

THE

# BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

VOLUME XXXIV



ISSUE 8



AUGUST 2014



www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

## WAWA GRAND OPENS WITH FANFARE AND FREE COFFEE FOR ALL

By: Miriam Leech

The much-anticipated Valrico Wawa held its grand opening on July 10. Wawa representatives were joined by local officials and members of the community for the fanfare-filled celebration. The grand opening of the Valrico store marks the chain's 11th store to open in Florida in 2014, and the 44th overall.

On hand for the ceremonial ribbon-cutting were Wawa Senior Vice President Cathy Pulos, Director of Store Operations Todd Souders, Area Manager Peter Rasmussen, General Manager Kira Faust, Wawa associates, customers and, of course, Wawa's mascot, Wally Goose.

Representatives from the United Service Organization (USO) Tampa Bay were presented with a check on behalf of the Wawa Foundation for \$4,334. The funds were raised across the state of Florida between June 14 and July 6 as a part of the Summer UPC campaign, where customers are invited to donate \$1, \$3, or \$5 as a part of their purchase.

Local residents turned out in full force to welcome the new store and were treated to free coffee and storewide discounts. A group of eight high schoolers even camped out over night to be the first customers in the store

Continued on Page 7



Photos: Miriam Leech

Wawa mascot Wally Goose was on hand along with Wawa representatives, local officials, members of the Tampa Bay USO, and the community for the July 10 Grand Opening festivities at the new Valrico Wawa.



General Manager Kira Faust (left) and Assistant Manager Lauren Castellana officially opened the new Valrico Wawa with a traditional ribbon cutting.

## BHA SEEKS NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Do you care about our Bloomingdale community and want to take an active role in its future? Then, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) wants you to become part of "Team Bloomingdale."

The Board consists of 12 directors, and there are currently three director and three alternate director positions available. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office at 6:30 p.m.

Board members serve the community in a variety of ways, which include working on committees that oversee the BHA's programs and services. Some committees require more effort than others, but all board members find ways to contribute according to their talents and desires. Committees include: Santa Visit, Community Clean-up, Golf Tournament, Fall Festival, Scholarship, Code Enforcement and more.

Not sure you have the time? The BHA encourages all interested residents to attend a few board meetings to see the Association at work, and to determine if joining the board is a good fit. Remember, current board members are residents like you who have the betterment of the community as their number one goal.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows." Sydney J. Harris

## This Month



COMMUNITY CALENDAR  
Page 2

BHA COMMUNITY CORNER  
Page 4

INs & OUTs  
Page 6

REAL ESTATE UPDATE  
Page 9

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RACE  
Page 12

LIBRARY HAPPENINGS  
Page 14

DINING WITH DAVE  
Page 16

SCHOOL NEWS  
Page 22

PLEASE RECYCLE



## AUGUST COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Florida Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday / August 1-3** / Tax free weekend is here! Don't miss out on this back-to-school event! During this period, no Florida sales tax or local option tax will be collected on sales of clothing, footwear, and certain accessories selling for \$100 or less per item, on certain school supplies selling for \$15 or less per item, and on the first \$750 of the sales price for computers and certain computer-related accessories when purchased for noncommercial home or personal use. For complete details visit the Florida Department of Revenue website, [dor.myflorida.com](http://dor.myflorida.com).

**20th Bi-Annual Candidate Forum / August 5 / Meet & Greet, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Candidate Forum, 7 p.m. / Bell Shoals Baptist Church Worship Center / 2102 Bell Shoals Road / Brandon** / The Bell Shoals Baptist Church Community Issues Team presents its Candidate Forum, which provides voters the opportunity to meet and talk with more than 60 local, state, and national candidates running for office in Hillsborough County. This non-partisan event is open to the community, and will be emceed by Bay News 9 anchor Al Ruechel. Supervisor of Elections representatives will be registering voters for the General Election, and all voters will receive a Comparative Voter Guide to take home. For more information contact Linda Townsend, 813-689-4229.

**Premier of The Village Players Present Canterbury Tales or Geoffrey Chaucer's Flying Circus / August 8 / 7 p.m. / James McCabe Theatre / 5th Street, Valrico** / Join the Village Players for this Opening Night Dinner and a Show of Canterbury Tales or Geoffrey Chaucer's Flying Circus—Chaucer's classic tale with a little Monty Python thrown in makes for this hilarious comedy. Dinner is sponsored by Paul and Tammy Holmberg. Tickets for the Dinner and a Show are \$25 and must be purchased in advance. Proceeds from the Opening Night Dinner and a Show to benefit renovations at the historic James McCabe Theatre, a 1915 historical site and home of the Village Players.

The remaining shows will be held on Saturday, August 9; Thursday, August 14; and Saturday, August 16 at 7:30 p.m. and matinees on Sundays, August 10 and 17, beginning at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for general admission; \$13 for students and military with ID; and group sales for parties of 10 or more are \$12 with advanced purchase. Visit [www.villageplayersvalrico.com](http://www.villageplayersvalrico.com) for more information or to purchase tickets.

**Calling All Teens! / August 7 and 8 / Bloomingdale Regional Public Library / 1906 Bloomingdale Avenue** / The Bloomingdale Regional Public Library is holding several end-of-summer events for teens. See Library Happenings for details.

**YMCA Annual Backpack Outreach Event / August 9 / 9 a.m.-Noon / YMCA Camp Cristina / 9840 Balm Riverview Road, Riverview** / Tampa YMCA annual event to fill backpacks with school supplies for

students in qualified families. Volunteers will be needed August 4-8 to sort items into backpacks. For more information on volunteering, contact Kavita Marballi at the Campo Family Y, 813-684-1371. (Please Note: Qualified families must be pre-registered to participate in the outreach event.)

**Bloomingdale Youth Sports (Formerly Bloomingdale Little League) Fall Registration / Beginning August 9 / 2215 Bloomingdale Avenue, Valrico**

Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Fall Registration Dates:

Saturday August 9 and 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Tuesday August 12, 6-9 p.m.

Thursday August 14 and 21, 6-9 p.m.

Registration Fees: \$100, \$75 T-Ball, \$25 Sibling Discount

For more information visit [www.bysafl.com](http://www.bysafl.com).

**Village Early Learning Center Children's Art Show / August 12 / 7-8 p.m. / The Village Early Learning Center / 3741 Canoga Park Drive, Brandon** / Come see artwork created by Kindergarten through age 5 summer camp students at The Village Early Learning Center. The World is Your Canvas-themed camps allowed students to "visit" a different country each week and create beautiful artwork. The show is free and open to the community. Please call 813-651-0779 for more information.

## UPCOMING & ONGOING

**Dash and Splash 2014 / September 13 / 7:30 a.m. / Brandon Sports & Aquatic Center / 405 Beverly Blvd., Brandon** / The Brandon Sports and Aquatic Center is proud to announce its third annual Dash and Splash event for athletes, non-athletes, and all ages. This family-oriented, fun event is held annually in support of our Youth Drowning Prevention initiative, and proceeds go toward providing swim lessons to families who cannot afford them.

Dash and Splash is a swimming/running timed event consisting of a 2 mile run/quarter mile swim/1 mile run for adults. For children ages 7 to 10 the event is a half mile run/100 meter swim, and children ages 11 to 14 will do a 1 mile run/200 meter swim.

Pre-race day registration prices are \$25 for adults, \$15 for children ages 7 to 10, and \$20 for children ages 11 to 14. Registration will be available at [www.mybsac.org](http://www.mybsac.org). Those unable to attend can still support the youth drowning prevention initiative by purchasing a t-shirt. For more information, please contact The Brandon Sports and Aquatic Center at 813-689-0908.

**Bloomingdale Yoga in the Park / Ongoing Saturdays / 8:30-9:30 a.m.** / Free yoga class for Bloomingdale residents held at private park at the end of Culbreath Road. For more information contact Dina White at 813-509-7780 or [dmwhite86@gmail.com](mailto:dmwhite86@gmail.com).

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





## YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

### Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

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

Email: [Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com)

Website: [www.BloomingdaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingdaleHOA.com)

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

3509 Bell Shoals Road

Valrico, Florida 33596

#### Directors at Large:

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

**Treasurer:** *Dennis Osborn*

**Secretary:** *Daniel Berkowitz*

*Billy Hightower*

*Mary Galin*

*Dina White*

*Amy Luhmann*

*Joanie Wilson*

*Ken Smith*

*Beth Smedley*

## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



### SUZANNE JONES

**Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette**

3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

Valrico, FL 33596 - (813) 681-2051

Email: [InBloomingdaleNews@gmail.com](mailto:InBloomingdaleNews@gmail.com)

Website: [www.BloomingdaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingdaleHOA.com)



### TONY DEL CASTILLO

**General Manager**

**Brandon & Southshore Times**

11268 Winthrop Main Street, Suite 101

Riverview, Florida 33578 - (813) 661-2438

Email: [tdelcastillo@tampabay.com](mailto:tdelcastillo@tampabay.com)



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# BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

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

## ONGOING 2014 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

**SIGN UP**

Every month, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) takes this opportunity to remind residents about the importance of joining the Association. As we enter the last few months of our 2014 membership drive, we ask again that you open your wallets and support the only group that oversees the issues affecting our community of over 5,000 homes and 23,000 residents.

One of the most important membership benefits is the BHA's part-time staff. These dedicated Bloomingdale residents produce our award-winning Bloomingdale Gazette, keep our NEW website and Facebook page updated, and manage our communications via phone, email, and U.S. mail. Our standard inquiry response time is 72 hours, and in most cases staff replies the same day. When you need assistance, our staff stands ready, willing and able. For \$25 a year, this is a small price to pay.

For those that have already joined, donated to our scholarship fund, and purchased Bloomingdale Pride license plates, we sincerely thank you.

Please join today. Make checks payable to the BHA and mail to 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33596. Or, stop by the office and meet our office manager. An easier method is to use our PayPal option. Go to [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com), look for the PayPal link and follow the simple instructions.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 2014 Bloomingdale Fall Festival will be here before you know it. See the Fall Festival flyer this issue. Scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 25 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club, the fest is open to all Bloomingdale residents. This community event is fun-filled with activities for all ages, and this year, the festival will include a Halloween Pet Costume Contest. Furever Friends Animal Rescue will, also, be on-site in support of October's "National Adopt a Shelter Dog" month. Dogs and cats will be available for adoption, and the group will be spreading awareness about shelter dogs and fostering.

Sponsors, here is your opportunity to reach out to our community's more than 23,000 residents! There are many options available, and at a minimum, your generosity will be noted in our newspaper, our website, and our Facebook page. If you would like to be a sponsor, set-up a booth, or volunteer, please contact Mary Galin at 813-468-6279, or email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com).

The BHA Fall Festival will feature several bouncy houses for your enjoyment. This year the festival will add more fun events and entertainment including a DJ, "Trick or Treat Street," and a karate demonstration.



## BHA EVENT CALENDAR

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

*Tuesday, Aug. 5, 6:30 p.m.*

Meet our new Hillsborough County Development Services Director, Bloomingdale Regional Public Library, 1906 Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico.

*Monday, Aug. 11, 6:30 p.m.*

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District (BSTD) Monthly Trustee Meeting, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico.

*Tuesday, Aug. 12, 6:30 p.m.*

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

*Tuesday, Aug. 19, 6:30 p.m.*

Bloomingdale Ridge (Fox Run and The Greens) HOA Meeting, Bloomingdale Regional Public Library, Rm. 1. This meeting is for residents only.

## BHA BRIEFS

### 2013 NATURES WAY TRAFFIC STUDY UPDATE

Aug. 27, 7 - 9 a.m. and 4 - 7 p.m. and Aug. 30, 8 - 11 a.m. and 5 - 7 p.m. The Hillsborough County Public Works Dept. will conduct a pedestrian count/observation on Natures Way near Bloomingdale East Park. Data collected will be used to validate the findings of the 2013 Natures Way Traffic Study which contained recommendations for installing a crosswalk and/or hazard lights at this location.

### MEET OUR NEW HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR!

Our community is invited to meet the new Hillsborough County Development Services Department Director Adam Gormly and his leadership team on Tuesday, Aug. 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library, 1906 Bloomingdale Ave. Gormly and his staff will address priorities and future goals, as well as provide information about the development process and resources available to facilitate obtaining necessary reviews, licenses, permits and inspections.

### BLOOMINGDALE ESTATES DEED RESTRICTION UPDATE

The draft documents are still in the hands of the BHA attorney. Information will be shared as it becomes available.

### YARD SALE FACEBOOK POSTINGS

Are you getting ready to clean out your closets and garage? Let the BHA help you make some room. Post your yard sale information on our Facebook page at [www.Facebook/BloomingdaleHOA.com](http://www.Facebook/BloomingdaleHOA.com). Provide an address, date, and time, and what kinds of items are available, then, let the de-cluttering begin.







**ELECT**

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**Winner: Brandon Bar Association Straw Poll  
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**EXPERIENCE**

**Private Practice – Barbara Twine Thomas, P.A.**

Stewart, Joyner and Jordan Holmes –  
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Steward, Twine & Campbell –  
Civil Litigation, Criminal Defense, Personal Injury

Senior Assistant County Attorney; Special Trial Counsel –  
Hillsborough County

Board Counsel – City of Tampa  
Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator

**EDUCATION**

University of Florida, Juris Doctorate;

University of South Florida, BA;

Hillsborough High School

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Hillsborough County Association of Women Lawyers – Past President

George Edgecomb Bar – Past President

Hillsborough County Bar Foundation – Past President

Tampa Bay Inn of Court, Virgil Hawkins Bar Association  
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**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

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2012 & 2014 – Recognized by Bay Area Legal Services  
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League of Woman Voters – Hillsborough County

Jack & Jill of America – Tampa Chapter

Bay Area Legal Services Development Council

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Political advertisement paid for and approved by Barbara Twine Thomas, for Circuit Court Judge, Group 8



# INs & OUTs

By: Jennifer Aragon, Environmental Scientist II, Adopt-A-Pond Program Coordinator

## WHAT RESIDENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ADOPT-A-POND

Living by a pond can provide years of enjoyment by creating opportunities for bird watching, fishing, photography and sunset gazing. While many people enjoy the benefits of living close to a pond, others wonder what they can do to promote a healthier pond environment.

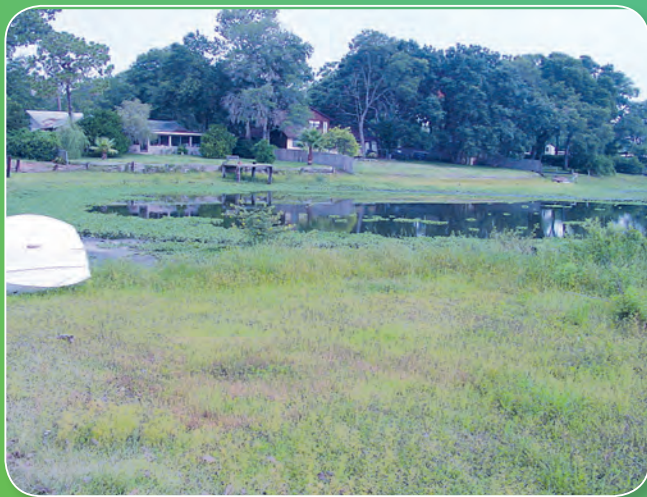
With the help of the Hillsborough County Public Works Department Adopt-A-Pond program, you can play an active role in maintaining or improving your pond's water quality and overall health. The Adopt-A-Pond program collaborates with communities to teach residents how to improve the water quality, wildlife habitat and appearance of storm water ponds. The program's pond specialists also guide participants through the initial steps of how to care for their storm water ponds to provide enjoyment for years to come.

Since 1991, Hillsborough County Public Works Department staff has worked with over 300 pond groups to empower them with the skills and knowledge to make good pond maintenance decisions. We have successfully helped tackle issues with invasive plants, trash, algae, duckweed, lack of native plants and erosion—you name it, we have done it. We have collaborated with neighborhood groups throughout the county and we are looking forward to a chance to work with the Bloomingdale community as well.

If you would like to improve a pond in your neighborhood, here is all you need to get started:

- An Enthusiastic Group - Find a team willing to get in the water to clean up, plant, maintain and monitor the pond. Adopting a pond is too much of a job for one person. Get your neighbors together and have fun with it!
- A Group Representative - Enlist a leader to organize the project and communicate with the group and the County's Adopt-A-Pond coordinator.
- Time - Pond transformations do not take place overnight. It takes months, and maybe years, to see the full effects of the change. That is why the Adopt-A-Pond process is a three-year agreement.

If you are ready to make a change in your pond, visit [www.HillsboroughCounty.org/AdoptAPond](http://www.HillsboroughCounty.org/AdoptAPond) to find out more about the program and complete an application. There are no fees to participate. Simply apply today to see if your pond qualifies.



“Before” photo of Tampa pond. Residents applied for acceptance into the Hillsborough County Adopt-A-Pond Program in 2002. Vegetation overgrowth was a major problem.

“After” photo of same pond more than 10 years later, clearly shows the benefit of the County's Adopt-A-Pond Program. The pond is thriving due to the hard work and efforts of the residents and the guidance given by the Adopt-A-Pond Program specialists.



Photos: Courtesy Photo by John McGee, Hillsborough County Public Works Dept.



## WAWA (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

when the doors opened at 8 a.m. “We wanted bragging rights,” said Bloomingdale student Katia Zavala. “[Wawa employees] gave us donuts and hot chocolate around 6:30 a.m.!”

General Manager Kira Faust lives locally, just down the road in FishHawk, and will lead a team of nearly 60 associates--all of whom are taking new positions created in the area through the development of the store. Her store is also the first to offer Florida Lottery tickets.

Ordering a famous Wawa built-to-order hoagie or specialty beverage is made easy by touch pad displays that allow patrons to customize their food and drinks. The store also offers their award-winning coffee (195 million cups sold annually); hot breakfast sandwich, the Sizzli; bakery items; and a Wawa line of dairy products, juices, and teas.

The grand opening event concluded with Hoagies for Heroes, a charitable hoagie building competition with members of the Tampa Bay Chapter of the USO sporting their sandwich-making skills. Each team was challenged to see who could build the most hoagies in 3 minutes in the traditional Wawa way. The competition concluded with a \$1,000 check presentation to the winning and runner up USO Tampa Bay teams.

Community is very important to Wawa, and they are very excited to expand their presence in Florida. Said Pulos, “We want to be a good neighbor in every way.” The Valrico Wawa store is located at 2224 Bloomingdale Ave. For more information visit [www.wawa.com](http://www.wawa.com).



The newly-opened Valrico Wawa boasts its own line of dairy products, juices, and teas in addition to their signature built-to-order hoagies, breakfast sandwiches, specialty beverages, and bakery items.

**Wawa**®

# Janet Dougherty

## For County Commission District 4

### Transportation Solutions

Being a lifelong resident and involved in local transportation taskforces, I am familiar with the traffic congestion that faces our county. I favor improving our transportation infrastructure and **do not support Light Rail in Hillsborough County.**

### Community Involvement

I will conduct evening meetings across the county that will allow me to **hear your opinions and suggestions.**

### Transparency

It is important to have a fresh set of eyes on where our tax payer money is being spent. As a business owner, I know the importance of **reducing costs and capitalizing investments.**

### Military Advocate

As someone who is very proud of my family's multigenerational service, I have worked with the Veterans Council, been an advocate for our military and **a champion of veteran affairs.**



“My professional background includes decades of experience in land use, transportation and water management. These are the complex issues that come before the Hillsborough County Commission.”

Thank you for your consideration!



813-708-9022 • PO Box 1340, Riverview, FL 33568  
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Political advertisement paid for and approved by Janet Dougherty, Republican for County Commission District 4



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## 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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## MEET YOUR BHA BOARD

George T. May IV serves our community as Bloomingdale Homeowners Association President. He served on the board several years ago, and after a brief hiatus, returned with his new role in 2012.



May has lived in Windsor Woods (Bloomingdale East) for the past 17 years, has a daughter and is a proud grandfather twice over. "One of the many things I love about this community is the beautiful trees," commented May. Taking in Bloomingdale's natural beauty can be a challenge for May as in addition to his role of BHA President, he works full time as an independent financial advisor. However, when time permits some play, May enjoys softball, golf and cycling.

As BHA President May helps to run the organization and has similar powers to a corporation's CEO. He is responsible for daily administration tasks and can order actions that are necessary to advance the goals of the association. He leads monthly association meetings; is responsible for the fiscal well-being of the association; and, represents the BHA in the community and with local government. In addition to being well connected in the community, May benefits the BHA with his ability to turn around organizations headed in the wrong direction. These talents are evident in the growth of the board under his leadership from just a handful of members to the re-establishment in 2013 of a full board with committees. "My vision for the BHA is that we continue to raise the bar," said May. "There are always things to improve. Working together, the Bloomingdale community can ensure it's a top notch place to live, which will create demand for people to move here."



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Uniform: You will wear your own white shirt with black pants and black shoes.

Equipment: You will be provided a hat, stop sign, traffic vest and a whistle at the time of hire

Training: You will be trained on-site for 3 days by a supervisor. There is a mandatory Yearly Training each summer.

Florida Retirement: 8 years continuous service required.

Contact: Community Service Officer Danny Fassett at (813) 247- 8195 or drfasset@hcsa.tampa.fl.us  
www.hcsa.tampa.fl.us  
(application available on line)  
(Careers, Career Opportunities)

Florida Drivers License or ID Card preferred required within 30 days of employment.





## BLOOMINGDALE REAL ESTATE & HOUSING UPDATE

The dog days of summer are in full force, but we are already winding down what is traditionally the peak real estate season! The first six months of 2014 offered some interesting twists to Bloomingdale's once hot market, so buyers and sellers may want to take note and read between the lines.

Of the 86 homes that sold from January through June, the median list price was \$236,975 and the median sold price of closed sales was \$224,492 (an 8% and 5% increase respectively from 2013). No doubt that is great news, but sellers may also note there are indications that the market is slowing. The median cumulative days on the market landed at 44 (a 23% increase from 2013) with an abrupt 84% increase from May to June of this year alone. While it's normal to see ups and downs throughout the year, this particular statistic is one to watch since May and June historically have been stronger months for Bloomingdale. Additionally, Bloomingdale has seen a 42% increase in active listings from January to June compared to the first half 2013, and another 25% spike from this May to June. But what exactly does all this mean?



Indications are that the market may have begun shifting supply and demand, leaning towards too much inventory, increasing days on the market and potentially driving prices down. From a seller's perspective, Bloomingdale has come into strong competition with FishHawk and new construction. This emphasizes the importance of pricing a home to sell and tending to small details such as fresh paint, manicured landscaping, and pressure washing when applicable, and selectively determining upgrades. It's also more critical than ever to work with experienced agents who can put the marketing of homes into overdrive and boost visibility to buyers. From a buyer's perspective, the time is still ripe to capitalize on the record-low interest rates, and equally important to work with an agent who takes the time to research and analyze the individual markets where you're looking to purchase. As always, I am always here to lend a hand and guide you in whatever the situation may be. Don't hesitate to call on us for all of your real estate needs.

\*Statistics pulled from Multiple Listing Service and do not include For Sale by Owner, bank owned properties, or short sales.



**Dina White**  
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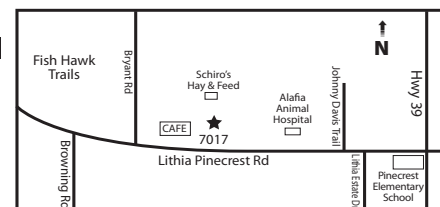
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**OVER 24 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE**



Did someone say \$1 Cupcakes on Tuesday? If you haven't heard the buzz yet, Bloomingdale has a new family-owned bakery and \$1 cupcakes are far from the only item on the growing menu at Petite Madelyns!

Bloomingdale residents Dennis and Megan Malin bought the bakery in May of this year and quickly established themselves as a friendly and fun fixture on Bloomingdale Road. The timing was perfect for the Malins as Dennis, a Marine Master Sergeant, retires from active duty this month and Megan had sharpened her hobby-turned-career baking skills after recently graduating from the Art Institute of Tampa as a certified pastry chef. Inspired by their daughter, Madelyn, who was named after the French cookie, the Malins turned their dream into a reality and their passion and talent emanate from the chic décor and delectable treats.

Some everyday menu items include American and European pastries and cookies, brownies, cupcakes, cake pops, and hot beverages. Megan happily accepts custom requests such as sugar, dairy, and/or gluten free, and vegan options and is happy

to bake a fresh loaf of your favorite bread for a scheduled pick-up. On any given day you may find a fresh loaf of Italian, honey wheat, or challah already waiting at extremely competitive prices.

The Malins take pride in being a family and neighborhood-oriented small business that offers a budget friendly option while customizing life's most celebrated events. Megan and Dennis thoroughly enjoy meeting their customers and becoming part of their experience. Whether a birthday, wedding, graduation, large or small, public or intimate event—they are standing by to offer a unique and affordable option to cherish each memory. And, if you're really lucky sweet Madelyn herself, who enjoys helping her parents around the bakery from time to time, may even be on hand to greet you.

For more information follow them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/PetiteMadelynsBakery1](https://www.facebook.com/PetiteMadelynsBakery1) or call 813-681-CAKE.



Photo: Dina White



One of Megan's many custom cakes offers a Lion King theme for a birthday party.

## ARRESTS MADE IN SANDY CREEK VEHICLE BREAK-INS, RESIDENTS PRAISED

Arrested...this is the word that applies to the suspects involved in the recent Sandy Creek-area vehicle burglaries, and Bloomingdale Little League attempted burglary that occurred on June 25. According to Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Master Deputy Curtis Warren at the Bloomingdale Area Community Council Meeting on July 24, four teenagers were apprehended and charged with 10 counts of vehicle burglary, one count of armed vehicle burglary (a loaded weapon was stolen), and one count of attempted burglary of a structure.

Residents of the Bloomingdale community played an important part in the positive outcome of this case. Once the burglaries were discovered and reported, law enforcement officials received home security camera footage from several Sandy Creek homeowners. In addition, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association posted a resident-provided video still of one of the suspects "in the act" on the Association's Facebook page and community website. That post went "community viral" with over 10,000 views and 135 shares.

Lead investigator Detective James Howell called resident help "crucial" to solving what are normally difficult cases. "I received more video coverage (on this case) than I have ever received," said Howell. "The videos provided a critical piece to our investigation."

With the Sandy Creek footage, he was able to link the suspects with another burglary attempt at the Bloomingdale Little League concessions building. Management of the facility supplied security footage as well, and connections were made which linked the incidents to the same individuals.

The teenagers were engaged in what Howell termed "car hopping." He explained that groups, usually late teens and adults, will work together between the hours of 12:30 a.m. and 5 a.m. pulling door handles on any vehicles parked on the street or driveways. With car hopping, groups will not normally use force to gain access. However, should a door

be unsecured, the group will quickly look for anything valuable to steal. Video footage showed the burglaries, from start to finish, occurring in a matter of seconds.

In the Sandy Creek cases, the most significant item stolen was a loaded weapon, which carries a felony charge. With the arrests, the weapon has been recovered, but Howell stressed that gun owners need to write down serial numbers and keep the information with other important documents.

Some crimes are preventable, or can at least be made more difficult to perpetrate. Howell advised: lock car doors, keep any valuables in cars out of view, keep garage doors down (even if you are home), and be observant. "It is all about opportunity, and you just can't create an opportunity for these guys (potential thieves)."

Master Deputy Warren echoed Howell's statements, "You know who belongs in your neighborhood and who doesn't. Write down license plate numbers and descriptions of vehicles and people. If it is potential evidence, report it." If you have information pertaining to a crime, contact the Hillsborough County Dispatch Line at 247-8000.

(Editor's Note: September's Gazette will feature an article about Neighborhood Watch, Citizens Patrol, and other programs that can and do keep our community safe and secure.)



This resident-provided security video "still" shows a suspect, since arrested, attempting to enter a Sandy Creek vehicle on June 25. The photo was also posted on the BHA website where views exceeded 10,000. Sandy Creek residents were commended by law enforcement for their help in solving the case.





5839 Parkset Dr. 4/3.5/2 3331sf \$384,750



15533 Martinmeadow Dr. 4/3/2 2420sf \$285,000



15915 Oakleaf Run Dr. 4/2/2 1857sf \$234,750



16314 Egret Crossing Ln. 4/3/2 2911sf \$339,000



16242 Bridgewalk Dr. 4/2.5/2 2020sf \$236,000



16006 Ternglade Dr. 4/4/3 3868sf \$550,000



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## FEATURED HOME

Located on a corner homesite in Valrico's Bloomingdale community, this 3/2.5/2 2-story home spans 2,109sf and is convenient to nearby shopping, dining and just a few blocks from the Bloomingdale Golfers Club and great schools.

The entry opens to a foyer with Formal Living and Dining room combo to the left, stairs ahead and family room beyond. Family room features soaring 2-story ceiling with skylights, wood-burning fireplace and laminate hardwood floors.

The kitchen with center island includes a breakfast nook and breakfast bar overlooking family room. Sliding glass doors connect to the spacious Florida room with ceramic tile floor and lots of windows overlooking the fully privacy-fenced backyard.



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The August 26 Primary Election is upon us. Since Primary results determine who will be on the November 4 General Election ballot, candidates are turning up the heat on their campaigns during the last few weeks. Now is the time to consider the candidates for the District 4 Board of County Commissioners’ race: Janet Dougherty, Rick Cochran, Stacy White, and write-in candidate Christopher Weaver. They are running to fill the seat left vacant by Commissioner Al Higginbotham, who is running for the District 7 county-wide seat.

While Weaver is a write-in, Dougherty, Cochran, and White are all Republican candidates; this makes the District 4 race noteworthy. Florida is a closed primary state; however, a 1998 constitutional amendment opened primaries to all voters in races in which all the candidates come from the same party, in essence making the primary a general election. But, there is a loophole: when there is a write-in candidate on the ballot, the primary again is closed because write-ins are treated as a candidate from another party.

With a closed primary, the district’s 75,000 registered Republicans will choose their candidate on August 26, and in November the 65,000 Democrats and 54,000 other voters will decide between winner of the primary or writing in Weaver’s name. (Note: Write-in candidate Christopher Weaver did not respond to e-mails or phone messages despite repeated attempts to request an interview.)

There are seven members of the Board of County Commissioners. Four are elected from single-member districts, and three are elected county-wide (Source: Hillsborough County Government). What do County Commissioners actually do?

- Develop policy for the management of Hillsborough County
- Provide direction to the County Administrator on any programs for the improvement of the county and the welfare of its residents
- Approve the county’s operating and capital budgets, and the county’s capital improvement program
- Serve as the Environmental Protection Commission
- Individual Commissioners serve on various other boards, authorities, and commissions



Voters who would like to see a sample ballot for the Primary Election can visit the Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections website, [www.votehillsborough.org](http://www.votehillsborough.org).

RACE HEATS UP FOR DISTRICT 4 BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Question

What is your background?



Janet Dougherty  
[www.votejanetd.com](http://www.votejanetd.com)

- Lived in Hillsborough County entire life
- Parents instrumental in starting Republican Party of Hillsborough County
- Bachelor’s degree in Public Administration from Eckerd College
- At 22 ran for County Commission; Youngest delegate to the Republican National Convention, 1984
- Served in Eastern Hillsborough as member of Farm Bureau, NRA, Riverview and Brandon Chambers of Commerce, Propeller Club, Transportation Task Force, and Riverview Community Based Planning
- Local business owner—President of Sage Eco Solutions, Inc., and HumiVerde, LLC
- Member of Tampa Bay Estuary Program and Tampa Bay Conservancy
- One daughter, Hollis, and one grandson, Killian



Rick Cochran  
[www.voterickcochran.com](http://www.voterickcochran.com)

- Raised in Temple Terrace and graduated from King High School
- Served 5+ years in the U.S. Air Force
- Joined Tampa Police Department in 1989 and retired as a Senior Police Detective in January 2014
- Has lived in eastern and southeastern Hillsborough County since leaving the Air Force
- Bachelor’s degree from Saint Leo University in Criminology
- Licensed Real Estate Agent and referral agent for Keller Williams
- Served as alternate board member on Hillsborough County Land Use Appeals Board, Senior Vice President of Tampa Police Benevolent Association, and currently serves as President of Sundance Trails Homeowner’s Association
- Married with two grown daughters



Stacy White  
[www.votestacywhite.com](http://www.votestacywhite.com)

- Fifth generation native of eastern Hillsborough County
- Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Florida
- Practicing pharmacist for 17 years in local community
- Honored in 2006 with the Roche Preceptor of the Year in an Outpatient Setting award from the University of Florida for working with students during clinical training
- Elected to Hillsborough County School Board in 2010
- Volunteered with Hillsborough County Recreation Center as athletics coach, served as a PTA board member, and strong supporter of local Boy Scouts
- Married with three children ages 14, 12, and 9



DISTRICT 4 SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Janet Dougherty

What made you decide to run for the Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners?

How do you feel about the decisions that led to the Bloomingdale Big Box Development, and what will you do to either curtail this kind of development or make certain it never happens again? And how do you view the residents' voice in community development?

A lot of County employees live in our Bloomingdale neighborhoods, and many have gone a long time without adequate/appropriate raises but have seen their cost of living go up. What will you do to help these constituents?

Are you familiar with the traffic issues affecting the Bloomingdale area (Bloomingdale Avenue, Lithia-Pinecrest Road, Bell Shoals Road), and what will you do to affect them?

How will you communicate with Bloomingdale residents?

In a field of Republican candidates, how do you set yourself apart?

Dougherty shared that she was encouraged by friends and family to run for the BOCC because they felt she could make a real contribution. She has served her community for 30 years. "I love my community. But it is not about me, it is about the people. My favorite part of campaigning is knocking on doors and getting input from the people."

Dougherty believes there was a lack of transparency, and that perhaps there were protocol issues at the end of the Big Box Development process. Dougherty had hoped to propose a one-time solution to turn the property into park land. She would like to see the community become proactive in planning for undeveloped property so that they are empowered to go to the County with plans instead of vice versa. She sees an important role for homeowners' associations in that process. Additionally, Dougherty said, "We need to incentivize development of old property where buildings are sitting vacant."

Dougherty shared that the BOCC has a \$3.38 billion budget. She has promised to work to shape the community to thrive economically by streamlining government and enacting checks and balances to eliminate wasteful spending. "We have to find money in the county coffers to help give livable wages to our county employees."

Dougherty shared that she has personally experienced the traffic delays on Bloomingdale roads, and sees Bloomingdale as having some of the worst traffic in the County. She stated that she will do anything and everything she can to address the traffic issues. "Traffic is job number one for the BOCC. It will not be easy, but we can't just think our way out of this issue."

Dougherty explained that, if elected, she hopes to attend Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association meetings as well as communicate with residents through the Bloomingdale Gazette. She hopes the CAN-DO group will stay active to help build public-private partnerships for the Bloomingdale area. "I am totally committed to holding town hall meetings in my district [including Bloomingdale] AFTER HOURS for working people to attend."

Dougherty explained that she has been the most involved Republican of the candidates—since the age of 22—and has helped over 50 candidates get elected during that time. She reiterated that she has 30 years of volunteer experience involving issues that come before the BOCC, including land-water issues and community-based planning. She has public- and private-sector experience. However, Dougherty stressed that "Everyone is looking for solutions. And potholes aren't partisan."

Rick Cochran

Cochran explained that he has spent his entire adult life serving. After retiring from the Tampa Police Department he was not ready to be "retired," so the board vacancy lined up perfectly with his availability. "I have always been a watcher of politics, and enjoy working with local community members to solve local issues."

Cochran believes the Board of County Commissioners needed to reach out to the people of the Bloomingdale community early on so they could have had their say in the Big Box Development process, and that it should have never moved forward the way that it did. He is against just putting up signs [public notice] as the sole way of communicating with constituents on development issues. "The Board of County Commissioners must make sure it is in touch with the public."

Cochran explained that County employees must make fair wages or good employees will be lost. He will advocate for such wages. "Turnover [of employees] costs more than increasing wages in the long run because you lose experience and have to train new workers."

Cochran stated simply that the Bloomingdale-area roads are failing. Now that the economy is better, his goal, if elected, would be to get transportation projects fully funded by the Board of County Commissioners. "Failing roads must be taken off the Board of County Commissioners to-do list."

Cochran explained that as a police officer he learned that problems can't be solved without talking to people in the community. If elected, he can dedicate 100 percent of his time to being a County Commissioner. He would meet with the Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association, and actually listen and apply what he learns from the residents. "I am going to make sure I am available to the people."

Cochran pointed out that he has proven leadership skills from his experience in the Air Force and his 25 years as a Tampa police officer. He explained that the decisiveness he learned as a police officer gives him a huge advantage, and that he is experienced in applying laws and talking to stakeholders. But mostly, he cites his time and ability to be dedicated to his job. "One hundred percent of my time will be given back to the people who put me in office."

Stacy White

White shared that he has always been called to serve his community. Knowing that the Board of County Commissioners affects his community in so many ways made the run the next logical step after serving on the School Board. "I felt called to step up to the plate and fill the vacancy on the board."

White says that, at best, there was not enough outreach to the community in the Big Box Development process, and that the Board of County Commissioners must do more than put up a yellow sign [public notice] to communicate with its constituents on development issues. He commits to do his homework on development issues, attend homeowners' association meetings, and reach out to his Bloomingdale contacts to do a better job of public involvement. "I stand with the people."

White explained that he has a proven record of pushing for increases in wages—as a member of the School Board he has advocated for school employees. "I have no issue spending money where it is important, and that is on our front-line folks [employees]."

White explained that, as a resident of the Bloomingdale area, he is very familiar with the traffic issues. He is very concerned about the increased impacts on the roads caused by the Big Box Development and the new Wawa at the corner of Bloomingdale Ave. and Lithia-Pinecrest Rd. He stated that he would work with Bloomingdale residents to form an informal committee on traffic issues. "I would like to work to look at the big picture of maintaining traffic as well as the character of the area."

White said that he would communicate with Bloomingdale residents by holding town hall meetings, via e-mail, and by attending Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association meetings. "Attending HOA meetings is an outstanding method to reach key leaders and grass roots constituents."

White emphasized that he is the only candidate who has a proven record in office [as a School Board member]. He pointed out that the School Board functions much like the Board of County Commissioners in that both bodies set policy and make hiring decisions—so he brings that experience with him. "I have walked in those shoes [Board member] to motivate, work with staff, and use resources, and I have stood with my people in the community."



## LIBRARY HAPPENINGS IN AUGUST

The Bloomingdale Regional Public Library offers lots to do in August for kids and for persons of all ages. We've included just a sampling. For a full calendar, go to [www.hcpl.org/hcpl/locations/bdl](http://www.hcpl.org/hcpl/locations/bdl). Call the library for registration and information at 813-273-3652.

- For children – The Tricky Dog Show on Wednesday, August 6 at 1 p.m. See this hilarious circus-style dog comedy act, starring a group of tricky little dogs and their pet human. For grades K-5.
- For children – Motion Commotion on Monday, August 18 at 10:30 a.m. Join in this fun and very interactive preschool music and movement program to shake some sillies out. For ages 2-5.
- For adults – Book Discussion: The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht. August 18 at 7 p.m. Adults are invited to join in a discussion about this book. This book is set in the Balkan region where young physician Natalia remembers childhood stories her grandfather once told her, especially the extraordinary story of the tiger's wife.
- For teens –

### *Summer Teen Tech*

August 7, 5-6 p.m. Want to use Photoshop to make a one of a kind photo? Learn some new programs? Create your own blog? Hang out and download music? Stop in and check it out at the library. A library card is required to download music. For ages 12-17. Limited to 12 participants.

### *Hogwarts Open House*

August 8, 6:30-10:30 p.m. Hogwarts School of Witchcraft & Wizardry invites you to their annual Open House. Participate in a sampling of classes, including Potions & Elixirs, Charms & Wand Work, Care of Magical Creatures, Broom Training, Divination, and Proper Penmanship. Wizard uniforms are encouraged, but not necessary. Books and equipment are not required; no owls, toads, or cats will be allowed. House elves will be on hand to serve a light meal, and a Butter Beer bar will be open at the end of the evening. For grades 3-8. Limited to 60 participants.

Register at the Ask Me Kiosk or by calling 273-3652. Both events funded by the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Library.

Principal Librarian Eloise R. Hurst recommends the following reads:

- Adult Books – Life After Life by Kate Atkinson (e-book format available)
- Young Adult Books – False Prince by Jennifer Nielsen
- Children's Books – Fancy Nancy and the Mermaid Ballet by Jane O'Connor

## NEW SPACE, NEW FACE

By: Miriam Leech

### AT BLOOMINGDALE REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

With 10,000 square feet of new space, and a brand new library manager, the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library has even more to offer the community. The 2.1 million dollar expansion was unveiled on May 23, and Vickie Ricketts took over as manager on June 16.

The expansion features an enlarged children's room, a second community room that seats 130 people, an Innovation Studio that includes six computers with creative software, a vending café, a new reading room with collaborative technology and trendy furniture, and an enhanced bookstore operated by the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library.

Of particular note is the glass artwork of local, award-winning artist Lisa Vogt. Her work, entitled Dreams Come True, graces the new children's room and features the White Rabbit from Alice in Wonderland, a sailing ship, butterflies, and more. Vogt makes her home in Wesley Chapel.

The library is also using its expanded space to showcase local startup businesses. The library has partnered with a local non-profit, SiliconGlades, to host entrepreneurs

presenting their ideas for feedback. (See AlligatorZone in this issue of the Gazette.)

The expansion also affords more and larger meeting rooms that are heavily used by the community and that can be reserved for free.

For Ricketts, who comes to Bloomingdale after 3 ½ years at the Brandon Regional Library, "It is almost like having a new job. Working in a big, busy library is nice!" Ricketts has been working for the Hillsborough County Public Library system for 14 years.

The expansion, which began in February 2013, was funded with ad valorem tax dollars provided through the special library taxing district. The original 15,000-square-foot library was built on a 7-acre site homesteaded by Valrico pioneer John McLean and opened in 2005 to serve Bloomingdale, Valrico, Lithia and FishHawk Ranch. It is now the second busiest branch in Hillsborough County.

Ricketts wants to remind Bloomingdale residents that, "...this is part of your community, and we are here to meet your needs."

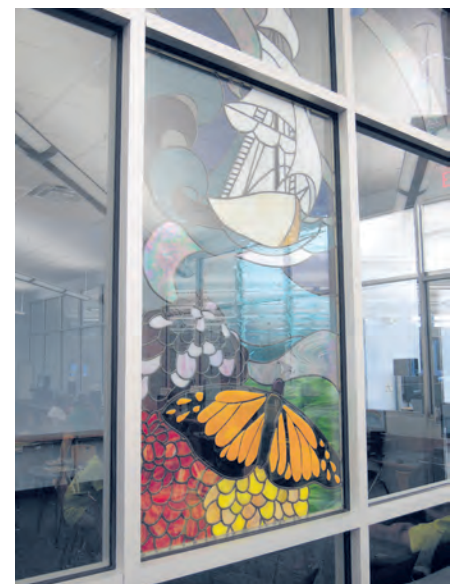


New library manager Vickie Ricketts comes to the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library from the Brandon branch, and is now overseeing the second busiest branch in Hillsborough County.

Dry erase tables are one of the new features that provide collaborative space in the 10,000-square-foot expansion of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library.



The newly-opened expansion at the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library includes an expanded Children's Reading Room and children's programming space.



Local glasswork artist Lisa Vogt of Wesley Chapel created stained glass renderings for the enlarged Children's Reading Room, which is part of the newly-opened expansion at the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library.



The Bloomingdale Regional Public Library has partnered with SiliconGlades, a local non-profit, to launch a new initiative called AlligatorZone. Much like ABC's popular reality TV show SharkTank, entrepreneurs are invited the second Saturday of every month to share their business efforts with the community, while families provide feedback. Individuals of all ages are invited to meet the local startups and participate in local innovation by reserving seats at AlligatorZone.eventbrite.com.

The library has already hosted two successful AlligatorZone events in its new Innovation Studio in June and July. The July 12 AlligatorZone hosted entrepreneurs Rick Moody of DodgeBall2You, Jason and Joanna Herndon of Boxadoo and Andrew Argue of Ten Key Heroes, along with 30 attendees.

The library will feature Matt Rutkoutz of OuterAction, Matt Branton of SenderDefender and one other entrepreneur at 10:15 a.m. on Saturday, August 9 for the next AlligatorZone. OuterAction provides fun, casual opportunities for millennial workers to gather and make professional connections while they participate in unique events (more information at [www.OuterAction.com](http://www.OuterAction.com)). SenderDefender provides a service to secure email attachments containing confidential information with delete-on-receipt, which can be thought of as Snapchat and Dropbox combined (more information at [www.SenderDefender.com](http://www.SenderDefender.com)).



Photo: Kayla Hayes

In August AlligatorZone expands to libraries in California's Silicon Valley, and in the fall to the Jan Platt Regional Library in South Tampa. For more information from the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library, contact Laura Doyle, Business and Innovation Services Specialist, at [doylel@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:doylel@hillsboroughcounty.org).

Andrew Argue of Ten Key Heroes presents his business efforts at the July 12 AlligatorZone hosted by Bloomingdale Regional Library. Ten Key Heroes is a business-matchmaking tool for accountants and employers.



LOOKING BACK...

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scalped, and his grave and tombstone can still be seen today off Stearns Road.

Capt. Frederick Worth and the Hendrix family were early settlers of the 1870's. In 1879, the Bloomingdale

Occasionally shoppers still park their horses on the corner of Lithia and Bloomingdale.

dairy cattle.

One of the newcomers of the early 1880's was Ludwig Bucholz, a German schoolmaster. Unhappy with the "crowded" life in Tampa, he bought land and farmed in the Bloomingdale

See BEFORE, pg. 16

### Of Cows And A 'Primitive' Beginning

by Rozel Sciulli

Bo Ryals' cows politely stepped aside when, in 1979, Criterion began developing the land now known as Bloomingdale East. The Ryals still live on Culbreath on a few acres that remain from their vast dairyland which stretched from Bell Shoals to Culbreath and down to the Alafia.

"The agreement was for Criterion to keep moving the fence back as they developed neighborhoods," recalled Fred Uphoff, quite literally the fifth resident to move into Bloomingdale East.

Sometimes, Uphoff and his neighbors would come home from work to find a stray cow in their front yards.

"We'd have to call Bo to come round

up the cow."

The fight for street lights was the first of many battles to be waged with the county, the builders, the school board, and the state over the years as these "early settlers" carved out of the Florida brush and wetlands a liveable community.

"It was very peaceful here then. There was nothing around for miles."

As the community grew, Uphoff saw a need to communicate formally with neighbors. Thus, began *The Bloomingdale Gazette*. The 8 1/2 X 11 newsletter was distributed door-to-door to 75 homes. It welcomed newcomers, kept residents informed on the latest issues with the county and develop-

ers, and served as a unifying force in this upstart community.

"It was handwritten, handprinted, and handed out," said Uphoff, the paper's first editor.

Through the new Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association, community

See BEGIN, pg 15

Fred Uphoff

This month's "Looking Back" features an article written for the January 1995 issue of the Gazette, entitled, "Of Cows and Primitive Beginnings." The article paints a colorful history of Bloomingdale including residents learning to live with the occasional cow on the run, and comments from the fifth resident of our community, Fred Uphoff. Uphoff and several neighbors went on to create the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) where he served as the first BHA President. Of note is the partial photo above the article which reads, "Occasionally shoppers still park their horses on the corner of Lithia and Bloomingdale." These were certainly simpler times.





## DINING WITH DAVE



Name: La Villa Mexican Grill  
 Cuisine: Mexican (Casual)  
 Location: 13206 Boyette Road (Near intersection of Boyette and Bell Shoals)  
 Phone: 813-324-8839

In the past few years the Bloomingdale area has seen a rapid increase in the number of fast-casual restaurant chains serving ethnic-based dining options. In the good ol' days, such establishments were simply known as "that place down the street" or a "good cheap joint." They are family owned and operated, one-of-a-kind storefronts with a front counter, a few tables scattered about, and a cooler full of drink options. Tucked away in a small retail strip next to a charter school on Boyette Road (near the Bell Shoals Road intersection), La Villa Mexican Grill offers authentic south of the border entrees in a setting that is more casual than fast ... but mighty tasty!

For a sit down meal, I recommend starting with one of the homemade soups. The tortilla soup made with hominy, cheese, cilantro, sour cream, and avocado is served with corn chips, while the tomato soup is creamy and filling with roasted corn. Monday thru Friday they offer a reasonably priced dinner plate combining traditional homemade dishes (beef, chicken, or pork) and enough sides to make it a true meal. Try the tacos (both meat and fish) either as an appetizer or a main course alongside quesadillas or enchiladas with a heaping helping of excellent guacamole. There must be a secret ingredient, but knowing what it is might ruin the thrill of the taste. Their tamales are the best I have had in and around the Tampa area. Desserts are limited, but there is little reason to order anything other than the home made flan.

For lunch, stop by for a burrito to go, a stack of tamales or a sack of tacos. Ask for it spicy as they tend to downplay this for most customers. Like dinner, a combo plate is available on week days and comes with fresh fried plantains. Your office mates will be truly jealous. Drinks are limited to juices and soft drinks from the cooler, but the selection is quite a treat as it includes soft drinks from across Mexico to give your taste buds a treat.

One of my favorite aspects of La Villa Mexican Grill is that not everything on the menu is available every day and more often than not there is an unusually tasty special that is gobbled up almost as soon as it is available. Like a truly authentic family run restaurant, fresh is the key to every meal and that means items run out on occasion. When that happens all you can do is grin and dive in to something new.

## GOLF -- A GREAT SPORT FOR KIDS

By: J.D. Carino (Bloomingdale CC campus)



Drew MacPherson teaching kids the basics of golf.

Golf is hard, like school. Golf is one of the most challenging sports there is. The time and effort put into learning the game is the same effort required to get that high school diploma. Golf takes a lot of dedication, hard work, persistence and the ability to keep going when everything falls apart—so much the same as that math class we call Algebra.

Golf has a low risk of injury. As a non-contact sport with the risk of injury dramatically reduced, golf is for some of our students, an opportunity to learn something that can be played and enjoyed for a lifetime.

Golf is fun! It can be a great time for a parent and son to bond or maybe a way to beat that older sister—in my case, beating my younger brother forever. It is also a game that you can take with you into both business life and pure enjoyment.

Please take a look at our Summer After School and Spring Break programs to get your kids started in this great game. Visit [CochraneGolfSchools.com](http://CochraneGolfSchools.com) for further information and for lessons, or call J.D. at (813) 957-3205.





## BLOOMINGDALE FALL FESTIVAL COMING SOON!



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

Our FREE, family-oriented event will feature:

- Children's and pet's costume contests
- Bouncy houses
- Business information booths
- Raffles
- Face painting
- Games
- "Trick or Treat Street"
- Food, DJ

There will also be appearances from the Tampa Bay Lightning Bug, the Hillsborough County Fire and Sheriff's Departments, and a martial arts demonstration.

Visit us at the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association web page or on Facebook for updates and additional information about sponsorship and volunteer opportunities.

(813) 681-2051 • Email: [Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com)  
[www.BloomingdaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingdaleHOA.com)



BloomingdaleHOA



## BLOOMINGDALE HIGH SCHOOL LAUNCHES NEW METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

Bloomingdale High School launched a new communication initiative, including a smartphone app, a weekly email newsletter and text message updates. These new communication methods for the 2014-2015 school year, will supplement the school Twitter's feed, @bloomingdaleshs, popular last school year.



"The biggest challenge for schools today is staying relevant with students by keeping up with technology and the world of social media," Principal Sue Burkett said. "We believe our innovative changes will improve our ability to communicate with all our families and allow them to communicate with us to do what's best for our kids."

For more information, contact:

Katie Rocha

Assistant Principal, Bloomingdale High School  
[Katie.rocha@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:Katie.rocha@sdhc.k12.fl.us) (813) 744-8018

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## YARD OF THE MONTH



Photo: Suzanne Jones

### Pamela Ennaco

4532 Swift Circle (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



## SECOND BLOOMINGDALE ROUNDTABLE MEETING HELD

### CAN-DO PROVIDES STATUS

The Bloomingdale Roundtable, a group of community leaders from the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) and neighborhood mandatory homeowners associations, met July 23 at the Bloomingdale Community Office. The group formed for the first time in March 2014 to develop a community leader network aimed at bettering Bloomingdale now and in the future.

Attendees included representatives from Bloomingdale Ridge (Fox Run and The Greens), Bloomingdale Cove, Cambridge Cove, River Crossing, Bristol Green, Somerset (via email), Mason Oaks (a neighboring community off Lithia-Pinecrest), Can-Do and the BHA. Twelve leaders attended the quarterly meeting representing over 1,100 homeowners.

### CAN-DO UPDATE

Fred Brown of Can-Do was the roundtable's featured guest speaker this quarter. He provided the group with the current status of his organization's completed legal action and mediation with Red Cast Developers and Hillsborough County regarding the "Big Box" development on Bloomingdale Ave. He also shared that because a settlement has been reached, he and his organization can no longer be a part of any future legal actions.

"We did not get what we wanted," said Brown, "but some concessions were made." When several expressed concerns about who will ensure that the mediation document is adhered to, Brown stated, "Can-Do will not dissolve until all mediation pieces are met."

Further, he explained that the completed action does not preclude other individuals, groups, or HOAs from continuing to pursue actions against the proposed deployment. To that end, his group is willing to pass historical and research documents to any interested parties.

Finally, Brown will be providing a letter template to the Roundtable should the leaders, singularly or together, wish to begin a "grass roots" letter writing campaign.

### Other Notes

- Bloomingdale Ridge President Terry Hoos briefed the group on an idea regarding benches at neighborhood entryways for school children waiting for the bus. He will explore the idea, and provide information to the Roundtable at a later date.
- BHA Board Member Mary Galin provided an overview of this year's BHA Fall Festival. She offered mandatory HOAs the opportunity to participate either by hosting or sponsoring an activity.
- BHA president George May reminded leaders that the FY 2015 Hillsborough County Mini-Grant Program deadline is Aug. 8. This program can provide up to \$2,500 to neighborhoods for projects, functions and improvements.

May concluded the meeting urging attendees to spread the word about upcoming elections. "The County Commissioner election is important; we need to elect someone who represents the heart and soul of our communities."

For information on the Bloomingdale Roundtable, call 813-981-2051 or email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com).



The second Bloomingdale Roundtable met July 23 at the Bloomingdale Community Office. Neighborhood leaders listen intently during a discussion with Can-Do representatives. Pictured: Peter Sleszynski, Can-Do; Fred Brown, Can-Do; Eric Gardner, Bristol Green; Dennis Osborn, BHA; George May, BHA; Dina White, BHA; Dan Penoff, Bloomingdale Cove; and Jack Franklin, Mason Oaks.

Photo: Joy Boisselle

THE **BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE**

# WANTS YOU

If you think you know how to tell a story or "turn a phrase," the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) wants to add your reporting skills to the already talented staff of the community's award-winning monthly newspaper, The Bloomingdale Gazette.

Are you a travel enthusiast, chef, green thumb gardener, or D-I-Y kind of guy or gal? The BHA is also looking for columnists to share their knowledge and experience with the community.

While experience is a plus, energy, enthusiasm, and the ability to meet deadlines is a requirement. The commitment is what you make it – write once every few months or monthly—you choose. Interested? Call 813-681-2051, or email [inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com](mailto:inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com) or [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com).



## OAKCREST RESIDENTS ADOPT THEIR POND

On July 21, Oakcrest residents attended an Adopt-A-Pond kick-off meeting conducted by Hillsborough County Adopt-A-Pond Program Coordinator Jennifer Aragon at the Bloomingdale Community Office. Property owners surrounding Pond 14-07, which borders many homes on Wrencrest, Quail Briar, and Moreland Drives, applied for the inclusion of the pond in the program, and the pond was accepted last month. At nearly five acres, the pond is one of the community's largest.

During the meeting, Aragon, an environmental scientist, provided residents with recent inspection results (for which the pond received a "Fair" rating). Key issues included trash accumulations and an overgrowth of invasive vegetation, water hyacinth. She noted that the pond is nearly completely covered by the plant.

Based on her inspection, she presented a phased management plan to help residents coordinate their pond improvement efforts. Calling residents the "eyes of the pond," she stressed the resident involvement and effort needed to improve the pond.

Program staff will work closely with residents for the next three years in the phased clean-up, planting, and maintaining system.

Taking the lead for Oakcrest pond residents was Roberta Stone, who spearheaded the pond application for the program. A long-time resident, Stone had attempted to maintain the pond area around her home. The task, simply, became too much for her this year.

All attendees, while enthusiastic, expressed concerns about the pond's future, and the impact its current condition has on their enjoyment of the pond and property values.

Aragon concluded the meeting cautioning residents that while Adopt-A-Pond staffers are there to help and guide residents, ultimately residents will determine whether the program will succeed. (See page 7 for details on Adopt-A-Pond.)



Oakcrest residents held an Adopt-A-Pond kick-off Meeting on July 21 at the Bloomingdale Community Office. Pictured, left to right, are Jennifer Aragon, Adopt-A-Pond Coordinator, Roberta Stone, and Marlene Downie, both Oakcrest residents.



Aerial view of Pond 14-07 in Bloomingdale's Oakcrest community is pictured in an undated Hillsborough County photo.

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# BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By: Community Resource Master Deputy Curtis Warren

## SCHOOL STARTS THIS MONTH - OBEY THE LAWS!

School starts back this month with the students' first day back on August 19. As parents get ready for this date we ask that they adjust their driving schedules to prepare for the increased traffic. Following are some very important rules that must be followed to keep our kids safe:

1. *Drivers must stop both ways for school buses making stops for children on roads without median dividers.* Example: Bloomingdale Ave.
2. *Drivers must not speed in school zones. Speeding in school zones is very dangerous and very expensive!* Speeding fines are DOUBLED in school zones.

## PRIMARY SEAT BELT LAW NOW IN AFFECT

An important reminder, especially for new drivers, is that the primary seat belt law is in full affect. In fact it has affected several drivers' budgets already. Numerous citations have been issued in the amount of \$103—that's money that could have been spent on groceries or bills, rather than a citation and increased insurance rates. All it takes is simply buckling up your seat belt.

## PROTECTING OUR YOUNG KIDS

You may have heard the tragic news of a young child who died after being left in a hot car in Georgia. Unfortunately, this wasn't an isolated incident. There is absolutely no excuse for this happening. Anyone with a child in their car is totally responsible for that child's safety.

Here are two ways to prevent this type of incident:

- Place a needed item such as a laptop, briefcase, coat or purse in the back seat as a reminder that you have a very precious child in the back seat, too.
- Keep an eye out when you are in busy parking lots for children or pets left in cars and call 911 immediately if you spot something concerning.

## NEW LAWS IN FLORIDA

In our busy day-to-day lives we probably don't give much thought to what's happening in Tallahassee and to the lawmakers we elected and the laws they passed. Well, just this past July, 159 new laws went into effect. Here is a sampling illustrating the wide array of topics addressed: child protection, dangerous sex offender, veteran's support, motor vehicle taxes, education, Medicaid, bicycle ways, flood insurance, cannabis and computer crimes.

Become informed on the new laws that affect you and your family. Visit <http://laws.flrules.org/> to access more detailed information on these and many other issues covered in the Florida Legislature's last session.

## SPECIAL UPDATE FROM HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY--"BELL SHOALS WIDENING PROJECT"

The Bell Shoals widening project is moving forward and public outreach planning is ongoing. If residents and drivers haven't already, soon they may see preliminary activities such as surveying and engineering teams along the roadway. As we transition to construction currently planned to start next spring, we will schedule a public kick-off meeting and provide regular updates to ensure the community is updated on our progress and timetable. As always, we will do all we can to both protect the travelling public and minimize inconvenience. Updates will also be posted online, as they become available, at <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?nid=3224>

Andrea Roshaven, Community Relations Coordinator  
Communications and Digital Media Services  
Hillsborough County BOCC

## SHERIFF'S CITIZEN'S ACADEMY

Community involvement is the most powerful force any law enforcement agency has in the fight against crime. Through the Sheriff's "CITIZEN'S ACADEMY," residents have the opportunity to get to know the Sheriff's Office up close and personal. They attend special training sessions on the Sheriff's operations, investigations, communications center, detention facilities and training range.

Any Bloomingdale area resident interested in this unique opportunity to attend the Sheriff's "CITIZEN'S ACADEMY" can call (813) 247-8115 or visit the Sheriff's website at <http://www.hcso.tampa.fl.us>. The next Academy begins the first week of September 2014. To qualify a resident must be 19; be a resident of Hillsborough County; sign an indemnity release; and submit to a background check.

**SPECIAL THANKS:** On behalf of myself, CSO Sandy and the many deputies and detectives who work out of the Bloomingdale Community Station, I would like to extend our special thanks to everyone in the Bloomingdale and surrounding area who has provided us with outstanding support over the last four years. July marked our fourth year anniversary in the new Community Station. We're all looking forward to another great year working together!







## RELAX THIS WON'T HURT A BIT...

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
**WWW.HILLSCOUNTYHEALTH.ORG**

It's that time of year again when thoughts turn to what our students need for going back to school. However, we get caught up in the clothes and school supply shopping we forget about a very important part of starting or returning to school... vaccines.

Students starting Kindergarten for the 2014-2015 school year are required to have:

- 4 doses of DTP/Dtap
- 3 doses of Polio
- 1 dose of MMR
- Hib series of 4 doses or 1 after 15 months
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 1 dose of Varicella (chicken pox) or verification of the disease
- \*1 Pneumococcal Conjugate (this is new for this year)

Students starting the 7th grade for the 2014-2015 school year are required to have:

- 5 doses of DTap
- 4 doses of Polio
- 2 doses of MMR
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 1 dose of Varicella (chicken pox) or verification of the disease
- \*1 dose of Tdap

It is also recommended, but not required, to be vaccinated for Hepatitis A.



By appointment only, free back to school physicals and immunizations will be given for students **WITHOUT** private insurance, Florida KidCare or Medicaid, on:

- Saturday, August 9 at Ed and Myrtle Lou Swindle Medical Arts Building, From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 1601 West Timberlane Dr., Plant City and
- Saturday, August 16 at Blake High School 1701 North Blvd., Tampa from 9 a.m. to 1p.m.
- Call 443-3048 for availability.

Walk ins will be taken for free school physicals and immunizations for students **WITHOUT** private insurance, Florida KidCare or Medicaid, at Eisenhower Middle School, 7620

Old Big Bend Rd., Gibsonton from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Webb Middle School, 6035 Hanley Rd., Tampa from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, August 16.

- A parent or legal guardian must accompany child at all times.
- Immunization record is required for free immunizations to school aged children
- No sports, Head Start, or childcare physicals will be available
- Not eligible to participate: Florida KidCare, Medicaid or private insurance



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### ALL SCHOOLS

**AUGUST 19** First Day of School

September 1 Labor Day Holiday/Schools and District Offices Closed

Visit the Hillsborough County Public Schools website ([www.sdhc.k12.fl.us](http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us)) for back to school information as it becomes available.

### ALAFIA ELEMENTARY

**AUGUST 15** Kindergarten Boo Hoo Breakfast, 8-9 a.m. (For incoming kindergartners and their parents only). This is a chance for the kids to meet their teacher and check out the classroom. Parents will have the chance to purchase agendas, t-shirts and PTA membership (cash or check only).

Sneak Peak, 2:30-4 p.m. Students can meet their teachers, drop off supplies and also purchase agendas, t-shirts and PTA membership (cash or check only).

Cimino Elementary

**AUGUST 15** Teacher Meet and Greet: 11a.m.-Noon last names A-L, and 1-2 p.m. last names M-Z

### BURNS MIDDLE SCHOOL

(No Information Available)

### BLOOMINGDALE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

**AUGUST 14** Bloomingdale High School Open House, 5:30 p.m. Come learn more about Bloomingdale High School at our freshman and new student orientation at 5:30. New students will get their schedules at 6 p.m., and returning students can receive their schedules at 7 p.m. Meet your teachers and pick up your syllabi. Stop by the cafeteria to purchase your yearbook, PE uniforms and spirit shirts. More information

**AUGUST 22** BSHS Football (home) vs. Freedom High School, 7:30 p.m.

**AUGUST 29** BSHS Football away at Strawberry Crest, 7:30 p.m.

Bloomingdale Guidance Bulletin

- Dual Enrollment - New HCC courses now offered  
Want to try or add dual enrollment to your schedule? Courses will be offered at Bloomingdale High School this school year. Stop by the main office to enroll!
- Academic Foundation - Support Bloomingdale's Classrooms

We're looking for parents to run our academic foundation and help us raise money for our classrooms. Please contact [katie.rocha@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:katie.rocha@sdhc.k12.fl.us) for more information.

### FALL ATHLETICS INFORMATION

Swim & dive team will be having their back to school meeting on August 4 at 7 p.m. in the media center. For more information about participating in athletics in the fall, contact the coaches directly:

Football: Brian Surcy - [brian.surcy@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:brian.surcy@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Cross Country: Jennifer Beach - [jennifer.beach@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:jennifer.beach@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Volleyball: Claudia Cabrera - [claudia.cabrera@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:claudia.cabrera@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Boys Swim & Dive: Eva Applebee - [eva.applebee@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:eva.applebee@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Girls Swim & Dive: Lindsey Petree - [lindsey.petree@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:lindsey.petree@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Boys Golf: Will New - [william.new@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:william.new@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Girls Golf: Sheila Cohen - [sheila.cohen@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:sheila.cohen@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

### FOOTBALL PROGRAM DEADLINE

If you are interested in putting an ad in the football program, please email [donald.peek@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:donald.peek@sdhc.k12.fl.us) by August 15.

### PTSA NOTES

New Bloomingdale PTSA president, Stacey Donahue, states that this year's PTSA goals will be to participate in some community service projects in conjunction with Student Government; offer a grant to the new Academic Foundation, which supports the teachers by purchasing items for the classrooms; and offer at least two senior scholarships. The PTSA also will be adding business membership this year to get the community more involved with the school. We hope you will help us reach these goals by joining the PTSA. Please stop by the PTSA table at the Open House on August 14 to get your membership.



September 20 - BSHS 2nd Annual Chorus Rock & Roll Golf Tournament at Riverhills Golf and Country Club. Fundraising event includes contests, silent auction, raffles, trophies, swag bags and much more. For information contact Taya Fagan, (813) 393-9832. Sponsors and Players sign up at: [www.tournevents.com/bloomingdalehighschool](http://www.tournevents.com/bloomingdalehighschool).

**Go online to register your teams and sponsorships.**  
[www.TournEvents.com/BloomingdaleHighSchool](http://www.TournEvents.com/BloomingdaleHighSchool)

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**GO BULLS!**

Inquiries, please contact Taya Fagan 813-393-9832





The Bloomingdale football program was dealt a blow this spring when Head Coach John Booth accepted the head coaching position at Manatee High School. But, it didn't take long for Principal Sue Burkett and Athletic Director Donnie Peak to find a replacement. After interviews with numerous qualified candidates, Bloomingdale's own running back coach of two years, Brian Surcy, was the natural choice.

Coach Surcy is no stranger to Bloomingdale High and the community. His family moved to Bloomingdale East when he was 7 years old and Surcy later attended Burns Jr. High School as an 8th and 9th grader. As a young boy, Surcy remembers attending high school football games at Brandon High School before Bloomingdale was built. He remembers thinking, "one day that will be me playing football for Bloomingdale High School"—a thought that became reality. Surcy (a 1996 BSHS grad) played running back for Bloomingdale High before going on to play the same position at USF. Surcy shared that he feels extremely excited for the opportunity to lead the BSHS football program. "Red and black colors are in my heart. I've walked these hallways, ate in this lunchroom, sat in these classrooms and gave everything I had on this home field."

As a new head football coach, Surcy is thankful for his staff and their support. This is especially true of Assistant Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator Kevin (Bubba) Steinestel. Steinestel and Surcy played together at Bloomingdale High. Coach Bubba has known Surcy for 20 years and says his passion for Bloomingdale football has never wavered. "He will do anything in his power to get our program to the next level," said Steinestel. "All of his extensive experience, as both a player and coach, has prepared him for his new role as head coach."

Surcy graduated from USF where he ran track and played football, graduating with a bachelor's degree in communications. "USF football was where I actually learned about the game." Throughout college he also continued to feel connected to BSHS. "USF at the time didn't have a band," explained Surcy. When the coach told the team that a high school band would be playing at the first game, Surcy was blown away when he saw the mighty Bloomingdale Bulls Marching Band take the field. "I had the best of both

worlds!" Surcy originally interned with ABC news for sports broadcasting but decided not to pursue that career. "I became interested in teaching and coaching in 2003. I absolutely fell in love with it and I hoped that with hard work I would work my way through the coaching ranks."

Hard work is certainly ahead for Surcy. According to Steinestel, learning on the fly and gaining confidence with each game will be a big part of the Bulls season. This is because the team is bringing in an entirely new offensive staff with not much time. "The kids have all been working extremely hard this summer, even with the coaching changes the kids never stopped working," commented Steinestel. Senior offensive tackle Tarron Hampton echoed, "we are putting in lots of work and are performing better as a team. The loss of our head coach in the spring didn't have an impact on us as a team at all."

A goal among coaches and players alike is to get the community excited about Bloomingdale football. One way to do that according to senior and defensive tackle Tyler Clark is to "win games and become the District champs." Because community involvement is a priority with Surcy, he carries the message outside of Charley Harris Stadium, going door to door introducing himself to local businesses assuring them that the football program can only get better.

"We are excited to see what Coach Surcy brings to the team and to see how the team does this year," commented Tarick Barnes, senior safety. Coach Surcy has a lot of work ahead, but if enthusiasm and experience are good predictors, he and his staff will put Bloomingdale football back on the map.

Good luck to Bloomingdale football this coming season and in the future. Go Bulls!!

For more information on the football program, the schedule and upcoming events visit the football website at [bloomingdalebulls.net](http://bloomingdalebulls.net). You can also find them on Facebook at Bdale Bulls (football) and follow them on Twitter at Bdale\_Football.

**New BSHS head football coach Brian Surcy is already hard at work prepping the team and community for what he anticipates will be an exciting season.**



Photos: Deidre Morgan







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