

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXXI
Number 2

MARCH 2013 • THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980



Travis Bird on the return for Bloomingdale during the Feb. 4 match against arch rival Brandon High School.

Spring is in swing

From baseball to tennis – and even a smattering of middle school soccer – the spring sports season is here.

See story, page 7.

INSIDE

Need money for college?

The Bloomingdale Community Scholarship Fund is now accepting applications.
See story, page 5.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming.”

Pablo Neruda

Homecoming in February for Sue Burkett

BY SUZANNE JONES

The signs, flowers, posters and cards decorating Bloomingdale High's administration office are not of the generic nature that might greet a new principal—their warmth and familiarity announces a homecoming. Bloomingdale Senior High School officially welcomed Susan Burkett as its new principal on Monday, Feb. 18, but that doesn't mean she is unknown to the school's staff and students. Burkett served in the position of Assistant Principal for Curriculum (APC) for four years prior to her promotion to Burns Middle School principal in 2009.

Burns Middle School feeds into Bloomingdale High school, which means Burkett is already familiar with most of the 2300 plus students that attend BSHS. "I feel lucky that I already know my way around the school, and know most of

the students, staff and teachers," said Burkett. Though a hot pink hard hat is prominently displayed in her new office, Burkett is also happy she isn't faced with the mess and inconvenience that both Burns and Bloomingdale have experienced with recent renovations. "My immediate, short-term challenge will be familiarizing myself with the new graduation requirements as these have changed in the four years I've been at Burns."

Burkett's knowledge of Hillsborough County-based education systems is not confined to administration positions at Burns and Bloomingdale. She also knows what it is like to be a teacher in Hillsborough County School District. "I spent 10 years in the classroom, teaching at both Durant and Plant City before moving to an administration position at Riverview High School,"

explained Burkett. Having graduated from USF with a bachelor's degree in special education (1992) and a master's degree in educational leadership (1997), Burkett is also no stranger to local higher education institutions. Of at least equal importance to educational qualifications and career experience, she knows what is like to be a parent of a teenager. Burkett has two children of her own in local schools, the oldest of which attends high school.

The Hillsborough County School Board named Sue Burkett as Bloomingdale's new principal on Feb. 5. Though her official start date at BSHS wasn't for two weeks, she spent the transition period going back and forth between Burns and Bloomingdale. Now settling into her new role, Burkett emphasizes that parents and students who knew her at Burns will



SUZANNE JONES

Bloomingdale welcomes Sue Burkett home.

find her style much the same. "I am the same administrator I was while at Burns. The difference in how I carry out my job as high school principal has to do with the students themselves. As a former student once shared with me, 'middle school is

about learning where you fit in; high school is about figuring out who you are.'" Burkett looks forward to working with BSHS students as they transition to adulthood and prepare for the future. "I will have the same open door policy to kids, parents, and teach-

ers." In terms of making changing at Bloomingdale, Burkett says it's too early. "I look forward to continuing the excellent standards of the school. I bring to the job a passion for kids, energy, a sense of humor and loyalty—this is my school. I'm home."

Bloomingdale Senior High School welcomes Dr. G

BY KIM MILLER

Basketball has Dr. J, television has Dr. Oz, music has Dr. Dre, but Bloomingdale Senior High School now has Dr. Nicole Gallucci, the new assistant principal of curriculum. Dr. Gallucci comes to BSHS after spending the last seven and a half years as the AP of curriculum (APC) at Armwood High School.

Dr. Gallucci grew up in Morristown, New Jersey. She attended East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania for two years before transferring to the University of South Florida. While at USF she obtained her bachelor's degree in sociology and family counseling. Gallucci worked as a family counselor for six years,

particularly with children between the ages 4-18.

While working on her master's degree in Educational Leadership from St. Leo University, Gallucci met an assistant principal from Pasco High School. He liked her ideas and outlook on emotionally disturbed children so much that he offered her a job working with those students at Pasco. Soon she was promoted to behavior specialist for Pasco County Schools.

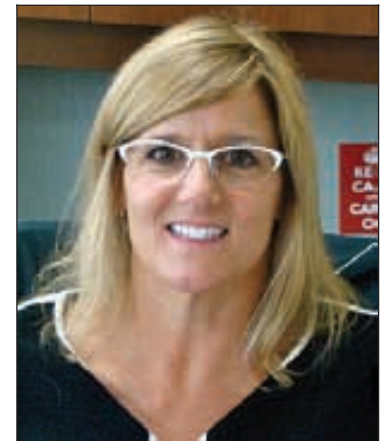
After finishing her studies at St. Leo University, Gallucci applied to work in the Hillsborough County School District and was hired to be an AP of Student Affairs at King High School.

Three years later Gallucci was promoted to the APC at Armwood, as she continued working toward her doctorate in Organizational Leadership through Nova Southeastern University.

When asked about her first impressions of BSHS Gallucci stated, "Bloomingdale has a very relaxed atmosphere, I have been here three weeks and I haven't stopped smiling. Bloomingdale has a very different climate and culture than the schools I have worked. It is academically focused, [and] the students are kind and respectful. I enjoy all the kids, all the different groups, and the different faculty, but I also know I will have different challenges."

Her goal is to continue the academic excellence at BSHS; continue to help the music department grow; address areas the community would like to see change or grow to benefit the students; and, help the students to evolve and adapt to changing societal issues. She doesn't want to fix what works, but would maybe like to "spit shine" it a little. She sees these goals as tangible because there is a real feeling of teamwork at BSHS.

Dr. Gallucci's describes her curriculum decisions as data driven. She notes that the change in approach to curriculum may not be noticeable at first, but over time she hopes that the benefit will be observed.



BY KIM MILLER

Dr. Nicole Gallucci moves into Bloomingdale High as Assistant Principal of Curriculum.

To Gallucci, the student comes first; all decisions should be in the best interest of the students to help them be as successful as possible, and to become productive members of society.

**YARD OF THE MONTH IS
SPONSORED BY ACE
HARDWARE OF
BLOOMINGDALE**



SHAPHALI JAIN

March Yard of the Month

Scott and Kristen
Modesitt
2614 Allwood Ave
(Bloomingdale East)

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.

Thank you Brandon

FOR VOTING US THE BEST 5 YEARS IN A ROW!



PLATINUM
PREFERRED CONTRACTOR

SAVE MONEY ON HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

Tampa Bay's leading family-owned and operated roofing company, Shingle Masters provides every customer with a wind mitigation inspection to measure hurricane protection, saving most homeowners hundreds of dollars each year on insurance.

Shingle Masters also maximizes roof ventilation to lower cooling costs and extend the life of the shingles.

Financing Available.

Lifetime Workmanship Warranty Available

Shingle Masters
Roofing
& Construction

(813) 661-4600

www.Shingle-Masters.com

Licensed Certified General Contractor // CGC 1513621
Licensed Certified Roofing Contractor // CCC 1328724



YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION INC.

PO Box 7221,
Brandon, FL 33508
Phone: (813) 681-2051

E-mail: bloomingtondale.homeowners@gmail.com

Meetings: first Tuesday in January, March, May, September and November at 6 p.m.

Web site: bloomingtondalegazette.com

President:

George May

Vice president:

Jim Harris

Secretary:

Daniel Berkowitz

Treasurer:

Dennis Osborn

Director at Large:

Bob Boettger

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The official publication of the BHA since 1980
Post Office Box 7221,
Brandon, FL 33508
Editor: Suzanne Jones

Phone number:
(813) 681-2051

E-Mail:
inbloomingtondale-news@gmail.com

Web site:
bloomingtondalegazette.com

The Gazette is published by Sunbelt Newspapers
202 S. Parker Street,
Tampa, FL 33606-2395
Ph: (813) 259-7479
Advertising: 627-4771

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

Alafia holds first annual Health & Safety Fair

byline_name

A variety of booths dotted Alafia Elementary's cafeteria on Jan. 31 offering up items ranging from stuffed cucumber appetizers to free Taekwondo lessons. Alafia's first annual Health and Safety Fair included 14 local business and educational displays. GNC protein bars, hand washing instructions, Robeks smoothies, and sports safety information were among the displays promoting a singular theme—creating a healthy lifestyle for children and their families. Alafia's PTA organized the Health and Safety Fair, which was free and open to the community. According to first year PTA President Michelle Salerno, approximately 60 families attended the event.

"I have received positive feedback from the vendors and the families who attended the Health Fair," said Salerno. "Some ideas for next year include adding entertainment from clubs [and] busi-



Event organizers enjoy some of the goodies doles out at Alafia's first annual Health and Safety Fair. Pictured (left to right): Cherice Krohn, Michelle Salerno, Michelle Reitmeyer, Andria Overstreet, Amanda Sullivan and Ali Wimsett.

SUZANNE JONES

nesses that promote activity in children (dance, gymnastics, sports, etc), including more vendors and offering more hands-on demonstrations for children."

The PTA looks forward to next year's fair, and hopes to add more programs of this nature in the future.



Early fair goers pick up pointers on nutrition and healthy food ideas.

SUZANNE JONES

Farewell to Bloomingdale administration staff

BY KIM WALLACE

Bloomingdale staff had a farewell party for Mr. Mark West, Mrs. Danielle Shotwell and Dr. Joe Castelli to wish them well as they take on new positions at other schools.

Mark West was principal for six years at Bloomingdale and is now moving to Armwood High School as principal. Dr. Joe Castelli was assistant principal of administration and assistant principal of student

affairs for seven years and is moving to Armwood High School along with Mark West. Danielle Shotwell was at Bloomingdale for 11 years as assistant athletic principal, assistant principal for administration and assistant principal of student affairs. Shotwell accepted a new job as principal of Eisenhower Middle School. Bloomingdale High is going to miss these administrators, but wishes them well in their new endeavors.



Bloomingdale High School says good-bye to Mark West, Danielle Shotwell and Joe Castelli (pictured L to R).

KIM WALLACE

Campo Y kicks off Annual Community Support Campaign

BY SHAPHALI JAIN

Libby Trautman and her family had always been members at the Y, but she never ventured in. When she was diagnosed with diabetes eight years ago and advised to lose at least 100 pounds, Trautman forced herself to start going to the Campo Y.

Though she felt intimidated at first by how fit other members looked, she found some comfort in the pool. At Campo YMCA's Jan. 31 Annual Community Support Campaign kickoff, Trautman confessed that the Campo pool was a refuge – she could hide herself in the water. She started to swim laps and started to lose weight. Over a period of time, she also began to feel a sense of family at being part of the Y and started to take part in water aerobics.

That was then.

Today Trautman has lost 130 pounds and teaches water aerobics part time at the Campo Y. At the kickoff Trautman shared that she believed in how the YMCA changes lives and has been participating in the Annual Community Support Campaign for over five years now.

The YMCA is a not-for-profit charitable organization, with the goal making membership and pro-

grams accessible to all, regardless of their financial circumstances. Its Annual Campaign raises funds necessary to help provide financial assistance for membership fees and community outreach programs such as Livestrong cancer support, Diabetes Prevention, and Healthy Start to a Healthy Heart. Libby Trautman, now diabetes free, has set her personal goal for this year's campaign at raising \$5,000.

YMCA volunteers, staff, and board members as well as community members and other guests were fortunate during the kickoff to hear how another member's life was changed through community outreach programming. In 2005, Steve Morrow was diagnosed with Liposarcoma in his calf muscle. The tumor was extracted but the wound refused to heal. Two years after the surgery, Morrow made the hard decision to amputate his leg. The years of medical care drained Morrow and his wife's insurance benefits, and the couple found themselves living on just a quarter of what was their combined salary before the diagnosis – scarcely enough pay for luxury items like a gym membership, or continued rehab.

Fortunately, Morrow re-

ceived a three month membership to the Campo YMCA as part of its Livestrong program. The YMCA program also offered encouragement that helped Morrow deal with the emotional challenges of recovery, like not being able to dance with his wife – and it was dancing that initially brought the couple together. Morrow happily reported that two years ago, in the Campo Y pool, he danced with his wife for the first time in five years. Through the help of annual campaign funds Morrow explained that he has also been able to extend his rehabilitation. With the wish to be able dance with his wife on a regular dance floor, Morrow has now progressed to wearing a prosthetic limb for up to two hours a day.

Hearing these stories, it was clear to those gathered that sense of community and the spirit of giving are alive a well at the Campo YMCA.

"Working and being members at the YMCA made my daughters who they are today. This is where the spirit of giving was instilled in them and this is also where they formed friendships that are still an important part of their lives," commented Mark Bullard, campaign chair and board member.



SHAPHALI JAIN

Pictured at the 2013 Community Support Campaign Kickoff (left to right): YMCA representatives Chuck Ammons, Mark Bullard, Andi Cook, Noel Russel, and Cindy Sofarelli along with and Steve Morrow (in wheelchair) and Debbie Morrow (directly behind Steve)

Bloomingtondale Community Scholarship Fund now accepting applications

Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association is now accepting applications for its annual \$2,000 scholarship. The objective of the scholarship is to reward and encourage local high school seniors who are residents of the Bloomingtondale community to pursue a college career, and to honor the exemplary efforts and outstanding dedication of B.J. Stelter, the principal of Bloomingtondale Senior High School from 1991 to 2005. A singular award is made each year to a graduate of the current school year. The 2012-2013 application process will run March 1 to May 1 and winners will be announced in late May. For more information and guidelines, and to obtain the application form, please email the BHA at bloomingtondale.homeowners@gmail.com.

ALMAND CENTER Inc

Full Time & Part Time
Preschool Programs
for 2, 3 and 4 year olds

VPK PROVIDER

NOW ENROLLING FOR
SUMMER 2013
& SCHOOL YEAR
2013 / 2014



License #CHC110064



**Call today to
schedule a tour**

www.AlmandCenter.com
AlmandCenter@yahoo.com
1311 BROOKER ROAD
BRANDON • 685-5844



KIM MILLER

Brianna Leigh takes the goal kick during the Feb. 5 match against Randall.

Burns soccer takes to the pitch

BY KIM MILLER

It's early in the season, but Bruins soccer coaches Nikki Porter and Roger Bradley are hopeful and enthusiastic. The girls' team started out their season 1-1, beating Eisenhower, and losing to their toughest competition Randall. Porter, in her fifth year as Burns Middle School soccer coach isn't carrying as many players this season because she wanted a team of players who are basically on the same level. She explained,

"I want to go deep in the bench and sub without having the game change drastically," she explained.

Eighth grader Brianna Leigh has played three years for Porter.

"She is a really good coach." Leigh loves the aggressiveness of the game, and thinks her team is really good; they have a lot more skill than previous years.

The boys team, coached by Roger Bradley, also had an early season record of 1-1, losing to Randall after penalty kicks to end a tie game.

"Randall is always our



Bruins goalie prepares to defend a Randall score attempt.

biggest rivalry, said Bradley. "We are always pretty even."

Back after a two-year Bruins soccer coaching hiatus, Bradley stated that he loves coaching and loves to win, but when it comes down to it, for him it's all about the kids – helping them build their self esteem. Bradley's strategy includes having an A and B (practice) team.

"All the players must perform academically, have no disciplinary prob-

lems and perform well in practice to remain on the A team. This gives the boys on the B team the chance to prove themselves and move up," he explained.

The players seem to approve of Bradley's methods. Player Josh Workman likes that the coach tries them all at different positions to find their strengths and weaknesses. Coach Bradley is "the best coach ever!" summed up teammate Cameron Prockish.

Local author visits Cimino Elementary

BY KIM WALLACE

Author Suzin Helen Carr made a special visit to students at Cimino Elementary on Feb. 5 to talk to them about her experiences writing children's books. Carr, a resident of Lutz, is author of "I Choose" and "I Choose Too!" Her first book, "I Choose," is a children's book about the choices people make every day. Her son Chandler drew the artwork for the book when he was 7 years of age. Carr shared with Cimino students that she juggles life choices and is grateful for countless blessings and immeasurable joy. But most of all, Carr says she enjoys visiting local schools and inspiring children to write.

Carr chooses to regularly donate a portion of her books' proceeds (in the form of books) to non-profit groups: Joshua House, The Children's Home, The Pajama Program, Books from the Heart, Bess the Book Bus, Healthy Start of Florida, Shriners' Hospital for Children, The Spring, The



KIM WALLACE

Author Suzin Helen Carr shares writing advice and her popular children's book, *I Choose*, with Cimino Elementary.

Haven, My Stuff Bags in the 2009 Florida Writers' Association Royal Palm Literary Awards (Children's Category).



KIM WALLACE

Happy 100

Cimino Elementary school celebrated this its 100th day of school on Feb. 5. Like many elementary schools across the country, Cimino uses this special day to reinforce math and language arts concepts through fun activities focused on the number 100.



KIM MILLER

Travis Bird on the return for Bloomingdale during the Feb. 4 Brandon High School match up .

Bulls rush the net

BY KIM MILLER

There was no love lost for Brandon High School as the Bloomingdale boys tennis team volleyed to win their home opener Feb. 4. Coach Eva Applebee, who is starting her fourth year as head coach of the boys tennis team commented, "We are a pretty good team, we have a lot of heart and talent. These boys are hungry for wins. I think we are in a

really good place."

The girls team started the season 1-1, losing to powerhouse Wharton High School. Head coach Nancy Harris predicts that the team will do pretty well this season, but pointed out that Plant and Wharton will present the biggest challenges. Senior Ashley Tressel, who is finishing up her fourth season at BSHS, feels the team is better than it was last year because she has seen a big improvement in all the players.

"Everyone has fun; we all get along, and help each other," remarked teammate Jessica Luty.

BSHS tennis teams play under the Junior United States Tennis Association rules, which means during matches the players rely on the honor system. Players keep their own score, call their own fouls, and determine whether balls are in or out of play. If a conflict arises, the players consult with their coach-



KIM MILLER

Kaelah Hill serves up the ball to Wharton opponent.

es and proceed in the match according to the agreed upon decision. Umpires officiate matches once play reaches districts, regionals, and

beyond.

You can catch the following BSHS home matches starting at 3p.m. (Be sure to bring a chair.)

Irish or not, it's time to celebrate

St. Patrick's Day (March 17) falls on a Sunday this year, so get out your ghillies and fiddles and jig your way to one of the local Irish celebrations.

Brandon Shamrock Classic. The 34th annual Shamrock Classic 10K and 5K will be held on Sunday, March 17 at Sabal Park, I-75 Faulkenburg Road and Queen Palm, Brandon. The Classic kicks off at 8 a.m. with the 10K. The 5K starts at 9 a.m. and the 1 mile fun walk/run begins at 9:45 a.m. Fees: 10k & 5K - \$25, \$30 on race day; Kids' 1 Mile - \$5, \$10 on race day. Registration closing date is Friday, March 15 at 2:00 p.m., however race day registration is welcome. For more information call (813) 684-0224 X212, or visit www.brandonrunning.com.

The Rough Riders' St. Patrick's Day Parade will be held on Saturday, March 16 starting at 8 p.m. More than 100 floats are expected for the event which draws nearly 20,000 people each year. The parade route is along 7th Avenue in Ybor City. Admission is free. For more information call (813) 248-1898, or visit www.tampa-roughriders.org.

Hungry for corned beef and cabbage? Many area eateries generally host St. Patrick's Day festivities and special menus. Contact the restaurants for dates, times and details.

O'Brien's Irish Pub and Family Restaurant

701 West Lumsden Road, Brandon

(813) 661-9688

www.obrienspubs.com

O'Toole's Irish Pub and Restaurant

1215 W. Brandon Blvd., Brandon

(813) 684-2600

www.otoolesirishbar.com

Fox and Hounds

229 E. Brandon Blvd, Brandon

(813) 681-8877

www.foxandhoundsbritishpubbrandonfl.com

Bloomingtondale steps up to bat

BY KIM MILLER

BSHS baseball and softball are in full swing. The girls opened up their regular season on Feb. 5 with a decisive 15-0 win over Armwood High School. Second year coach Melissa Gentile is very happy with where her team is right now. Gentile played third base and catcher at the University of Michigan where she earned her degree in kinesiology. She also has masters degree in athletic administration. In addition to coaching softball, Gentile teaches HOPE at BSHS.

“Other schools look at our team and see only 11 players, and they don’t take us seriously. I embrace the underdog role.” expressed Gentile. “You can only put nine players on the field.”

Gentile admits that the girls’ biggest obstacle is their concern about having a small roster. Courtney Zanoni, senior right fielder, says the team enjoys a strong bond because many of the girls have played together for a long time, starting with Little League, then travel teams, then for BSHS. She echoed Gentile’s goal in getting everyone to believe it’s the quality of ball played and not the quantity of players. However, Zanoni feels that hitting may be their biggest weakness – an opinion she may want to re-evaluate after the team’s 15-0 win.

Coach Kris Wilken is in his sixth season at the

helm of Bulls baseball. Coach Wilken hails from New Mexico, attended the University of Houston and played third base and catcher for the Cougars. He was drafted by Baltimore and spent two years in AA and one year in AAA. Like Gentile, he teaches HOPE at BSHS. The boys team lost seven players to graduation last year, but Coach Wilken feels that with three weeks of practice under their cleats, this year’s team will be pretty good.

“We have four very good pitchers that will keep us in the game; we just need to play good defense and get some hits. But it doesn’t matter what happens in the regular season—it all comes down to how the team plays those two days in April during the district playoffs.” voiced Wilken.

Seniors Cody Crouse and Jamal Wilson both feel this season is different from last season.

“Losing seven seniors is huge, but they set good examples that many of us have carried over,” said Wilson.

Crouse added, “We have to work a little harder and be more focused, where other teams may feel they don’t need to work as hard because they didn’t lose a lot of players. I think we may do a little better this season.”

If their Feb. 5 preseason 5-1 win against Brandon High School is any indication, Crouse may be right.



KIM MILLER

Junior Josh Mote plays first base at the Feb. 5 preseason game against Brandon High School.



KIM MILLER

Shannon Eckhaus prepares for the catch in the team’s season opener against Armwood.

Is it allergies or is it a sinus infection?

BY KIM MILLER

Runny nose? Sore Throat? Feeling tired and run down? It could be allergies, or maybe it’s a sinus infection. Here are some tips to help you tell the difference.

Allergies

Allergies are caused by the body’s immune system producing antibodies to protect the body from foreign substances that may cause sickness or infection. Common triggers of allergies are certain types of foods, insect stings, medications, and airborne substances like pollen, dander, and dust mites. Symptoms of allergies differ, based upon the trigger.

- ♦ Airborne Substances: Congestion, runny nose, itchy and watery eyes
- ♦ Certain Foods: Tingling mouth, swelling of lips, tongue, face or throat, and hives
- ♦ Insect Stings: Swelling around the sting site, itching or hives, cough, tightness in the chest, wheezing, and shortness of breath
- ♦ Medication: Hives, itchy skin, rash, facial swelling, and wheezing

The severity of allergies varies from person to person. Most of the time, allergic reactions have minor symptoms. Very severe reactions, such as shortness of breath, and swelling of the mouth, tongue and throat, or chest tightness are less common. Immediately call 911 in cases of severe reaction. Treatment for allergies varies depending on the severity of the allergic reaction. Allergy medications, allergy shots, and epinephrine shots are treatments that aid in reducing the reaction of the immune system, and that ease allergy symptoms. Consult with your doctor and discuss the option that is best for you. Most people that have severe allergic reactions carry an epi-pen, which can help them survive should they be alone, or until help arrives. Speak with your doctor about your allergies, and discuss whether an epi-pen is right for you.

Sinus infection

Sinus infections occur when bacteria becomes trapped in the sinus membranes. This can happen on the heels of any condition that blocks off sinus drainage (e.g., colds and allergies). Bacteria can grow when sinuses become blocked and filled with fluid and this causes infection. Symptoms of a sinus infection include a runny nose and postnasal drip (mucous dripping down the back of the throat), which often causes a sore throat. There is usually pain or pressure around the inner corner of the eye, down one side of the nose, or pressure in the upper cheek areas below the eyes. Headaches in the temple area, behind the eyes, or in the forehead area are also associated with a sinus infection. Pain and pressure symptoms in the sinus area are worse when coughing, straining, or lying on your back, and are relieved when sitting upright. A fever regularly occurs with sinus infections. A sinus infection is best treated by a physician who will most likely prescribe an antibiotic.



SUZANNE JONES

Lewis and Burns Middle School All-County Band musicians take a short, well-deserved break from 3rd period band. Pictured (left to right): Christina Hernandez, Jade Siapno, Mr. Kevin Lewis, Cody Nixon and Shane Sullivan.

Burns musicians show music education pays off

BY SUZANNE JONES

March is Music in our Schools Month, a time to acknowledge the importance of music education in the nation's schools. The benefits of music education at Burns Middle School are personified by band students Christina Hernandez, Jade Siapno, Cody Nixon and Shane Sullivan. These four students auditioned and were selected along with 120 other outstanding Hillsborough County musicians as members of the 2013 All-County Middle School Band.

Selection for All-County band requires students to commit in advance of their auditions to attending approximately 15 hours of rehearsal in less than two weeks, and to a full concert performance. The Burns musicians selected for All-County Band appear to have taken all this in stride.

"I auditioned for All-State last year and thought

it would be fun to audition again, this time for All-County," shared Christina Hernandez.

Jade Siapno chimed in, "I like to challenge myself and my classmates to work hard."

Working hard is certainly part of the experience. Rehearsals are led by a carefully selected, highly qualified conductor who demands the best from students. The payoff is clear.

"I learned that it's the small things that make a big difference in your sound," explained Cody Nixon who has played trumpet since the fifth grade.

"My favorite part was the concert," reflected Shane Sullivan.

Sullivan's classmates readily agreed that the Feb. 2 concert was the highlight of their experience. This year's All-County Middle School Band performance included five pieces, four by Larry Clark

and an arrangement by Sean O'Loughlin.

"The most challenging selection was Ascending," explained Kevin Lewis, Director of Bands at Burns Middle School. "This [work] was commissioned by a high school band in Ohio that suffered the tragic loss of two band members in a car accident...It was a challenging composition with the emotions of the event and rhythmic drive that propels the piece forward. The middle school band did a fine job on this selection."

Lewis is clearly proud of his students and sums up the benefits to this unique school music opportunity.

"The Burns students who participated in this year's All-County Band are wonderful young musicians.... The All County experience helped them gain a new perspective on their music and bring that back to share with the members of their own band."

The Village to hold second International Festival



SUBMITTED

Children attending the 2012 International Festival learn square dancing from the pros.

STAFF REPORT

The Village Early Learning Center, 3741 Canoga Park Drive in Bloomington West, will host its second annual International Festival on March 2 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This free, community-wide event wraps up the Village's International Week which began on Feb. 25.

"There isn't another International Festival in our area, at all, so we'd like to make this a growing annual event," commented Susan Miller, Owner of Village ELC.

According to the Village ELC, attendees can expect dancing and music from other countries and a display of cultural and native costumes from all over the

world. Children attending the festival will receive a passport to carry with them as they travel from country to country within the school, hearing stories and viewing items from countries studied by Village students during International Week. Bay Area Twirlers, Adventure Club Twirlers, The Philippine Cultural Center, and The

Baptist Brazilian Church are scheduled to perform. Food vendors Jimmy's Meatballs, Gringo's Burrito Box, and Tiki Cone will be on hand to serve up food and drinks.

This event is sponsored by The Village Family Foundation, a non-profit organization, and the Parent Advisory Committee of the preschool.

Ready, SAT, go

Bloomington High makes registering for the SAT easier than ever

BY KIM MILLER

Nothing puts the SAT in Saturday like signing up for a free Collage Board test (at least if you are a parent). That's what Leena Hasbini, College and Career Counselor at BSHS, had in mind when she came up with the idea of hosting an open house Jan. 26 in the BSHS media center. Current juniors are eligible to receive a voucher for one free SAT courtesy of Hillsborough County (a \$50 savings for many students). The open house afforded Bloomingdale juniors a chance to pick up their vouchers and use

their voucher code to register on the spot. Parent volunteers were on hand to assist students and parents with navigating the SAT sign-up website. The event was a success—108 students signed up that Saturday. New AP of Curriculum, Dr. Nicole Gallucci, thought it was a fantastic approach, so she and Ms. Hasbini are offering another SAT sign-up open house on March 23.

There are nearly 600 students in the junior class at BSHS. Marcus Butler, junior class president, is challenging his schoolmates to take advantage of this opportunity.

"Not only do you get to take the test for free, but you get four free college application waivers from the College Board after taking the exam," he explained.

Butler is encouraging all juniors to take the SAT even if they aren't currently considering college.

"Somewhere down the line, you may change your mind, and guess what... now you have to pay for it! Why not take it while it is free!" he voiced.

More information on College Board vouchers is available by calling the BSHS Guidance Office at (813) 744-8018.



KIM MILLER

Sean McKenna and his mom, Margaret, put Sean's voucher code to good use by registering on the spot at the Jan. 26 open house.

BSHS programmers swim with the gators

BY KIM MILLER
with Sam Miller

Six students from Bloomingdale competed alongside 25 other teams in the University of Florida's second annual High School Programming Contest on Feb. 7. The first team, consisting of Ryan Chadderton, Kyle McKishnie, and captain Ian Ludden (senior), placed third; captain Sam Miller (junior) led Devan Ludden and Jake Woodbury on the second team to a 12th place finish.

Ian Ludden studied advanced placement (AP) computer science last year. Miller is currently taking AP computer science through Florida Virtual School and studied honors computer science III last year. The two captains partially credit their teams' success to these courses, neither of which is offered at BSHS. Prior to



SUBMITTED

BSHS programming teams venture into the swamp. Pictured (left to right): Club sponsor Ms. Leena Hasbini, Ian Ludden, Kyle McKishnie, Sam Miller, Ryan Chadderton, Devan Ludden and Jake Woodbury.

the most recent contest, both Ludden and Miller competed on the BSHS team that placed ninth out of 48 teams at the University of Central Florida's May, 2012 programming tournament. This was the first time in 21 years that a

Bloomington team had entered the contest.

In preparation for the recent UF competition the teams held weekly practice sessions, which were helpful for the new members. Of the four new team members only Woodbury

was enrolled in a computer science course; Chadderton, McKishnie, and Devan Ludden learned from independent study and team practices.

Both teams are already practicing for the 2013 Annual UCF High School

Programming Tournament, which will be held on Friday, May 3. "Ian and I decided to each guide a team to see what we need to work on before the UCF competition in May," said Miller. Ludden added, "We're definitely going to

work on our strategy over the next few months." Stakes are higher for the May 2013 since tournament winners not only receive trophies – they win scholarships to the university, along with other prizes.

Community Station Notes

Our teens, and the important choices they make

Area law enforcement is very concerned about the teens in our community. Many of them are our own. Unfortunately, our contact with teens in the community is not always under the best of circumstances. It may be when writing a speeding citation; arresting them for any of a number of other legal violations from drug possession or dealing, to fighting; and sadly, when investigating vehicle accident scenes.

After talking with numerous parents of teenagers during my career in law enforcement, I've learned that there are some very important things that can be done to keep this age group safer and out of trouble – the most important of those is helping the young people in our lives make good choices. All of us have been teenagers; we can remember that each day we made many choices that directly impacted how our days went. Some were very big decisions and some seemed small at the time. In the course of making daily choices we developed habits that we carried into young adulthood, and later practiced as adults.

With the goal of keeping teens safe and out of trouble, parents can help them resolve to make the right choices each day in some critical areas:

1. Health – Today, I will choose to eat right and get enough exercise to stay healthy and strong.

2. Drugs – Today, I will choose to leave all drugs alone and protect my mind and body from harm. This includes the newest dangerous synthetic drugs.

3. Alcohol – Today, I will choose to make the

right decisions about drinking alcohol. If I do choose to drink, I will choose to never endanger myself or others by driving a vehicle after drinking.

4. Driving – Today, knowing that auto accidents are the leading causes of deaths with teens, I will choose to put on my seat belt and have others with me put on their seat belts before I start my vehicle. I will also choose to focus 100 percent on driving safely and not be distracted by talking on the phone or texting.

5. Traffic Laws – Today, while I am enjoying the “privilege” of driving the vehicle I have because of the trust placed in me by my parents, I will choose to obey all traffic laws and not speed or run red lights.

6. Respect For Others – Today, I will choose to show respect for others and treat them as I know I should.

7. Know My Priorities – Today, I will carefully choose my personal priorities and do my best at school, realizing that I only get one opportunity in life to go to high school.

8. Help Others – Today, I will choose to help others when I can, knowing that there are others less fortunate than me.

While there are certainly many other critical choices in the daily life of a teen, I would challenge every parent and teen in our community to review, discuss and apply the resolutions listed above. Make them a part of daily life.

Teenagers, each of you gets only one chance in life to be a teen and live through it safely without being hurt, hurting someone else or getting into



Curtis
Warren

serious trouble. Parents, we all know that raising teens is an enormous challenge that takes

time, patience, love, more patience and money. Parents and teens who work together in making daily choices can develop great memories that will last a lifetime.

Our job in law enforcement is to help keep teens safe and out of trouble. But it is really up to our young people to protect themselves by making the right decisions and choices every day. Our toughest days are those that involve having to call a parent and tell them that their teen has gotten into trouble or even worse to tell them that their teen has been involved in a deadly accident.

Life as a teen can be a lot of fun; choosing how to make it fun is a personal decision. Please, make the right choices.

Synthetic Drugs

Synthetic drugs, commonly sold as K2, Spice, herbal incense and even plant food are the latest in a long list of drugs that are killing teens. They are a mixture of herbs, spices and other unknown compounds typically sprayed with dangerous chemicals. The United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has noted that these chemicals have not been approved by the FDA for human consumption.

There has been a dramatic rise in the use of these substances. Law enforcement is very concerned about this use because it is killing teens.

These drugs can be purchased online, at gas stations or convenience stores. They are the second most commonly used illicit drugs by high school seniors.

Teens, you get one life to live. Don't waste it using synthetic drugs that are deadly. Even just using these drugs one time can be enough to kill you. Don't risk it.

To ALL Bloomingdale Residents

If you notice any suspicious activity or a crime being committed, collect all the information you can – descriptions of individuals, vehicles and license numbers, and immediately call the Sheriff's Dispatch at (813) 247-8200. Time is critical.

Volunteers needed for BHA annual community cleanup

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association will be holding its annual Neighborhood Pride Community Cleanup on April 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cleanup provides Bloomingdale residents with a convenient way to dispose of items not normally accepted on regular trash days (e.g., old appliances, mattresses, water heaters, and furniture).

Assistance is needed to help residents unload their refuse into cleanup bins that will be available at the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation maintenance facility at 1626 Natures Way near Alafia Elementary School. This volunteer opportunity is ideal for students wanting to earn community service hours.

For additional information or to volunteer, contact Bloomingdale Homeowners Association at (813) 681-2051 or send an email to Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com.

Volunteer slots will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

Dementia Care

Specialized, compassionate & fun atmosphere.

A unique, home-like community for those at all stages of Alzheimer's disease & dementia. Ask about our “Day Stay” services.

Caregiver tip: Join our FREE dementia support group the last Friday of the month at Campo YMCA from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Call for details.

- Nurses 24 Hours a Day
- Alzheimer's Support Group
- Extended Congregate Care
- Respite Care

 SUPERIOR
RESIDENCES
of Brandon
MEMORY CARE

(813) 657-8587

1819 Providence Ridge Blvd., Brandon, FL 33511

www.SuperiorALF.com/Brandon

Assisted Living Lic. #AL9739

Live the Moment... Love the Moment™



Geography is abuzz at Burns Middle

BY SUZANNE JONES

Observing the 20 anxious young faces before her, Suzanne Janss paused a moment to lend encouragement,

“Take a deep breath and smile, remember, this is supposed to be fun.”

The middle schoolers were assembled in the Burns media center on Jan. 24 to take part in the 2013 National Geographic Bee. To the parents in attendance Janss explained that Geographic Bee questions can be difficult but the students’ knowledge is impressive.

“I’m always amazed by the answers [the students] get correct,” said Janss. She knows that many adults would be hard pressed to come up with the answer to a typical question posed to these tweens: “The Yaghan were a nomadic tribe indigenous to Tierra del Fuego,

an island group that is divided between Argentina and what other country?” This was one of three final round questions that determined seventh grader Noah Hensley as the winner of the 2013 Burns Geo Bee. (By the way, the answer is Chili.)

For 25 years the National Geographic Society has sponsored the contest as “a way to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject, and increase public awareness about geography,” according to the society’s website. Ms. Janss and co-proctor Jana Smith have administered the school-level National Geographic Bee (Geo Bee) at Burns Middle School for at least 12 of those contests. As eighth grade history teachers, they couldn’t help but wonder how new curriculum that eliminates geography classes in sixth- and seventh-grades will



SUZANNE JONES

Finalist, Fox Goddard and his dad, Rich.

affect students’ future participation. Six seventh grade students competed in the final round: Fox Goddard, Noah Hensley, Abby Williams, Luz Negron and Kellen Kozak.

Student preparation strategies ranged from review the school’s class materials to studying online sample questions. Some students like Fox Goddard have been preparing without knowing it. Goddard’s father, Rich, shared that their family has a



SUZANNE JONES

Geo Bee winner Noah Hensley proudly displays his first place award medal. Pictured (left to right): Suzanne Janss, Noah Hensley, Jana Smith.

history of “playing geography-related games at home...[Fox] also watches the Discovery Channel show, How the States were Made.”

Winning the school-level Geo Bee was not the end of the road for winner, Noah Hensley. Shortly after the preliminary contest, Hensley took a written test that could qualify him to compete on April 5 at the state level along with approximately 100 other geographic whiz kids

in grades 4 through 8. The first place state winner receives \$100 and a trip to Washington, D.C. to participate in the national competition. But that’s not all. The national champion receives a \$25,000 college scholarship, lifelong Society membership, and a trip to the Galapagos Islands. From there it’s off to the world Hensley will know by early March if he has qualified for the state competition in Jacksonville.