer keyboards, laptops, desktop computers, tower computers and servers, scrap computers, telecom equipment, rack servers, cell phones, laser printers, flat screen monitors and flat screen TVs, battery backups, ion lithium batteries, circuit boards, and computer cables.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office through "Operation Medicine Cabinet" will accept: Pill bottles, Boxes and/or packaged drug items, Patches, Powders, Liquids (properly sealed), Inhalers, and Veterinarian Prescription Drugs.

Hillsborough County Roll-off accepted items include: Refrigerators, ovens, water heaters, Steel and other metals, Furniture (such as couches, chairs, tables and

mattresses) and Construction debris (such as concrete, bricks, glass and roofing materials), and tires. Items not accepted are: televisions, microwaves, computers or radios **(UrbanErecycling will take flat screen TVs and computers as noted above)**, yard waste, hazardous materials including paint, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals and waste from commercial activities.

The BHA needs volunteers. High school students earn community service hour credits for helping with this project. For information, contact the BHA at 813-681-2051 or by email at bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com.



Does your garage look something like this? The BHA wants to help you clean it up at the Annual Clean-up Day, Saturday, March 7, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. OR until trash bins are full.

Gazette File Photo

Dade City Chamber of Commerce presents the **18th Annual Kumquat Festival®**

Headlining Sponsor **FLORIDA HOSPITAL ZEPHYRHILLS**
The skill to heal. The spirit to care.

Saturday, January 31, 2015
9 AM - 5 PM
Historic Downtown Dade City

Come enjoy music, food, family fun and those "little gems of the citrus industry" – THE KUMQUAT!

- Arts & Crafts
- Car Show
- Children's Activities
- Farmer's Market
- Health and Wellness Section
- GREAT Food
- Kumquat Pie & Products
- Live Entertainment

Free Admission

It's great fun for the ENTIRE family. Enjoy the Festival. Come back and visit again!

Thanks Florida Hospital Zephyrhills our Headlining Sponsor and all of our Sponsors

FLORIDA HOSPITAL ZEPHYRHILLS
The skill to heal. The spirit to care.

bright house **CSX** **GEICO** **Wesley Chapel** **PASCO** **Wesley Chapel** **Western & Southern Life**

Bayfront Health Dade City, Reef O'Brady's Dade City, Boltin Pest Control, Busch Gardens, CenterState Bank, Central Bank, First National Bank of Pasco, Gulfside Hospice & Pasco Palliative Care, Hampton Inn Dade City/Zephyrhills, IR Staffing, Jim Browne Citrus Chrysler Jeep Dodge, Jim Browne Pasco Chevrolet Buick GMC, Morningside RV Estates, Saint Leo University, Sam's Club, Suncoast Credit Union, The Brass Tap Dade City

www.KumquatFestival.org

PET GOT ISSUES?

Allergies? Overweight? Diabetes? Itchy Skin? Chronic Ear Infections?
It Is Amazing What You Can Fix & Prevent With The Proper Diet!

- Over 20 Brands of Natural/Holistic Dog & Cat Foods
- Frozen Raw Diets
- Huge Selection of Natural Treats & Chews
- Holistic Homeopathic Remedies & Supplements
- Huge Selection of Dog/Cat Supplies
- Friendly, Knowledgeable Pet Care & Nutrition Consultants
- Free Samples of Healthy Foods & Treats

dog gone HOLISTIC
a natural pet market

Mon - Fri 10am - 7pm, Sat 10am - 6pm

813.651.0842

5620 FishHawk Crossing Blvd.
Located in the FishHawk Ranch Publix Shopping Center
www.doggoneholistic.biz

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

**CAMPO YMCA SPOTLIGHT
3414 CULBREATH ROAD**

Barre Fitness / First 4-week session is Wednesday, Jan. 5 through Friday, Jan. 30 / Classes will meet on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9-10 a.m. Barre Fitness is a fun, low impact workout that's extremely effective, yet gentle on the body. This class enhances posture, balance and coordination, while increasing body awareness and the mind-body connection. It's the perfect combination of functional strength and flexibility training. Space is limited so stop by our Welcome Center to register today!

FIT FIRST REWARDS / Ongoing / At the Y, we are always looking for fun ways to help you achieve your goals. With that in mind, we are pleased to bring you our Fit First Rewards. Fit First Rewards is a member appreciation program designed to reward you for committing to that First step in your fitness journey. How does it work? • Schedule your two FREE Fit First Sessions, included with your membership, with one of our certified personal trainers • Complete both sessions within 60 days • Receive \$25 to apply to any YMCA program (with the exception of membership). Call 813-684-1371 to sign up.



Photo: YMCA

Saladino Baseball Academy Spring Tryouts / Jan. 5, 6 p.m. at South Brandon Little League; Jan. 7, 6 p.m. at South Brandon Little League; Jan. 10, 10 a.m. at South Brandon Little League / 600 S. Parsons Ave., Brandon / Potential players only required to attend ONE tryout date. For information, call 813-684-UCAN (8226) or visit www.saladinoba.com.

Bloomington Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Spring Registration / Jan. 10 & 17 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Jan. 13 6 -9 p.m. / 2215 Bloomington Ave., Valrico / Registration fees: \$155, Baseball & Softball; \$105, T-Ball; \$25 Sibling Discount; \$45 Concession Duty Opt Out Fee. Players must live within the league's boundaries. For information, visit www.bysafl.com.

Annual Plant City MLK Festival / Jan. 16-19 / Event Times and Locations Vary / The Plant City Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Arts Festival is a 4-day cultural event including an Opening Ceremony, Freedom Parade through historic downtown (held Jan. 17 at 1 p.m.), Leadership Breakfast, Freedom Walk and Friday/Saturday Street Fest. Enjoy ethnic foods, health fair, carnival rides & concessions, goods, and educational exhibits at the Plant City Bing Rooming House Community Museum and visual and performing artists for children and adults. For the past 29 years, the non-profit organization Improvement League of Plant City, Inc., has hosted this event. Visit www.plantcitymlkfestival.com for information.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Parade / Jan. 19 / Noon / Downtown Tampa / The 26th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Parade begins at N. 15th Street and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., and ends at E. Osborne Ave. and N. 22nd Str. Visit www.mlkjrparade.com for parade route map and information.

Charlotte's Web / Jan. 23 / 7 p.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association, Inc. / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon / Based on E.B. White's best-selling children's paperback book of all time, Charlotte's Web tells the story of a pig named Wilbur and his friendship with an extraordinary barn spider named Charlotte. When Wilbur is in danger of a trip to the butcher, Charlotte is determined to save him. This beautiful, knowing play about friendship, sacrifice, compassion, and bravery will weave its way into your heart and leave your audiences totally enchanted. Ages Pre-K to 3rd grade. Tickets: \$6 members /\$7 non-members. All shows are approximately 50 minutes.

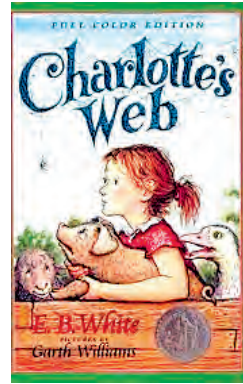


Photo Credit: www.goodreads.com

The Village Players Present Noises Off / Feb. 6-8, 13-15, 20, and 21 / Evening performances at 8 p.m.; Sunday Matinees at 3 p.m. / The James McCabe Theater / 506 N. 5th Str., Valrico / Join in the fun as the Village Players present this play within a play about an ambitious director and his troupe of mediocre actors. Tickets: \$15 Regular Admission; \$13 Senior Citizens, Students, or Military with ID; \$12 Groups of 10 or more. Visit www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com for information.

The Florida State Fair / Feb. 5-16 / Mark your calendars! Recruiting has begun for volunteering, working a part-time job or just attending the fair to discover the fun! For information, visit the website at www.floridastatefair.com.



Photo: Improvement League of Plant City, Inc.

By Kayla Hayes

Bloomington West residents Jeff and Joanie Wilson enjoy a Tampa Bay pastime. Joanie has been a BHA board member for over a year.



Photos: Wilson Family

Joanie Wilson, a BHA Director at Large, has been serving on the board since August 2013. A Bloomington West resident, Wilson – and her husband Jeff – were attracted to the overall atmosphere and diversity of the Bloomington community when they first moved here.

“It’s a safe, friendly place where you can sit in your front yard, go for a run, walk your dog, or play with kids and grandkids in the park,” Wilson said. She and her husband have six children and 3 granddaughters.

When she’s not serving on the board, Wilson works as an ESE (Exceptional Student Education) Specialist at Brooker Elementary School. Her hobbies include photography, gardening and participating in 5K or 8K runs.

“I enjoy volunteering for the various activities that are planned for our residents,” Wilson said about her contributions to the BHA board.

“Working at events such as Family Fest and Community Clean-Up Day gives me the opportunity to meet residents from across the Bloomington community that I otherwise wouldn’t meet,” she continued.

Wilson’s vision for Bloomington is to keep the area a place where families love to live.

“Serving on the board gives me the privilege of contributing to our community and knowing that I can be one small voice on a team of individuals who have Bloomington’s best interest at heart,” she closed.



What free time board member Joanie Wilson has is spent with her six adult children and three granddaughters. Pictured are Wilson and granddaughters, Kenzi and Kylee.

AIG Financial Network



We're hiring.
We're growing.

James Mullins
Director of Recruiting
10002 Princess Palm Ave., Suite 106
Tampa, FL 33619
727-742-5698
james.mullins@aig.com

We're also changing the way Americans think about, purchase, and use life insurance. We need eager and excited sales associates to be a part of our innovative company. We have an affordable product offering that provides modern, consumer-focused life insurance protection. Plus, you can enjoy a greater work/life balance, a family atmosphere, and outstanding compensation and benefits — today and for the future.



Bring on tomorrow

Policies issued by American General Life Insurance Company (AGL). Issuing company AGL is responsible for financial obligations of insurance products and is a member of American International Group, Inc. (AIG). AIG does not underwrite any policy described herein. ©2014 American International Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

A_Recruiting_121914_0958_1963

53257-1

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)... Topics include garden news and events as well as tips on how to make your garden the neighborhood showpiece. To learn about the VGC, contact Mary Kay McMahan at 813-684-6323, email danmcmahan@aol.com or visit Facebook/Valrico Garden Club.

Florida's Arbor Day is Jan. 16 Plant a tree!

The first conservationist could very well be Nebraska newspaper publisher Julius Sterling Morton. In the late 1800's, he noted with alarm the rapid use of resources as our nation quickly developed. His concern for the country's diminishing resources led to the creation of Arbor Day (arbor, a Latin word for tree).

The first Arbor Day was April 19, 1872. While many states still celebrate National Arbor Day in April, Florida's state legislature adopted the third Friday in January as the state's official Arbor Day. This year, the celebration is Jan. 16.

So, why Arbor Day? Arbor Day is a day celebrated nationwide to encourage tree planting and education about the important role trees play in our environment.

Trees are a critical part of our energy system. They yield oxygen and help cool our earth, our homes and our cities. Their leaves and branches filter out dust, sound waves, and reduce noise. They prevent erosion, conserve water, control floods, serve as windbreakers and provide homes for our precious wildlife.

For many, trees mean natural beauty along with lasting memories...a cool shade on a holiday picnic, a bird's song, a squirrel scampering and foraging for nuts. Brightly colored leaves you collected on a special trip or for a school project. How many have climbed a tree in their youth or had a tree swing?

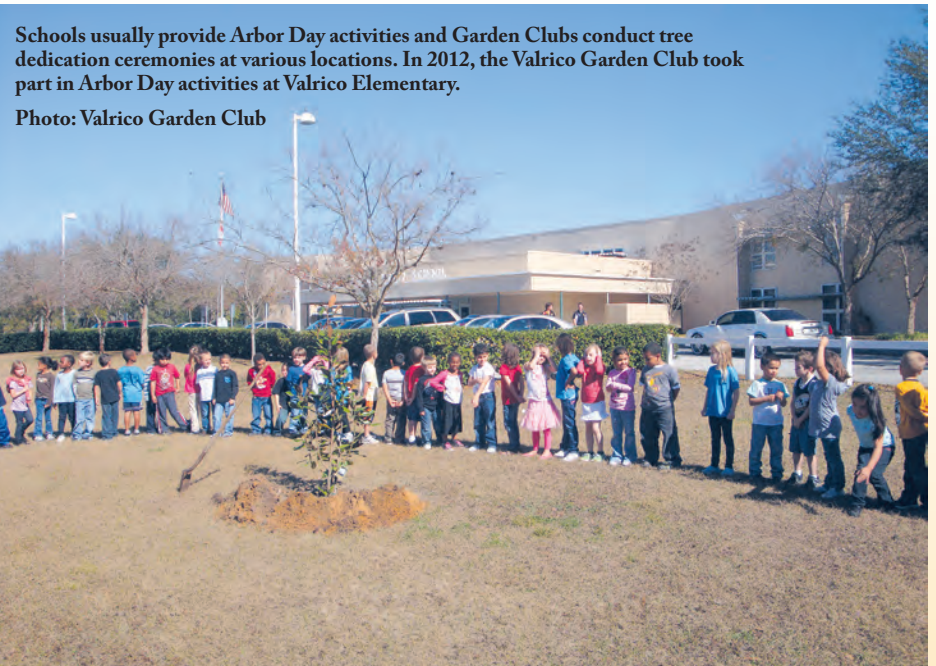
For Native Americans and early settlers, trees were nature's drugstore offering many natural remedies; some are still in use today. Trees were also a good food source bearing nuts, fruits, berries, and syrup.

Trees, in short, are priceless to us and for our future. We cannot take them granted. On Arbor Day, take time to plant a tree or join the Arbor Day Foundation. The foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization dedicated to planting trees. For as little as a \$10 membership, the foundation will send you seedlings appropriate for planting in our area.

For information, check out their website: <http://www.arborday.org>.



Credit: <http://independenttree.com>



Schools usually provide Arbor Day activities and Garden Clubs conduct tree dedication ceremonies at various locations. In 2012, the Valrico Garden Club took part in Arbor Day activities at Valrico Elementary.

Photo: Valrico Garden Club

Along with their own "plant and learn" experiences, club members rely on information from The University of Florida and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) located in Hillsborough County. A valuable tool produced by the institute is the monthly "To Do List."

For January:

- Plant/transplant cold hardy shrubs and trees.
- Do not compact soil or prune foliage; plants will shed what they cannot support.
- Prune deciduous fruit and ornamental plants. Contact the County Extension Service for pruning information.
- Lightly prune annuals. Remember flowering annuals produce blooms on the new growth.
- Have your soil pH tested now in readiness for the spring gardening season. The County Extension offices provide soil testing services and recommendations.



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. Her on-staff and freelance writing experience includes ads, brochures, radio, video and newsletters for Jack Nicklaus country clubs in Atlanta, New Orleans and Chicago, recruitment advertising, and marketing, advertising and public relations assignments in the healthcare, retail, real estate, and service industries, among others, in the U.S. and the Bahamas. She lives with her husband, Frazier, a retired high school Chemistry teacher, 2 cats and 2 dogs (all rescues) in Bloomingdale West.



New Year's Resolutions Made Easy

Oh, yippee. Clap hands. Another New Year. Yawn. Hmm...maybe I'd better explain my lack of enthusiasm.

In the past, I have entered each new year with wide-eyed anticipation. I have regarded it as an opportunity to embark upon a 12-month self-improvement campaign from which I would emerge the following December radically altered. Physically fit. A faultless wife. An award-winning mother. Thoroughly professional in my chosen craft. So perfect, in fact, that strangers would gaze upon me in awe. By March, I have "radically altered" myself right into Lady Macbeth, wandering the halls, wringing my hands and moaning in distress.

Well, nuts to that. This time around, I have composed the Ellen Bess Can't Fail New Year's Resolution List:

1. I resolve to keep those 10 extra pounds I've tried to shed every January. Why not? Those 10 pounds have been

behind me (literally) through all kinds of travail. They have followed me faithfully. Even when I have tried to rid myself of them as an unsightly nuisance, they've hung in there, so to speak. How could I even think of spurning such loyalty? Pass the Twinkies.

2. I resolve to change my attitude towards housework. No, I don't intend to do more of it. Don't be ridiculous. I simply intend to change my attitude. When my husband sarcastically suggests that I either clean or shoot the shower curtain because it growled at him, I will not respond with bleach in one hand and a flame thrower in the other. With my new attitude, I will smile benignly, content in the knowledge that I am no longer a "slob." I am "Bohemian." Clean your own shower curtain.

3. I resolve to no longer panic when a client presents me with an unreasonable deadline for a writing assignment. I am a professional; I am experienced in my craft. When a

client insists upon a preposterous deadline, I will assume that's what he wants: dead lines.

4. I resolve to no longer take it personally when one of my houseplants gasps, keels over and expires before my very eyes. Listen, I have spent untold amounts of money on organic foods, sprays and fertilizer sticks. I have spoken softly to them, played classical music and made sure their light was "just right." They neither wag their pistils when I enter the room nor fawn on me when I water them. Instead, they have chosen to show their gratitude by dropping yellow leaves all over my carpet. Heck with 'em.

There. See how easy this year is going to be? No more unreasonable demands. No more impossible goals. No more Lady Macbeth. Bring on 2015.



DON'S BAY AREA PAINTING



Professional Painting Services

All Phases ♦ All Applications

- * Commercial
- * Residential
- * Interior
- * Exterior

Re-paint Specialists

Pressure Cleaning

813.661.9006

www.DonsBayAreaPainting.com

20 years in Bloomingdale

Free Estimates

Meet or beat our competitors' prices

License #PA 2653
Bonded & Insured

58758-1



DR. ROBERT A. NORMAN, DO, MPH, MBA

CERTIFIED DERMATOLOGIST

- FREE Skin Screenings
- Diagnosis & Treatment for skin cancer
- Shingles Vaccine Available
- Treatment for Psoriasis, Eczema
- Chemical Peels & Facial Products
- Botox, Restylane & Latisse
- Specialize in Image Products

NON-SURGICAL TREATMENT FOR SKIN CANCER AVAILABLE

Same Day Appointments
Accepting MOST Insurances

CALL TODAY!

813.880.SKIN (7546)
800.488.7336

Tampa Riverview
8002 Gunn Hwy. 10422 U.S. Hwy. 301

www.drrobertnorman.com






55889-1



DO IT YOURSELF. IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK!

By Theresa Clinton

The holidays are over and it is a new year! Time to start those resolutions and attempt some creativity of your own. Last month's issue featured a holiday cardholder made from an old window shutter. Well, readers, here's what I accomplished with the remaining three shutters and, if I do say so myself, it's a nifty and pretty decorative piece for any home or business. This decorative room divider was gifted to the owner of The Salt Grotto located on Bloomingdale Avenue. Go by and take a look!

(Editor's Note: Bloomingdale resident Theresa Clinton is the owner of Spotlight Home Staging Company, LLC. Her monthly columns focused on home improvement and craft projects residents could accomplish in do it yourself fashion. This is Clinton's last column, and we thank her for keeping our residents informed and entertained!)



Theresa Clinton

Spotlight Home Staging Company, LLC

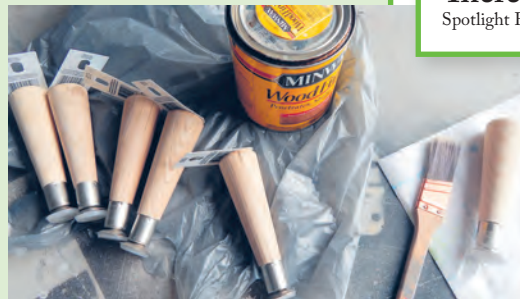
813-732-3604

spotlighthomestagingco.weebly.com

1



Take an electric sander and prep the shutters for some new paint.



Purchase six 5-1/2" round table legs and stain.

2

3

Before painting, drill two holes at the bottom of each shutter for inserting the legs.



4



Adhere the three shutters together with 1-1/2" x 48" continuous hinge strip.

5

Measure and cut a 3/8" dowel to be attached by screws at the top and bottom of the shutter slats. Measure the length of the shutter slat area and cut fabric to cover. Cover the dowels with the fabric. (See last photo) I purchased four yards of fabric. I had some extra but better to have enough in case of an error.



6

I decided to add a little Florida flare to my cardholder by taking the remnants of a fallen palm frond and making it into a reindeer. Think googly eyes, pom pom ball and black Velcro. Let your imagination run wild and the creativity flow. There is no wrong here...Just decorate and have some fun with it. And remember, hot glue, hot glue...

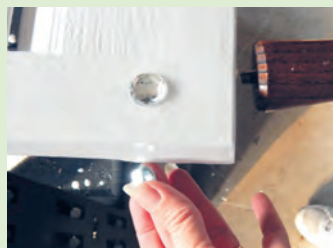


7



Hot glue any type of decorative appliques in the corners of the shutters to cover up the screw holes and finish off your desired look.

8



Attach the table legs at the bottom of each shutter with simple bolts.

You now have a beautifully transformed piece ready for any room of the house. These room dividers can be the perfect addition to bedrooms, offices, dens, or bathrooms. Create a weathered look and it will add a unique natural feel to any outdoor space. This is a whole weekend project due to drying time for paint (several coats). Cost is a little on the pricey side depending on the quality and amount of fabric used and all of the hardware. However, I guarantee this project is still cheaper than purchasing one already made at your local home décor store.



Photos: Theresa Clinton

Let Royal Maid Rock in the New Year!

Book in January For
\$10 Off Your First Clean!

ROYAL MAID SERVICE

813-999-4929

L-02855

Make Your Financial Future a Priority.

Take advantage of our complimentary financial review at least once a year. We will discuss the different strategies available to help put your finances in line with both your short- and long-term goals.

To schedule your complimentary financial review, call or visit today.

Dan Sammons, CLU®, ChFC®
Financial Advisor
3616 Erindale Drive, Valrico, FL 33596
Office 813-681-1462
dan.sammons@edwardjones.com

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

www.edwardjones.com Member SIPC

58755-1



Project title: South Brandon Fire Station #7 Replacement

Description: Construction of a new 9,300 square foot bay fire station to replace existing fire station at 122 West Bloomingdale Avenue. New site location is 1292 West Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico.

What to expect during construction:

- Construction on this project does involve the use of heavy construction equipment that will be entering and exiting the construction site. Most of the construction is on site.
- Special traffic control measures will be in place as required to protect workers, pedestrians and drivers. Obey these safety measures. Use special caution when driving in this area, especially during severe weather.

Costs and funding: Approximately \$2.3 million, funded through Impact fees, Unincorporated Area Construction Funds and the Public Safety Improvement Bond Project funds.

Timeline: Started in July 2014, completion expected in spring 2015.

Special information:

No special meetings required.

Status: Currently underway.



The new Fire Station #7 on Bloomingdale Avenue has made tremendous progress since its late summer groundbreaking ceremony.

Photos by Mack Austin, unless otherwise noted.

Project title: Bell Shoals Widening

Description: This project consists of widening Bell Shoals Road from a two-lane, undivided rural road to a four-lane, divided urban facility. The project extends approximately 3.1 miles from just south of the Alafia River to north of Bloomingdale Avenue. The corridor will have two 12-foot lanes for vehicles, a 4-foot bike lane, and sidewalks in both directions. The proposed design includes widening the existing bridge over the Alafia River. This project will also improve the traffic signals at Glenhaven Drive, Rosemead Lane and Bloomingdale Avenue.

Costs and funding: Approximately \$19 million, funded by Newland Communities and Hillsborough County.

Timeline: Projected to begin in 2015 and completed within 24 months.

Special information: Any required public meeting meetings will be scheduled and notification publicized.



When the Bell Shoals Road Widening Project begins, traffic delays will be inevitable. Stay alert and use caution.

Project title: Wal-Mart Supercenter, Business Complex and Apartments on Bloomingdale Avenue

Description: This construction project includes a 158,000 sq. ft. Wal-Mart Supercenter, adjacent businesses and 261 apartments on property east of the Bloomingdale Library. Developer is Red Cast Development LLC.

What to expect during construction:

- This work will involve heavy construction equipment and excavation entering and exiting the construction site. Most construction will take place on site. Construction of entrances and exits and changes to medians on Bloomingdale Avenue will require special coordination.
- At some times, traffic closures will be necessary. Special caution is a must during peak traffic hours – school opening and ending as well as morning and evening commutes. Additional caution must be observed during severe weather conditions.
- Extensive traffic control measures will be implemented and must be observed at all times.

Costs and funding: Funded by Red Cast Development and Hillsborough County. Costs were unavailable at deadline.

Timeline: This construction project began in November 2014. Completion date is to be determined (TBD).

Special information: No required meetings are scheduled at this time.

Status: Currently underway.



This parcel sketch, on file with Hillsborough County, outlines the land usage of the development ongoing on Bloomingdale Avenue. Planned are a Walmart Supercenter, apartments and several businesses. Source: Hillsborough County.



Construction is underway on the Wal-Mart Supercenter on Bloomingdale Avenue. Drivers should be extra cautious in this area!

Project title: Bloomingdale Avenue and Culbreath Road Intersection Improvement

Description: This intersection improvement consists of approximately 1,930 feet, extending approximately 650 feet west and 800 feet east of Culbreath road and 480 feet south of Bloomingdale Avenue. The project will include the construction of an exclusive eastbound right-turn lane, and additional westbound and northbound left-turn lanes at the intersection.

The existing signalized intersection will be upgraded from the current concrete pole and span-wire configuration to a steel pole and mast arm configuration. Additional improvements include ADA compliant sidewalks installed at the intersection corners and bike lanes constructed on both sides of Bloomingdale Avenue.

Costs and funding: Approximately \$2.3 million, funded with Capital Improvement Surtax Phase III funds earmarked by the Transportation Task Force.

Timeline: Project design updates are currently being completed. Acquisition of the required right of way is scheduled to be completed in April 2015. Construction is to begin in November 2015 and be completed by January 2017. However, this project could begin as early as spring 2015.

Special information: Any required public meetings will be scheduled and notification given.



While planned improvements are long overdue at the intersection of Bloomingdale Avenue and Culbreath Road, traffic will significantly worsen before getting better. Be prepared for longer waits at the intersection and plan your travel accordingly.

Project title: Traffic Improvements on Lithia-Pinecrest Road

Description: This project involves plans to improve traffic flow and safety on and around Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

Costs and funding: TBD

Timeline: TBD

Special information: Information on public meetings will be publicized as received.

Project title: Truck Traffic Safety Improvements on Bloomingdale Avenue

Description: This project involves monitoring and coordination to improve traffic safety on Bloomingdale Avenue due to heavy truck/tanker traffic. Coordination for improvements had been completed several years ago but with new truck company ownership, the truck traffic problem has resurfaced.

Timeline: TBD

Project Information Source: www.Hillsboroughcounty.org

2014 - The Year in Review



The first-ever Bloomingdale Roundtable was held in March. Mandatory HOA leaders met with the BHA to discuss future needs of the community. Having “one voice” when dealing with county and state officials is critical to the betterment of the community.

As 2014 closes, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association presents a look back at 2014 in pictures.

Last year was an exciting year for the community and the Association. New board members whose passion and enthusiasm for Bloomingdale energized the Association. These volunteers worked hard to keep the community a place all can be proud to call home.

Initiatives and activities included:

- The annual community clean-up day, a charity golf tournament for K-9s for Warriors, and the rebirth of the Fall Festival, a free community-building event.
- Meetings with Redstone Developers seeking compromise on the Walmart Supercenter, and attendance at county meetings regarding Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road conditions.
- Launching the community’s new website, www.bloomingdalehoa.com, a one-stop information source.

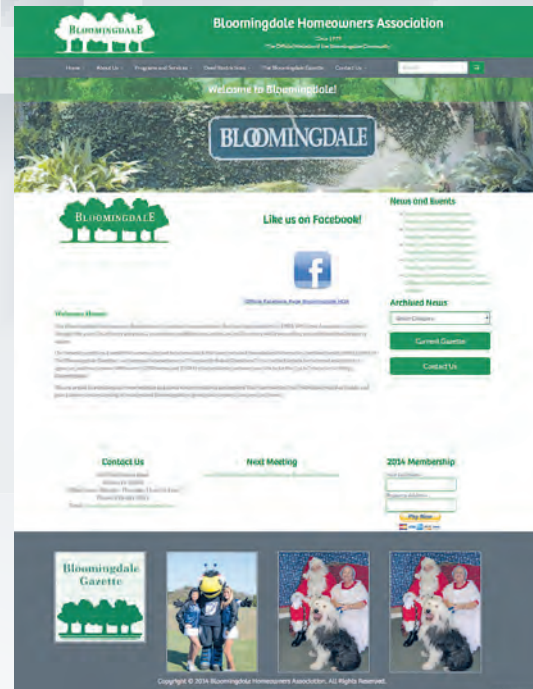
- Winning two Hillsborough County Recognition Awards; best large-scale community and the Bloomingdale Gazette, our community newspaper, environmental program for Yard of the Month.
- Spearheading “no thru truck” signs at major entryways to deter construction traffic.
- “Name Your Neighborhood” program for Bloomingdale Pointe and Fairway Park.
- Providing a \$2,000 scholarship to a local college and high school student.
- Initiating the Bloomingdale Roundtable for community leaders to share ideas for the betterment of the community.

2015 will be another great year for our community. Thank you for the BHA. Your membership will provide the foundation for our success.

- Our staff, newspaper, website, Facebook page, and social media presence.



Shannon Leahy, pictured with her mother Katherine, received the \$2,000 BHA Community Scholarship in May. The scholarship is made possible solely through resident donations during the annual membership drive.



The new Bloomingdale Homeowners Association website launched in June. The web address is www.bloomingdalehoa.com.



In May, the BHA hosted charity golf tournament benefitting K9s for Warriors. K9 Warrior teams Matt Metts with Bouncer and Jon Ellyson with Scout helped to put a name on the worthy organization.



For the 27th time, Santa and Mrs. Claus aka Joe and Pam Liguori visited Bloomingdale on Dec. 6 at the Community Office. Prior to the event, volunteer elves tried to be on their best behavior to get on Santa’s “Nice” list before the holidays. Photo: Joy Boisselle



Priscilla Ryan of Fairway Park is happy to help at the Name Your Neighborhood Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony. Bloomingdale Pointe also received signs at neighborhood entryways. Residents selected their new neighborhood names, which were installed by the BHA.



The Yard of the Month program continued to be a crowd pleaser. Twelve homeowners were rewarded for being standards bearers in the community.

ew and a Look Forward

ty Neighborhood
ale communications for
community paper, and best
f the Month.
Installation at community
office and completing the
am; i.e. Bloomingdale
a Bloomingdale resident

scholarship, golf tournament, Fall Festival, Santa visit and charity food drive.

- An exciting initiative to establish a single deed restriction document and mandatory HOA for non-mandated neighborhoods helping to preserve property values and neighborhood standards.
- A continued and strong voice at county and state meetings dealing with transportation and other issues affecting our quality of life and much more!

None of the events highlighted would be possible without your support. As 2015 begins, you will soon receive your membership notice. Your \$25 membership allows the BHA to continue the programs and services that make our community special.

table, a forum
as for community

New initiatives will be costly but will improve property values and deed restriction compliance. We need your support. Don't think twice. Join the Association today.

community, and a busy one
provide for:
book page, clean-up day,



The BHA created a program to recognize the exceptional young people living in the community. The "Best of the Best" program sponsor is Ray Chadderton pictured with the first recipient Kiera Dunham.

Residents and the BHA helped the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in the apprehension of four persons of interest in a car-hopping spree. Social media via the BHA Facebook page helped to spread the word.



The Fall Festival returned to the community after a long absence. More than 40 businesses and 500 fest-goers enjoyed the day's activities. "Rock 'em sock 'em robot" Jack Thomas (10) took top honors in the costume contest. The BHA promises an even bigger and better event in the years to come.



BHA board members met routinely with county officials on a variety of issues affecting the community. Pictured are BHA president George May, Commissioner Al Higginbotham and Commissioner Stacy White and BHA secretary Dann Berkowitz.



The BHA community clean-up was a resounding success. New partners, UrbanRecycling and the HCSO Operation Medicine Cabinet, made the event the best yet.

Volunteers are the backbone of the BHA. More than 75 volunteers worked tirelessly at BHA events throughout the year.



Candy Canes, cookies and a visit from Santa – what more could a youngster want during the holidays? According to Santa and Mrs. Claus, aka Joe and Pam Liguori, children at the BHA’s annual Santa and Mrs. Claus visit wanted more, a lot more.

Nearly 500 children and adults visited with Santa and his blushing bride on Dec. 6 at the community office. Holiday wishes included the traditional toys and sweets, but some youngsters asked for pets, baby brothers or sisters, a deployed military parent’s safe return, and even, world peace.

As this is the Liguori’s last visit of a 27-year career, this one was especially wonderful and a little bittersweet. “Children” from the past, now young adults, traveled many miles to re-visit a past memory of a treasured visit with the couple.

Former elf (circa 2002) Allie Tiso, now 22, said, “I heard this was their [Joe’s and Pam’s] last year and I wanted to surprise them. They are just good people doing a fantastic thing.”

Besides bringing smiles to the community, the Santa and Mrs. Claus visit is also an opportunity to give to those less fortunate. This year’s food drive netted nearly 200 pounds of non-perishable foods for Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO).

In an email interview with ECHO Community Relations director Kathy L. Collins, the importance of this food drive was evident.

“Each year we serve over 16,000 area residents, half of whom are children. We give clients up to seven days of food for the entire family,” she explained, “As you can imagine, this equates to a lot of food. Without the fall food drives conducted by organizations such as the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, we simply could not provide the level of service that we do.”

Even though the Liguoris are, of course, irreplaceable, Santa, a much-loved tradition, will return to Bloomingdale this coming December.

Allie Tiso, former elf, surprised Santa and Mrs. Claus with a special return visit. Joy is evident on all faces. More than 200 families turned out to visit with the couple.



Photos: Joy Boisselle

“How do I know your sister is home from the Navy?” Santa asked. “Cuz you’re Santa!” responded Bloomingdale resident Daniel Cowan (8). Santa surprised many young visitors with his all-knowing comments about their lives.

Still Honoring... One Family At A Time



Locally Owned & Operated



Only on site crematory in the Brandon, Valrico, and Riverview area.

Traditional, Trusted and Personalized Funeral Services. Committed to arranging a service that is most befitting to your loved one, striving to celebrate their life in a meaningful way.

813-677-9494 ext. 222

www.serenitymeadows.com

6919 Providence Road, Riverview, FL 33578

For more about Serenity Meadows like us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/serenitymeadowsriverview>



Amazing Stories. Tampa Bay Times

People in Bloomingdale create amazing stories every day, and the *Tampa Bay Times* tells them like no one else. Turn to the *Times* in print or online.

Read the stories behind the photos tampabay.com/amazingstories



Going on its fifth year in the plaza on Lithia Pinecrest and Bloomingdale Avenue is “Adorable Pets by Dena,” a pet salon that has been serving the Valrico area since 1992. The salon used to run out of a local animal clinic, but now calls this cute and colorful shop home. Every customer is greeted by “Boo” the shop cat and is invited to bring in a picture of their pet for the “Our Adorable Pets” wall.

Owner, Dena Craig, has been grooming for 32 years.

“When I first moved down here I had a friend who worked at a grooming shop and I would help her wash dogs. I fell in love,” said Craig. She went on to finish grooming school at the Florida School of Dog Grooming in 1983 and built her own business from there.

A dedicated staff of groomers, many with more than 30 years of experience, hold the clippers at “Adorable Pets.” Retta Black – the shop’s cat groomer – has been with Craig for 17 years. She works on Mondays. Besides experience, the salon offers scissor finishing as a part of its grooming packages. This technique provides an even more manicured look than regular clipper grooming.

Tender loving care is a hallmark of the groomers at the salon. “We try to make the grooming experience fun,” commented Craig. Their slogan is “Free belly rubs with every groom.”

“If a dog doesn’t like something, we won’t do it,” she continued.

“Adorable Pets by Dena” is the place to take your dog or cat if you value a staff with experience and confidence, and professional training. Open Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., the shop is located at 3212 Lithia Pinecrest Rd.

Call 684-5693 or email adorablepetsbydena@gmail.com for information on various grooming packages to fit your pet’s needs.



Photo: Kayla Hayes



Photo: Adorable Pets

Dena Craig and one of her just-groomed “Adorable Pets” show off her quality work. Craig has been grooming animals for 32 years.



Photo: Kayla Hayes

“Adorable Pets by Dena” has been serving the Valrico area since 1992. Stop by the plaza on Lithia Pinecrest and Bloomingdale to schedule your pet’s appointment today!

“Boo” is Dena’s “shop kitty.” He greets every customer that walks into “Adorable Pets by Dena.” Behind Boo is the “Our Adorable Pets” wall where customers’ pet pictures are displayed.



Salt is a natural, drug-free therapy

- Relaxation
- Anti-Inflammation
- Anti-bacterial

Relieves symptoms of

- Sinusitis
- Allergies
- Bronchitis
- Congestion & Cough
- Asthma
- COPD



THE SALT GROTTTO



Happy New Year!

Now Offering Acupuncture, Infrared Sauna & Massage

Follow us online and on Facebook to learn more about Halotherapy...
...just breathe...

www.TheSaltGrotto.com
1026 Bloomingdale Ave., in Plaza Bella
Next to the Shrimp Boat
813-324-8946
info@TheSaltGrotto.com

We're in Your Neighborhood

Open Your Account Today!



SERVING MEMBERS WITH EXCELLENCE



Railroad & Industrial

FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

(813) 621-6661 • www.rifcu.org

6106 Delancey Station St., Riverview
 4373 Lynx Paw Trail, Valrico
 1209 Kingsway Rd., Brandon

Coming Soon! New location in Ruskin!

Federally insured by NCUA Equal Housing Lender



BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Master Deputy Curtis Warren



ANOTHER NEW YEAR IS HERE - CHANGES ARE COMING!

Now is the time for all of us to reflect on the memories of the old year and think about our goals for the New Year. 2015 promises to be a year with more changes and challenges for us as a community, county, state and nation.

Even though the war in Iraq has ended and Afghanistan is drawing down, the Bloomingdale community still has many of its military residents deployed around the world – many directly in harm's way. Our new state and county officials will be making many changes that will directly affect our residents. With the 2016 election year coming, government officials will be gearing up for the elections and looking for your votes.

Fortunately, no serious changes will affect the Sheriff's Office ability to provide the best possible safety and security we can for our residents. Sheriff David Gee and his staff stand ready to protect and serve to the best of our abilities in 2015. Interested in joining the team – a very active recruitment program continues to find qualified, motivated candidates to join the ranks of those who serve and protect.

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS...

As we begin the 2015 New Year, all of us in the Sheriff's Office want to wish every Bloomingdale resident and our surrounding communities a very safe and secure New Year. We also want to especially thank each and every one of you who provided support and help to us during this past year!

The Sheriff's Office will continue to provide Bloomingdale and the surrounding areas of Hillsborough County with a safer and more secure place to live, to work, to run your businesses and to raise your families. The safety and security of residents and their homes and businesses is our very reason for being. Our work with concerned residents from your community will continue to make this possible.

We will continue to expand the Sheriff's "Volunteer Citizens Patrol Program" and seek more resident participation at the monthly Sheriff's Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC). In addition, we will provide programs like "Operation Medicine Cabinet" which allows for the safe disposal of unwanted and dangerous outdated medicines.

SAFETY AND SECURITY EDUCATION

Those of you who read "Community Station Notes" will notice that many of the items we mention concern your safety and security. These include topics such as buckling your seat belts, not drinking and driving, locking up your homes and vehicles, and being cautious about identity theft.

The reason we continue to keep mentioning these safety and security topics is that there are folks who must be told repeatedly to do what must be done to protect themselves. Through our monthly reminders, we hope folks will read and heed. Only you can do what must be done to protect yourself and your family. We will continue to do our best to educate and motivate all residents!

The holidays are over, and it's time for residents to take time to ensure their families, homes and vehicles are safe and secure. Make sure garage doors are locked and down, and vehicles parked outside are secured and all valuables removed.

I know a lot of you may be thinking, well, we all hear these same safety and security tips over and over every year. *"The simple fact is that these tips won't work until you take action and do them!"*

SPECIAL CRIMES IN OUR AREA

In 2014, there were specific criminal activities that I want to make our residents aware of so they can take the proper steps to protect themselves.

Specifically, these involved sales solicitation and identity theft. Even though signs at our community entrances clearly state "NO SOLICITATION," solicitors continue to knock on our doors.

When solicitors come to your door, be very cautious. Some are very aggressive and even rude and, they need to be stopped. If solicitors approach you, do not open your door. Call the Sheriff's Dispatch Line at 813-247-8200. Provide as much information as you can – company name, descriptions, vehicles, license numbers, etc. (See the Hillsborough County Solicitor Information boxed insert this page)



Citizens Patrol provides an added set of eyes and ears helping to keep our community safe. Volunteers wanted! Gazette File Photo



HCSO's Operation Medicine Cabinet provides residents a place to dispose of unwanted, outdated and potentially dangerous drugs.

Some of our residents were also victims of identity theft last year. One ploy used by criminals was to call and pretend to be bank representatives or other officials while asking for personal info or money. Some residents fell for this scam.

Please know that banks will not call you and ask for personal info – they already have it.

What can you do? Using Caller ID, make note of the caller's phone number. Better yet, don't answer if you do not recognize the number. If you do answer, this tells the criminal the phone number is a "good" number. Let your bank know about the call.

If your identity or credit cards are stolen, collect all critical information and report the incident to all responsible parties. You can call the Community Station at 635-8040 for more information.

Let's make 2015 a safe and secure year. Take personal responsibility for your property, your home, your vehicles and your finances! No one will miss them more than you. Also, be a good neighbor and watch out for your neighbors.

**DRIVE SAFE, OBEY THE TRAFFIC LAWS AND PLEASE BUCKLE UP!
HAVE A GREAT 2015!**

SOLICITATION: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Source: www.hillsboroughcounty.org

Solicitation is an ever-increasing problem in our community. As stated by Master Deputy Curtis Warren in our Community Station Notes, caution is the name of the game. Do not open your door. HOWEVER, do report the incident to the Sheriff's Dispatch Line at 813-247-8200. Follow up by calling or emailing the BHA so the incident is logged.

The following is an excerpt of information concerning county rules for solicitation.

A Home Solicitation sale occurs when an unsolicited sale or rental of any consumer good or service over \$25 occurs at a place other than the seller's fixed location such as your home.

Solicitors Must Get a Permit

It is unlawful for any home solicitor to conduct such a sale without first obtaining a sales permit from the Clerk of the Circuit Court. This permit is very important because it requires the sales representative to file a sworn application providing all of their personal information, a photograph, and a complete set of fingerprints.

The clerk will then forward this information to the Sheriff and Florida Department of Law Enforcement for criminal background checks. If a home solicitor cannot show you a permit, then show them the door or call your local law enforcement agency.

Each Sale Must Be a Written Agreement

All home solicitation sales must be evidenced by a written agreement. This agreement must contain the date of the transaction and the buyer's signature. This written agreement must also contain the buyer's right to cancel clause.

Second Thoughts...if you did buy

If you did feel pressure to buy, and are having second thoughts, you have three days to cancel the sale and receive all of your money back.

You must inform the business of the cancellation in writing. The safest way is to send it certified mail so that you have postmarked evidence.

The seller has 10 days to return your money. In the meantime, you must safeguard and secure any product and return it when the seller arranges to pick it up from your home. They should do this within 40 days.

Note: A violation of the home solicitation law is a crime. There are criminal and civil penalties associated with it. If you want to know more about this consumer topic, please contact your Consumer Protection Agency.



Photo Source: Hillsborough County

Dining With Dave

Name: Sushi Ninja
Cuisine: Sushi and Japanese Delicacies
Location: 8887 East Bloomingdale Avenue
 (Bloomingdale Square Shopping Plaza)
Phone: 813-662-3377



The main reason for this restaurant review column was to highlight that while Tampa has a myriad of fine dining opportunities, the Bloomingdale community has its own share of excellent restaurants that are much closer to home. No local establishment represents this better than Sushi Ninja. Located in Bloomingdale Square, Sushi Ninja offers both menu options and quality worthy of its numerous local awards.

For starters, the sushi menu is one of the largest and most colorful ones I have ever seen. With names like the Brandon Roll, Lightning Roll, Crazy Mexican, Seminole, Gator and USF Rolls, Tempura Bagel, and Volcano, the list is as interesting to read as it is to experience. From

the simplicity of the Boston Roll (shrimp, cucumber, avocado) to the over-the-top Bloomingdale Roll (escolar, krab, cream cheese, tomato, asparagus, spicy mayo, yellow tail, eel on top, eel sauce, scallion, flying fish roe), there is something here to please everyone.



Photo: Dining With Dave

My one grievance is that I simply do not understand the Floridian obsession with cream cheese as a sushi additive and that ingredient is pervasive throughout their offerings. Fortunately, the chefs do not take offense at modification requests.

Sushi is not the only menu offering. The fried tempura is a nice golden color with a light and flavorful batter. The teriyaki offerings of chicken, beef, and salmon use a home-made sauce, and the Katsu is just like momma used to make in the old country (provided your ancestry comes from the Pacific Rim). Together with a flavorful variety of noodle (udon) soups in meal-sized portions, Sushi Ninja can be a worth a visit even if you are not a sushi fan. Traditional Japanese beers, a small selection of wine and, of course, sake are available to refresh your palette between bites.

The restaurant itself is small and can feel cramped when packed with diners. While the décor is a bit dated, you won't notice what is beyond your taste buds once you start eating. The prices are good, considering that sushi is usually an expensive dining experience no matter where you go. The next time you have a yen for sushi – don't travel far, try Sushi Ninja.



Sushi lovers will sail away with a boat-size sampler of sushi favorites at Sushi Ninja. The "Best of Brandon" award winner is conveniently located in the Bloomingdale Square Shopping Plaza.

53399-1

Your love, Our expertise

Caring for a loved one with *dementia* can become *overwhelming* and the decision to seek help can feel like giving up. But it's never the wrong choice to get the best care.

Superior Residences offers specialized services for those with Alzheimer's and dementia-related illnesses, from temporary respite care to full-time residency. We give families *peace of mind* knowing their loved one is receiving expert care in a secure, compassionate community.

SUPERIOR RESIDENCES
of Brandon
MEMORY CARE

Call to make an appointment today. Visit our community and see how we can work together to give your loved one the best possible care.

(813) 657-8587 • www.SuperiorALF.com
1819 Providence Ridge Blvd • Brandon, FL 33511

Live the Moment...Love the Moment™

Assisted Living Facility #9739

Shaughnessy Law

(813) 657-6700

Free Consultation

Weekend and evening appointments available.

- Wills • Trusts • Probate
- Landlord-Tenant
- Real Estate Agreements
- Buy/Sell Agreements
- Title/Closing Services
- Foreclosures
- Corporations
- Contract Disputes

Mara Shaughnessy

Monica A. Frost

Family Law

- Marital and Family Law Attorneys
- Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator
- Guardian Ad Litem

618 East Bloomingdale Avenue • Brandon, FL 33511

The hiring of an attorney is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, ask us to send you free written information about our qualifications and experience.

55525-1

INs & OUTs

WHAT RESIDENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE COSTS OF VANDALISM AND RECKLESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY...

A BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT (BSTD) SPECIAL REPORT

Every time a driver crashes into a wall, a resident dumps pool water in common areas, vandals spray paint an electric box, or a thief steals plants around our community, Bloomingdale residents pay with their special tax dollars for cleanups, replacements and repairs.

According to Bloomingdale Special Taxing District (BSTD) President Dave West, "Vandalism is unsightly, costs tax dollars, impacts property values, and takes away the good will of our community."

Your tax dollars support the BSTD, whose mission is "To make the Bloomingdale community a desirable place for home ownership by beautifying and protecting the community's common areas through pro-active management of community infrastructure, while being good stewards of our constituent's tax dollars" (source: BSTD Mission Statement).

For the BSTD beautifying also means addressing vandalism and the reckless actions of some residents and others traveling through our community. Of major concern are:

- Damaging walls and trees—Damage to the walls and trees that line our roadways usually occurs during car accidents involving speeding or reckless driving. The BSTD aggressively pursues drivers' insurance companies to recover repair costs; however, in many cases, these incidents involve hit and run drivers. In addition, the loss of mature trees is not only expensive but ruins the aesthetics of the community.

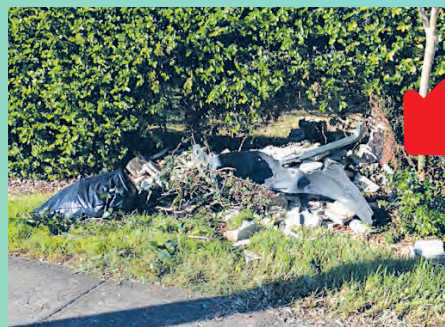
In calendar 2014, there were nine hit and run incidents requiring wall and landscaping repair or replacement, totaling over \$5,300 in repairs that were not recoverable (source: BSTD).

- Draining pool water into common areas—Residents are asked NOT to drain their pools into community common areas. This practice kills the ground cover planted to keep Bloomingdale looking well maintained and landscaped.
- Stealing plants and decorations—New plantings, landscaping and even holiday decorations are routinely stolen. Landscaping and decorations are for the enjoyment of all Bloomingdale residents and NOT for individuals to use for their own purposes.
- Killing Creeping Fig—Creeping fig, an evergreen vine, is planted along all Bloomingdale community walls. Not only is it aesthetically striking, but studies have also shown it has a calming effect on traffic, keeps down wall maintenance costs, and discourages graffiti. NEVER spray the creeping fig to kill it or pull up the guide stakes for newly planted fig plants.
- Miscellaneous vandalism—Graffiti, damaging Dogipots pet stations, breaking or stealing signs and lights, and destroying turf are all acts of vandalism. In calendar 2014, vandalism cost taxpayers over \$3,400 for repairs and/or replacement (source: BSTD).

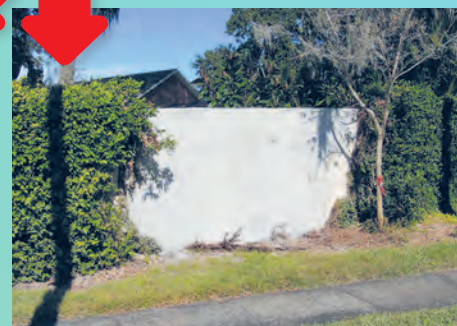
Residents pay \$130 per year per residence as part of annual property taxes. This money comes back to the BSTD to keep Bloomingdale beautiful. With a current budget of \$675,000, the seven-member Board of Trustees is a cost-conscious group. However, says West, "We cannot control the costs of vandalism."

Trustees ask that any vandalism sightings be reported by e-mail to bstd@verizon.net or by phone to 813-684-6777. Report hit and run accidents directly to the police. For information on the BSTD, visit www.bloomingtontaxingdistrict.org.

Editor's Note: The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) and the BSTD are two entirely separate organizations with different boards, missions, contact numbers and emails. Please contact the correct group when reporting issues.



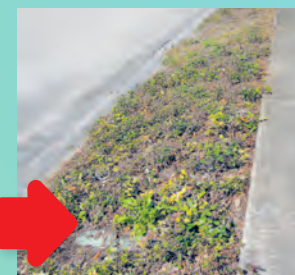
This wall at the intersection of Erindale Drive and Culbreath Road was recently the scene of a hit and run accident... Repairs cost Bloomingdale taxpayers \$2,195. Before Photo: BSTD



Creeping fig is a striking wall cover that keeps maintenance low and prevents graffiti on the walls in Bloomingdale. Residents should never kill the fig or pull up the stakes where it is newly planted.



Ground cover along Springvale Drive has died because of residents draining pool water into common areas.



Tee it high and let it fly

By J.D. Carino (Bloomingdale CC campus)

In 2006, the Pinehurst (N.C.) Resort did a study for Golf Magazine to find out whether teeing the ball high really improved ball carry... is it fact or fiction? Golfers of different skill levels took part in the study. Each golfer hit ten drives each at three different tee heights – Low-entire ball below the crown, medium-half the ball above the crown and high-entire ball above the crown.



John E.S. Cochrane
GOLF SCHOOLS

The results were:

Teeing the ball high gave golfers an average of 12 more yards of carry than teeing it low. The higher-handicap golfer did even better with 18 extra yards. Fact: Teeing the ball higher creates a higher launch angle and less spin creating a great for shot for long drives.

Next lesson: Why we swing like we do. Any questions or for lessons, visit CochraneGolfSchools.com or call J.D. at 813-957-3205.

Next lesson: Tee it up to launch it up. Any questions or for lessons, please visit CochraneGolfSchools.com or call J.D. 813-957-3205.

Tee the ball above the crown of your driver to help create a higher launch, less spin and a lot more yards.



Photo Credit: J.D. Carino

On the Road with Ryan

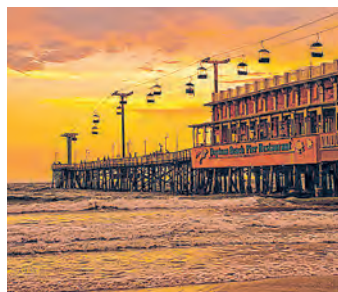
Ryan Brantley, a local Realtor and travel writer, has traveled extensively throughout Florida and the Caribbean. Her more exotic travels include swimming with whale sharks off the coast of Mexico, winning \$5 on a slot machine in Monte Carlo, sipping wine in Sicily, scuba diving wrecks in the Caribbean, and she is apparently worth six camels in Turkey. Put your seat belts on and enjoy the ride as Ryan shares her adventures with our community!



The holidays are over and excitement fills the air in hopes of a better year to come. Almost everyone has the same basic resolutions including getting in better shape, making or saving more money, spending time with the kids or starting a new family, but what about enriching your lives with travel?

Traveling often takes a back seat to braces, little league games, or that new dishwasher, that quite honestly, you could probably live without. This year, make memories by experiencing new cultures, food and activities. These are the things you will remember; not the year you decided to re-design the family room.

Start by taking advantage of the little weekend trip you've already planned. Going to Daytona for a kid's All-star game? Stay an extra day and go for a drive on the beach. Yes, you will likely get back late Sunday evening and be exhausted for the better part of Monday but you won't forget that fleeting cool parent moment and neither will your child.



Daytona Beach promises beautiful sunset views. Credit: Daytona Beach Area CVB

Better yet, be a little selfish this year. Moms, treat yourself to a weekend getaway with "the girls." Visit exciting new art galleries, hop on a plane to the beaches of Puerto Rico, or go wine tasting in Sedona. After all, is there a better way to experience culture than through a wine glass with a couple of your best friends?

Or, take that anniversary trip that was supposed to be for your 20th, but perhaps on a smaller scale. Take the Key West Express out of Fort Myers for a fun weekend of music, food and sun. Cruise lines are always offering last minute deals for Florida residents, so hop on a boat for a few days of R & R.

No matter where you go, make 2015 count!



Tampa offers many exciting cruise destinations. Credit: Tampa Port Authority

Key West is just an express ferry ride out of Ft. Myers. Be sure and visit the Southernmost Point in the Continental U.S.A. Credit: Wikipedia.org



Library Happenings in January

Compiled by Kayla Hayes

Access the library's calendar online for all upcoming events and holiday hours at www.hplc.org/hplc/locations/bdl. The Bloomindale Regional Public Library will close on Monday, Jan. 19 for Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

FOR CHILDREN -

Block Party on Sunday, Jan. 25 from 2 to 4 p.m. in Room 8. Kids will use Lego building blocks to have a fun, interactive and creative afternoon. The Library provides the Legos; kids provide the imagination!

FOR TEENS -

Teen Advisory Board (TAB) on Monday, Jan. 5 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 8. Join the Teen Advisory Board to get involved with the library's teen program or earn community service hours for graduation, scholarships and more.

FOR ADULTS -

Lighten Up! Free Yourself from Clutter on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 2 to 3 p.m. in Room 8. Michelle Passoff, author of "Lighten up! Free Yourself from Clutter" and president of Free from Clutter Estate Sales, works with people to get rid of clutter and guides them to make space in their lives. In this program, Michelle will discuss how to create an action plan to end clutter and organize a home, and will share a step-by-step paper filing and closet management system that will create a legacy, not a mess!



FOR ALL AGES -

The Bloomingdale Giveback Program on Wednesday, Jan. 7 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the McLean Community Room. Join the Bloomingdale Giveback Program to learn how to knit or crochet. These handmade items are donated to local organizations, such as the Neonatal Center, shelters and nursing centers. Be a part of something helpful, productive and fun.

GOOD READS!

Read these library favorites in preparation for special book discussions in January:

- Whodunit Book Club: Phantom by Jo Nesbo (Jan. 8 at 1 p.m. for adults)
- Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver (Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. for adults)

Young Adult – The Raven Boys by Maggie Stiefvater

Children – This is Not My Hat by Jon Klassen



Twisted Cigar

CIGAR, BEER & WINE LOUNGE



Cigars • Pipes • Tobacco

200 sq ft Humidor with 300+ Variety of Cigars • Fine Wine and Beer
Billiards • Flat Screen TV's • NFL Sunday • Military Discount

Watch your favorite NFL & college teams here!

3644 Lithia Pinecrest Rd, Valrico, FL 33596 • 813-571-7500
WWW.TWISTEDCIGAR.COM

58254-1

BLOOMINGDALE PAINTING

"A Brush Of Quality"

INTERIOR/EXTERIOR
PRESSURE WASHING
RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL

Bloomindale Resident-Tod Howard

FREE ESTIMATES, EXPERIENCED and RELIABLE

(813)654-5646 | (813)966-3601

www.BloomindalePainting.com

License#PA3694 Bonded & Insured

58752-1

Yard of the Month: Holiday Lights-travaganza!



WINNER Robert & Sigrid Jaeger
3822 Cloverhill Court, Brandon, FL 33511 (Bloomingdale West)



HONORABLE MENTION Steven & Betty Eckebrecht
3807 Northridge Drive, Valrico, FL 33596 (Fox Run)



Photos Joy Boisselle

HONORABLE MENTION Mark & Jill Horst
4409 Swift Circle, Valrico, FL 33596 (The Links)

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

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



TechPlayzone Partners with Brandon Sports and Aquatics Center

By Miriam Leech

TechPlayzone Science and Technology Center will be ringing in 2015 by introducing new classes at Brandon Sports and Aquatics Center (BSAC). TechPlayzone, founded and owned by Bloomingdale resident Desh Bagley, provides hi-tech, hands-on workshops with the goal of keeping kids engaged in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

In business since 2005, Bagley took her TechPlayzone business mobile last year. She is always looking for fantastic venues for her workshops and camps. "BSAC is an icon in the community," said Bagley. "We are very excited to expand our STEM education."

BSAC Executive Director Chuck Burgess said of the new partnership, "We have been wanting to do STEM education for a while, and Desh is doing STEM the best in the Tampa Bay area. A large part of our mission is education so this partnership is a natural fit."

Both Burgess and Bagley see a growing emphasis on STEM locally, nationally, and globally, and believe families will rely on resources like TechPlayzone and BSAC to provide educational and athletic programming in one place.

"We want kids to see that science and sports are equally cool," said Bagley.

TechPlayzone workshops include Lego Mindstorms Robotics, Minecraft, 3D Modeling, hands-on science, and game design. New at BSAC will be a "waterbotics" workshop on Saturdays where students will build and program robots to perform missions underwater. Also, a maker space will be provided for 3D design—projects will be sent off for printing and returned to student designers.

To kick off the partnership, TechPlayzone offered 3-day mini-camps during the holiday break in December. In January free introductory workshops will be offered to the community, and in February regular classes will begin.

Classes will be offered for ages 7 to 14 from 5 to 8 p.m. during the week and during the day on Saturdays. Each class will be held once a week for four weeks. According to Burgess, BSAC's goal is to offer TechPlayzone classes for 42 weeks of the year. During the summer months TechPlayzone will continue to offer STEM camps at Bell Shoals Baptist Church.

For more information on TechPlayzone as well as upcoming class schedules and pricing at BSAC, visit www.techplayzone.com, e-mail techplayzone@gmail.com, or call 813-684-7329.



TechPlayzone facilitator and Bloomingdale resident Will Leech shows camper Leandro Barcelos how to get started in robotics.



Photos Miriam Leech

TechPlayzone founder and owner Desh Bagley, a Bloomingdale resident, greets a camper during winter mini-camps held in December at Brandon Sports and Aquatics Center to kick off the new partnership.





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

- Jan. 5 – Students Return to School
- Jan. 19 – No School – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Jan. 20 – No School

ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

- Jan. 7 – Alafia MINT & Book Swap, 7:30 -7:55 a.m., Rm. 208; Running Club 2:30-3:10 p.m.; Math Club 2:15-3:45 p.m.
- Jan. 9 – School Spirit Day wear your Alafia shirts; 5th grade field trip to Oakfield Lanes



CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

- Jan. 9 – Wear White for Honesty
- Jan. 16 – All Pro Dad's: A monthly get together for kids and their dads. Meet in the Multi-Purpose Room at 7 a.m. Enjoy a great free breakfast and bonding with our kids, raffles and more.



BURNS BRUINS BLAST

- Jan. 12 – Soccer practice begins, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.



BLOOMINGDALE BULL BUSINESS

- Check out the calendar at <http://bloomington.mysdhc.org/> for more January events.
- Jan. 13-16 – Exam Week



BULLS BRIEFS

Financial Aid Nights/ Hosted by Hillsborough County Schools / Hillsborough County Public Schools is hosting several financial aid workshops for seniors and their families. A university/college financial aid expert will conduct the workshops and will provide an overview on how to apply for

BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT



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

David P. West, President
 Mike Chanen, Vice President
 Mark Horst, Treasurer
 Russell Jones, Trustee
 Chris Papp, Trustee
 Mark Vargo, Trustee

postsecondary financial aid. The eight workshops will cover the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), deadlines, state scholarships, and Bright Futures Scholarships. All workshops start at 6 p.m. in each school's auditorium.

UPCOMING FINANCIAL AID WORKSHOPS

- Monday, Jan. 12, Plant City High School, One Raider Place, Plant City
- Tuesday, Jan. 13, Freedom High School, 17410 Commerce Park Blvd., Tampa
- Thursday, Jan. 15, Riverview High School, 11311 Boyette Rd., Riverview
- Thursday, Jan. 22, Brandon High School, 1101 Victoria St., Tampa
- Tuesday, Jan. 27, Jefferson High School, 4401 W. Cypress St., Tampa
- Thursday, Jan. 29, Gaither High School, 16200 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa
- Tuesday, Feb. 3, Hillsborough High School, 5000 N. Central Ave., Tampa

Snapchat News and More: Follow us at BloomingdaleSHS. Bloomingdale is now sharing daily announcements on Snapchat. Be sure to check out all our social media accounts on Twitter: @BloomingdaleSHS, Facebook: facebook.com/BloomingdaleSHS and Instagram: @BloomingdaleSHS.

SAT PREP INFORMATION

The next SAT prep class will be starting Feb. 14 through March 7. This is a great opportunity for juniors to gain exposure to the SAT before the school day SAT on Feb. 25. Applications are available in the guidance office and on the guidance website.

SCHOOL DAY SAT

The school day SAT is Feb. 25. Information regarding the exam will be distributed to students during junior programming. If there has been a change of address, please update this with the school. Registration tickets will be mailed to student's home address.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Check for new opportunities posted daily on the guidance website at <http://www.bloomingtonguidance.org/>. Also, there are over 85 scholarships available through the Hillsborough Education Foundation. Visit educationfoundation.com to apply. Deadline is Jan. 30.

LEGACY BRICKS

Buy a brick to help us build our new field house. Leave your mark forever. Please notify all current and former students of this great opportunity. Forms are available at bloomington.mysdhc.org/Files/legacybrick.pdf. Bricks cost \$100.





The Best of the Best Student of the Month Program recognizes outstanding students in our community. The selected student receives a \$25 gift card provided by our sponsor, Ray Chadderton of The Chadderton Group of Keller Williams Realty. Send your nominations to bloomington.homeowners@gmail.com or call 813-681-2051. Nominees must be in home, public, or private school and residents of Bloomington. Include the nominee's name, address, phone number, email and school attending. In addition, provide a short paragraph detailing why he/she should receive the award.

Congratulations to Chris Santarlas, January's Best of the Best Student of the Month!

Bloomington High School senior Santarlas boasts an impressive resume, concrete goals and a detailed plan on how to achieve them. Academically, he ranks 16th in his class of more than 500 students and carries a weighted GPA of 5.96 and unweighted GPA of 4.0. By graduation, this scholar will complete 12 AP courses – a difficult task for any good student.

Santarlas is not just a good student...he is a great student. His straight "A" average began in 3rd grade and he works hard to maintain that perfection.

His involvement in BSHS activities is extensive. He is a member of Mu Alpha Theta (Math Honor Society), Rho Kappa (Social Studies Honor Society), the National English Honor Society, and Bloomington's new Medical Club. In addition, he is the Vice President of the National Honor Society and is a section leader in the award-winning Rajun Bull Band of which he has been a member for four years. This spring, track will be added to his already-packed schedule.

While his accomplishments are considerable, Santarlas is proud of his community service record. He is close to logging 200 hours, and says he volunteers because he enjoys giving back to others and encouraging younger students to strive for success. The person who nominated Santarlas spoke highly of the young man's selfless nature and his natural leadership abilities. His record of accomplishment bears this out.

Even with a full academic and extracurricular schedule, balance is important to Santarlas. A Bloomington resident for over nine years, he enjoys spending time at the Campo YMCA, enjoying neighborhood get-togethers, and just hanging out with friends.

After graduation, this exceptional student will attend the University of South Florida Honors College where he will study pre-medicine. After earning his undergraduate degree, he will attend medical school, but is uncertain, what specialty he will pursue. This may be the only part of his plans of which he is uncertain.

Paul and Teresa Santarlas are the proud parents of this outstanding Bloomington community resident. The family, including his sister Rachel, live in Windsor Woods.

Keep up the great work, Chris!



Chris Santarlas, flanked by his parents Teresa and Paul at Bloomington High's Senior Night, is this month's Best of the Best. Santarlas is a section leader in the Rajun Bull Band, currently in Rome, Italy.

Photo: The Santarlas Family

SPONSORED BY:

THE CHADDERTON REAL ESTATE GROUP
 RAY CHADDERTON
 REALTOR® / PARTNER
 KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY
www.ChaddertonGroup.com | 813.601.0597 | Ray@ChaddertonGroup.com



Continuing a tradition begun last year, the BSHS Boys Soccer Team teamed with local non-profit Creative Kids in a Kick-a-thon fundraiser to provide presents for children in hospitals over the holidays. The event took place Dec. 8 at the school.

The soccer players added a twist to the event by attempting goals blindfolded with a partner guiding their efforts. Seventeen players participated and raised over \$1,000 dollars. Afterwards, a trip to a local retailer netted 235 presents bound for All Children's Hospital based in St. Petersburg.

Kelly Diaz, whose son Nick is a team member, brought the idea to Coach Derek Harrington who welcomed his team's participation. "For Coach Harrington, it's not just about winning on the field," she explained. "He wants to instill more; he is an amazing coach." The experience was a proud one for the team and many expressed a desire to continue the event again next year.

Next month, The Bloomington Gazette will feature the Diaz family and Creative Kids in a resident profile.



BSHS Soccer player Nick Diaz helped fill a shopping cart with toys after the team's kick-a-thon to raise money to buy presents for hospitalized children. Diaz and his teammates raised over \$1,000 during the event held Dec. 8.

Photo: Kelly Diaz

Last month the BSHS Boys Soccer team held a kick-a-thon to raise funds for Creative Kids, a non-profit dedicated to helping children facing medical issues. Not content to score the easy way, players wore blindfolded and guided to the goal by a partner. Coach Derek Harrington levels a scoring goal guided by team member Lucas Soares.

Photo: Christine Hester





Bloomingtondale High School Opens Culinary Arts Program

BSHS Press Release

Ribbon cutting ceremony celebrates new opportunities for students

Bloomingtondale High School opened its culinary arts program on Dec. 18 with a ribbon cutting ceremony hosted by the Valrico/Fishhawk Chamber of Commerce.

“The opportunity to provide students with post-secondary options that will prepare them for a rewarding future is always an exciting endeavor,” Principal Sue Burkett said. “Not every student is a traditional college kid and this allows them an opportunity to pursue school and a career at the same time.”

The Stampede Café is coordinated by culinary arts teacher Peggy Voss and run by students in the culinary arts program.

“There are many career opportunities in the culinary and hospitality industry, the largest employing field in the world,” culinary arts teacher Peggy Voss said. “Upon completing all levels and passing the Food Service Manager’s Certification Exam, the students have the possibility of a successful career in the industry.”

The culinary arts program is based out of Hillsborough County Public Schools Career and Technical programs. The program prepares students for employment in the food service and hospitality industry to operate a restaurant or catering business.

Students in the program earn industry certification with the National ProStart Certificate of Achievement and as a Certified Professional Food Manager from ServSafe.

“It’s a great opportunity for our kids and our faculty loves letting the kids cater for us,” Burkett said.

For information about the program, contact Peggy Voss at Peggy.Voss@sdhc.k12.fl.us or 813-744-8018.

Photo: Nicole Cluck, BSHS Senior



Bloomingtondale High School unveiled its new culinary arts program on Dec. 18 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held at the school. Students, teachers, administrators and county officials attended. Culinary arts teacher Peggy Voss is pictured front row, second from the left.



Bloomingtondale Football Team Holds Season Awards Banquet

By Deidre Morgan

On Dec. 10, the Bloomingtondale Football team celebrated their phenomenal season and the players and coaches who made it happen at an end of season awards banquet held at the Crossings Church. The event included funny stories, emotional speeches and a video that captured the amazing season.

During Coach Brian Surcy’s remarks, he noted the players’ historical achievement of a 9-1 season and a playoff berth – something no other team in Bloomingtondale history had ever done. Earlier last month, Surcy, also a Bloomingtondale alum, was named 2014 Tampa Chapter Billy Turner Football Coach of the Year.

Awardees were:

Offensive MVP:
Logan Crouse, Isaiah (Bobby) McIntyre and Doug Sandberg

Defensive MVP:
Tyler Jahn

Scout Team Player of the Year:
Cordale Alexander

Leadership Award:
Tyler Clark

Black Helmet Award:
Doug Sandberg

Highest GPA:
Doug Sandberg

Coaches Award:
Offense: Tyler Caudillo
Defense: Ryan Voyles

Special Teams Award:
Doug Sandberg

Most Improved:
Chris Wonsley

Coach Hutch Award:
Will Morgan

Photos: Deidre Morgan



Will Morgan (center) with Head Coach Brian Surcy (l.) and Coach David Hutcherson received the 1st Annual Coach Hutch Award, which included a scholarship. The Coach Hutch Award was presented to the individual who exemplifies the ultimate teammate, who gives total commitment to the program, excels in academics and is a role model on and off the field. Coach Hutch has been a staple on the Bloomingtondale coaching staff for over 19 years.



Doug Sandberg (l.) pictured with Tarick Barnes won four awards at the banquet. Highest GPA, Special Teams, Offensive MVP and the Black Helmet award for outstanding performances on offense and defense.

Attention Bloomingtondale Seniors!

IMPORTANT DATES

January 22 - April 1
Applications accepted.

April 1
Application deadline (firm).

May 13
BHA Board meeting and announcement of scholarship winner.



The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association is proud to sponsor the

Bloomingtondale High School

\$2,000 Community Education Scholarship

REQUIREMENTS:

Candidate

- Must be a resident of the Bloomingtondale 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 Bloomingtondale community.
- Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association 2015 membership dues must be paid prior to the scholarship application deadline. Membership drive begins January 2015. **Deadline is April 1, 2015.**
- 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 22, 2015 online at www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com, at Bloomingtondale High School and at the Bloomingtondale 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: bloomingtondale.homeowners@gmail.com • www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

BloomingtondaleHOA

Flyer: Beth Smedley



Brandon Regional Hospital



TOGETHER, GREAT THINGS WILL HAPPEN

Brandon Regional Hospital and All Children's Specialty Physicians are now working together to provide advanced levels of care to newborns and high-risk expectant mothers. Families welcoming their little one at Brandon Regional Hospital's Baby Suites can rest assured:

- Early or special arrivals will receive care from All Children's Specialty Physicians in Brandon's Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Neonatologists are in-house, 24 hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week
- Dedicated obstetrical suite is always prepared and ready
- You and your family will feel at home in a spacious, private room with private bathroom

To learn more about The Baby Suites at Brandon Regional Hospital or to register for childbirth education classes, visit BrandonRegionalHospital.com or call 813-653-1065.
119 Oakfield Drive • Brandon, FL 33511



58754-1