

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

IT'S FALL!

VOLUME XXXIV    ISSUE 10    OCTOBER 2014    www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

## Fall Festival promises fun for everyone; four-legged friends included

Staff Report

New Trick or Treat Street offers safe candy-gathering opportunity!

### THE BLOOMINGDALE FALL FESTIVAL

The BHA Fall Festival is an event where residents, young and “young at heart,” gather for a day of community-building family-oriented fun. This year’s event is Oct. 25 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club off Natures Way.

Sponsors and business booth participants, totaling nearly 50, have provided cash donations, raffle prizes, demonstration teams, activities for kids, and more. Many participants are Bloomingdale residents wanting to spread the word about their companies to our community.

An added feature this year is a safe “trick or treat” street where our booth participants will pass out candy and goodies to children. Parents, make sure your child brings a bag to collect their day’s haul! In addition, entertainment and activities include a DJ spinning the latest music hits, two inflatable bouncy houses, static displays, craft tables for kids, face painting, games and contests, raffles, and food.

Two new and highly anticipated events are the first-ever Howl-O-Ween Pet Costume Contest and the Halloween Children’s Costume Contest. Although not a requirement to participate, contestants are asked to donate either a canned food item for pets or people.



This year’s Fall Festival features a pet costume contest and children’s costume contest. See rules on page 12.

Continued on Page 12

## CARES Adult Day Services Opens in Bloomingdale West

By: Kayla Hayes



Photo: CARES



CARES is a charitable organization that has been serving older adults throughout West Central Florida through health, social and supportive services since 1973. On Sept. 15, CARES opened an Adult Day Services program at the Recreation Center in Bloomingdale West offering supervised care for older adults outside of the home during the day.

“We are hoping to become part of the community and partner with local groups and organizations to arrange intergenerational activities,” said Christine Powers, Administrator of Adult Day Services and Business

Continued on Page 3

Laughter is still the best medicine. Entertainment is regularly featured and helps create an upbeat, happy environment.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. *Helen Keller*

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PLEASE RECYCLE

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Newsletter Category



# 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](mailto:Bloomington.Homeowners@gmail.com)

Website: [www.BloomingtonHOA.com](http://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:** *George T. May IV*

**Treasurer:** *Dennis Osborn*

**Secretary:** *Daniel Berkowitz*

*Billy Hightower*

*Mary Galin*

*Joanie Wilson*

*Ken Smith*

*Beth Smedley*

## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



### JOY BOISSELLE

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## CARES (continued from cover)

Development. “We are also looking forward to being inspected by the VA [U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs],” she continued.

A day at CARES Adult Day Services includes breakfast, lunch and a snack, a personalized plan of care, supervision for those that may wander, medication monitoring by a staff nurse, health screenings and access to resources. Participants may also enjoy fun activities such as arts, crafts, musical entertainment, holiday celebrations, gentle exercise and mentally stimulating games. It’s a great way to spend the day and offers peace-of-mind for caregivers according to Powers.

If your passion is to help people and you’re a good communicator, make a difference by joining the CARES Adult Day Service Volunteer Team.

“We are always looking for volunteers to provide a little ‘TLC’ and one-on-one time,” mentioned Powers. Volunteers who can provide musical entertainment are also welcomed.

If you would like to help but don’t have the time to volunteer, consider making a cash or other donation (snack and prize donations for activities like Bingo are greatly appreciated). CARES is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization, so donations are tax deductible. Contact CARES at 813-330-7964 to volunteer or donate.

For more information or to arrange a complimentary visit, call 1-844-313-CARE (2273), or learn more online at CARESFL.org or Facebook.com/caresfl. The Bloomingdale West Recreation Center is located at 3940 Canoga Park Drive.



Photo: CARES

Participants help assemble Teddy Bear kits that provide huggable comfort to children in crisis. The teddies are distributed to police departments and charitable organizations.

## Talk Around Town

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 is the best part about Halloween?***

Brandon McRae, 14  
Burns Middle School

“The thing I like best about Halloween is putting on a chipmunk mask and scaring little kids”



John Goodwin, 11, Burns Middle School  
“I like the candy. Especially candy corn”



Photos: Deidre Morgan

Emily, 9, and Jordin Gundin, 7  
Cimino Elementary

Emily: “Dressing in scary costumes.”  
Jordin: “All the chocolate candy.”

## Meet Your BHA Board

By: Kayla Hayes

Dennis Osborn has served faithfully as the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Treasurer for the past six years. With extensive computer and financial skills, past corporate leadership experience and the commitment to help keep our community land values at their highest level, Osborn’s vision for Bloomingdale is to see increased property values assisted by adequate transportation avenues.

“We have many good ideas on the drawing board for the BHA to better serve our community. We need increased residential membership and an increased number of board members to effectively support the ideas,” Osborn shared.

Besides serving as the BHA Treasurer, Osborn’s favorite part of serving on the BHA board is being

involved in the yearly membership drives and enjoying the many opportunities the board offers throughout the year through various sponsored events.

When asked what he enjoys most about living in our community, Osborn responded, “At first it was the attraction of a somewhat rural environment with family neighborhoods.” “Over the years increased population growth has been both good and bad from a property value and transportation (roads) congestion aspect.”

Osborn is retired and lives with his wife, Vi (a dedicated BHA volunteer) in the Chadds Ford subdivision of Bloomingdale East. With their children grown, travelling is an Osborn passion.



BHA Treasurer Dennis Osborn and his wife, Vi, enjoy travelling in their free time. This photo was taken at the Grand Canyon.

Photo: Dennis Osborn



# BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

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

## BHA EVENT CALENDAR

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

**Monday, Oct. 13, 6:30 p.m.**

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Monthly Trustee Meeting, 3509 Bell Shoals Road.

**Tuesday, Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m.**

BHA Monthly Board Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road.

**Thursday, Oct. 16, 7 p.m.**

Bloomingdale Area Community Council chaired by Hillsborough County Master Deputy Curtis Warren, Bloomingdale Community Station, 3622 Erindale Drive, 813-635-8040

**Saturday, Oct. 25, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Bloomingdale Golfers Club**

Mark your calendars! The 2014 Bloomingdale Fall Festival will be here in just three short weeks. This community event is fun-filled with activities for all ages, and this year, the festival will include a Halloween Pet Costume Contest and Children's Costume Contest, music, and a "Trick or Treat" Street. We still need volunteers and community service hours are available! Call 813-681-2051 or email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com). See all festival details this issue.

## BHA BRIEFS

### BHA September Board Meeting Highlights

The September Board Meeting included discussions with county officials including Commissioner Al Higginbotham, John Lyons, Public Works; Adam Gormly, Development Services Director; Mike Williams, Public Works, and the BHA attorney Dan Pilka. Key topics were traffic issues affecting our community, the Big Box development, and a discussion with Pilka regarding deed restriction and HOA liability issues. Several residents attended, and as always, monthly board meetings are open to all.



Photo: Joy Boisselle

Pictured at the table are board member Joanie Wilson, Commissioner Higginbotham, Ken Smith and Billy Hightower. Behind are River Crossing HOA President Sean Donahue, county directors Gormly, Lyons, and Williams, and residents.

## ONGOING 2014 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Three months remain of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association 2014 Membership Drive. The Association still needs your help as we prepare to close the year with two large events: Fall Festival this month and the 27th Annual Santa and Mrs. Claus Visit/Charity Food Drive in December.

Both events require volunteers, sponsors and many Association hours. More importantly, neither event can take place without funding in the form of your \$25 dues. Again, the Association asks for your continued support of the only group that oversees the interests of this community of over 5,000 homes and 23,000 residents.

For those thinking about joining, \$25 is a small price to pay. If you have ever called the office, read the Bloomingdale Gazette, looked at our website or Facebook page, submitted a complaint, attended a BHA event, these are all things that would not happen without the funds generated during the Association's annual dues drive.

For those that have already joined, donated to our scholarship fund, and purchased Bloomingdale Pride license plates, we sincerely thank you. For those that have not, please join today. Make checks payable to the BHA and mail to 3509 Bell Shoals Road., Valrico, FL 33596, or stop by the office and meet our office manager. The easiest way to join is to use our PayPal option. Go to [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com), look for the PayPal link and follow the simple instructions.



### HOT! HOT! HOT! BHA Closes Post Office Box 7221, Brandon, FL 33508; Please update your mailing lists!

Effective Aug. 31, the BHA post office box is no more. Please direct all mail to the Association's physical address at 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL, 33596. Residents using automatic bank payments for dues processing should update the mailing address accordingly.

### BHA Yard of the Month

Do you have neighbors who take pride in their property? Thank them by nominating them for Yard of the Month at [inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com](mailto:inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com) or call 813-681-2051.



### CORRECTION:

In last month's issue (front page), we incorrectly identified a child held by Ray Chadderton (Chadderton Group of Keller Williams Realty) as his son. This is a file photo taken at the 2008 Fall Festival. The child pictured is an event attendee and not Chadderton's son, Ryan. We regret the error.





## Here comes Santa Claus

Mark your calendars for December 6! For the 27th consecutive year, Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit the Bloomingdale community during the first week of December. Look for more information in the November Gazette, on Facebook at Bloomingdale HOA, and on our website at [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com)!

## Yard of the Month



Photo: Joy Boisselle

## Dennis Hall

3913 Rosedale Drive

Brandon, Florida 33511 (Bloomingdale Estates - Bloomingdale West)

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

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



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



*October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Encourage loved ones, both men and women, to perform monthly self-exams. Early detection is important and can save lives.*

## TODAY!

**Holiday Cards for Troops / Oct. 4 / 9 a.m.-3 p.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon /** Show your support by making hand-made Holiday Cards for our Troops! The decorated cards (blank inside) are sent to our deployed service members. The soldiers will be able to write a sentiment to their loved ones inside each card. This is a free community event! Donations appreciated! Ages 16 and up! NO childcare provided. Raffle tickets: 6 for \$5, arm's length for \$20. Arrive early!



Photo: Miriam Leech

**AARP Meeting / Oct. 6 / 11:30 a.m. / Brandon Community Center / 502 Sadie Street, Brandon /** Guest speaker is County Commissioner Al Higginbotham. Bring a wrapped sandwich for lunch; beverages and dessert furnished. Anyone over 55 is welcome. Celebrating 25 years, we are the only local AARP club in Hillsborough. For information, call 813-689-6590.

**Cards for Troops Kid's Night / Oct. 8 / 6-8 p.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon /** Make thank you cards for our Troops to be included with Holiday Cards made Oct. 4. Ages 8 to 15 welcome. Call 813-685-8888.

**Panera Bread / Oct. 17 / 3490 Lithia Pinecrest Rd, Valrico /** Panera Goes Pink- 100% of proceeds from every pink ribbon bagel sold will be donated to Moffitt Cancer Center.

**7th Annual Plaza Bella Goes Pink / Oct. 18 / 9 a.m. / Plaza Bella / 1078 Bloomingdale Avenue, Brandon /** Walk to raise funds and awareness for a cure for breast

cancer! Walk begins at 9 a.m. Pre-register at the Green Boutique or on the day of the event at 8 a.m. Registration fee: \$40/person; teams of five or more, \$35/person. DJ, Raffle, Refreshments. All proceeds benefit the American Cancer Society, the Brandon Outreach Clinic, and the YMCA's Livestrong Program. For information, call the Green Boutique at 813-685-9494.



**Zach Tucker Memorial 5K & Fun Run 2014 / Oct. 25 / 8 a.m. / Lithia Springs Elementary School / 4332 Lynx Paw Trail, Valrico /** Join us in helping raise support for families facing pediatric cancer. Enjoy the fall weather while taking in the scenery of the River Hills Community as you complete the 5th Annual Zach Tucker Memorial 5K or 1-mile run. This chip-timed race event also includes a post-race party with DJ, food, face painting, tattoos, crazy hair spray, and much more family fun! Wear a costume or raise the most money and win a prize! 5K begins promptly at 8 a.m.; Fun Run at 9 a.m. Parking is at the school but is limited.

**Social Security—Maximizing Your Strategy Seminar / Oct. 27 / 6-8 p.m. / Mimi's Café / 804 Providence Road, Brandon /** Social Security Seminar for 55-65 year olds nearing retirement age. Hosted by the Edward Jones Valrico office. Dinner provided. Limited seating; RSVP required by Oct. 23. For information, call 813-681-1462.

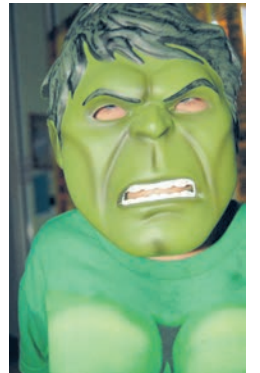
## HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

**Howl-O-Scream Busch Gardens / Select Dates Oct. 2 through Nov. 1 /** Busch Gardens is hosting the 14th annual Howl-O-Scream, and this year's theme is Cursed. It will take place on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays with an additional Sunday night on Oct. 19. These 18 select nights will be open for scares from 7:30 p.m.-1 a.m. A Thrills & Chills ticket is available for \$89 and includes both Howl-O-Scream and Busch Gardens throughout the weekend of purchaser's choice. No costumes are allowed. This event is intended for adults. For information, visit <http://seaworldparks.com/howloscream-tampa/>.

**Lowry Park's ZooBoo / Lowry Park Zoo / Select Dates Oct. 3 through Nov. 1 /** Tampa's largest family Halloween event, ZooBoo, is an annual fundraiser for Lowry Park Zoo. The Zoo's signature spooktacular event will be Oct. 3-4, 10-12, 17-19, 23-26, and 30 as well as Saturday, Nov. 1. Zoo Boo will open every night at 7 p.m. General admission for regular nights starts at \$14 for children ages 3-11 and \$18 for ages 12 and up. For information, visit [www.lowryparkzoo.com/zoo-boo/index.html](http://www.lowryparkzoo.com/zoo-boo/index.html) or call 813-935-8552.

**Brandon Ballet Presents Dracula / Oct. 19 / Centro Asturiano de Tampa / 1913 N. Nebraska Avenue, Tampa /** Join Brandon Ballet and Artistic Director, Octavio Martin, for a night of mystery as he presents a premiere, one-night performance of the classical ballet *Dracula*. Tickets: \$20, Adults; \$10, Children (18 and under); \$15, Seniors (55+). Tickets can be purchased online at [www.tututix.com/brandonballet](http://www.tututix.com/brandonballet). For information, contact the Brandon Ballet at [dance@brandonballet.org](mailto:dance@brandonballet.org) or 813-684-4282.

**Halloween in the Halls at The Village Early Learning Center / Oct. 25 / 5-8 p.m. / 3741 Canoga Park Drive, Brandon /** The Center hosts its 4th Annual Halloween in the Halls with age appropriate activities for all. Decorated hallways and Trick or Treat Street, ages 2-6; Haunted House, ages 6-11; and bounce house, cakewalk, face painting, and fun for all. Costs are \$5 per family--each child receives a free hot dog and water (\$1 for adults). Free parking and open to the public. Proceeds go to Cure Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA). For information, call 813-651-0779 or visit [www.villageelc.com](http://www.villageelc.com).



**Guppyween / The Florida Aquarium / Oct. 26 / 4 - 8 p.m. /** Join us on the only day we let wild animals, ghosts, and princesses roam the aquarium--Guppyween! Dress in costume and roam the aquarium trick-or-treating tank-to-tank among the sea creatures. Family-friendly, entertainment and treats provided. Prices: \$5 for kids in costume, \$15 for adults age 12 and over, and free for Florida Aquarium Members. To purchase tickets, visit [www.flaquarium.org](http://www.flaquarium.org), or contact the Aquarium at 813-273-4000.

**17th Annual Halloween Horribles Parade at Center Place / Oct. 27 / 3 p.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon /** Costumed Munchkins (ages 10 and under and with an adult) are invited to take part in a Halloween Parade with treat stations hosted by civic clubs and local businesses. Parade begins outside on the deck area at 2:30 p.m. There is no charge to attend, but tickets are required. Tickets available Oct. 1 at Center Place. Call 813-685-8888.

**Costume Crusade for Spinal Muscular Atrophy at The Village Early Learning Center / Oct. 31 / 10 a.m. / 3741 Canoga Park Drive, Brandon /** The Center hosts its 13th Annual Costume Crusade to raise money and awareness of Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA). Silent auction and basket raffle. Proceeds go to Cure SMA. To donate, or raffle tickets purchase, call 813-651-0779 or visit [www.villageelc.com](http://www.villageelc.com).



## Greek Specialties Will Soon Enhance Bloomingdale Dining

By: Miriam Leech

Opa! In Greek, the word is a declaration of celebration—and what many Bloomingdale diners will be saying about the opening of Little Greek Restaurant in the Lithia Crossing Shopping Center next to Fresh Market.

This is the 18th and newest location of the Tampa-based Little Greek Franchise Development LLC. President Nick Vojnovic spent 12 years with Beef O'Brady's. He resides in nearby in River Hills.

The Valrico Little Greek Restaurant is part of Vojnovic's franchise, and is individually owned by Rob Wolfenden and his partner, Chris Lewis.

Wolfenden, a graduate of Bloomingdale High School, is deeply involved in the community through his involvement with the Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO) and his children's Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). Lewis lives in Valrico and serves as a reserve police officer. The partners see the new restaurant's patrons as their neighbors.

"It is nice to have our business in our back yard," says Wolfenden. As the son of an Air Force dentist, the restaurant owner moved to Bloomingdale in 1987 and soon considered it home. After graduating from Bloomingdale High in 1992, he left the area to attend the University of North Florida. Wolfenden decided it was time to move back home 12 years ago with his wife and family. They now reside in Lithia.

Wolfenden got the franchise restaurant bug while a student at Bloomingdale High School. During and after college he gained experience with popular chains such as Chili's and Tijuana Flats. He now owns five Beef O-Brady's and just signed a contract to open his second Little Greek Restaurant.

Diners should look for signature dishes of gyros (YEER-ohs), chicken skewers [souvlaki (soo-VLAH-kee)], and Greek salad. Particularly palatable will be the dolmades (dol-MAH-thez), or grape leaves stuffed with beef and rice, which require 17 steps to prepare and are cooked for 2 hours. Wolfenden believes that the fresh, prepared in house, made-to-order food of Little Greek Restaurant will be a perfect fit for Bloomingdale and a complement to the Fresh Market.

The 1,400-square-foot restaurant will seat approximately 45 to 50. Diners can expect outstanding food and great service, as well as a 10 percent Heroes Discount for those in uniform (military, fire, police). Little Greek Restaurant is located at 3430 Lithia-Pinecrest Road. For more information about the grand opening date, visit [www.mylittlegreek.com](http://www.mylittlegreek.com).

Bloomingdale High School graduate and local resident Rob Wolfenden believes his new Little Greek Restaurant, located in the Lithia Crossing Shopping Center, will thrill Bloomingdale diners with its fresh fare.

Photo: Little Greek Restaurant



One of the Little Greek Restaurant's signature dishes is the gyro (YEER-oh), a dish of meat roasted on a vertical spit and served in a pita with tomato, onion, and tzatziki (tsah-ZEE-kee) sauce, which the restaurant makes fresh with sour cream.



Photo: Miriam Leech

## Compassionate Dementia Care in a Fun Atmosphere!

### What Family Members Say about Alzheimer's Care at Superior Residences



Sisters Terrie and Dawn knew their mother needed the assistance with daily living that they could not provide her. After researching various Alzheimer's communities, they visited Superior Residences of Brandon and found it to be the perfect home for mom.

Dawn stated, "The fact that all the staff at Superior understands Alzheimer's makes us comfortable. And Mom has felt safe and comfortable since the day she got there." Terrie agreed by emphasizing, "They're wonderful caregivers. It's a special gift they have and we're fortunate they're here. They know our mother and they love her."

Find out first hand why our community is aptly named Superior Residences and may be the better choice for your loved one. Call today for your personal tour.

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# BLOOMING IN BLOOMINGDALE

Provided by the Valrico Garden Club

## ...HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

*Editor's Note: Blooming in Bloomingdale is a monthly column for our green and brown thumb gardeners penned by local garden experts and amateurs from the Valrico Garden Club (VGC). Each month, the club will highlight garden news and events in our area as well as tips on how to make your garden the neighborhood showpiece.*

*To learn more about the Valrico Garden Club, contact Mary Kay McMahan at 813-684-6323, email [danmcmahan@aol.com](mailto:danmcmahan@aol.com) or visit Facebook/Valrico Garden Club. This month's article:*

### THE MAGICAL ART OF BONSAI

Let us explore the art of bonsai, the cultivation and shaping of small trees in small containers. The literal translation of bonsai (pronounced bon-sigh) is "tray planting." Tracing its origins to China where it was known as penjing, bonsai, today, is a popular gardening practice most often associated with Japan.

Japan is a small heavily populated country, where nearly every inch of available land is occupied or under cultivation. Space is at a premium. Those who practice bonsai create small garden illusions of forests, mountain slopes or seashores. Through bonsai, even a city dweller can design an escape into a natural miniature world where a small rock can be a mountain and a few seedlings a forest landscape.

Many varieties of trees are used for bonsai purposes, but many expert and novice gardeners believe evergreens are the easiest to manage. Short leaf pine, green and blue junipers, cypress, and holly make beautiful bonsai. One expert recommends ficus for indoor bonsai and juniper for outdoor bonsai.

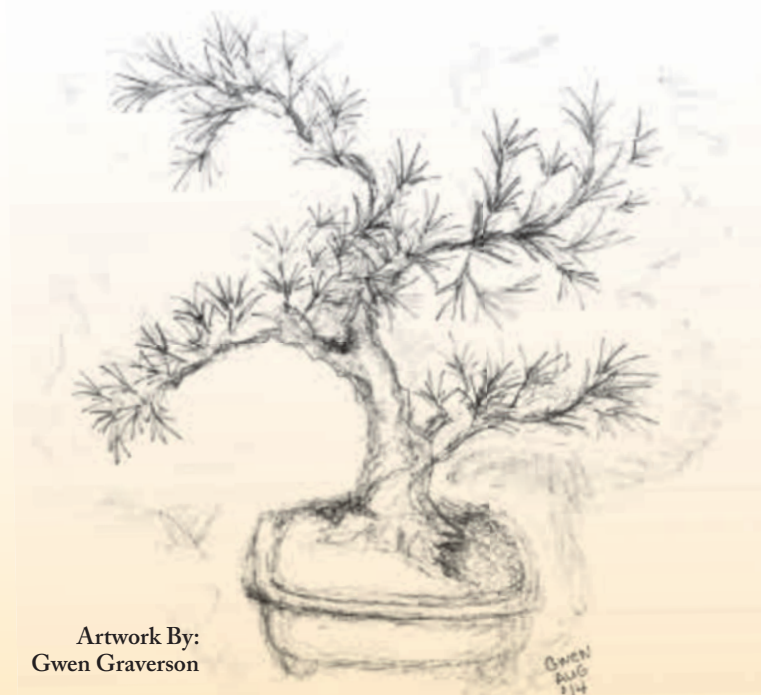
Whatever variety chosen, expect to dedicate time and effort towards maintaining a healthy productive specimen. Bonsai art is magic and mystery. Understanding the plant chosen, the care needed and habitat required will ensure the best possible bonsai outcome. Unbelievably, some bonsai are reportedly hundreds of years old.

Next, choose a container. Generally, the pot's depth should be equal to the diameter of the plant trunk just above soil level. Pots come in many colors, but traditionally, pot colors are dark brown, black, dark red and dark blue. These colors are symbolic of earth and rocks in nature.

Bonsai soil is a mixture of equal parts planting soil, sharp sand, coarse sawdust or peat moss. Fertilize once a month with water-soluble fertilizer. Once the bonsai is settled in its new home, water gently. It is best to water in the morning and in very warm weather, twice a day.

Wiring and shaping is another bonsai hallmark accomplished with copper wire wrapped around branches to form a pleasing plant shape. It is important to prune carefully to leave desired branches in place. Wire remains on the plant for three to 12 months.

You are now ready to start your own bonsai and gain a true appreciation of the art. With proper care, your bonsai can live many years. Get ready for the usual reactions of astonishment and exclamations of "I just can't believe it" from your friends and neighbors. To learn more, resources are available online and at the local library or bookstore.



Artwork By:  
Gwen Graverson

Along with their own "plant and learn" experiences, club members rely on gardening information provided by The University of Florida and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) located in Hillsborough County. UF/IFAS is an educational service that provides courses, seminars and print material for the casual to more accomplished gardener. A valuable tool for gardeners is the Extension Service's monthly "To Do List."

#### For October:

- **Lawn weeds:** Apply pre-emergent herbicides when nighttime temperatures are 55-60 degrees for four to five days to be effective.
- **Fertilize Ornamental Trees and Shrubs:** Controlled-release fertilizer provides nutrients over a longer period.
- **Fertilize Bahia and St. Augustine lawns:** Fertilize with a controlled-release nitrogen fertilizer for longer lasting results.
- **October is the last month of the year to fertilize.**
- **Strawberries:** Prepare beds and set strawberry plants this month.
- **Winter Landscapes:** Evergreen hollies and their bright berries add color to the landscapes. Water well when planting and mulch to minimize weeds.
- **Twig girdlers:** Small branches failing from oak and hickory trees may be the work of twig girdlers. To control, clean and destroy fallen branches, which may harbor young twig girdlers.

For information, call UF/IFAS Extension at (813)744-5519, email [Hillsborough@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:Hillsborough@ifas.ufl.edu), check out the website at <http://hillsborough.ifas.ufl.edu/> or stay connected through the UF/IFAS Solutions Facebook page.



## Looking Back...

Staff Report

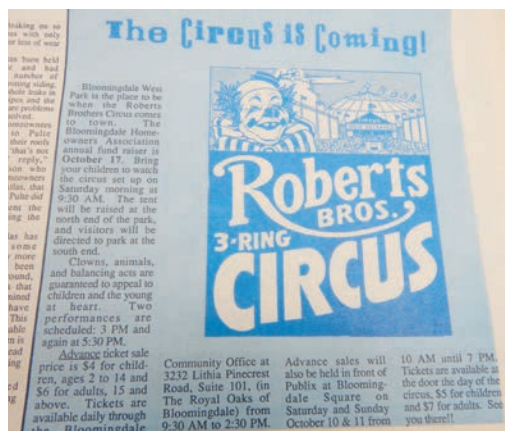


This month, "Looking Back" features a fundraising announcement written for the October 1992 Gazette, titled "The Circus is Coming!"

As the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association continues preparations for the upcoming Fall Festival, it is interesting to note that the BHA has been undertaking events like this for years. Nearly 22 years have passed since the Roberts Bros. Circus raised the "Big Top" at Bloomingdale West Park. The circus featured clowns, aerialists and animal performers, and delivered its final performance in 2001.

Note that event tickets cost \$4 to \$7. This was not a free event like the Fall Festival, but one can assume that many residents had a fun time.

Today, a trip to one of our nation's premier circuses, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, will cost you from \$20 (upper level) to \$100 (front row). For those interested, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey will be in Miami at the American Airlines Arena from Jan. 8-19, 2015.



## Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 5-11!



### Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives

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Fire Prevention Week • October 5-11, 2014



Photo: National Fire Protection Association

Sparky the Fire Dog was created for NFPA in 1951 and has been the organization's official mascot and spokesdog ever since. Here, Sparky gives enthralled youngsters a lesson in fire safety.



Photo: Joy Boisselle



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

By: Theresa Clinton

October is the time to celebrate fall and upcoming holidays! So, I came across a crafty DIY project just in time for the many fall festivities. This month's DIY challenge for me is to make my own decorative vases for any occasion. Sounds like fun!



**1** Purchase a clear vase. I wanted to do a few and purchased mine at Old Time Pottery. There were several vases available in all different shapes and sizes and reasonably priced starting from \$2.99.



**2** Purchase festive stickers and window decals. At this time of year, these are not hard to find—think Target, Walmart, and Michaels.



**3** Trim your stickers to remove unwanted portions. Remember, just the silhouette of the sticker/decals will show so many details are not needed. In this case, the simpler the better.



**4** Attach the stickers/decals to the vase(s) and begin spray painting. I chose orange and black spray paint. You will want to mist the spray paint lightly several times until you get the coverage you want. Dry completely before applying more coats to avoid paint runs.

**5** Once completely dry, carefully remove the stickers and decals. Note: the bigger the stickers and decals, the easier the removal.



Finally, add some ribbon to your new vase to create even more decorative appeal. Place a tea light or two inside the vase(s) and your homemade decoration is ready for any table or front porch.

*(Editor's Note: Bloomingdale resident Theresa Clinton is the owner of Spotlight Home Staging Company, LLC. Her monthly column will focus on home improvement projects residents can accomplish in do it yourself fashion.)*

**Theresa Clinton**

Spotlight Home Staging Company, LLC

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## Weight Loss Journey Leads to Health and Happiness

By: Miriam Leech

Bloomington resident Rhonda Starks' weight loss journey began two years ago, when at the age of 48 and a weight of 220 pounds she made the decision that something had to change. Today she is 70 pounds lighter and living a healthier and happier lifestyle.

The weight gain didn't happen overnight. After Starks had her first child, she told herself she could "lose the baby weight." After the birth of her third child, her weight ballooned to its highest ever and, as Starks reflects, "I was 37 years old and it was getting tougher and tougher to lose [the weight]."

For a time Starks would join a weight loss group, lose 20 or so pounds, drop out of the group, then put the weight back on—plus some. She woke up one day in 2012 and realized it was time to take control.

Starks began walking, but not really changing her eating habits. Feeling defeated after losing only two pounds in six months, she began to watch what she ate and to journal her food intake. Starks continued walking, and added a Zumba class from time to time. In a year, she lost 50 pounds.

In the fall of 2013, the trimmed-down mom decided she wanted to tone up. That is when she discovered the Campo Family YMCA. Starks lives within walking distance of the Bloomington facility, and once she became a member she took advantage of the Y's many classes and weight-training equipment. She has participated in Boot Camp, Body Pump, and yoga classes, and took advantage of the Fit First program to kick-start her weight training program (new members receive four free sessions with a Wellness Coach who provides customized strength and cardio training).

She begins her day at 5 a.m. at the Y with a group she calls her "silent supporters." Starks explains that the focus and committed Y regulars help keep her motivated. By 8 a.m. she has worked out, walked her dogs, and taken her son to school.

The mom of three says her husband has been supportive of her weight loss journey, and is wowed by the results. Her children, aged 13, 19, and 22, are extremely proud. "It has changed me in so many ways," Starks says.



Photo: Rhonda Starks

**BEFORE:** Bloomington resident Rhonda Starks, pictured in 2011 with her mother, weighed 220 pounds before starting her weight loss journey two years ago. With a family history of heart disease, Starks has taken steps to be healthier.



**AFTER:** The 50-year-old Starks, pictured with her family (from left Joshua; husband, Keith; Conner; and Lauren), has lost 70 pounds and continues to eat healthier and work out regularly at the Campo Family YMCA.



# INs & OUTs

## WHAT RESIDENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MOSQUITOS

*With the flood of rain our community has experienced recently, a look at mosquitos and their control is in order. The Hillsborough County press release that follows reminds residents to take steps to eliminate breeding spots and protect themselves from bites.*

**Hillsborough County Mosquito Control and the Florida Department of Health reminds residents to protect themselves against mosquito-borne diseases**

The Florida Department of Health and the Hillsborough County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control reminds all residents and visitors to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites. According to Dr. Douglas Holt, director, Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, preventing mosquito bites can protect your health, which is why it is important for residents and visitors alike to protect themselves from mosquitoes and the illnesses they can transmit.

The Florida Department of Health works closely with Hillsborough County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control to reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease throughout the county. According to Dr. Carlos Fernandes, manager, Hillsborough County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control, it is important that everyone in our community take some basic precautions to help limit their exposure to mosquitoes by following these simple, and effective recommendations.

Beware that water may accumulate outside your home creating a breeding ground for mosquitoes. These helpful drain and cover tips can prevent mosquitoes from living and multiplying around your home or business:

- **Dump any water collected in flowerpots, gutters, kid's toys, buckets, etc.**
- **Dispose of old tire, drums, bottles, broken appliances and other items that are not in use.**
- **Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once a week.**
- **Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that will not accumulate water.**
- **Maintain the water balance of swimming pools.**

Protect yourself from mosquito bites and the diseases they carry by covering your skin with clothing and repellent if you must be outside. In addition, cover doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home.

For information or to report a mosquito concern, visit the Hillsborough County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control website at [www.HillsboroughCounty.org/Mosquitoes](http://www.HillsboroughCounty.org/Mosquitoes) or call 813-635-5400. Tips on preventing mosquito-borne diseases are available on the Florida Department of Health website, [www.FloridasHealth.com/Environment/medicine/arboviral/Prevention.html](http://www.FloridasHealth.com/Environment/medicine/arboviral/Prevention.html).



Photo: Hillsborough County



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## 2014 Fall Festival Schedule of Events



## THE BLOOMINGDALE FALL FESTIVAL IS BACK & BETTER THAN EVER!

10 a.m.	Welcome and General Announcements, 1st Raffle, Trick or Treat Street opens
10:15	Raffles/Sponsor highlights
10:30- 10:45	Storm All Star Cheerleading Demo
11:00	Thunderbug Arrives, Raffles/Sponsor highlights
11:15-12:00	Howl-O-Ween Pet Costume Contest Cyber-Bully Presentation, HCSO Children's Costume Contest
12:00	Lunch, Raffles/Sponsor highlights
12:30-12:45	World Champion Center Tae Kwon Do Demo
1:00	Thunderbug Departs, Raffles/Sponsor highlights
1:30-1:45	Crunch Fitness Demo
1:45	Final Raffles/Sponsor highlights
2 p.m.	Closing

All times are subject to change.

## 2014 Fall Festival First-Ever Howl-O-Ween Pet Costume Contest and Children's Costume Contest

# THE RULES

1. Donate a canned food item for either pets or people. (Optional)
2. There are two separate contests: one for pets and their owners and one for children. There are five categories for pets and four for children. There is one winner per category.
  - a) Best Costume Overall – Basket and Gift Card
  - b) Best Owner/Dog Combo (Dog contest only)- Gift Card
  - c) Cutest - Gift Card
  - d) Scariest - Gift Card
  - e) Funniest - Gift Card
  - f) All Contestants- Goodie Bag
3. General Rules: Both contests will be in a circular parade format. Judges will be in the center of the parade and select winners based on categories in Rule 2.
  - a) Contestants must be at parade ring 15 minutes prior for either contest.
  - b) Judges decisions are final.
  - c) Photos will be taken of winners and others for inclusion in our community newspaper, and Facebook page. Photos belong to the BHA.
  - d) For Pets: Pets must be on leash and under owner control at all times.
  - e) For Pets: Vaccinations must be up-to-date, and pets must be over 4 months of age.
  - f) For Pets: Parent must walk with child/pet if the child is under 12.
  - g) For Pets: Owners must pick up after their pets.



## Festival (continued from cover)

Pet food donations are for two of our participants, Furever Friends Animal Rescue and DARE- Dachshund Adoption Rescue and Education. Both groups will have pets ready for adoption onsite. The BHA will provide local charity organizations with donated canned foods for people just in time for Thanksgiving preparations.

Ready to wow fest-goers are demonstration teams from Storm All-Star Cheerleading, World Champion Center Tae Kwon Do, and Crunch Fitness. In addition, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office will deliver a short presentation on the hot topic of cyber-bullying. Several businesses will be selling their products including jewelry, candles, school spirit ribbons and bows, and offering promotional materials about their companies.

Attendees can also enjoy a fall-themed photo opportunity donated by Heather Rose Photography owned by Heather Fenzau. Photos will be available online to download shortly after the event. She will also display her artwork and photographs available for sale.

The BHA Raffle Program is a critical component to keeping this event free for our residents and businesses. Prizes include club memberships, bikes, pet-related baskets, gift cards and more. Tickets are available at \$1 for one ticket, \$5 for six tickets, \$15 for 18 tickets, and \$20 for 25 tickets. All proceeds support the Fall Festival. Cash and checks are accepted.

The Fall Festival offers something for everyone. Come out, support your community and have a fall-tastic day! For information, contact 813-681-2051 or email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com).



## Thank you to our Fall Festival Sponsors and Participants!

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association would like to thank our sponsors and participants for being a part of our upcoming Fall Festival. Over 30 businesses are participating. Any business not listed in this issue will be acknowledged in the November Gazette. This list is current as of publication deadline.

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**Earthwise Pet Supply**, Christopher Klecic and Mark Renfrow, 3454 Lithia Pinecrest Rd Valrico, Valrico@EarthWisePet.com, fb.com/EarthWisePetValrico, 813-999-0858

**Heather Rose Photography**, Heather Fenzau, hfenzauphoto@gmail.com, www.heatherosephoto.com, 813-431-6102,

**5/3 Bank**, 3402 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, Valrico, 33596

**Crunch Fitness**, 3236 Lithia Pinecrest Road, Valrico, 813-381-4106

**Ricky Mondelli**, Rhythm Makers DJs, rickmondelli@yahoo.com

**Daniel Pilka, Pilka & Associates, P.A.**, 213 Providence Rd, Brandon, 33511, 813-653-3800

**Salon Jennifer**, Heather Michael, hairgirl75@gmail.com, 813-340-6457

**Storm All Star Cheerleading**, Margaret DeVore and Evelyne Hogue, 514 Corner Drive, Brandon, 33511, www.stormallstarcheerleading.com, 813-657-8676

**Jersey Girl Bows**, Deborah Stasiak, https://www.facebook.com/JerseyGirlBows, deborahlstasiak@yahoo.com, 813-810-9104

**World Champion Center Tae Kwon Do**, 1015 Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico, 813-643-4262

### GOLD SPONSORS

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**Adorable Pets By Dena**, Dena Craig, adorablepetsbydena@gmail.com, 813-684-5693

**Title Boxing Club**, 889 E. Bloomingdale Ave, Brandon, 33511, 813-252-2732

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**Don's Bay Area Painting**, Inc, Donald Murray, Don@DonsPainting.com, Bloomingdale, Valrico, www.DonsPainting.com, 813-661-9006

**Sneaky Dog Studio**, Virginia Elliott, sneakydogstudio@gmail.com, 239-961-8050

**Fibi & Clo. Ita**, Debby Duncan, ddctacs@msn.com, fb/fibiandclo.com/debbyduncan, 813-731-8757

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**Quality Life by Education and Research**, PO Box 4191, Brandon, FL, 813-379-7537

**Brandon Shapes**, 731 W Lumsden Rd, Brandon, 33511, brandon@shapetotalfitness.com, 813-661-0033

**Tina Stephanz**, Thirty-One Consultant, 813-842-9108, tstephanz456@gmail.com www.mythirtyone.com/TinaStephanz/

**Noah's Ark Animal Hospital**, 4338 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, Florida 33596, 813-662-7275, www.noahsarkanimal.com

### BUSINESS PARTNERS

**Furever Friends Animal Rescue**, info@daretorecue.com, debbie@fureverfriendsanimalrescueinc.com

**DARE: Dachshund Adoption Rescue and Education**, 4495-304 Roosevelt Blvd. PMB 179, Jacksonville, 32210, http://daretorecue.com, cheryl.scripiter@yahoo.com

**Tampa Bay Lightning Thunderbug**

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**Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office**, Community Outreach Division, Citizen's Patrol

Hillsborough County Fire and Rescue

**Abdoney Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics**, 2220 East Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico, 33596, www.abdoneyortho.com, 813-651-0400

**A Queen's Jewels**, Angela Lopez, alqueeny84@gmail.com, aqueensjewels.mypremierdesigns.com 813-523-5108

**Tampa Bay Times**



## Halloween Fun Facts

Staff Report

- The first Jack O'Lanterns were turnips.
- Halloween is the second highest grossing commercial holiday after Christmas.
- Fifty percent of kids prefer to receive chocolate candy for Halloween, compared with 24% who prefer non-chocolate candy and 10% who preferred gum.
- The largest pumpkin weighed in at 2,032 pounds in 2013.
- Ireland is believed to be the birthplace of Halloween.
- Scarecrows symbolize the ancient agricultural roots of the holiday.
- Orange and black are Halloween colors because orange is associated with the fall harvest and black is associated with darkness and death.
- Halloween has many names: All Hallows' Eve, Witches Night, Lamswool, Snap-Apple Night, Samhain, and Summer's End.
- Halloween consumers in 2013 spent \$75 on average—approximately \$6.9 billion—on costumes, cards, and candy.
- More than 158 million Americans will celebrate Halloween.

- Halloween costumes for adults and children tend to traditional favorites – witches, zombies, princesses and pumpkins. Over \$2 billion will be spent on adult and children's costumes.
- One in five plan to dress up their pet. Spending on pet costumes will near \$330 million.
- The candy industry in America rakes in an average of \$2 billion annually thanks to Halloween (that's 90 million pounds of chocolate).
- Chocolate candy bars top the list as the most popular candy for trick-or-treaters with Snickers #1.
- Tootsie Rolls were the first wrapped penny candy in America.

Sources: <http://facts.randomhistory.com/halloween-facts.html>, <https://nrf.com/resources/halloween-headquarters>, <https://nrf.com/news/the-long-and-short-of-americas-consumer-holidays>, <http://www.businessinsider.com/13-facts-you-never-knew-about-halloween>, <http://www.halloween-website.com/trivia.htm>





# BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By: Community Resource Master Deputy Curtis Warren

## STOP CRIMES OF OPPORTUNITY!

The good news is that crime in our area has dropped. The bad news is that too many burglaries are still occurring. Some people blame it on the economy. Believe me; criminals don't check the "Wall Street Journal" while planning their crimes. Most are crimes of opportunity, an opportunity to get cold hard cash or items they can sell for cash. When residents don't take the proper measures to protect their vehicles and property, then they become crimes of opportunity victims.

Don't make it easy for them! Properly securing your home and vehicles is a full time responsibility. The one time you get in a hurry or forget to lock your vehicle, take your valuables inside or close your garage door is all it takes. Lock up your vehicles. Take your valuables inside your home or business and close your garage doors! It is that simple. Remember, crimes of opportunity (which you can prevent) take law enforcement officers away from other crime or security issues they could be covering.

HCSO Deputies and Volunteer Citizens patrolling our community need the full support and cooperation from the residents in our community. By being vigilant and reporting suspicious activity, we can work together to reduce crime even further, and even stop crimes in progress.

**Call 247-8200 as soon as possible to report suspicious activities!**

## TEEN DRIVING - A CRITICAL TIME OF LEARNING

Most adults can remember how excited they were when they got their first driver's license. There are some big differences between then and now. There are many, many more drivers on the road and many, many more distractions both inside and outside our vehicles.

Do you remember driving with your windows down? Now, vehicles are so well "sealed" that you can't even hear an ambulance or fire engine siren until it almost on top of you. Don't be distracted. Distractions aren't just talking on your cell phone or texting. They include talking to passengers, adjusting the radio, eating and anything else that takes your attention from your primary job - driving safely!

If stopped for a driving infraction, many law enforcement officers will note on your citation whether you were distracted while driving. This is serious information that your auto insurance company can use to raise your rates!

Parents don't just "teach your teens to drive, but instead teach them to drive safely!" Finally, be a driver role model and set the right example when you drive. Remember, they have already been watching you drive for fifteen years.

## HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE OFFERS TEEN DRIVER CHALLENGE

The HCSO Teen Driver Challenge is an effective program at reaching teens, modifying their driving attitudes and creating better teenage drivers.



A defensive driving and vehicle control program, it enhances young driver awareness of the complex task of operating a motor vehicle. The two-day safety program is part classroom and part driving experience allowing teens to practice the skills that will prepare them to anticipate and handle hazards that occur daily under normal driving conditions.

Training includes evasive maneuvers, emergency braking, cornering, backing, and other important skills. Drivers are under the direct supervision of certified highly skilled driving instructors.

The next class dates are Oct. 23 and 24, and each class is limited to 12 participants, with an additional three to four students on stand-by. To enroll, go to <http://hcsosf.us/Featured-Info/News/Teen-Driver-Challenge.aspx>, download and complete the required forms and forward them to HCSO, Attn: Community Outreach Division, P.O. Box 3371, Tampa, FL 33601.

This life-saving program is available on a first-come, first served basis. Enroll now! For information, contact the Sheriff's Community Outreach Division at (813) 247-8115.

## HALLOWEEN - MAKE IT A SAFE AND FUN TIME

Sadly, the old fun innocent times of Halloween have almost disappeared. In some ways, Halloween has turned into a dangerous "trick or treat" event caused by those with no personal regard for the safety of others.

**PARENTS: Follow these safety steps and make Halloween a safe, fun time:**

1. Trick or treat with your children or ensure they have a responsible escort.
2. Make sure drivers can see you; use flashlights and wear light colored clothing or costumes.
3. Stop only at homes where the front porch lights are on.
4. Cross only at intersections or clear areas. Do not cross between parked cars.
5. Check all treats before your kids eat them. When in doubt, throw them out.
6. Consider alternative activities. Many churches and schools have organized fun activities. The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association is sponsoring a safe alternative Trick or Treat Street during their upcoming Fall Festival, Oct. 25, see details this issue.
7. Keep pets, inside and outside, under control.
8. Watch out for kids walking through your neighborhoods.
9. Remember, almost all fireworks are "ILLEGAL" in Florida. Not only can they be dangerous; Halloween costumes can catch fire.

**TEENS - Follow these steps to stay safe and have a great time:**

1. If you go plan on attending Halloween parties, use your seat belt.
2. Don't drink if you're underage.
3. If you are old enough to drink, don't drink and drive.
4. Don't ride with anyone who has been drinking.
5. Don't use any illegal drugs or be around those who are using drugs.
6. Have fun, but remember that bad "tricks" can be very costly and get both you and your parents into a lot of expensive trouble.



**Finally, Halloween is supposed to be fun don't spend your night in an emergency room.**



## HCSO Operation Medicine Cabinet Provides Safe Disposal Site for Medication



Photo: Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office popular Operation Medicine Cabinet Program prevents potentially dangerous drugs from getting into the wrong hands. This month's collection effort is Thursday, Oct. 9 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Hawthorne Village of Brandon Assisted Living Facility at 851 W. Lumsden Ave.

Collaborating with Home Instead Senior Care of Sun City, representatives will collect dangerous, outdated, unwanted prescription medicines and drugs. Collect your old medications and drop them off so they can be properly disposed of; accepted items include Pill bottles, Boxes and/or packaged drug items, Patches, Powders, Liquids (properly sealed), Inhalers, and Veterinarian Prescription Drugs.

Join the effort to protect your family and your environment! Please do not flush medications or put them in the trash. Organizers promise an easy drop-off experience.

HCSO Operation Medicine Cabinet collects hundreds of unwanted medications at various collection sites. Properly dispose of your medications at Hawthorne Village of Brandon Assisted Living Facility on Oct. 9.

## Bloomingtondale Real Estate & Housing Update

By: Ryan Brantley

Who can believe it's fall already? Well our version of it anyway – football cookouts and carving pumpkins in the eighty-ninety degree heat; after all, that is what living in Florida is all about. Still, almost everyone enjoys getting into the fall spirit including decorating for the upcoming holidays and finding unique fall recipes.

There are many ways to save time and money when diving into the holiday spirit. Start prepping now. Choose the items in your house that will need to be taken down and determine if you can use those pre-existing nails for holiday décor, keeping walls free of additional holes and potential arguments regarding level spacing to a minimum.

Take advantage of the kids' creativity. Create a "turkey" out of their favorite drawings or let them decorate their own pumpkin using markers or a carving template. Instead of purchasing a kit at the store, try going online to find their favorite movie character. Download the template, attach to the pumpkin, and allow them to poke holes where you will later carve.

Display creative foods as added décor. Fill a plastic rubber glove with popcorn and candy corn for fingernails, tie off the end and place strategically throughout the house. For a more dangerous chocolaty snack, try making witch hats. This clever and easy snack uses only Hershey kisses, orange icing, and fudge-striped shortbread cookies. Attach one Kiss to the bottom of each cookie, using decorating icing – and voila, witch hats!



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### MLS STATISTICS

It is easy to get lost in all of the holiday fun and traditions associated with the beginning of fall, which is why this is the time of year we begin to see signs of a slowing housing market. However, after a slow September, we expect it to pick back up in October before tapering off in December-January.

According to the Multiple Listing Service, there were only 8 homes sold in September compared to 32 Bloomingtondale listings sold in August. The market saw 16 new listings in August and 13 new listings for September. MLS statistics include Bloomingtondale East and West valid through September 23rd. Sales not entered into the MLS did not count in these statistics.



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*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!*

## Halloween Thrill Seekers Can Travel Near or Far: Orlando and the “Big Easy”

Whether you are looking for a spooky thrill-seeking adventure or finding that scary/not so scary medium for the kids, there are plenty of Halloween destinations to please the entire family. With All Hallows’ Eve falling on a Friday this year, there is no better time to take the festivities on the road.

Located less than 70 miles away, we are incredibly lucky to have Orlando’s theme parks at our fingertips. Universal transforms into Halloween Horror Nights on select evenings now through Nov. 1. This year’s attractions include eight haunted houses, taunting shows, ghouls traipsing through the streets and all of your favorite rides soaring into the night.

Mickey’s Not So Scary Halloween Party, which takes place in Disney’s Magic Kingdom, offers a haunting twist for the young ones. Let them don their favorite costumes for some eerie entertainment beginning at 7 p.m. nightly now through Oct. 31. This event requires a separate admission ticket and special rates may be available. Because of Orlando’s convenient location, take off for the day and enjoy one of these attractions or rent a room at one of Disney’s magical resorts for a weekend getaway.

For a more festive extravaganza, use those airline miles and hop aboard a Southwest flight to the Big Easy. Stroll down Bourbon Street in your favorite costume depicting the last year in pop culture or check out this year’s lineup at Voodoo Fest. The three-day music festival (Oct. 31-Nov. 2) includes artists such as Outkast, Foo Fighters, Thirty Seconds to Mars and many more local and national acts.



Photo: Krewe of BOO!



This is a legendary float in the New Orleans’ official Halloween parade – Krewe of BOO!

If you’ve visited the city, you know that locals don’t take any holiday or excuse thereof lightly. Costumes are always encouraged and there WILL be parades, including Krewe of BOO! - New Orleans’ official Halloween parade taking place Oct. 30 at 6:30 p.m. After all of the bead catching, spend the evening on one of the numerous haunted tours offered throughout the city. After all, what could go wrong after hours in the “Most Haunted City in America?”

Whether this year’s Halloween is for the young ones or your inner kid at heart, don’t forget to enjoy all it has to offer!



Photo: NewOrleansOnline.com

The music never stops in the land of Voodoo and witchcraft.

Costumes are a requirement for adults and kids alike throughout Halloween weekend all over the Big Easy.



Photo: NewOrleansOnline.com





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.



## Trick or Gimmee

Drat. And darn. I love Halloween. I love the costumes. And the little kids. And the scary stories. And the left-over candy. Yessirree, my kind of holiday. But after last year, I'm not so sure.

My disenchantment actually started quite a few years ago when my daughter and I returned from "Trick or Treat" and she blithely announced, "Okay, I'm ready to go."

"Go where? You have a 'Lawn and Leaf' bag crammed with enough junk to keep our dentist grinning until well after the birth of your first child. Surely, you don't want more?"

"I mean I'm ready to go have my candy X-rayed."

"X-rayed? What happened? Baby Ruth break a leg?"

"Mo-therr, it is now a standard safety precaution for all Halloween treats to be X-rayed before we children eat them. There are a lot of strange people out there." No kidding.

So off we went to the hospital where her goodies were plied with sufficient radium to cast a lovely glow in the car on the return trip. As she happily munched on radioactive Hershey's, I tried to come to grips with the fact that the Halloween I had come to love had gasped its last festive breath.

Since that time, I have tried to recapture that old Halloween spirit. We have thrown awe-inspiring parties. We decorate the house, carve pumpkins and purchase enough candy to keep USF in cavities. It's just not the same. But last year was the worst.



Always an optimist, I started out filled with anticipation. I loaded a bowl with candy, turned on the porch light and anxiously awaited the arrival of the first monst...uh, Trick or Treater.

When the bell rang, I eagerly flung it open and was greeted by a sight no mother should ever behold. It was a boy...I think...with green hair...and jeans that appeared to have been painted on at birth.

"Well! Isn't that a delightful costume? I have things in my refrigerator I've been meaning to throw out that look just like that!"

He just stood there, mutely holding out a king-sized pillowcase.

"What do you say?" I prompted.

"Gimme Whoppers." Uh-huh.

Then the motorcade arrived. Three SUV's pulled up and off-loaded what appeared to be the population of Vermont. As they swarmed to my door, I gathered up my bowl and waited for the happy cries of "Trick or Treat!" I'm glad I didn't hold my breath.

"Well," I coached again. "What do you say? Trick orrrrrrrrrr..."

"Gimme Whoppers!" "Gimmee Hersheys!" "Milky Way!" "Rolos!"

\*Sigh\*

So Halloween is upon us yet again and I will make an effort to enjoy it. I'll decorate the house, wear a costume, turn on the porch light ... and hand out toothbrushes. "Trick or Gimme," indeed.

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## Dining With Dave



**Name:** Burger Monger  
**Cuisine:** Burgers, Fries, Shakes  
**Location:** 903 East Bloomingdale Avenue/Bloomingdale Square  
**Phone:** 813-684-7982

As a foodie, I tend to shy away from chain restaurants and fast food franchises with one serious exception – good burgers and fries. Raised on In-n-Out and having later discovered Five-Guys, I have a soft spot in my wheelhouse for the basics with a side of saucy and sweet options. A recent addition to this lineup is the Tampa based Burger Monger with four locations (and growing).

The core of the Burger Monger menu is the delicious all-natural Akaushi beef hamburger paired with a garlic buttered challah bun.

However, with an almost bewildering choice of toppings there is no reason to leave your burger plain. The basic toppings include six types of cheese, more than a dozen toppings (both fresh and grilled) and nearly 20 different condiments (from sedate to extra spicy). The upgraded toppings add to the price, but a fried egg or smoked bacon with a dollop of French Brie can turn the standard burger into something special. In the mood for something different, try the quarter-pound 'Monger' Hot Dog with your favorite burger toppings.

Alongside the burgers, the Burger Monger offers french fries in a variety of order sizes that are cooked in natural beef fat and available topped with beef chili or their own spicy cheese sauce. On the lighter side of the menu are Chicken and Veggie version of their burgers and the option to lose the bun and have your patty wrapped in hearts of romaine lettuce. Salads and gluten-free buns round out the menu. For the younger diners, Burger Monger offers a Kid Menu with mini-version of their burger and fries and fresh made macaroni and cheese.

Drinks include the standard fare from the soda fountain, fresh-brewed coffee and iced tea. But unlike the competition, Burger Monger has beer and wine available for a reasonable price. Fancy a Cigar City IPA, Brooklyn Brown Ale or Yuengling's with your meal? The Monger has you covered. For a sweet treat, try the milkshake of the month made with high quality ingredients and blended to perfection.

The one shortcoming of Burger Monger is that they are a bit pricey for a burger joint. However, this can be justified by the quality of the food and drink. To entice you further, they offer daily specials such as \$5 Burger Mondays / Chicken Wednesdays and \$3 Hot Dogs on Thursdays. Their Loyalty Program pretty much guarantees that you will find room in your wallet for just one more card of allegiance.

## 2014 General Election: Are You Ready to Vote?

By: Craig Latimer, Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections



Over the summer, when I told people how important it is to vote in the Primary Election, some people listened. I heard a lot of people say "I only vote in the General Election."

Well—here we are. The General Election is underway. This month, we're mailing out more than 150,000 Vote By Mail ballots and expecting tens of thousands of people to visit one of our 15 Early Vote sites. Election Day, Nov. 4, should be busy, too, but because so many of our voters prefer to vote before Election Day, we don't expect long lines or delays at our polling places.

Here's what you can do to help ensure the success of the General Election in Hillsborough County:

### ✓ VOTE!

Our community becomes stronger when we all choose our leaders together and have a voice in the issues at hand. There really is no excuse not to vote, because we make it so easy— We offer you three different ways to cast your ballot:

**Vote By Mail** is the most convenient way to vote. Visit [VoteHillsborough.org](http://VoteHillsborough.org) or call 813-744-5900 to request a Vote By Mail ballot. After voting, drop your ballot in the mail (postage pre-paid) or at any of our offices or Early Vote sites.

**Early Voting** takes place at 15 sites Oct. 23 – Nov. 2, from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. (including weekends!). Check locations and wait times at [VoteHillsborough.org](http://VoteHillsborough.org).

**Election Day** is Nov. 4. Polling places will be open 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. You can only vote in the polling place assigned to your precinct. Election Day is your last day to vote.

### ✓ FOLLOW SOME SIMPLE RULES.

If you're voting by mail, your signature is important. If you think your signature may have changed, submit a voter registration form with a new signature. Sign the envelope before returning the ballot no later than 7 p.m.

Make sure your voter information is current. If voting in person, the check-in process will be quicker if you have current and valid photo and signature ID. Study the sample ballot and make your decisions before you arrive. There are three amendments on the ballot, read up on those ahead of time.

### ✓ STAY CONNECTED.

We share important and timely information on Facebook and Twitter. I also send out an email newsletter once a month. Visit [VoteHillsborough.org](http://VoteHillsborough.org) to take advantage of all the different ways you can keep in touch with us.

We work hard to provide you with excellent customer service. If you want to speak with someone in person, call 813-744-5900 or visit one of our four offices 8 a.m.–5 p.m.:

- 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 16th Floor, Tampa, FL 33602
- 2514 N. Falkenburg Rd., Tampa, FL 33619
- 12022 Anderson Rd., Tampa, FL 33625
- 10439 Gibsonton Dr., Riverview, FL 33578

Together, we can make Hillsborough County the best place in America to vote!

## Lateral Water Hazards - Go Back As Far As You Want

By J.D. Carino (Bloomingdale CC campus)

When most of us lose a ball in a lateral water hazard, we simply drop another ball within two club lengths of where the ball last crossed the hazard margin. Most of the time when you drop the ball that way, it will end up on a bad lie—in the rough or a side hill lie. Both of these shots require you to make adjustments in set-up and club selection.

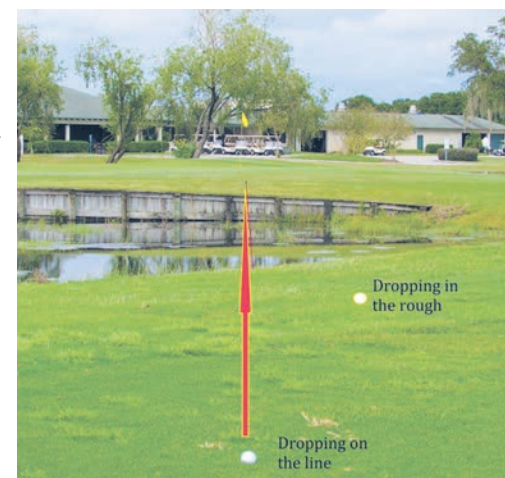
There are two additional options added to a ball lost in a lateral water hazard. The one I'm writing about is the option of dropping the ball on a line, going as far back as you want.

Simply, keep the point of where the ball last crossed the hazard and the flag and imagine a straight line between the two points. Your goal is to find a spot along the extended line which gives you a flat area of the fairway and a yardage you are comfortable with.

Next month: Why you want to tee up on the side of trouble. Any questions or for lessons, please visit [CochraneGolfSchools.com](http://CochraneGolfSchools.com) or call J.D. (813) 957-3205.



**John E.S. Cochrane**  
GOLF SCHOOLS





## Library Happenings in October

Compiled by: Kayla Hayes

October is "Computer Learning Month!" The Bloomingdale Regional Public Library offers a variety of instructional computer courses in the month of October, as well as a many other events for all ages. Review their events calendar online at [hcplc.org/hcplc/locations/bdl](http://hcplc.org/hcplc/locations/bdl) or call 273-3652 for more information.



### FOR CHILDREN

Puppet Show: Anansi and the Tree of Life on Monday, Oct. 6 from 3:30-4:15 p.m. in the McLean Community Room. This show uses colorful puppets, a large-sized Baobab tree with shadow puppets and African music to bring these stories to life. Free for ages 3 and up.

Crafts for Kids: Fall Festival Masks on Monday, Oct. 13 from 3-3:45 p.m. in Room 7. Children will use felt and other materials to create and decorate their own unique mask. All supplies will be provided for children of all ages.

### FOR TEENS

Cyber Creations Club Thursdays in October from 5-6 p.m. in the McLean Community Room. Want to use Photoshop to make a one-of-a-kind photo? Learn some new programs? Create your own blog? Download music? For ages 12-17. Limited to first 12 participants. Library card required.

### FOR ADULTS

Great Books Discussion: Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe on Saturday, Oct. 18, from 10:30 a.m. to Noon in the McLean Community Room. Join Patrick DeMarco for a discussion of this classic work.

Growing Excellent Students on Wednesday, Oct. 8 from 7-8 p.m. in the McLean Community Room. Parents and students can gain insight on the implicit skills needed to be successful in school today. This workshop is not meant for the parents of straight A students, but for the parents of students who should be.

### FOR ALL AGES

Bloomingdale Giveback Program on Wednesday, Oct. 15 from 6-8 p.m. in the McLean Community Rm. Join the fun. Learn to knit or crochet. The handmade creations are donated mostly to Newborns in Need, Inc. which supports local shelters and hospitals in the area by putting together gift bags with gently used and homemade items like clothing and blankets. Come be a part of something helpful, productive and fun! All Ages, Teens, Children. Funded by the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Library

### GOOD READS!

- Adult Book – The Luminaries by Eleanor Catton (e-book format available)
- Young Adult Book – Kill Me Softly by Sarah Cross (e-book format available)
- Children's Book – The Lion and The Mouse by Jerry Pinkney



The Lion and The Mouse is a wordless retelling of an Aesop fable. The artwork, alone, will captivate the reader and the child.



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



## ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

**Oct. 15** - Spirit Night: Chick-Fil-A, Causeway Drive

**Oct. 17**- Walk-A-Thon Fundraiser: Pledges are a flat donation or per lap.

**Oct. 27-31** - Book Fair in the Media Center

## CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

**Oct. 7** - PTA General Assembly: First assembly and special preview performance of Brandon Ballet's Dracula! Schedule: 6:15 p.m., Sign In; 6:30 p.m., Meeting; 7 p.m., Ballet Performance. There will be a drawing for a family 4-pack of tickets to the Tampa performance of

Dracula for PTA members only. Memberships will be available for purchase during the General Assembly.

**Oct. 10** - Cougar Challenge: Walk-a-thon fundraiser: pledges for per-lap or flat donations.

**Oct. 14** - Spirit Night: 2:30-9 p.m., Chick-Fil-A, Causeway Drive and Westfield Mall.

**Oct. 17** - All Pro Dads: 7 a.m., Multi-purpose room.

**Oct. 24** - Cimino Elementary School's Fall Festival: 4-7 p.m. Enjoy bounce houses, games, food, and a silent auction. Fun for the whole family!



**Oct. 31**- Storybook Character Parade: Come parade as your favorite storybook character.

## BURNS BRUINS BLAST

**Oct. 6 - 10** - Book Fair

**Oct. 9** - Basketball Game vs Randall at Burns, 6 p.m.

**Oct. 14** - PTSA Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

**Oct. 14** - Chorus Fall Concert, 7 p.m., Bloomingdale High School

**Oct. 16** - Fall Orchestra Concert, 6:30 p.m., Bloomingdale High School

**Oct. 17** - Burns Band to perform with the Rajun Bull Band/BSHS football game

**Oct. 24** - Spirit Night, 5-9 p.m., Chipotle.



## BLOOMINGDALE BULL BUSINESS

**Oct. 6** - Homecoming ticket sales begin, Cafeteria

**Oct. 6** - Spirit Night, Chick-fil-A, Westfield Mall, 3:30 p.m. to close; Drumline performance.

**Oct. 9** - 11th grade Parent Night, Auditorium, 5:30 p.m.

**Oct. 10** - Homecoming Football vs East Bay, 7:30 p.m.



**Oct. 11** - Homecoming Dance, Cafeteria, 7-11 p.m.

**Oct. 13** - Volleyball vs East Bay, Home, 7 p.m.

**Oct. 13** - Orchestra Fall Concert, Auditorium, 7 p.m.

**Oct. 15-16** - Senior Cap and Gown orders 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.

**Oct. 17** - Varsity Football vs Riverview, Home, 7:30 p.m.

**Oct. 27** - Chorus Fall Concert, Auditorium, 7 p.m.



## BULLS BRIEFS

The Rajun' Bull Homecoming BBQ is just around the corner! On Friday, Oct. 10, 4:30-7 p.m. the Bloomingdale High School Rajun' Bull Band will again host this annual Homecoming pre-game tradition in the school's cafeteria. The BBQ features a live jazz band and a delicious pulled pork sandwich, beans, chips and a drink for \$10. For tickets, contact a band member or the Band Boosters at [rajunbullfundraising@gmail.com](mailto:rajunbullfundraising@gmail.com).

Mattress Palooza 2014 - Frazzled, lumpy, saggy—those old mattresses keeping your friends and family from a good night's sleep? On Oct. 25, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., the Rajun'Bull Band converts the BSHS cafeteria into a fabulous mattress showroom; including top brands at 30-60% below retail.

Like us on Facebook(<https://www.facebook.com/events/685027678240639>), share the Facebook flyer, and tell all your friends! For information, email the Band Boosters at [rajunbullfundraising@gmail.com](mailto:rajunbullfundraising@gmail.com).

Legacy Bricks/ Buy a brick to help us build our field house, and leave your mark forever. The booster club will be selling Legacy Bricks during all football games at the Athletic Booster Club Table. For information, email [donald.peek@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:donald.peek@sdhc.k12.fl.us). Bricks cost \$100.

Birthday Marquee/ Put your student's name on Bloomingdale Avenue. For \$20, the PTSA will run your child's name on the marquee for their birthday. For information, email [bloomingdaleptsa@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdaleptsa@gmail.com).

Booster Corral/ Join the boosters at home football games! The Athletic Booster Club will be showing their appreciation to members at "The Corral" during home varsity football games. Athletic Booster Club members can enter "The Corral" free of charge to enjoy some pre-game food. Members may bring a guest for \$5. The Corral is open from 6:45-7:45 p.m.

BSHS Alumni Wanted! Homecoming Football Game - 5:30-7 p.m., Alumni Barbeque sponsored by the Academic Foundation and the Athletic Booster Club. The alumni package includes a barbecue dinner provided by the Band Boosters, game ticket and an alumni t-shirt. A separate alumni area will feature entertainment and activities. Purchase packages online by Oct.7 at <http://bshsalumnibbq.eventbrite.com/>.





## Bloomington HS Football Coach Honored

By: Deidre Morgan

David Hutcherson, better known to his players as Coach Hutch, has been a staple on the Bloomington Football program for 19 years, having even coached current Bloomington Head Coach Brian Surcy. On Sept. 5, before the Bloomington Bulls took on rival Brandon High School, Head Coach Surcy presented Coach Hutch with a plaque and customized football honoring him for his service and dedication to the team.

Coach Hutch is an inspiration to many. He has devoted countless hours to the football program without pay but also has made sure that no football player went without including equipment like cleats, meals and even rides home. Thank you, Coach Hutch, for your selfless dedication to the Bloomington High School football program, for mentoring and molding young boys into great young men and coaches.

Coach Hutch with Bloomington Head Coach Brian Surcy and members of the Varsity Football Team receives awards for his 19 years of service to the team on Sept. 5 at Bloomington High School.



Photo:  
Clark Sports Media

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## Tyler Clark Presented Blue-Grey Jersey

By: Deidre Morgan

Bloomingtondale High School Senior and defensive tackle Tyler Clark received his All-American Bowl Blue-Grey jersey on Sept. 19, during half time at the Bloomingtondale vs. Plant football game. Larry Ryans, a former NFL wide receiver for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers presented the jersey to Clark.

The 2015 Blue-Grey All-American Bowl is Jan. 10, 2015 at Raymond James Stadium. Clark's selection to play in this event signifies his elite status as one of the country's hottest prospects in high school football.

Tyler is the son of Tom and Karen Clark of Valrico.



Tyler Clark receives the 2015 All-American Blue-Grey jersey from former Tampa Bay Buccaneer Larry Ryans. Also pictured are Coach David Hutcherson, far left, and Coach Kyle Jones, far right.



## Bloomingtondale High School Alumni Invited To Inaugural Homecoming Barbecue

### Alumni and families called to reunite, support their alma mater

BSHS Press Release

Bloomingtondale High School invites all alumni back to campus for its inaugural homecoming alumni barbecue. The barbecue will take place on Friday, Oct. 10 at 5:30 p.m., before the homecoming football game against East Bay High School.

"There are 27 years of alumni out there that have accomplished great things and become successful business owners in this community," Principal Sue Burkett said. "Our current students could benefit from interacting with them."

This is the first coordinated alumni event by Bloomingtondale High School, open to graduates of all classes from 1989 to 2014 and their families.

"I want our alumni to feel a part of this tradition, to be proud to give back to our community and students, and most importantly, to know we miss them and need them to make Bloomingtondale even greater than it is," Burkett said.

### ALUMNI BARBECUE MORE THAN JUST GOOD FOOD

The barbecue dinner is provided by the Bloomingtondale Band Boosters; a portion of alumni ticket sales will support the Rajun' Bull Marching Band as they prepare to travel to Rome over winter break. Alumni who purchase tickets will have special seating to enjoy their dinner in the tennis courts near the stadium as well as family entertainment, games, face painting and a bounce house.

DJ Jake dela Cruz, known for his mixes on 93.3 FLZ, will provide music, and there is a private drumline performance scheduled. The spirit men and Rajun' Bull mascot will be available for exclusive photo opportunities.

### TICKETS

Tickets are available now at [bshsalumnibbq.eventbrite.com](http://bshsalumnibbq.eventbrite.com). An adult ticket is \$30 and includes admission to the event, a t-shirt, a barbecue dinner and a football game ticket. A child ticket is \$20 and includes admission to the event, a barbecue dinner and a football game ticket.

Your package supports the Bloomingtondale Academic Foundation, Bloomingtondale Athletic Boosters and Bloomingtondale Band Boosters. Tickets will be on sale online through Tuesday, Oct. 7. Tickets are non-refundable.

Only t-shirts and legacy bricks will be sold at the event. The t-shirt included with the package is a special alumni shirt design. Extra t-shirts are available for sale online at the event webpage, or at the event for \$10. T-shirt sales benefit the Bloomingtondale High School Academic Foundation, supporting the classrooms of Bloomingtondale.

Legacy bricks are sold by the Bloomingtondale Athletic Boosters. For \$100, supporters can purchase a brick that will be placed either at the baseball and softball complex around the new concession stand, or at the football field near the ground of the hospitality house. The proceeds will go to raise funds for the athletic field house. Legacy bricks are available for sale online, at the event site, or at the barbecue.

### PENNY WARS FUNDRAISING

Penny wars is an extra fundraising effort sponsored by the athletic boosters, which will add funds for the new field house. Alumni classes will go head to head as they try to collect more funds than the other classes. Each class is encouraged to bring pennies to vote for their class to win. Each penny is worth one vote. If silver coins and dollars are received, their value will be subtracted from the competition's totals. Alumni are encouraged to bring money to donate to help their class win.

For information, contact the school at 813-744-8018.



Photo: Heather Hanks

BSHS Alumni! Come join the sea of red at the first-ever alumni event Friday, Oct. 10 at 5:30 p.m. before the homecoming football game against East Bay High School. Tickets include dinner, t-shirt, game ticket, and family entertainment.





## NEW! BHA with sponsor Ray Chadderton Unveil New Student of the Month Program

Staff Report

Introducing the Best of the Best Student of the Month Program established by the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association to recognize the outstanding young people in our community. Each month, the BHA will receive nominations for and select a young resident to be our Best of the Best recipient. If selected, the student will receive a \$25 gift card provided by our sponsor, Ray Chadderton of The Chadderton Group of Keller Williams Realty. In addition, the BHA will feature the resident's photo and accomplishment in the Bloomingdale Gazette.

This program is to recognize students in all grade levels who have excelled in one or more of the following areas: academics, sports, citizenship, extra-curricular activities, leadership, volunteer work and community service. This recognition does not have to be for a school-related activity or be for the highest grade point average or be for the best athlete, although they too are worthy of nominations. Primarily, the award is to recognize the many levels of achievement and excellence among our community's young people.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Any Bloomingdale resident currently in school including homeschool, private, elementary, middle, and high school.

### WHO CAN NOMINATE?

- Parents, teachers, administrators, coaches, neighbors, fellow students.

### WHO SELECTS THE WINNER?

- The BHA Board and Bloomingdale Gazette staff.

### HOW DO YOU NOMINATE?

- Simply send an email to [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com) before the 20th of each month.
- Include the nominee's name, address, phone number, email, school attending, and short paragraph detailing the student's accomplishment (s) and why they should receive the award.
- Those providing nominations must provide contact information as well.

Help the BHA recognize the talented students in our community. Nominate someone you know today. Email [inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com](mailto:inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com) or call 813-681-2051.



## Bloomingdale's Best of the Best... Recognizing Excellence in our Community

Staff Report

Congratulations to Kiera Dunham, our Best of the Best Student of the Month for October!

Dunham is a homeschooled 10th grade student with a well-rounded academic, athletic and extra-curricular portfolio. She competes on the Campo YMCA competitive swim team, and enjoys horseback riding, a passion for which she earned money in order to pay for riding lessons. Dunham participates in local theater, which included the Sunshine Theater productions of Aladdin Jr. and The Little Mermaid, and she is currently in Les Mis with Music Showcase.

Noteworthy, certainly.

However, the main reason for her selection is her cake making and decorating talent coupled with her generosity and a desire to help others. Three years ago, Dunham took a cake decorating class through her homeschool network, Home Education Activities Teams (HEAT).

In the submitted nomination, the writer wrote, "The neatest thing about Keira is her very giving heart. Many people have told her she should open a business, but she insists she just wants to continue to bless others and help put a smile on their faces." She has done just that by donating raffle cakes, wedding cakes, birthday cakes, and cupcakes to individuals and organizations.

Her future plans are undecided, but she hopes to continue cake decorating for fun, and become involved in horse rescue and missionary work. Her proud parents are Paul and Paula Dunham who reside in Fairway Manors.

Keep up the great work, Kiera.

Send your nominations to [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com) or call (813) 681-2051. Winners will receive a \$25 gift card from our sponsor.

Photo: Joy Boisselle



Ray Chadderton of The Chadderton Group of Keller Williams Realty sponsors the BHA Best of the Best Student of the Month Program. Pictured are Chadderton and Keira Dunham, October's Best of the Best.



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