



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

VOLUME XXXVI ❧ ISSUE 12 ❧ DECEMBER 2016 ❧ [www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com)

Here Comes Santa Claus!



30th Annual Santa  
Claus Visit &  
Charity Food Drive  
See Page 4 for Details

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"What we do today is what matters most." *Buddha*

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

BHA  
COMMUNITY CORNER  
*Pages 4 - 5*

COMMUNITY CALENDAR  
*Page 6*

BSTD  
*Page 8*

NEIGHBORHOOD  
HAPPENINGS!  
*Pages 12 - 13*  
Wonderland  
Foundation Coffee  
St. Vincent de Paul  
Thrift Store

SCHOOL NEWS  
*Pages 20 - 23*

PLEASE  
RECYCLE

## WINNER

2013 & 2014  
Hillsborough County  
Neighborhood  
Recognition Award  
Best Communications  
Newsletter Category

Photo: Joy Boisselle



# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

## YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

### Bloomington Homeowners Association, Inc.

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

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

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

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

3509 Bell Shoals Road  
Valrico, Florida 33596

#### Directors at Large:

*Sean Donahue*  
*Billy Hightower*  
*Bobbi Ferraro*  
*Beth Smedley*  
*Joanie Wilson*  
*Charlie Woodcock*

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

**Vice President:** *Daniel Berkowitz*

**Secretary:** *Suzy Watts*

**Treasurer:** *Mary Galin*

# YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



### JOY BOISSELLE

#### Editor - The Bloomington Gazette

3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

Valrico, FL 33596 - (813) 681-2051

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# Tampa Bay Times

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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

# Kids R Kids

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- Summer and Holiday Camps

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12/19-12/30



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Bevis, FishHawk Creek,  
Lithia Springs,  
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813-657-6200  
[www.krkvallrico.com](http://www.krkvallrico.com)  
4321 Lynx Paw Trail

Located across from Lithia Springs Elementary

813-654-7000  
[www.krkcirca.com](http://www.krkcirca.com)  
5815 Kids Crossing Drive

Located between Stowers Elementary & Mosaic



## Yard of the Month



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

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



**Alberto & Oneida Aloma** 510 Sandy Creek Drive, Brandon, FL 33511 (Sandy Creek Estates)

## Wanted: A Forever Home and Family

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

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

For information on adoptions and foster care, lost pets or spay/neuter vouchers, contact the PRC at 813-744-5660 or visit [www.HillsboroughCounty.org/Pets](http://www.HillsboroughCounty.org/Pets). Located at 440 N. Falkenburg Rd., the center is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

## Zoey



Pretty Zoey (1680101) is a 6-year-old girl who's been spayed and is up to date on her shots.

## Bo



Bo (1683888) is 1-year-old spotted boy who is ready to meet his special forever family. Make this pup's day...he needs a home.

## Peanut



Peanut (1683436) is a 5-year-old beauty who is hoping you can't turn down her cute face and green eyes.

## Provided By The Pet Resource Center

**FIRST SATURDAY**  
*Celebration*

**The Pet Resource Center's First Saturday Celebration features Adorable Stocking Stuffers**

According to Santa's list, the pets at Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center have been very good this year and are ready to go home for the holidays. First Saturday Celebrations are always a great time to find your fur-ever friend. During December, all pets are available for a \$20 adoption fee, which covers the cost of spaying/neutering, microchipping, vaccinating against rabies, and registering the pet with Hillsborough County. Also, all pets adopted in December will go home with a stocking full of goodies and a personalized tag.

How can you help this month? Food donations are always welcome as the Pet Resource Center has a Safety Net Food Pantry available for residents who might be going through a difficult time and need some assistance feeding their pet. The pets at the shelter also love MilkBones, peanut butter, honey, broth, Kong brand toys, and quick-snap collars.

The First Saturday Celebration is TODAY from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Adoption packages include spaying/neutering, vaccinations, microchip with free registration, and Hillsborough County pet license tag (a package valued at \$250 to \$400). Come enjoy refreshments and music, special guests, exhibitors, rescue partners, and foster pets ready for adoption. As always, parking and admission are free.

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



# BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

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

## 2016 Membership Drive concludes, 2017 drive starts in January

As the 2016 Membership Drive nears its end, The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association thanks all who joined this year making it one of the most successful membership drives yet.

The BHA still needs your support. With 2017 right around the corner, we ask that you again support the Association. When you receive your membership card and scholarship donation request in January, please join. Your membership helps this dedicated group of volunteers continue to keep Bloomingdale a great community in which to raise a family, and a great place to call home.

The BHA is the only community organization fighting for the interests of Bloomingdale's nearly 23,000 residents, 5,000 residences and 32 neighborhoods at local and state meetings. In addition, the all-volunteer organization works closely with the County Code Department and Sheriff's Office to improve standards and safety in the area.

In addition, your dues fund all special programs and services including this newspaper, a part-time staff, today's annual Santa visit, the upcoming community garage sale and the community clean-up. In 2017, the BHA is attempting to add a second clean-up in September. The numbers of residents who join the Association in 2017 will determine whether this event can be funded.

### Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Rd. • Valrico, FL 33596 • [bloomingdalehoa.com](http://bloomingdalehoa.com)

*Please correct name below if different. BHA Membership Notices are mailed to the owner or on file with the Hillsborough County Tax Collector. Recent changes may not be reflected here.*

Name:

Address:

**2016 BHA MEMBERSHIP**  
\$35.00 to Join or Renew!

Return This Card With Payment



2016 Membership ..... \$35.00

Community Scholarship Donation ..... \$

Total Enclosed ..... \$

Check Number ..... #

As always, every member and dollar matter. The BHA is an IRC 501(c) (4) non-profit organization, run entirely by volunteers who live in your neighborhoods.

Make checks payable to the BHA and mail to 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33596. An easier method is to use our PayPal option. Go to [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com), look for the PayPal link and follow the simple instructions. All membership money collected goes back to our community, and all residents are welcome at our monthly board meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Bell Shoals office.

**2017 Membership Drive – Membership notices will be mailed between Jan. 1 - 5, 2017. Please consider joining and supporting your community.**

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



Photo: Joy Boisselle

## HERE COMES SANTA CLAUS!

**TODAY!**

**Dec. 3, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. / Santa Claus Visit and Charity Food Drive, Bloomingdale Golfers Club, 4113 Natures Way Blvd. Bring your camera and a canned food donation!**

## HE'S BACK! SANTA RETURNS TO BLOOMINGDALE

### Food Drive Helps the Needy

Continuing a holiday tradition started 30 years ago; the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association in partnership with the Bloomingdale Golfers Club (BGC) is pleased to announce the return of Santa and his merry band of elves to the community! The annual event features a visit with the "jolly one", photo opportunities, crafts, a balloon maker, and a chance for participants to give to others less fortunate during the holidays. Visitors are asked to bring a non-perishable food item, which will be donated, to The Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO).

**Don't forget your camera and a non-perishable food donation!**





# BHA EVENTS CALENDAR

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

**Monday, Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. / Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Monthly Trustee Meeting,** Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Call 813-684-6667 for information.

**Tuesday, Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting,** Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome. Call 813-681-2051 for information.

**Note:** No BACC Meeting in December / Bloomingdale Area Community Council chaired by Hillsborough County Deputy Luke Hussey, Bloomingdale Community Station, 3622 Erindale Drive, 813-635-8040. Learn about safety and security issues affecting our community

## BHA BRIEFS

### November Board Meeting Highlights and Other Board News

Elections and By-Laws topped the list of agenda items during last month's board meeting. Re-elected officers are President George May, Vice President Dann Berkowitz, and Secretary Suzy Watts. The treasurer position was tabled until the Nov.29 special committee meeting where Director Sean Donahue received the nod to replace current treasurer Mary Galin. The officers and directors will begin their duties on Jan.1.

By-laws were reviewed and after much discussion the By-laws Committee agreed to rework several items. The By-Laws were again put forward for approval at the special committee meeting and were approved. Residents wishing to review the By-laws can come by the office for a copy.

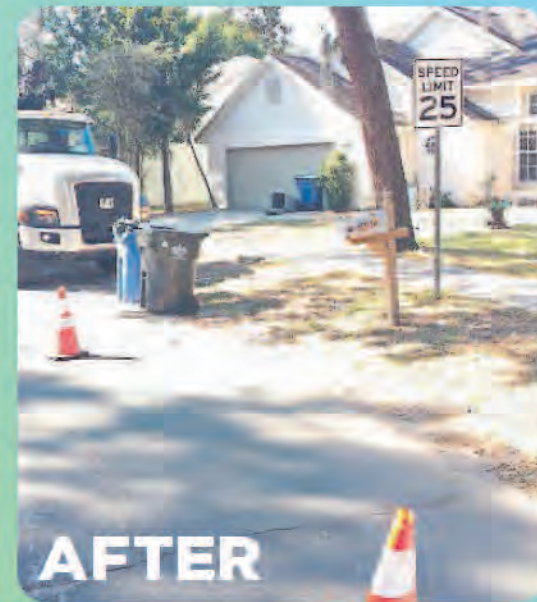
Also at the special meeting, the budget committee reviewed the current budget and proposed a 2017 budget. The document will be voted on at the Dec. 13 board meeting and will be implemented on Jan.1.

### BEFORE AND AFTER:

On Nov. 13, the BHA received a resident complaint with picture (see below) of a bank-owned property in the area. BHA staff contacted the Bloomingdale County Code Officer Christine Zien who in turn contacted the County's Rapid Response Team. Bottom Line: Within 3 days, the mess was gone. While turn arounds are not always this quick or always successful, the BHA works hard to act quickly on behalf of residents.

This is just one of the many issues your BHA works to resolve on your behalf. When your membership letter arrives in January, JOIN, Please.

Courtesy Photos:  
Resident and  
Hillsborough County



## UPCOMING EVENTS



The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association



## 2017 Annual Clean-Up Day

March 4, 2017

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **OR** until bins are full




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

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

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

Email: [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com) • [BloomingdaleHOA.com](http://BloomingdaleHOA.com)

 BloomingdaleHOA



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

## TODAY

**Valrico Fishhawk Chamber of Commerce 2nd Annual Shop Local Holiday Expo / 9 a.m.-12 p.m. / Park Square in Fishhawk / 16132 Churchview Drive, Lithia /** Showcasing local businesses of Valrico and Fishhawk, the 2nd Annual Shop Local Holiday Expo is good old-fashioned fun with games, crafts, and shopping. Don't miss a photo "op" with Florida Santa and his flamboyance of flamingos!



**The Wonderland of Lights / Ongoing through Dec. 31 / Sunday-Thursday, 6-9 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 6-10 p.m. / Hillsborough County Fairgrounds / 215 Sydney Washer Road, Dover /** Tampa Bay's biggest light show, with over 2 million lights, comes to the Hillsborough County Fairgrounds this holiday season. Cost for passenger vehicles (up to 8 passengers), \$20; Season Pass (vehicles only), \$35; coaches, limos, and mini-vans (9 to 24 seating), \$35; motor coaches (25 to 50 seating), \$75. For information, contact The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce, 813-689-1221, [info@brandonchamber.com](mailto:info@brandonchamber.com).

**It's a Wonderful Life / Dec. 3, 9, 10, 16, 17 at 8 p.m.; Dec. 4 and 11, 3 p.m. Matinee / The Village Players James McCabe Theater / 5th Street, Valrico /** The Village Players present the holiday classic story of an angel who shows a despairingly-frustrated man what life would have been like if he had never been born. Tickets \$15, General Admission; \$13, Students, Seniors and Military with I.D.; \$12, Groups of 10 or more. For information, visit [www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com](http://www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com).

**Lighting of the Christmas Tree  
Dec. 7 at 7 p.m.  
Center Place Fine Arts  
& Civic Center  
619 Vonderburg Drive  
Brandon**

Free community event  
to ring in the  
holiday season!

For information, call  
813-685-8888.



**6th Annual Holiday Tea / Dec. 4 / 2:30 p.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Center / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon /** Put on your hats and holiday attire and attend our annual Holiday Tea which includes a holiday lunch, scones, Devonshire cream and desserts. Enjoy a silent auction just in time for holiday gifts and special prizes for the most unique and whimsical hat and table will be awarded. \$35/person or \$250/table of 8. Make table reservations by Nov. 20. Adults only. For information, call 813-685-8888.

**Winter Holiday Tales / Dec. 8 / 4-4:45 p.m. / Bloomingdale Library / 1906 Bloomingdale Avenue, Valrico /** Presents from far away countries have arrived just for you! With each present, storyteller Katie Adams unwraps a toy that introduces a holiday tale. Matryoshka dolls introduce The Little Snow Girl, a Russian version of Frosty the Snowman. Dreidels begin the The Magic Pomegranate, a Jewish adventure story about the true meaning of giving. Victorian costumes lead into The Shoemaker and the Elves, a tale from old England about elves who help a poor shoemaker and his wife. These multi-cultural stories are performed with lots of fun audience participation. For information, call 813-273-3652.

**Walk Through Bethlehem / Dec. 8-11 / Kings Avenue Baptist Church / 2602 S. Kings Avenue, Brandon /** With the help of over 300 workers, Kings Avenue Baptist Church presents "Walk Through Bethlehem," a re-creation of the town of Bethlehem as it existed during the time of Christ. Open Dec. 8, 6:30-9:30 p.m.; Dec. 9, 6:30-10 p.m.; Dec. 10, 4-10 p.m.; and Dec. 11, 4-9 p.m. For information, visit [www.kingsavenue.org](http://www.kingsavenue.org).

**Season of Giving Celebration / Dec. 10 / 10 a.m.-12 p.m. / Noah's Ark Animal Hospital / 4338 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico /** Meet the staff of Noah's Ark Animal Hospital and enjoy clinic tours, refreshments, face painting, friends from Great Greyhound, holiday pet photos with Santa, gift basket raffle, collection of pet food for local animal shelters and more. Free family fun for all! Call 813-662-7275 or visit [www.noahsarkanimal.com](http://www.noahsarkanimal.com) for information.

**Brandon Ballet Present The Nutcracker / Dec. 10 and 11 / Matinee and Evening Performances / Riverview High School Auditorium / 11311 Boyette Road, Riverview /** Experience the thrill and magic of Brandon Ballet's The Nutcracker! With beautiful sets, costumes, and glorious music enter the magical world of Clara and her Nutcracker Prince, waltzing Snowflakes, and the regal Sugar Plum Fairy. Tickets \$30 for adults, \$20 for children under 12, and \$20 for seniors 55+. Tickets available at [www.tututix.com/brandonballet](http://www.tututix.com/brandonballet). For information contact the Brandon Ballet at [dance@brandonballet.org](mailto:dance@brandonballet.org) or 813-684-4282.



**Eastern Hillsborough Community Band Christmas Concert / Dec. 15 / 7 p.m. / New Hope United Methodist Church / Logan Hall, 115 Knights Ave, Brandon /** The community is invited to experience the sounds of Christmas presented by the Eastern Hillsborough Community Band. EHCB is a full-sized concert band that has been entertaining the Tampa Bay area since 2009. There is a \$5 suggested donation at the door. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., no reservations required. For information, email [info@ehcb.org](mailto:info@ehcb.org), visit [www.ehcb.org](http://www.ehcb.org) or call 813-569-1771.



**Kidapalooza and Parents' Night Out / Dec. 16 / 5-7 p.m. / Fred Astaire Franchised Dance Studio / 1076 E. Brandon Blvd., Brandon /** Ballroom dance class for kids plus pizza, games, and more, while parents enjoy a date night or get their shopping done. Families welcome to stay from 7 to 9 p.m. for a free holiday party. Call 813-438-5963 for information.

**Breakfast with Santa / Dec. 17, 9 a.m.; Dec. 18, 10:30 a.m. / Campo Family YMCA / 3414 Culbreath Road, Valrico /** Christmastime is a wonderful time of the year to enjoy with friends and family. Join the Campo Family YMCA for the annual Breakfast with Santa event (members only). Activities include pictures with Santa, crafts, games, and so much more. Please sign up at the Welcome Center. Call 813-684-1371 for information.



**Santa's Workshop / Dec. 17 / 11 a.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon /** Come and join Center Place for a fun-filled day of cookie decorating, crafts, and a visit with Santa! Don't forget your camera! Moms, Dads, Grandparents, and children ages 5 and up are welcome! Children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets on sale now and must be purchased in advance. \$10. No tickets at the door. For information, visit [www.centerplacebrandon.org](http://www.centerplacebrandon.org).



## Bloomington Real Estate Update

*(Editor's Note: While we thank our departing real estate columnist Ryan Brantley for her advice over the years, we welcome our new real estate columnist Ronnie McLaughlin. McLaughlin's moves from Michigan, New Jersey, Dubai, and eventually to Valrico, helped her find her niche in residential real estate. She has lived in Bloomington for six years with her husband and two children, a son attending University of Florida and daughter at Bloomington High School. A productive Realtor, she is also active in the Bloomington High School PTSA and Girl Scouts, and you might just see her at your next local 5K race!)*

### Declutter One Item at a Time

My family and I take our dog, Princess, on nightly walks around our Bloomington neighborhood and this is our favorite time of year to walk because we get to see great holiday yard decorations. We get such a kick out of seeing which house displays their holiday cheer first and watching as the neighborhood continually lights up with more décor throughout the season.

In our moves over the years, holiday decorations were what normally had to be left behind. This got me thinking, are you planning on listing in 2017? What a perfect time of year to declutter your house and purge items that you probably will not take on that big move.

So, where do you start? Declutter one room at a time or one type of item at a time. Do you have decorations that you do not plan to display? Do you have holiday cookbooks that you no longer reference? This could be a great time to make a donation and discard box. A tip that has worked for me is to take all of your clothes out of the closet and drawers, place them in a pile, and only put back what you love and what you

have worn over the past 12 months.

Decluttering a little bit now will help you enjoy a more stress free holiday season. If you do decide to list your house next year, you will appreciate that you took the time now.

### Neighborhood Snapshot - Bristol Green

Bristol Green located across from the entrance of Cimino Elementary and along Natures Way, was developed between 1995 - 2003 and is comprised of 188 homes on Golf Manor Blvd, Merrick Run Ln, Blantyre Pl, Kendal Ct, Maren Trace Ln, Arranmore Cir and Castlebar Way. The average sales price for homes sold in the last year was \$323,000 at an average of \$121 per square foot. Twenty-nine homes along Golf Manor Blvd line the Bloomington Golf Club. All but just a few of the homes include three car garages and many have private pools. The average square footage is 2625 and the average number of bedrooms is four.

*\* MLS statistics were based on rough property lines for individual neighborhoods and included homes sold Nov. 13, 2015 through Nov. 13, 2016. Sales not entered into the MLS did not count in these statistics.*



By Ronnie McLaughlin

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Keller Williams Realty

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## Unsafe Sidewalks are a Growing Concern

By Miriam Leech, BSTD Staff

### The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District: The Community's Common Area Connection

*Editor's Note: The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District's (BSTD) monthly column will inform readers about the BSTD, its mission and ongoing and new initiatives. The BSTD meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of the month at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. Questions? Call 813-684-6667 or email [bstd@verizon.net](mailto:bstd@verizon.net). Office hours are flexible, so call before you come by for a visit.*

Residents of Bloomingdale take great pride in our beautiful streets, walkways, and thoroughfares. Walkers, runners, and cyclists all call our community home. However, with our aging infrastructure one of the most used paths throughout Bloomingdale is becoming unsafe—our sidewalks.

Not only are the sidewalks often slippery from the buildup of mold and mildew, but they have become uneven because of the roots of the mature live oak trees that line our streets. And our residents are getting injured as a result.

While Hillsborough County is the responsible party for the maintenance of our sidewalks, the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District (BSTD) and the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) are working together to gather information on the worst sidewalk areas, take pictures, and report them to County officials.

It is the BSTD's belief that it will take the efforts of both organizations as well as the residents to make Bloomingdale's voices heard on this matter.

The following is a list of contacts for reporting unsafe sidewalks throughout the common areas of Bloomingdale:



Hillsborough County at Your Service  
813-272-5900  
<https://hillsboroughcounty.org/AtYourService>

Hillsborough County Public Works  
Department Director, John Lyons  
813-307-1868  
[PWCustomerResolution@HCFLGov.net](mailto:PWCustomerResolution@HCFLGov.net)

Wanda Sloan  
Hillsborough County Neighborhood Liaison  
Office of Neighborhood Relations  
813-307-3564  
[sloanw@HCFLGov.net](mailto:sloanw@HCFLGov.net)

If you are injured and need to make a claim, contact Hillsborough County Risk Management at <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?nid=1762>, where you will find a link for the Citizen's Claim Form for Property Damage or Injury.



## VOLUNTEER CITIZEN PATROL PROGRAM; ANOTHER GREAT WAY TO GET INVOLVED

HCSO Website

The Volunteer Citizen Patrol Program (VCP) is based on the concept of utilizing the talents and skills of volunteers from within the local community as partners in public safety. Citizen patrol volunteers are specially trained by the Sheriff's Office to respond to many non-emergency and routine calls for service that do not require law enforcement or regulatory authority.



[www.hcso.tampa.fl.us/  
Featured-Info/News/  
Volunteer-Citizen-Patrol.aspx](http://www.hcso.tampa.fl.us/Featured-Info/News/Volunteer-Citizen-Patrol.aspx)

The VCP was created to reduce crime, improve the safety of our citizens, improve the quality of life within Hillsborough County and allow community members to become active participants in the process of crime control and prevention.

Volunteers donate their time to patrol while driving specially marked Sheriff's Office vehicles. Volunteers receive training in areas such as crime prevention, first-aid, traffic control, and community policing. The VCP consists of three shifts per day, patrolling up until midnight, seven days a week. Each VCP vehicle will patrol with two volunteers per shift.

Only by working together will we address and resolve community problems and affect lasting change in the communities where we live and raise our families. Sheriff Gee needs volunteers who want to help keep our county safe.

Bloomingdale needs to add more volunteers to this program, currently there are only eight! If you are interested in being a volunteer or want information about the program, call: 813-247-8223 or email Deputy Lorraine Jordan - [ljordan@hcso.tampa.fl.us](mailto:ljordan@hcso.tampa.fl.us).

## BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

# BLOOMINGDALE

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico  
Florida 33596

(813) 684-6667 Office

(813) 684-2358 Fax

[BSTD@verizon.net](mailto:BSTD@verizon.net)

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

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

David P. West, President

Mark Horst, Treasurer

Russell Jones, Trustee

Chris Papp, Trustee

Mark Vargo, Trustee

Tom Leech, Trustee

Jay Kittle, Trustee



# SHEN YUN

**All New 2017 Show With Live Orchestra**

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*— Kenn Wells, former lead dancer of the English National Ballet*

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**FEB 7-8** Lakeland  
The Lakeland Center

**FEB 10-12** Venice  
Venice Performing Arts Center

**Ticket Online:** [Shenyun.com/FL](http://Shenyun.com/FL)

**Ticket Hotline:** 888.974.3698



**T**HROUGHOUT HISTORY, almost every culture looked to the divine for inspiration. Art was meant to uplift, bringing joy and renewal to those who created and experienced it. Today, Shen Yun's artists follow in this noble tradition, incorporating study of traditional culture, meditation and a mindful lifestyle into their rigorous daily training. This spiritual connection is the heart behind each dance movement and each musical note. It is why audiences feel there is something different about Shen Yun, something deeply heartening that continues resounding long after the performance.



Presented by Florida Falun Dafa Association



**"I was moved to tears a few times. It was very uplifting. They use their costumes brilliantly with their movement. I've never seen anything like that before."**

*— Carol Miller, former Ballet teacher*



**"I would say come and see it for yourselves, because you will have never seen anything like this before. It's really so beautifully done, so energetic, and the choreography is spectacular."**

*— Edward Chapman, CEO of Marchesa Fashion House*



**"I probably have reviewed over three to four thousand shows, which still cannot compare to what I saw tonight. I give this production Five Stars, that's the top! The best word to use is 'mind-blowing'!"**

*— Richard Connema, Talkin' Broadway critic*

## EXQUISITE COSTUMES

Apparel has always been an essential part of China's five-millennia-old culture, and Shen Yun Performing Arts brings this heritage to life on stage. From radiant golden-hued Tang Dynasty gowns to elegant Manchu chopine shoes, each costume is designed and tailored with meticulous care.



## STUNNING BACKDROPS

Shen Yun's breathtaking dynamic backdrops bring classical Chinese dance into the 21st century, adding visual depth and grandeur. Each backdrop is custom designed to exactly match the costumes, storyline, lighting, and even choreography of each dance.







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## VALRICO

643-4825

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Source: HCSO

## BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Deputy Luke Hussey and C.S.O. Sandy Capitano

### BLOOMINGDALE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING (BACC)

There will be no BACC this month. The next scheduled BACC meeting will be Jan.19. See you next year!

### AREA LAW AND ORDER

Between Oct.18 and Nov. 26, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office conducted 233 traffic stops in the Bloomingdale and surrounding area known as J04 Zone. District IV deputies in the J04 zone patrol a very large area. J04 zone encompasses not only the Bloomingdale area but also reaches all the way down to the Lithia area.

In the Bloomingdale area, there were six auto burglaries and three residential burglaries. There were also two criminal mischief incidents. Please remember to lock the doors to your home, secure your garage doors and lock up your vehicles. This will significantly reduce the opportunity for you to become a victim.

### HOLIDAY CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

The holiday season is a wonderful time to enjoy family and friends, to go shopping for and with loved ones and to take those long awaited trips or vacations. Our minds are wandering and we are preoccupied with these cheerful and maybe stressful events. Unfortunately, criminals know that when our minds are wandering, mistakes are made and we become careless.

During this holiday season, remember these few tips:

- Always park in well-lit areas while shopping
- Always lock your doors and secure your valuables (preferably in the trunk)
- Try to shop and/or walk in pairs or with multiple people
- Let your neighbors know when you leave town and include names and contact information for only people who will be allowed access to your home while you are gone
- Make sure all windows and doors are closed and locked, including blinds shut
- Don't leave empty large TV or electronics boxes at the curb for trash pick-up (it's like an advertisement for thieves), dispose of them in another way
- Arm your home security system, even when you are home
- Have motion and glass break detectors installed in your current security system, primarily on rear sliding doors and bedroom windows

### SAFE EXCHANGE ZONES

The popularity of online deals, whether you are buying, selling or trading, is not without its dangers. In Hillsborough County, and around the nation, the number of robberies or scams involving online transactions are on the rise. Most of the victims are the sellers.

### HCSO'S SAFE EXCHANGE ZONES NEAR BLOOMINGDALE:

HCSO District II  
2310 N. Falkenburg Road  
Tampa, FL 33619  
813-247-8555

HCSO District IV  
508 33rd Street SE  
Ruskin, FL 33570  
813-247-0455

The HCSO can help make that exchange a safe one. With some simple safety tips and the use of our Safe Exchange Zones, you can make the online sale a safe and pleasant experience.

### DO:

- Use a Safe Exchange Zone to complete the transaction.
- Get the contact information from the buyer or seller to include telephone number.
- Notify someone about the transaction including when and where it will take place.
- Go with a friend or family member.
- Avoid secluded areas, such as the rear parking lot of an apartment complex or business.
- Pick a public location for the transaction, preferably in the daytime.
- Take a working cell phone in case you need to make an emergency call.
- Inspect the item to make sure it's not counterfeit or damaged.

**FROM ALL OF US AT THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE,  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS, MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



## The Commissioner's News

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



### Happy Holidays!

As we come into this Christmas Season, my hope is that we all take just a moment to be thankful for family and friends, and reflect upon the powerful meaning of Christmas. I pray that you found much to be grateful for during Thanksgiving, and that you take another opportunity to remember those blessings once more.

I am also reminded of the great blessing and privilege it is to serve as your County Commissioner and as the newly elected Chairman of the Board of Hillsborough County Commissioners. I am most especially thankful for the citizens of District 4 who chose me as their representative on the board. My thoughts and prayers are also with you as we enter this New Year and I hope you have a safe and happy New Year's Eve!

Wishing you and yours a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Always out and involved, Commissioner White participated in the Great American Teach-in on Nov. 17. Courtesy Photo: Hillsborough County



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

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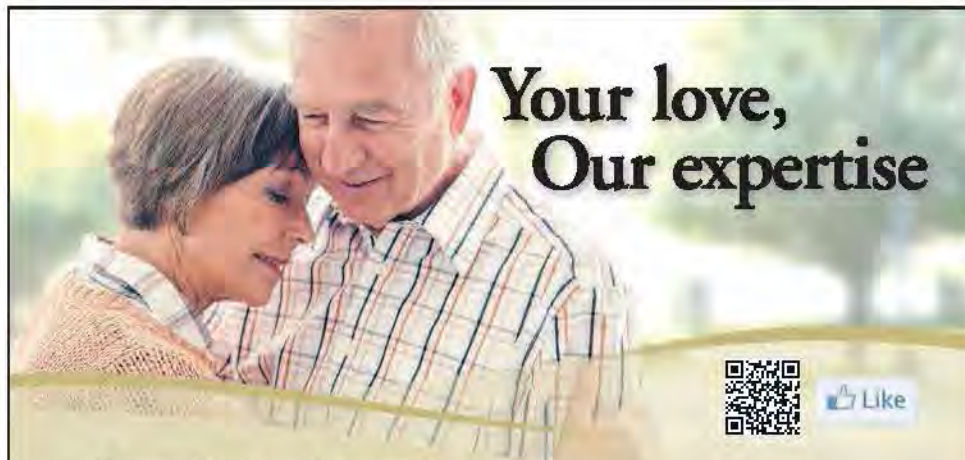
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## A New Drive-Thru Opens for the Holidays - Tampa Bay's Wonderland of Lights™

By Wendy Knipp

Tis the season! Many love driving around searching for homes alit with twinkling lights and holiday decor. It's a beloved tradition that brings joy to the heart.

Where do you go? What are the costs? When you arrive, will it even be worth it? The answer is local, inexpensive, and yes, it is definitely worth it. This year, look no further than the ever-popular, family-friendly event – Tampa Bay's Wonderland of Lights.

The Brandon Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with North Pole Productions hosts Wonderland, which returns to the area after a brief hiatus. Jack Vandercook, Chamber communications coordinator said, "We're looking forward to bringing it [Wonderland] back to the Brandon area."

With over 2 million lights, Wonderland is a drive thru experience enjoyed from the comfort of your own vehicle. Beyond the dazzling holiday displays, families can park the car and enjoy a more interactive experience at the Christmas village where a winter carnival awaits. Walk through Santa's Village, enjoy The Wolves of the World, or ride your choice of The North Pole Express Train, or a horse drawn carriage ride. Refreshments, shopping, games, and more are also available.

The drive thru is open now through Dec. 31. Days and times are 6-9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 6-10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Admission for 1-8 passenger vehicles is \$20, 9-24 passenger vehicles is \$35, and 25-50 passenger vehicles is \$75. Season passes on vehicles are \$35. Save \$3 per carload by purchasing in advance at [www.BrandonChamber.com](http://www.BrandonChamber.com) and entering Promo Code 1225.

Wonderland of Lights takes place at the County Fairgrounds at 215 Sydney Washer Road, Dover. For information, visit [www.hillsboroughcountyfair.com](http://www.hillsboroughcountyfair.com).



Don't miss this hidden gem which is sure to delight the whole family.



## Tampa Bay's Wonderland of Lights™



Beautiful holiday exhibits containing over 2 million lights are on display at The Wonderland of Lights of Tampa Bay.



Courtesy Photos: North Pole Productions

## Coffee, Community, and Outdoors Make Foundation Coffee a Perfect Blend

By Miriam Leech

If you are in search of the perfect blend of specialty-grade coffees, a meeting place for friends and family, and an outdoors living room feel, look no further than Foundation Coffee. The cozy coffee place, located off Boyette Road, just celebrated its 1-year anniversary on Oct. 24.

Said owner Emily Smith, "We knew the coffee business was growing [when we opened], but did not expect such a positive reaction to our place to meet up and share coffee."

In fact, the reaction has been so positive that Smith just opened a second location of Foundation Coffee in downtown Tampa on Aug. 21. This keeps Smith, along with husband Jason, owner of Outdoor Impressions, busy while raising their three children ages 11, 6, and 4.

"We have always entertained, and Jason has built us such a beautiful outdoor space at our home, so opening an outdoor place that combined our love for coffee with our love for people seemed perfect," said Smith.

The coffee aficionado takes time choosing the blends served at Foundation. Unlike other coffee

sellors, she selects her specialty coffees from multiple roasters—King State out of Seminole Heights, Four Barrel out of San Francisco, Sweet Bloom out of Denver, and Novel out of Dallas.

"If we brew them right, the coffees are going to taste great. And we like to give the coffee a chance to speak for itself," says Smith. "We are not Starbucks."

In order to help achieve the perfect coffee flavor, Smith hires baristas (the Italian word for bartender but associated with those making and serving coffee) who have a passion for the drink as well as a passion for people. The most popular drinks at Foundation are the Latte (a shot of espresso with steamed milk added) or the Cortado (equal parts espresso and steamed milk).

Barista Phil Schiller loves creating original drinks for Foundation. This summer he created a Marbre Citron drink using espresso and layering with fresh-squeezed lemonade sweetened with simple syrup—making for a surprisingly refreshing blend of flavors. For the holidays, Schiller is creating a hot, spiced honey drink.

To find your perfect blend, visit the original Foundation Coffee at 10020 Carr Road, Riverview, or the Tampa Heights location at 1607 North Franklin Street. Riverview hours are Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. For information, visit [www.foundationcoffee.com](http://www.foundationcoffee.com).



Foundation Coffee, located just off Boyette Road, celebrated its 1-year anniversary on Oct. 24. Coffee, Community, and Outdoors are the elements that make this coffee place the perfect blend. Photo: Miriam Leech



Emily Smith is the owner of Foundation Coffee. She selects only the highest quality coffees from multiple roasters to bring the best flavors to her customers. Photo: Phillip Schiller



## Giving Made Easy at St. Vincent de Paul, Donate Before Dec. 31 for Tax Breaks

By Susan DeLuca with Paula Roetendink



The holidays are the perfect time to give back to those in need. Finding the time during an already stress-filled time of year can be difficult. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store has the answer – the non-profit organization will come to your home, pickup donations and save you the trip.

The thrift store offers a wide variety of furniture, clothing, toys, games, household goods, collectibles, antiques, new mattresses, and more. Donations are accepted at the thrift store and larger items can be scheduled for pick up. After donations are sorted, they are then placed out for sale where proceeds benefit multiple churches in the area, including, St. Stephen, Nativity and St. Anne Catholic Churches. Proceeds feed, clothe and sustain the poor.

The Society, established in 1833, consists of 89 conferences of charities, 6,000 volunteers, and 2,500 associate members. Over 12 million people receive assistance from the Vincentians each year.

Volunteers are always welcome and needed at the thrift store. St. Stephen's Father Curtis Carro said, "They are a tremendous group of dedicated volunteers who, with the biggest hearts, want to help those in need. They do great work only because of the generosity of the larger community."

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store is located at 1311 E. 3rd Street in Ruskin behind Saint Anne Church on U.S. 41. For information, visit the thrift store website at [www.svdpruskin.org](http://www.svdpruskin.org) which features items for sale on eBay, how to obtain assistance, how to find Saint Vincent de Paul on social media, and most importantly, how you can help.



Sequoia Cross will pick up anything you are willing to donate – from furniture, to clothes, to pots and pans. "To arrange to have the truck come to your home to pick up donations, call 813-645-5255.

Have a holiday party coming up? Don't just donate, come shop at the store for finds like this party dress displayed by store manager Gabriela Munoz. The dress, in excellent condition, sells for \$20.

Photos: Susan DeLuca



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Photo: Phillip Schiller



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Photos: Susan DeLuca



## Michigan

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

### Michigan by Will Leech



## When Can My Kid Start Learning to Golf?

By J.D. Carino (Bloomingdale CC campus)

The answer is very simple. **When your kid wants to go to the golf course or the driving range with you, it's time.** Your kid really wants to spend time with you and have fun. If they do not want to go or are not having fun, then it'll be an unpleasant experience.



During the early stages of learning to golf, a kid only understands the joy and laughter shared with their parent. Pars, birdies and eagles are totally irrelevant.

At this point, ensuring the young golfer has the right golf clubs for their height and age is crucial. The wrong size clubs can be too long or too heavy. Both will cause a child to develop bad swings by compensating. The bottom line—the child must have the desire, the right equipment and ideally some instruction to learn the basics from the beginning.

For those parents who do not golf or those who would like another person to teach their kids, we're starting a Little Linksters program at Bloomingdale in January on Saturday mornings. Call for information.

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



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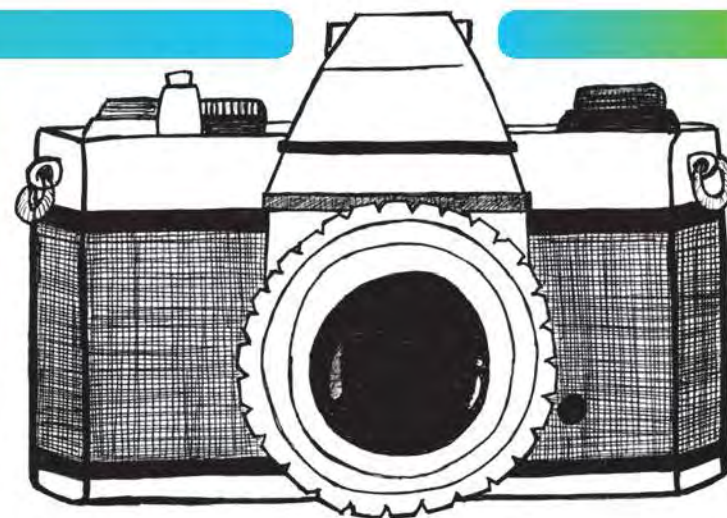
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## Resident Photo of the Month

**Hey Santa, That Ain't No Reindeer!**



Bloomington has many interesting sights to enjoy. Want to show off your photography skills? Send your photo to [inbloomingtonnews@gmail.com](mailto:inbloomingtonnews@gmail.com) to share with the community!

This month's Resident Photo of the Month comes courtesy of Windsor Woods resident Kathy Peraud. Karen captured a surprise visitor perhaps looking for a little holiday cheer. *Photo: Kathy Peraud*

## WHAT'S ON YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST?



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



## The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Well, now that Thanksgiving is over, we are officially into the Holiday Season, undoubtedly my favorite time of the year. Mainly because this is the time of year when, no matter how old you are or what your "position" in life is, you can, with impunity, get "carried away" without getting "carted away."

For instance, at Christmastime, you can wander into any toy store or toy department and play with anything you want without earning disapproving stares from salesclerks. Since everyone assumes we are merely closely examining items from our shopping lists, we can happily slip back into childhood rearranging doll house furniture, taking imaginary trips on electric trains and musing over whether or not Ken is ever going to break down and marry Barbie.

And with the holidays comes the annual Candy Glut. From now until the first of the year, we can purchase as much confectionary as we please, convincing everyone around us that "it's for the kids," or "for my house guests" or "it makes such a great gift!" My car has been known to smell like a Godiva shop well into March.

During this time of year, we are also allowed to go into a baking frenzy that would make Betty Crocker dizzy. From Thanksgiving until New Year's, kitchens are filled with the aromas of pungent spices. Buttery cookies are shaped into snowmen, trees, bells and angels. Cakes bursting with nuts and exotic flavors abound. Mind you, these are the same kitchens that, during the remainder of the year, would be hard put to produce half a box of broken vanilla wafers.

But one of the very nicest phenomena occurring during the next few weeks involves people. Folks who normally think you want to steal their watches if you ask the time, will find themselves smiling at complete strangers. People will say "Merry Christmas" and mean it, unlike, "Have a nice day," which they don't.

Parents will share secret smiles and begin speaking in code because this is also the only time we have all year to drive our kids nuts (it's called "Paybacks"). Small children, sworn to secrecy by a well-meaning, but clueless, parent, will loudly refuse to let Mom or Dad know what their Christmas present is, but will drop hints broader than the Atlantic.

Guys who can barely gag out a "You're all right, kid" in the summer will discover that saying "I love you" is not painful after all.

In short, this is the time of year when we all seem to reach an unspoken agreement to make the miracles happen. It's beautiful. And I hope each of you enjoys your own personal miracle and helps someone else find theirs. Merry Christmas.



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## Behind the Byline: Meet Wendy Knipp, The Gazette's Newest Reporter

By Miriam Leech



Bloomington Estates resident Wendy Knipp has lived in the community for 30 years, and is the newest reporter for the Bloomington Gazette. Courtesy Photo: Wendy Knipp

Wendy Knipp has been reading the Bloomington Gazette for years. And she has loved writing for her entire life. "I am very excited to combine the two," says the Bloomington Estates resident, who is the newest reporter for the community newspaper.

The mother of two sons, Michael, 13, and Jason, 9, recently took some time off to spend with her children. However, for more than 20 years, Knipp has worked as a paralegal where writing and research have always been a large part of her job. Now, with the support of husband Mark, she looks forward to doing these things for our community in a non-legal capacity.

Said the new reporter, "The Gazette keeps us informed of things going on in our community, and gives us a

heads up on such topics as traffic changes, school updates, and [homeowners association] news that we may not know about otherwise."

Her favorite articles are the holiday ones. "It's always fun to see the articles about Fall Festival and visits with Santa.

Both Knipp and her husband are graduates of Bloomington Senior High School. She has lived in Bloomington for 30 years, 18 of those in Bloomington Estates.

She brings a history of, and passion for, this community to the Gazette. "My greatest joy has been watching this community grow and seeing my children now being active in the same community that I have spent my life in," says Knipp.

In her spare time the new reporter enjoys reading, organizing, puzzles, and family travel. Most evenings she can be found on the soccer fields with her sons.

Welcome, Wendy!

## Salon Jennifer Celebrates 10 Years of Beauty

By Miriam Leech

After 22 years as a hair stylist, Jennifer Taylor marked the 10th Anniversary of her very own salon, Salon Jennifer, on Nov. 25. To celebrate, the salon held an open house for its clients on Nov. 14 complete with food, drinks, and vendors offering a variety of items for sale.

Over 35 loyal customers and friends browsed clothing from LuLaRoe, candles from Scentsy, jewelry from Premier Designs, and handmade wreaths and home décor from Hott Divas. The individual product vendors were all Salon Jennifer customers.

Taylor, a wife and mother of two, is a native of New York and moved to the area in 2004. Always a great supporter of Bloomington, she says, "I feel very supported by this community."

Salon Jennifer is located at 3507 Bell Shoals Rd., next door to the Bloomington Community Office, and can be reached at 813-681-6364.



At Salon Jennifer, stylists keep the community beautiful one cut and manicure at a time. Pictured left to right are Yong Blankshain, Heather Michael, Jennifer Glasgow, Jean Dankerl, Debbie McGuire, Angella Farris, Sherrie Reichert and Danielle Greer. Heather Michael, a former Bloomington resident, has long-supported BHA events including fundraisers, fall festival and the community's annual Santa visit.

At the 10th anniversary celebration, Hott Divas Boutique owner Dawn Register and Nicole Hott brought the holiday spirit with their unique wreath offerings. Contact them on their Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/hottdivasboutique/](http://www.facebook.com/hottdivasboutique/). Raffle winner Janice Weston won a "Hott Diva" wreath during the event.

Courtesy Photos: Salon Jennifer



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# BLOOMING IN BLOOMINGDALE

Photo Provided By: Peter and Eileen Kadzielewski

## ...HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

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

### Ferns are the answer...

By Gwen Graverson and Ramona Pettigrew

Bare spots in your landscape look like an unwelcome black eye that you don't want anyone else to see. You feel certain that's what everyone notices first when passing by your otherwise lovely yard. Being from the north, I never thought much about ferns other than seeing them as ground cover in the woods, while going on childhood adventures to state parks in or near Rockland County, New York. Now that I'm a Floridian and have encountered a number of bare patches in my own landscape, where nothing seems to want to grow – ferns have been the answer.

I have at least two types of ferns growing in the back yard: leftovers from one of the Valrico Garden Club's annual yard sales and some donated to me by Ramona Pettigrew, a former club member. While I want to share insights about ferns, I also want to tell you a little about Ramona.

Ramona passed away in June of this year and had a passion for "all things green." A Life Member of the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. and a longtime member of the Valrico Garden Club, she wore many hats while serving the club from President to Club Historian...and everything else in-between. She was also the Horticulture Chairperson and as part of her duties submitted articles to the Bloomingdale Gazette.

To honor her memory, I would like to share one of her articles about ferns.

"Ferns are among the world's oldest living plants and lower on the evolutionary scale than seed plants. They are popular because of their graceful foliage and ability to grow in low light or dense shade. In Florida landscapes, they are grown for decoration both in and outdoors.

Ferns became popular indoor plants during the Victorian era. Today they are used extensively in green houses, patios, apartments, and homes where their quiet, graceful beauty softens landscapes. They are non-flowering plants and number about 9,000 plus varieties.

Some of the more easily grown ferns are Birdsnest, Rabbits Foot (does well in baskets) Boston, Leatherleaf (florist fern) Sword, Maidenhair, Button, Holly, Fishtail, Petticoat, Elkhorn, Fuffyuffles, Staghorn, Mother, and Cinnamon, just to name a few. These are available in most nurseries.

Growing ferns inside is a challenge. They need light, moisture, and air circulation; bathrooms make an ideal place, as most of their needs are found there. Ferns do grow well outdoors. Boston ferns grow exceptionally well, as they require little care, form large beds, and make great ground cover. And, ferns are great additions to dish gardens and large planters.

The Bottom line: Ferns are easy to grow, rewarding and will give you many days of beauty and enjoyment."

Finally on a personal note, thank you, Ramona! You are missed.



Columnist Gwen Graverson shares ferns she grows in her Bloomingdale back yard.

Photo: Gwen Graverson

### SAVE THE DATE



Wreaths-Across-America / Saturday, Dec 17 / Florida National Cemetery, Bushnell, FL/ Any wreaths donations after Dec 1 will be added to the following year's list of sponsorships. For event information, visit [www.wreathsaacrossamericabushnell.com](http://www.wreathsaacrossamericabushnell.com) or email Randy Lewer at: [waab.info@gmail.com](mailto:waab.info@gmail.com). Remember The Fallen, Honor Those Who Serve, and Teach Our Children.



Liven up your holiday conversations with a few facts regarding one of our more enduring symbols of the holiday season...the Christmas tree.

## Did you know that...

- Trees are grown in all 50 states, including Alaska and Hawaii.
- 25 to 30 million Real Christmas Trees are sold in the U.S. every year.
- The average growing time is 7 years.
- Oregon is the leading producer of Christmas trees.
- The top selling Christmas Trees are: balsam fir, Douglas fir, Fraser fir, noble fir, Scotch pine, Virginia pine, and white pine.
- The official White House Christmas Tree this year is a 19-foot Balsam-Veitch fir from Wisconsin.
- Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since about 1850.
- In 1856, Franklin Pierce, the 14th President of the United States, was the first President to place a Christmas tree in the White House.
- President Calvin Coolidge started the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the White House lawn in 1923.
- Thomas Edison's assistant, Edward Johnson, came up with the idea of electric lights for Christmas trees in 1882.
- An acre of Christmas trees provides for the daily oxygen requirements of 18 people.
- In 1984, the National Christmas was lit on Dec. 13 with temperatures in the 70's, making it one of the warmest tree lightings in history.
- In 1978, a live 40-foot Colorado blue spruce became the National Christmas Tree. A new tree was planted in 2012 and was officially lit on Dec. 1. It is located on the Ellipse, the grassy area south of the White House.



(Editor's Note: Compiled from several online resources including the National Christmas Tree Association, <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/trees/treefacts.html>, and [www.realchristmastrees.org](http://www.realchristmastrees.org).)

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## DEC. 19 - JAN. 2, 2017 - WINTER BREAK BACK TO SCHOOL - JAN. 3, 2017



### ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

Dec. 8 - Burger Monger Spirit Night  
Dec. 16 - End of 2nd Grading Period

### Alafia Yearbook Photos

If anyone who has taken pictures during the school year and would like your pictures to be in the yearbook, please upload them at community.lifetouch.com and enter the access code: XYDWUY and follow the instructions. If you have difficulties uploading the pictures, contact Jessica Hinson at 813-924-8642 or jessicahinson916@gmail.com.



### CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

Dec. 5 - Dec. 9 - Santa's Workshop in the Multipurpose Room  
Dec. 16 - End of 2nd Grading Period

Book Fair!



### BURNS BRUINS BANTER

Can you add a Poinsettia graphic here?  
Dec. 3 - Poinsettia Delivery, 9 a.m.  
Dec. 9 - 8th Grade Breakfast, 8 a.m. in the cafeteria  
Dec. 12 - Winter Band Concert, 7 p.m.



### BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS

Dec. 5 - Orchestra Winter Concert, 7 p.m.  
Dec. 6 - Boys & Girls Soccer, 6 p.m. @ TBT  
Dec. 6 - Boys & Girls Basketball, 6:30pm vs East Bay  
Dec. 6 - Cheer Competition, 6:30pm @ Hillsborough  
Dec. 6 - Chorus Winter Concert, 7 p.m.  
Dec. 7 - Boys & Girls Basketball, 6:30pm @ Durant  
Dec. 8 - Band Winter Concert, 7 p.m.  
Dec. 9 - Boys & Girls Soccer, 6 p.m. vs Lennard  
Dec. 9 - Boys & Girls Basketball, 6:30 p.m. @ Strawberry Crest  
**Dec. 13 - Herff Jones Junior Ring Ceremony, 6:30pm in the Cafeteria**



### BULL BRIEFS

Congratulations, Bloomingdale SGA!



Courtesy Photo: Bloomingdale SGA

### "Project Twinkletoes"

## ANNOUNCING...

### CIMINO ELEMENTARY'S

### "Project Twinkletoes"

Week of December 5-9

Show your kind and caring spirit by donating a pair of NEW shoes as a holiday gift (preschool through teenage sizes). Shoes will be distributed to needy children in the local community.

"Extra Twinkle" ... include a pair of socks tucked inside the shoes.

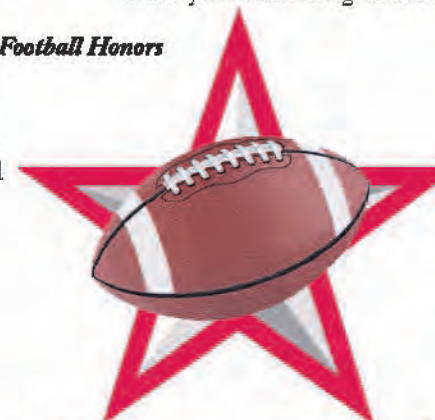
Students should bring items to the office and place them under the "Giving Tree".

All shoes should be unwrapped.

Contact: Stephanie Hanett, School Counselor with questions 740-4450.

### BSHS All Western Conference Football Honors

First Team:  
Dalton Carde - Left Tackle  
DJ Williams - Running Back  
Sam Skinner - Defensive End  
Second Team:  
Ethan Carde - Left Guard  
Colin Errity - Linebacker







## Go Lady Bulls! Bloomingdale Cheer Takes 1st Place

Brief by Deidre Morgan

"Spirit" was in the air as the Lady Bulls cheerleading squad toe-touched, "herkie-d" and split-lifted their way to a first place win to start the 2016-2017 Cheer competition season. The event was held Nov. 16, at Bloomingdale Senior High School. In a tight competition, the Lady Bulls vied for top honors against nine other area squads. The girls will compete in four mini competitions prior to the FHSAA Regional and State Competitive Cheerleading Contest in January. BSHS Cheer is off to a great start. Congratulations and good luck to the squad.

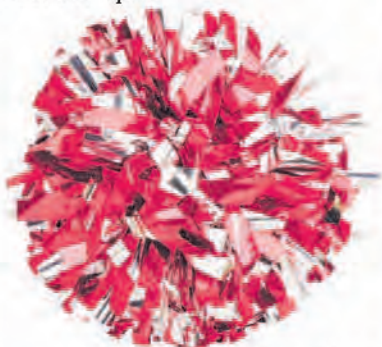
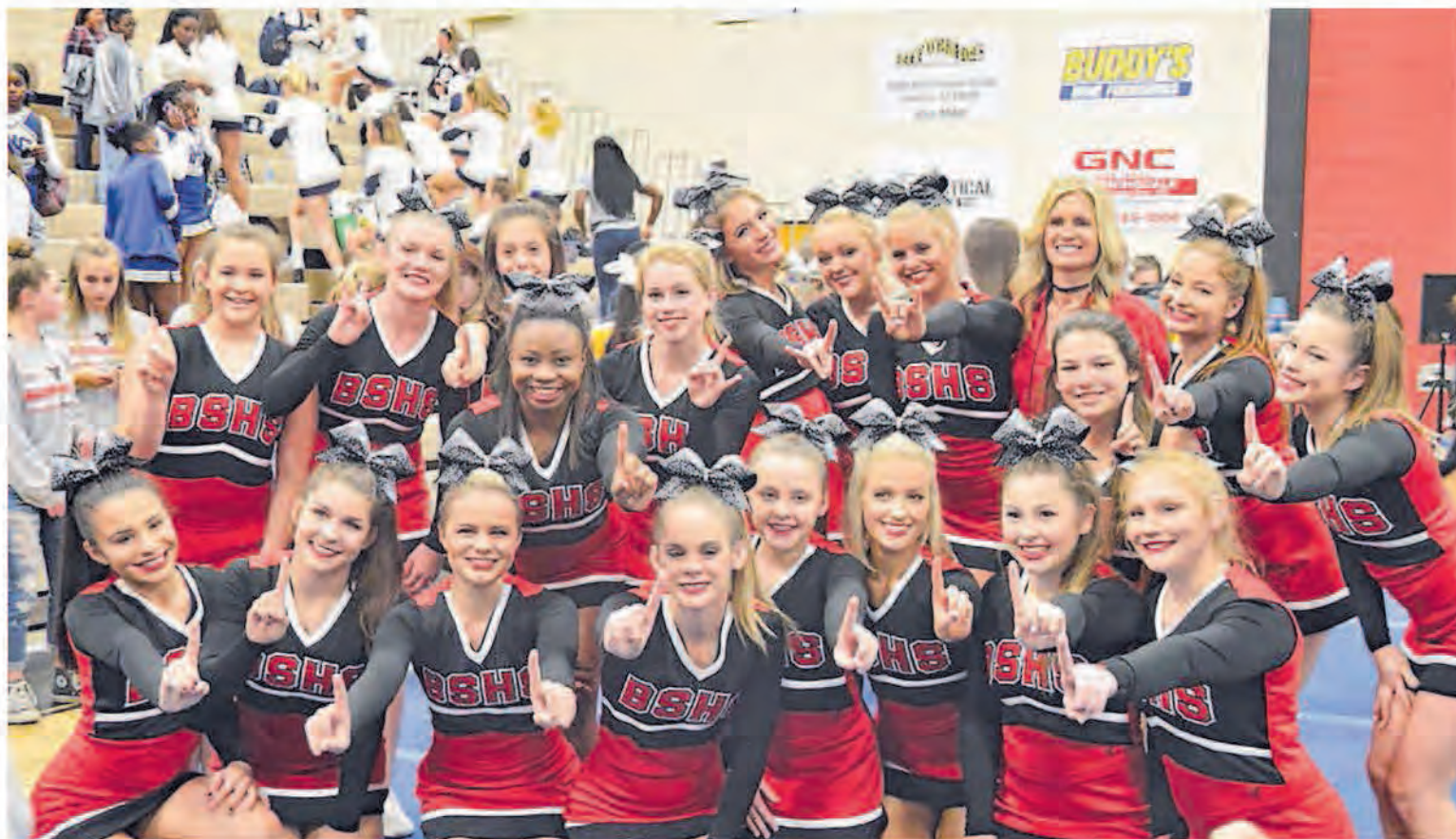


Photo: Loretta Gadson



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## Rajun' Bull Band Earns Superior Rating at Annual FBA Competition

By Amy Fluty

Photos: Kristin Witt

The Bloomingdale High School Rajun' Bull Marching Band and Crimson Guard are known nationally and internationally for their superior sound and performance. On Nov. 5, they added to their stellar reputation receiving their 30th superior rating at the Florida Bandmasters Association (FBA) Marching MPA at Riverview High School.

Directed by Jon Sever with Crimson Guard directors Billy Sullivan and Coleen Petree, the more than 200-member strong band is known for their entertaining half-time shows. This year proved no exception as the group performed music from The Eagles including "Desperado", "Life in the Fast Lane", "Tequilla Sunrise", "Lyn Eyes", and "Already Gone."

Of the 2016 marching season, Sever said, "This year's marching season was a challenge due to all the weather issues, but the band did an outstanding job and I am proud to have been a part of the 30-year legacy known as the Bloomingdale Marching Band program."

Missed the competition? See the band on Dec. 8 as they take to the stage to perform holiday favorites and collect for "Toys for Tots." The concert begins at 7 p.m. If that doesn't get you in the holiday spirit, join the Rajun' Bull Marching Band on Dec. 10 as they perform on the streets of Ybor City as part of the "Snow on 7th" parade. Come support the band and celebrate the holidays in "Rajun' Bull" style.



30 years and counting...Rajun' Bull drum majors Leilani Torres (left), Robin English (center) and Joel Papineau (right), display the band's 30th Florida Bandmasters Association (FBA) Marching MPA superior designation. Also pictured is the band's director Jon Sever.



The Rajun' Bulls "Take It to the Limit" performing an Eagles medley during their FBA competition on Nov. 5.



The Rajun' Bull Band stands ready to take the field at the FBA Competition.



Seniors enjoy special recognition from Director Jon Sever.





## BSHS Athletes Sign Letters of Intent

Brief/Photo: Deidre Morgan

On Nov. 16, family, friends and teammates gathered at Bloomingdale High School to witness the culmination of several standout athletes' high school careers with the signing of College Letters of Intent. Their signatures signaled the next step of their athletic careers as they signed to play their sport at the college level. Taking their talents to the next level are Cody Wilson (left), Emily Doyle and Nate Chevalier. Both Cody and Nate will show off their baseball skills at the University of North Carolina Asheville and NOVA Southeastern University respectively. Emily will take her volleyball striking abilities to West Virginia Wesleyan. Good Luck to each of these athletes as they live out their dreams of playing college sports!



## Alafia Honors Teachers and Staff

Compiled by Deidre Morgan

*Congratulations!*

**Congratulations, Teachers and Support Staff!**  
**Principal Lisa Jackson and Assistant Principal**  
**Teresa McGinnis flank awardees.**



Ida S. Baker Award: Justin Terrill, Art Education



Teacher of the Year: Jennifer Hageman, Second Grade



Instructional Support Award: Carol Collado, Secretary



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***- Luke 2:11***

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