



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980



# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

VOLUME XXXV ISSUE 2 FEBRUARY 2015 [www.BloomingdaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingdaleHOA.com)

## Fairies and Fantasy Create One-of-a-Kind Photos

By Kayla Hayes

**“Have you come to see the fairies?”**

This is the first question Bloomingdale resident and owner of Bloomingdale Photography Susan DeLuca asks children who arrive at her home photography studio. DeLuca, already an award winning landscape photographer, recently turned her focus to fantasy portraits of children and adults involving fantastical garden scenes in which her subjects “become” fairies.

DeLuca leads her young clients through a story about fairies, which starts at the door, then takes them into the studio complete with “fairy house” and “fairy glitter” on the floor. After the photo shoot and 12 to 16 hours in Photoshop, she presents her clients with their finished photographs – “evidence” to them that a fairy was indeed present with them in the studio!



Susan DeLuca, owner of Bloomingdale Photography, is a long-time Bloomingdale resident and former Bloomingdale Gazette editor.

“We’re so busy looking for fairies that they don’t have time to get nervous in front of the camera,” DeLuca commented.

Fantasy portraiture is popular among her clients. Children, especially, enjoy selecting their fairy outfits (evening dresses are available for adults) and getting their hair done in the dressing room. The girls can always ask for more flowers in their hair, but DeLuca never does their makeup. “I always apply makeup in Photoshop so that it looks more natural,” DeLuca revealed.

In the end, this artist’s photographs look more like beautifully detailed paintings than photographs. “I turn photographs into pieces of art,” DeLuca said, a truth that becomes apparent after viewing any one of her pieces.

Always honing her craft, she teaches photography and digital darkroom, has advanced technical skills in Photoshop and is currently working toward her master’s degree in photography. Her

vision is to get involved with an organization that will connect her with women, children and families who can’t afford professional portraits.

“God gave me a gift, so why can’t I provide someone else [with] a gift?” DeLuca said.

For information on Bloomingdale Photography’s services, prices or to see more photos, visit [bloomingdalephotography.com](http://bloomingdalephotography.com), email at [susan@bloomingdalephotography.com](mailto:susan@bloomingdalephotography.com) or call 813-368-9767.

This photograph, titled “Fairy by the Water” was featured in Photoshop User magazine last month as the “Image of the Week.” Just before the photo was taken, DeLuca and the girl’s mother told her that there was a fairy on her shoulder. Later, the girl was surprised to see the fairy in her lantern.



Photos: Bloomingdale Photography



DeLuca’s clients range in age from newborns to children to adults of all ages. Not all of her fantasy portrait sessions involve fairy wings, although “fairy portraits” are the most popular among her clients.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

A life without love is like a year without summer. *Swedish Proverb*

## This Month



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## 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*

*Beth Smedley*

*Joanie Wilson*

*Suzy Watts*

## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



### JOY BOISSELLE

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## Meet Your BHA Board

By Kayla Hayes

Beth Smedley has been serving the Bloomingdale community for nearly a year as a Bloomingdale Homeowner Association (BHA) Director-at-Large. Beth, Brian, her husband of 20 years, their two children Wyatt (19) and Morgan (16), and two dogs Molly and Jack reside in the Somerset subdivision.

Smedley's day job is as a graphic designer for Hillsborough County. In her free time she enjoys going to garage sales, yoga, art and movies, but she usually stays busy with graphic design projects.

"This board is very committed to the betterment of Bloomingdale and the areas that affect us," Smedley stated. "Besides being a willing volunteer for the charity and event work we do, I hope to help with the collateral and marketing materials promoting the neighborhood and the good work the board does," she added.

What Smedley enjoys most about living in our community is the diversity of residents and all of the activities convenient to those who live here.

"We have activities to support so many interests for all of us. Our community is clean and vibrant," she added.

"Our Bloomingdale Gazette reminds residents of what a great community Bloomingdale is. My vision would be to strengthen it even more," Smedley said.

Board member Beth Smedley and her husband, Brian, enjoy a favorite Tampa event, Gasparilla. Smedley's vision for Bloomingdale is to see it become a more cohesive community.

Photo: The Smedley Family



## Bloomingdale Real Estate & Housing Update

By Ryan Brantley

January brought good news for first time homebuyers and others in need of lower down payments to purchase a home. In early December, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac announced that they were developing new programs allowing for down payments as low as three percent.



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The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) has already been offering a lower down payment program for quite some time with down payments as low as 3.5%. Mortgage insurance premiums have also decreased, saving homeowners an average of \$900 per year.

This could help Millennial homebuyers all over the country purchase their first homes. Not only does it reduce costs up front, there is also more opportunity for money to be "gifted" from family. Currently, conventional loans require proof the buyers' funds are their own.

Of course, all of this comes with stricter requirements for credit scores and a closer look at buyers' debt. Most buyers using these programs will incur steeper interest rates and higher costs over the life of the loan.

In the Bloomingdale area, we are already experiencing the initial ascent into the busy season. In January, 13 properties hit the market and 17 homes were put under contract compared to just four in December. 12 homes sold; 10 under \$200,000.

If you are thinking about selling your home, now could be a good time. There are many potential buyers looking for a home particularly in the lower to mid range price points.

\* MLS statistics include Bloomingdale East and West valid through Jan.28. Sales not entered into the MLS did not count in these statistics. Other statistics derived from the Florida Association of Realtors.



## Talk Around Town: Love, Set, and Match!

Compiled By Kayla Hayes

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

This month's question:

*"How do you enjoy spending Valentines Day with your significant other?"*

"A quiet, romantic dinner at home with a good bottle of wine."  
Paul and Lisa Thomasee, married 6 years



"Since we've had to work on Valentines Day the last three years, it would be nice to just relax at the house with each other. Netflix and a home-cooked dinner sounds like an ideal night."  
Jaryd Davis and Taylor Lipsey, dating 3 years



"We enjoy spending Valentine's Day taking the motorcycle out for a scenic ride and finding a place to eat where we can watch the sunset!"  
Ed and Nicki Tillotson, married 7 years

Photos: Kayla Hayes

## BLOOMINGDALE

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# BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK! 

## 2015 Annual Membership Drive Starts Strong

The BHA membership notices and scholarship donation letter mailed on Jan. 15. The mailer contained a letter, front and back, with details about the Association's role, events, and other programs. A green membership card and a return envelope was also included. Please consider joining and strengthening the one organization that represents the entire community of over 5,000 homes and 23,000 residents. Many initiatives are planned this year, and we need your support.

For those that have already joined the Association and/or donated to the scholarship program, thank you for your support. 100 percent of collected dues are returned to the community through the myriad of programs and activities annually spearheaded by the all-volunteer board.

To help with planning and budgeting, join today or at least within the next 90 days. Make checks payable to the BHA and mail to 3509 Bell Shoals Road., Valrico, FL 33596, or stop by the office and drop off your check. Note: The BHA no longer has an active post office box address.

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



Photos: Joy Boisselle

## BHA BRIEFS

### January Board Meeting Highlights

Board members approved the Association's 2015 budget as a first order of business.

BHA attorney Dan Pilka provided detailed guidance regarding the update of deed restrictions into a single source document for sections of the community in non-mandated neighborhoods. Again note: This initiative requires resident majority vote for approval in each separate neighborhood section, i.e. Section D1, H3, etc. When available, the BHA will post the draft document online at the community website for resident review and comment. This process is slow, but must be done correctly the first time.

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



What's missing from the 2015 BHA Board? You are! New members needed. Pictured, left to right, are Beth Smedley, Billy Hightower, Mary Galin, Dann Berkowitz, George May, Suzy Watts, Joanie Wilson, and Dennis Osborn.

## BHA EVENT CALENDAR

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

**Monday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m.** / Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Monthly Trustee Meeting, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. The BSTD is seeking new trustees to fill vacancies. Call 813-684-6667 for information.

**Tuesday, Feb. 10, 6:30 p.m.** / BHA Monthly Board Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome.

**Thursday, Feb. 19, 7 p.m.** / Bloomingdale Area Community Council chaired by Hillsborough County Master Deputy Curtis Warren, Bloomingdale Community Station, 3622 Erindale Drive, 813-635-8040. Learn about safety and security issues affecting our community.

## Annual Community Clean-Up

The BHA's ever-popular annual community clean-up will be Saturday, March 7 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Five commercial trash roll-offs will be on site as well as our partners, Urban E Recycling, a computer and electronics recycling company, and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Operation Medicine Cabinet program. See flyer and additional information this issue.

## 2015 Scholarship Dates/Deadlines Set

Important dates and deadlines for the \$2,000 Bloomingdale Community Scholarship are:

**Jan. 17** - Scholarship applications available.

**April 1** - Scholarship Deadline, No exceptions.

**May 12** - Winner announced at monthly BHA board meeting.

Applications are available online at [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com), in the BHA office, and the BSHS Guidance office.



## 2015 BHA Charity Golf Tournament

This year's tournament is Saturday, April 18 at the Summerfield Crossings Golf Club in Riverview. The BHA, again this year, selected K9s for Warriors to receive all proceeds in the upcoming charity golf tournament. Why? This group trains service dogs (many from shelters) for our wounded warriors, and Bloomingdale has a large military population. We need sponsors, donations, players, and volunteers. Call the BHA at 813-681-2051 for information. See flyer and additional information this issue.

**Correction: In last month's issue, we incorrectly listed Rev. Mel Harris's retired rank as Master Sergeant. After a distinguished career, he retired as a Senior Master Sergeant. In addition, Step 6 of last month's "Do it Yourself" column was from a previous project. We regret the errors.**



Photo: Joy Boisselle



Yard of the Month is sponsored by Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale. Send your Yard of the Month nominations to:  
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**PLEASE CHECK THE BHA COMMUNITY CORNER FOR ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS RIGHT HERE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

## Swimming News and Lessons / Ongoing / Campo Family YMCA 3414 Culbreath Road, Valrico

- Registration for swim lessons for the early spring preschool and parent-child sessions is ongoing, \$65 for members.
- New this year! SPLASH swim lessons the week of spring break. Free to the community March 9-12. Registration details coming soon.
- Adult Swim Team – a great way to stay in shape and build up your endurance year round with our coach Scot Moser for just \$35/month.

For information, contact the Campo Y at 813-684-1371.

## The Village Players Present Noises Off

**Feb. 7-8, 13-15, 20-21 / Friday Evening Performances at 8 p.m.; Sunday Matinees at 3 p.m. / The James McCabe Theater / 506 N 5th Street, Valrico** / Join the fun as the Village Players present a play within a play about an ambitious director and his troupe of mediocre actors. Tickets: \$15 Regular Admission; \$13 Senior Citizens, Students, or Military with ID; \$12 Groups of 10 or more. Visit [www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com](http://www.thevillageplayersvalrico.com) for information.

## Dogapalooza

**Feb. 8 / 12-3 p.m. / Sunset Bay Chapel / 6026 Churchside Drive, Lithia** / Join us for our 2nd Annual Dogapalooza! Free Fun Family Event! Bark for Life has joined us this year as well with many fun activities! Dog costume contest, walk, adoptions, food trucks, vendors, crafts, rescue groups, cats, raffles, kids' activities, bounce house, and more! All leashed pets welcome! Sponsored by the Pug Rescue of Florida. For information, contact Giselle Hollister at 813-727-8760.



Photo: Giselle Hollister

## Mind Boost Workshop: A Program on Brain Health and Exercising Your Mind

**Feb. 10 / 11 a.m.-1 p.m. / The Bridges Retirement Community / 11350 Bloomingdale Avenue, Riverview** / The Mind Boost workshop will provide information on normal changes in memory, how memory works, steps to improve memory, and memory exercises. Edmond Dubreuil, The Community Mental Wellness Center, will facilitate the program made available through the South Shore Coalition for Mental Health and Aging. \$5.00 to attend includes lunch and workshop materials. Space is limited. Call Janet Noah at 813-413-8900 to reserve your seat.

## "Let There Be Music"

**Feb. 13-15 / Congregation Beth Shalom / 706 Bryan Road, Brandon** / Three days of music – Cantor Paul Offencrantz will impress with his vocal talents while officiating at Shabbat worship service on Feb. 13 at 7:45 p.m.

On Valentine's Day at 7:30 p.m., Cantor Offencrantz and choir director, Joan Frankel, will present a magnificent evening of love songs, cabaret-style. Hear favorites from Broadway and bring your own wine. Soft drinks and snacks provided. Tickets for this event are \$10.00 per person or \$18.00 for a couple/family. Tickets can be purchased at the door; cash, check, or credit card. E-mail Toby Koch for information: [tobykoch@hotmail.com](mailto:tobykoch@hotmail.com).

Sunday morning, Feb. 15 at 9:30 a.m., Cantor Offencrantz will perform a special program for students in the religious school. All events are open to the public and program sponsorships are available. Call the office at 813-681-6547 for information.

## Essential Oils and Raw Diet for Dogs Seminar

**Feb. 19 / EarthWise Pet Supply Valrico / 7-9 p.m. / Country Inn and Suites / 915 South Falkenburg**

**Road, Tampa** / EarthWise Pet Supply Valrico is hosting a seminar on the healthy benefits of a raw diet and how young living essential oils will benefit your pets' life. For information, call Chris or Mark at 813-999-0858.

## Alafia Elementary School Spring Carnival

**Feb. 21/ 11 a.m.-3 p.m. / 3535 Culbreath Road, Valrico** / Alafia Elementary is hosting its annual spring carnival and craft show. Join us for bounce houses, face painting, food trucks, local vendors, and a cakewalk. The school is looking for vendors who would like to attend and sell their items. If interested, contact Debbie Gibson at [hootsnestfl@gmail.com](mailto:hootsnestfl@gmail.com).

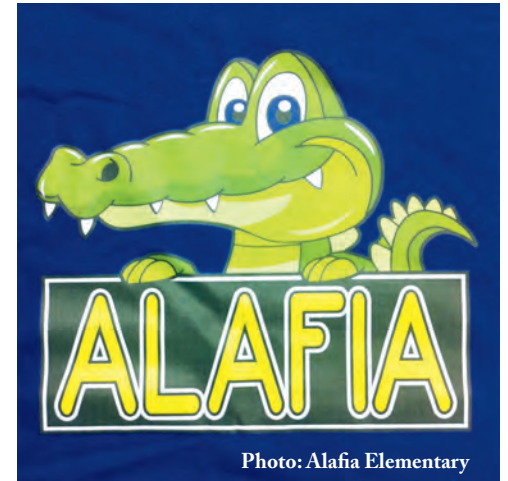


Photo: Alafia Elementary

## Autism Center Charity Ride

**Feb. 21 / 12-4 p.m. / Livingstone Academy Autism Center / 1649 Bloomingdale Avenue, Valrico** / Livingstone Academy Autism Center is hosting a charity ride with Florida Ride or Die Motorcycle Group. There will be a 30-minute ride followed by a BBQ, bounce house, character visits, and raffles. ALL donations will go towards the purchase of therapy equipment for students. Open to the community. Come show your support for this event benefitting autism students. For information, contact the Academy at 813-438-8550.



Photo: Kristin Seltzer

## Greater Brandon Chapter of AARP Meeting

**March 2 / 11:30 a.m. / Brandon Community Center / 502 Sadie Street, Brandon** / Games, prizes, friends, fun. Be our guest. All over 55 welcome. Beverages and dessert furnished. Meetings held the first Monday of every month. For information, call J. Popovich at 813-689-6590.

## Puttin' on the Ritz Bunco

**March 3 / 6-7 p.m. / Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association, Inc. / 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon** / A night of fun, food, and prizes will be held at the G.F.W.C. Valrico Service League's Puttin' on the Ritz Bunco. Tickets cost \$20 and include light dinner, drinks, and prizes. Tickets available at Center Place or contact Claudia Yake at 813-685-7998. Proceeds help support local children and families in need.



## Dining With Dave - Dave's 2014 Restaurant Favorites



*The original purpose of this column was to highlight the breadth of dining options in the Bloomingdale area. Over the past year, I have been highly impressed with the quality of restaurants in and around our community. This month is dedicated to my top picks from 2014 before I move on to new gastronomy adventures.*

### Best for Eclectic Kids:

#### Slugger's Neighborhood Bar and Grill (Bloomingdale and John Moore)

Slugger's is a classic locally owned family friendly joint with a wide variety of offerings that is both kid-friendly and a good place to catch a sports event.



Logo: Sluggers

Don't expect fine dining and engraved silverware, but do enjoy the half-pound burgers, tasty fried appetizers and saucy wings. Good, solid, dependable staples with a pleasant atmosphere makes Slugger's a good place to bring the family when you don't feel like cooking, or want to commune with other locals for the big game, and have a hankering for comfort food on a budget.

### Runner Up

#### Burger Monger (Bloomingdale Square)

### Best for a Quiet Date Night

#### Mai Thai (Bloomingdale Square)

From my very first review till now, Mai Thai is still the go-to place for my wife and me when we want a quiet evening away from the kids. Mai Thai is family owned and the

menu is standard Thai fare with enough variety to appease anyone who enjoys the cuisine. It is very easy to discuss options with the staff and they understand the nuances of spicy versus not too spicy. Open Monday thru Saturday, this small restaurant is semi-casual and worthy of a first date or as a regular evening out. Prices are very reasonable and the portions are of such good size that you feel you are getting an honest meal at an honest price.

### Runner Up

#### The Shrimp Boat (Plaza Bella)

### Best Way to Start an Argument

#### Jaymer Que (Bloomingdale and Lithia Pinecrest)

It is my humble opinion that Jaymer Que offers the best BBQ ribs (both spare and baby-back) in the Tampa area. They also offer delicious pulled pork, beef brisket (chopped or sliced), and burgers crafted from ground brisket. Four homemade sauces are readily available including mild, sweet, zesty and a West Carolina vinegar based option. Side dishes include amazing smoked cinnamon apples (weekends only) and made-from-scratch items such as baked beans, collards, coleslaw and their unique smoked green peas or beans. Round out your meal with award-winning, melt in your mouth bread pudding, which could be a main course by itself.

### Runner Up

Every other BBQ place in the area. Argue amongst yourselves.



Photo: Mai Thai

Logo: Jaymer Que



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

### Keeping Love Fresh: How to Care for Valentine's Day Roses

By Gwen Graverson

One of the best ways to show your appreciation for receiving roses on Valentine's Day is by making sure they last as long as possible. Here are some tips to follow:

Roses delivered in a box need to be opened as soon as possible and placed in water. If that's not possible, place the unopened box in a cool, dark place until opening is possible.

Preparing your roses for a vase is easy. Cut stems at an angle one inch from the bottom using a sharp knife or shears. For best results, hold the stems under cold running water. Fill your vase with cold water and insert roses so no more than six inches of the stem is covered. Remove any leaves that touch the water to hinder bacterial growth. Replace the water every other day.

If your roses came with a plant food packet, use it. If not, just add a few teaspoons of sugar. Do not add aspirin; this is considered an "old wives' tale."

Finally, display your roses, preferably in a cool location away from direct sunlight and heat. Enjoy!



**To prevent misunderstandings, know the meaning of the rose color you give or receive:**

Red – Love, Romance and romantic love

Yellow – Friendship, Joy, Get Well

Lavender – Enchantment, Majesty, Love at First Sight

Pink – Love, Gratitude, Appreciation

White – Purity, Innocence, Sympathy, Spirituality

Orange – Desire, Enthusiasm and Passion

Photo: [www.free-picture.net](http://www.free-picture.net)



The University of Florida and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) located in Hillsborough County provides a valuable monthly tool for the budding nature lover.

#### February "To Do List":

- **Prune Roses:** improves overall form. Follow-up with fertilizer and fresh mulch. Blooming will begin eight to nine weeks after pruning.
- **Shrubs:** Fertilize, water, and apply fresh mulch.
- **Lawn Weeds:** Apply a pre-emergent weed killer (not a weed and feed) to prevent warm season weed seeds. Apply when temperatures rise to 65 degrees for four to five days.
- **Fertilize Citrus/Fruit Trees:** If not done in January, do now.

#### VGC Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 18, 10 a.m.

Apostles Lutheran Church - 200 Kingsway Rd., Brandon

Topic: Floral Design with guest speaker Ramona Pettigrew. Call 813-684-6323 or 813-662-7659 for information

#### Annual VGC Yard Sale

Friday, March 6, 8 a.m.

3915 Kristin Place in Bloomingdale off Natures Way and Bell Grande





*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.*



## Valentine's Day Ain't What it Used to Be

I used to love Valentine's Day. When I was a kid, I'd spend at least a week going over my card list. I'd add Marlene because she loaned me notebook paper without ratted me out to Sister Matthew. Robert's Valentine was history the second the little creep shoved my face into the water fountain. It was a lot like having an annual hit list.

We'd make a Valentine's Day "Post Office" out of a paper towel carton and enough pink tissue paper to gift wrap Montana. On The Big Day, one kid would be chosen "Post Master," usually the student destined to one day be elected "Most Likely to Toady His Way to the Top." The Post Master would call out the name written on each Valentine and, snickering and stumbling, the recipient would come forward to claim the tiny envelope. It was great.

But that was before Valentine's Day became a commercial event of Cecil B. de Mille proportions. By January 1, FTD florists have united in their bi-annual Guilt Fest (second only to Mother's Day) and begun airing commercials depicting grandmotherly types with tears streaming

down their lined faces as they caress a dish garden. In retaliation, Hallmark pulls out all the stops and runs an ad featuring grandparents, kids, a calendar flipping the days away in the breeze and a litter of puppies. Then American Greetings loses control entirely and sponsors some boneheaded animated special like "Shrek Forgets Valentine's Day." Yech.

Years ago, ladies and gentlemen would write the name of their love on a piece of paper and pin it to their lapels. Lovesick swains would leave tender messages on the doorstep of the beloved or bribe a servant to deliver a note on the breakfast tray. The only thing on my lapel is a 2-year-old VFW poppy. The note on my breakfast tray says "1 Egg McMuffin, 1 sm coffee," and I won't tell you what I found on my doorstep this morning, but there's a poodle down the street whose days are numbered.

\*Sigh.\* I am an erudite professional with a list of admirable credits. I have flown far and wide to speak before groups of people. And I'd give anything for a paper towel box covered with pink tissue.



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## On the Road with Ryan

*Ryan Brantley, a local Realtor and travel writer, has traveled extensively throughout Florida and the Caribbean. Put your seat belts on and enjoy the ride as Ryan shares her adventures with our community!*



“Portland, Maine... I don’t know where that is,” a line from Tim’s McGraw’s latest album has fans wondering – “where exactly is this place?” It turns out the lively “Mini Boston,” as locals refer to it, is just a short two-hour drive from its big brother city – Boston.

During the summer months, the charming ocean side city is bustling with shoppers, craft beer connoisseurs and businessmen alike. During the winter months, much of city closes down in wait for next season.

Portland dining is incredible. The seafood is fresh and caught locally. For a unique experience, make reservations at DiMillo’s – a wonderful seafood restaurant aboard a retired car ferry. Hot Suppa is a local brunch favorite and Grittys treats news guests and old like regulars.

If you’re more into making your own fare, stop by one of the local markets, it doesn’t get any fresher than filleting your own fish!

There are a variety of accommodations including big names such as Marriott and Westin and many B&Bs. Most are within walking distance to shops and restaurants but many hotels also provide free shuttles to and from wherever you want to go.

Portland is easily accessible via plane, train, or even ferry! It’s a destination many may not think of, but well worth the spring or summer trip!



In Portland, Maine, fish markets offer fresh local fish at unbelievable prices. Many local restaurants serve their seafood “from pier to table.”

Photo: Ryan Brantley

## Mulch Mania Comes To Bloomingdale!

By Mags Oldman

Spring is just around the corner and in Florida that means it is mulching time! Everyone needs it and knows the hassles of lugging it from store to home. Boy Scout Troop 826 believes they have a better way for you to get your mulch this spring! Order your mulch through them and they will deliver those bags – however many you need – right to your driveway.

This is the second year for the successful fundraiser. To meet with various community HOA/design guidelines, the troop has three varieties of mulch available – pine bark, cypress, and red mulch. These hard-working young men will be taking orders now through Feb. 20 with delivery scheduled for Feb. 28.

The 47 boys of Troop 826, based in Lithia, but comprised of scouts from Valrico, Lithia and Riverview, will be using the funds raised to help send kids to summer camp as well as purchase new camping gear for the very active troop. The troop camps at least monthly in Florida or Georgia. This summer, the troop is sending a patrol to Philmont Scout Ranch, the Boy Scouts of America’s largest High Adventure Base camp located in New Mexico.

Troop 826 will deliver mulch to Bloomingdale and many surrounding communities. Let Troop 826 help you be prepared this spring!

Questions? Contact the mulch sales coordinator at [mulchsaletroop826@gmail.com](mailto:mulchsaletroop826@gmail.com), visit their website at [troop826mulch.weebly.com](http://troop826mulch.weebly.com) or their Facebook page at Troop 826 Lamb of God Church. Cash, checks and online PayPal payments are accepted.



Boy Scout Troop 826 included a week at Camp Daniel Boone in North Carolina this past summer on one of their frequent camping trips. Photo: BSA Troop 826



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## Amazing Stories.

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

Read the stories behind the photos  
[tampabay.com/amazingstories](http://tampabay.com/amazingstories)





## Become a Super Hero at New Campo Y Max Results Room

By Miriam Leech

Super heroes of all shapes and sizes celebrated the grand opening of the Campo Family YMCA's Max Results Room at a high-energy ceremony held Jan. 23. Captain America and Batman greeted guests while YMCA trainers demonstrated equipment to help members achieve their own super hero status. The ceremony included ribbon cuttings by both the Valrico/FishHawk and Greater Brandon Chambers of Commerce, a raffle for a free membership and other prizes, and refreshments provided by Yoyo Juice owner Scott Laviono.

Executive Director Cindy Sofarelli told guests, "This is the perfect place to keep your New Year's resolutions."

The Max Results Room features state-of-the-art training equipment, including barbells with bumper plates, TRX Suspension trainers, kettle bells, dumbbells, battling ropes, prowler sled, medicine balls, and more. Member fees to take advantage of the Max Results Room/Group Personal Training are \$90 for unlimited monthly use, \$100 for a 10-Session Flex Plan, or \$15 drop-in rate.

Classes include After Burn, designed to give a total body workout and improve overall fitness in the shortest time possible; TRX Suspension Training, a revolutionary method of leveraged bodyweight exercise; and Power Plate/Sculpt, an intense total body workout incorporating stretch, balance, core, strength, and massage elements. Pre-registration is required for all classes.

To become your own super hero visit the Campo Family YMCA Welcome Center or call 813-684-1371.



Bloomington resident Kendall Duncan shows off her inner super hero while celebrating the opening of the Max Results Room at the Campo Family YMCA.



Campo Family YMCA Executive Director Cindy Sofarelli cuts the ribbon while Valrico/FishHawk Chamber of Commerce representative Mary Nieves (left) looks on at the grand opening ceremony for the Max Results Room on Jan. 23.



Super heroes were on hand to help Campo Family YMCA staff celebrate the grand opening of the new state-of-the art Max Results Room.

Campo Family YMCA trainer Keely Seymour noted, "The energy in the [new Max Results] room has been so high," as she demonstrated one of the TRX Suspension trainers.

Photos: Miriam Leech

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Special Events Highlight Bloomingdale Spring



Join the Fun and Support a "Dog Gone" Good Cause  
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Charity Golf Tournament

to benefit

K9S FOR WARRIORS

April 18 • 1 p.m.

Shotgun Start • Registration begins at 12 p.m.



Summerfield Crossings Golf Club

13050 Summerfield Boulevard, Riverview

Register by April 4 • \$85 per person, \$300 for a foursome

Besides fun and supporting a great charity, golfers can win great prizes and will be treated to an Italian dinner buffet. And, the whole event is tax-deductible.

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Heather Michael (813) 340-6547,  
email hgolf75@yahoo

BloomingdaleHOA.com



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Clean-up Acc

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

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





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## Accepted Items List

Hillsborough County Roll-off accepted items include: Refrigerators, ovens, water heaters, Steel and other metals, Furniture (such as couches, chairs, tables and mattresses) and Construction debris (such as concrete, bricks, glass and roofing materials), and tires. Items not accepted are: televisions, microwaves, computers or radios (UrbanErecycling will take flat screen TVs and computers as noted above.), yard waste, hazardous materials including paint, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals and waste from commercials activities.

# Attention Bloomingtondale Seniors!

## IMPORTANT DATES

**January 22 - April 1**  
Applications accepted.

**April 1**  
Application deadline (firm).

**May 12**  
BHA Board meeting and  
announcement of  
scholarship winner.



The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association  
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## Bloomingtondale High School \$2,000 Community Education Scholarship

### REQUIREMENTS:

#### Candidate

- **Must be a resident** of the Bloomingtondale community.
- Must be a graduating senior accepted at a 2 or 4-year college or university. Proof of acceptance is required.
- Weighted 3.2 GPA

#### Candidate's Parent/Guardian

- **Must be a resident** of the Bloomingtondale community.
- Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association 2015 membership **dues must be paid prior** to the scholarship application deadline. Membership drive begins January 2015. **Deadline is April 1, 2015.**
- Proof of residency is required.

#### Selection Criteria

- Community service
- Extra-curricular activities
- Well-written essay
- Academic Standing
- Reference letters

Scholarship information will be available January 22, 2015  
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BloomingtondaleHOA



Last month's Gazette presented a look at various construction and development projects affecting the community. In an ongoing effort to keep residents informed, this month the focus is on the new fire station and Walmart Supercenter complex. Each month and as information is obtained from our Hillsborough County points of contact, updated project statuses will continue. Information will include timelines, progress, delays (if any) and any scheduled public meetings.

The following update is accurate as of the paper's deadline.

## Project title: South Brandon Fire Station #7 Replacement

**Description:** Construct a new 9,300 square foot three-bay fire station to replace existing fire station at 122 West Bloomingdale Ave. New site location is 1292 West Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico.

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

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

**Status:** Currently underway.



Progress continues at lightning speed on the new fire station on Bloomingdale Avenue. Accounting for the speed, construction crews have been working seven days a week to finish the project this spring. The station will serve Bloomingdale's 20,000 plus residents. Photo: Mack Austin

## Project title: Wal-Mart Supercenter

### Business Complex and Apartments on Bloomingdale Avenue

**Description:** This construction project includes a 158,000 sq. ft. Wal-Mart Supercenter, adjacent businesses and apartments on property east of the Bloomingdale Library. Developer is Red Cast Development LLC. The out parcels currently identified include one retail store, one bank, and three restaurants.

### What to expect during construction:

- Heavy construction equipment entering and exiting the site. Most construction will take place on site. There will be construction of entrances and exits and changes to medians on Bloomingdale Avenue.
- At some times, traffic closures will be necessary. During peak traffic hours—school opening/ending and morning/evening commutes – and weather events use caution.
- Extensive traffic control measures are expected.

**Costs and funding:** Costs are being determined. However, Walmart paid \$4.6 million dollars for 23 acres at the site.

**Timeline:** This construction project began in November 2014. Hillsborough County Development Services department has approved construction plans for earth, drainage and utility work at the site.

The Wal-Mart building permit application and design plan did not pass Hillsborough County architectural standards. Plans must be redrawn and resubmitted. Once issued, an inspection will occur every 180 days to keep the permit current and ensure that the developers follow the submitted and approved plans. The developer is not required to give an estimated construction completion date.

At a meeting held Jan. 26 at the BHA office between BHA president George May and Victor Bevis, legislative aide to Commissioner Stacy White, discussions centered on the current development, site access improvements and rumors surrounding the project.

What we know now concerning traffic improvements at and around the site:

### On Bloomingdale Avenue –

- A traffic signal will be installed at Blowing Oak Street.
- The construction of an eastbound turn lane into the site will include closure of the median access into the Bloomingdale Library. An easement to the back of the property will restore library access.
- There will be an extension of the westbound left turn lane into the site, which includes closure of the median opening at Little Oak Street.
- A second driveway exit from the site will be restricted to right-out only.
- A westbound right turn lane will be constructed at the second project entrance.
- Milling and resurfacing of lanes will occur adjacent to road widening for the turn lanes.

### On Lithia Pinecrest Road –

- Entrances to the site will include a northbound left turn lane and southbound right turn lane.
- Milling and resurfacing of entire roadway will occur for limits of widening.

**Rumor 1:** Walmart has purchased the parcel slated for the apartment complex. There is no truth to this rumor. Redcast still owns the property.

**Rumor 2:** The apartments to be constructed are zoned Section 8. This is untrue. Section 8 housing would require a rezoning application and no application is on file at this time. May assured Bevis that any effort to rezone the apartment parcel would be met with heavy opposition from the Bloomingdale community and surrounding neighborhoods.

At a meeting held in the fall between Redstone and the BHA, Redstone officials reported that the 261-apartment complex was now to be a 91-unit luxury townhome complex selling from between \$200,000 and \$300,000 each. The BHA is seeking to reconfirm this information, but at press time had not received an answer.

**Special information:** None scheduled at this time.

**Status:** Currently underway.

To learn more about development and construction projects in our area, visit [www.hillsboroughcounty.org](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org).





## February Is American Heart Month:

Staff Report

### Heart Disease, Are You at Risk?

Thanks to Valentine's Day, February is a month filled with love, candy, cards, flowers and – American Heart Month. Perhaps, the best gift you can give your loved ones is your continued good health. Keeping your heart healthy by knowing cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors and recognizing symptoms of a heart attack are a great way to start.

You can control many CVD risk factors.

Risk Factors include:

- Poor diet
- Lack of physical activity
- Tobacco use
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes



Heart attack warning signs can vary by individual. However, if you think you are experiencing a heart attack – call 9-1-1. It could be the difference between life and death – yours.

Signs include:

- Chest discomfort in the form of pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain
- Pain or discomfort in the upper body... arms, back, neck, jaw, stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweat, nausea, lightheadedness

Finally, here are a few sobering statistics that may send you straight to the doctor, treadmill or dietician...and maybe all three.

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States.
- About 600,000 Americans die from heart disease each year—that's 1 in every 4 deaths.
- In the U.S., someone has a heart attack every 34 seconds. Each minute, someone in the U.S. dies from a heart disease-related event.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for people of most racial/ethnic groups in the U.S., including African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. For Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders and American Indians or Alaska Natives, heart disease is second only to cancer.
- High blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol, and smoking are key heart disease risk factors for heart disease. About half of Americans (49%) have at least one of these three risk factors.
- Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, and is more deadly than all forms of cancer combined.
- Since 1984, more women than men have died each year from heart disease.
- The symptoms of heart disease can be different in women and men, and are often misunderstood.

(Compiled from <http://www.cdc.gov/> and <http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/>)

## Living Well

By Teri Bartus, MA, CPT



Teri Bartus is the founder and practice director of Flourish Weight Loss Center, in the River Hills Professional Center of Valrico. She considers it her joy and privilege to help women design and achieve



their personal best in wellness. Teri has lived in the Central Florida area for over 25 years and now resides in the Somerset development of Bloomingdale. She has three lovely daughters, two great sons-in-law and twelve amazing grandchildren.

To learn more about Flourish Weight Loss Center, contact Teri at (813)309-3349, email [teri@flourishdesigningwellness.com](mailto:teri@flourishdesigningwellness.com) or on the web at [www.flourishdesigningwellness.com](http://www.flourishdesigningwellness.com).

### The Silent Killer Hits Home

I recently relocated to the Bloomingdale community after my mother received a series of poor health reports, leading to open-heart surgery last November. My mother is thankfully recovering, yet she was one of many women whose initial symptoms did not seem to indicate a heart attack. However, her medical team informed her that she had experienced two heart attacks in the past of which she was not even aware.

#### 'I had absolutely no symptoms'

Every woman is at risk for heart disease. More women die from heart disease each year than any other cause of death. As in my mother's case, women face the additional challenge of their symptoms being easy to miss or downplayed as a temporary discomfort. According to Nieca Goldberg, M.D. of the Joan H. Tisch Center for Women's Health at NYU's Langone Medical Center, women may not experience chest pressure. "Instead they may experience shortness of breath, pressure or pain in the upper abdomen, dizziness, light-headedness, upper back pressure or extreme fatigue."

Even when the signs are subtle, the consequences can be deadly, especially if the victim doesn't get help right away.

#### Take care of yourself.

Heart disease is preventable. Schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider to learn more about your personal risk for heart disease. Don't delay. Get the support you need to modify your family's diet and exercise if needed. Your life is a gift to so many!

For more heart healthy information, visit the American Heart Association's website at <http://www.heart.org>.

Take Action. It is not just older women who are at risk. Diabetes, Metabolic Syndrome, Low Estrogen and Depression are risk factors that play a significant role with women in the development of heart disease.

Photo: American Heart Association, Go Red for Women Campaign.



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# BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Master Deputy Curtis Warren



## SEVENTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY

This month marks seventeen years since the Sheriff's Bloomingdale Community Station opened on Bell Shoals Road in Bloomingdale in 1998. The success of the Sheriff's Office operations in our area is greatly due to the outstanding cooperation and support given by Bloomingdale residents and those in our surrounding communities.

Groups like the Sheriff's Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) have continued to work directly with us in identifying critical concerns and working with us to find solutions. The council still needs more members from homeowners' associations. Residents interested in information can call the Community Station at 635-8040, come by the station at 3622 Erindale Drive (Intersection of Erindale and Lithia-Pinecrest Road) or attend the next meeting on Thursday, February 19 at 7 p.m.

Hillsborough County's Sheriff, David Gee and his committed law enforcement team continue to provide dedicated service. Programs like the Sheriff's Volunteer Citizen Patrol Program have provided outstanding assistance to those of us in law enforcement and improved our ability to provide Bloomingdale's residents with the secure home and work environments you want and deserve.

The first line of defense against crime in our community is you, the homeowner. There are not enough deputies to patrol our community and ensure that your home and vehicles are secure. The Sheriff currently has an intense law enforcement recruiting to fill several hundred vacancies. Anyone interested in working in law enforcement can check the Sheriff's website at [www.hcsos.tampa.us.fl](http://www.hcsos.tampa.us.fl) for information.

## CRIME REPORT

Detective James Howell briefed BACC members at the January meeting that there were several vehicle burglaries in our area with one involving the theft of a large caliber weapon taken from an "UNLOCKED VEHICLE," yes an unlocked vehicle! Fortunately, law enforcement officers recovered the gun. Another incident involved a home burglary in which a vehicle's keys were taken and the vehicle stolen resulting in a grand theft auto incident.

As homeowners, you must also take responsibility for keeping your personal vehicles locked and all valuable items removed. A recent case in Bloomingdale involved criminals burglarizing LOCKED vehicles. You do not want to be one of these victims. It will cost you time and possibly a lot of money. Make sure you lock your vehicles with valuable items removed and secured inside your home.

Keep an eye out for suspicious activity and report it. Keep records of your property for future identification if you want to increase the chances of getting it back. Criminals have techniques they use to look for open homes and vehicles and it only takes them a couple of minutes to walk away with televisions, money, jewelry, GPS systems, credit cards and even guns.

## COMMISSIONER STACY WHITE AND STAFF ATTEND BACC MEETING

The Sheriff's Bloomingdale Area Community council was honored to have newly elected Hillsborough County District 4 Commissioner Stacy White and his legislative staff attend the January BACC meeting.

Commissioner White introduced his two legislative staff members, Victor Bevis and Megan Nixon. He stated that as a team they are looking forward to working with the BACC, HCSO deputies and detectives, and residents of the Bloomingdale area to make our community a safer and more secure area in which to live and work. He addressed many diverse areas of concern presented by BACC members and guests including area construction, transportation and property issues. Not all questions could be answered, but White promised to follow up on all concerns raised.

The BACC is looking forward to working together with Commissioner White and his staff and truly appreciate them being at the meeting. We believe this was the beginning of a great team effort to improve the quality of life in our community.



Commissioner Stacy White (center) attended the Bloomingdale Area Community Council meeting in January to introduce himself and his staff to residents and share his commitment to Bloomingdale and surrounding communities. Also pictured are Master Deputy Curtis Warren (L.), who heads the BACC, and Billy Hightower (r.), a Bloomingdale Homeowners Association director-at-large.

Photos: Joy Boisselle



Hillsborough County Commissioner Stacy White (standing, center) listens closely as Sean Donahue, River Crossing Homeowners Association president, asks a question at the January BACC.

## HCSO SPECIAL NOTES

Florida has a newly strengthened child passenger law. Effective Jan. 1, Florida drivers must follow an enhanced child restraint device (car seat) law which extends the requirement of a car seat or booster seat until a child's 6th birthday. A car seat with a harness must be used until the 4th birthday. Then, for children 4 and 5, a car seat or booster seat can be used but NOT a seat belt alone. Using a booster seat is recommended until a child reaches a height of 4'9" generally between the ages of 6 and 12.



For information on this new law, visit [www.flhsmv.gov/safetytips/CPS.htm](http://www.flhsmv.gov/safetytips/CPS.htm).

## NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT APPLICATIONS HELP KEEP RESIDENTS SAFE



HCSO has announced new media tools to help residents keep the county safe. They are tip411 and the Audio Traffic/Bulletin Smart Phone application.

### About tip411:

tip411 is simple yet effective. This app is available through the Apple App store or Google Play. Look for "HCSOSHERIFF" to download it to your smartphone or tablet. tip411 is easy to use. To send a tip, press "New Tip." You can also include a photograph or video. Just touch the camera icon at the bottom. All tips transmit instantly to our Communications Center, where the information is directed to the appropriate area, i.e. patrol, narcotics, warrants, etc.

Tips are anonymous and the sheriff's office monitors tip411 twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

### About Audio Traffic/Bulletin:

The Audio Traffic/Bulletin Smart Phone Application gives Hillsborough County residents up-to-the-minute, voice activated, on-demand, audio traffic reports and news bulletins. This service will give HCSO officers the ability to communicate instantly with audio messages with important information on crimes, missing or endangered children, and hazardous safety or weather conditions. The app is free and can be downloaded through the Apple App Store or Android Goggle Play by searching for "Audio Traffic Hillsborough."

**Remember, in the event of an emergency, always dial 9-1-1.**



## HCSO Operation Medicine Cabinet Joins BHA Clean-up Day Efforts

Provided By Mack Austin

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Operation Medicine Cabinet will again join the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association at the community's annual clean-up day on March 7. This popular program provides residents a safe way to dispose of dangerous, outdated, unwanted prescription medicines and drugs.

Protect your family and your environment! Collect your old medications, then, drive up and drop off – it is as simple as that. Help us spread the word. Pictured below, Master Deputy Curtis Warren displays a portion of last year's haul.

Representatives will be on site from **9 a.m. until noon, one hour less than the BHA's actual scheduled clean-up closing.** See clean-up details in this issue for more information.



Photo: Gazette Files

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# INs & OUTs

## WHAT RESIDENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PARKING YOUR CARS AND CANS IN THE COMMUNITY

By Miriam Leech  
Photos: Miriam Leech

Whether parking a car or storing a trash can, Bloomingdale residents are subject to deed restrictions regarding both. Bar none, the most frequent calls/emails to the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) office are to report parking and trash violations.

The number one goal of the BHA code program is to maintain our community property values and keep Bloomingdale a desirable place to live.

In June 2013, the BHA adopted complaint letter criteria, built around curb appeal and common sense, for parking and trash issues. Should a violation listed below occur, the BHA sends one letter to the homeowner and tenant (if applicable).

- Parking on the grass.
- Vehicles blocking driveways and/or sidewalks.
- Trash and recycle containers visible from the street. Containers may be placed curbside for collection the evening prior and must be stored after collection before close of business. Storage Options include storage on the side of the house, preferably blocked by landscaping or an enclosure, behind home fencing, or in the garage.

Deed restrictions regarding these two areas vary by neighborhood. With 15 mandatory and 15 voluntary homeowner associations, there are 44 individual deed restriction documents governing individual neighborhood sections throughout the community. The documents are mandatory and apply to both homeowner and tenant.

Restrictions regarding house trailers, mobile homes, habitable vehicles, recreational vehicles, trailers, boats, school buses, and trucks or commercial vehicles over 1 ton vary by neighborhood as well; these vehicles are also subject to Hillsborough County code enforcement.

If you have received a deed restriction violation letter from the BHA regarding **parking on the grass, blocking driveways and/or sidewalks, routinely leaving trashcans in plain sight, and/or violating county ordinances**, this means a complaint was received, verified by the BHA and you are in violation of your neighborhood's deed restrictions as written.

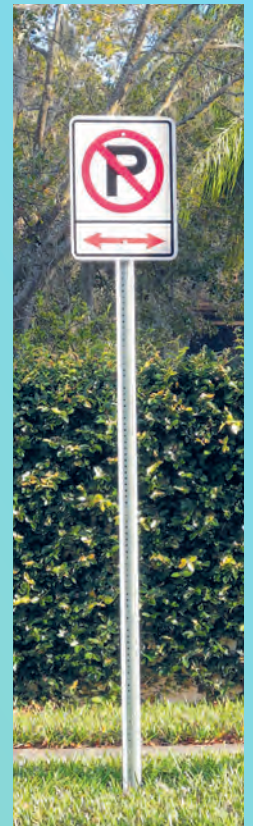
While the BHA serves as the umbrella association for all, our mandatory HOA neighborhoods police themselves through various code enforcement programs generally run by a committee or property management company. Our voluntary HOA neighborhood rely on the BHA to handle complaints through a code letter system. The primary purpose of the letters is to educate, inform, and request violators adhere to their mandatory deed restrictions and resolve the violation.

To learn more about the cans and can'ts of parking and trash in your neighborhood, view or download your deed restriction documents online at the BHA website at [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com). For information, contact the BHA at 813-681-2051 or email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com).

Bloomingdale's deed restriction documents, all 44, provide specific standards for parking in our neighborhoods. Residents are asked not to park on the street (ensures easy emergency vehicle access), the grass, or to block sidewalks and driveways.



Bloomingdale residents are reminded to keep trash and recycle containers out of sight except for the evening prior to collection days when they can be placed curbside. Store trash cans after collection by the day's end.



... even school crossing guards have special parking places to preserve common areas grass throughout the community.

## Why We Swing Like We Do...

By J.D. Carino (Bloomingdale CC Campus)

The Titleist Performance Institute's 90/90 test measures the player's range of external rotation in the shoulder and their ability to maintain scapular stability in a golf posture.

To perform the test: Stand tall and hold your right arm out to the side parallel to the ground. Without bending backwards try to rotate the hand up and back, similar to swearing in at court. Think, "Do you swear..."

In the pictures below, the golfer on the left has better mobility, range of motion and will most likely, have better golf technique. The golfer on the right needs exercise and stretching for better shoulder rotation or he will compensate to get the club back to the ball. Many golfers with limited mobility on the 90/90 test have a "flying right elbow" stroke.

Next lesson: Ladies, ladies, ladies... Any questions or for lessons, please visit [CochraneGolfSchools.com](http://CochraneGolfSchools.com) or call J.D. at 813-957-3205.



*John E.S. Cochrane*  
GOLF SCHOOLS

Photos: J.D. Carino





## Library Happenings in February

Compiled by Kayla Hayes

February is Black History Month, a month to celebrate accomplishments of African Americans throughout U.S. history. The Bloomingdale Regional Public Library is observing Black History Month with various programs for all ages. The information listed here is only a sampling. For the full calendar, go to [hcpl.org/hcpl/locations/bdl](http://hcpl.org/hcpl/locations/bdl). Call the library for registration and information at 813-273-3652.

### For Children

*Crafts for Kids: Valentines*, Thursday, Feb. 12 from 3 - 3:45 p.m. in Room 7. Join us as we make Valentine's Day cards. All supplies provided, just bring your creativity!

*Drum Circle Magic*, Thursday, Feb. 19 from 4 - 5 p.m. in Room 8. In celebration of Black History Month, dance, laugh, sing and enjoy the magic of community and teamwork while playing African drums with Giving Tree Music.

### For Teens

Teen Game Zone, Monday, Feb. 16 and 23 from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. in Room 8. Play popular Wii games like Rockband, Mario Smash Bros. and Mario Kart. Showcase your musical talent or challenge your friends to some sports! Get your game on.

### For All Ages

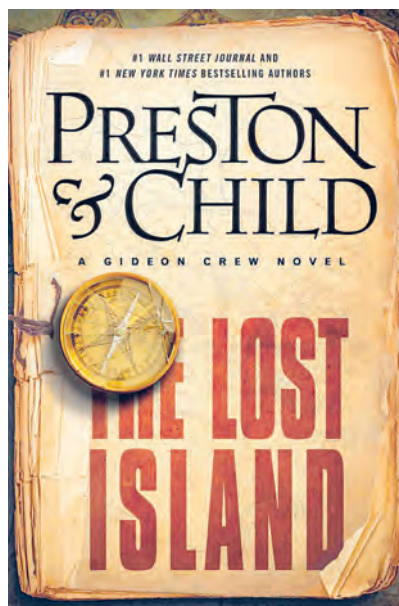
*Tai Chi Demo* on Friday, Feb. 27 from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. in the McLean Community Room. Tai Chi reduces stress, increases stamina, flexibility and alertness.

*Bloomingdale Giveback Program*, Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 6 p.m. in the McLean Community Room. Learn to knit or crochet. These hand-made items are donated to local organizations. Be a part of something helpful, productive and fun! Funded by the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Library.

### Good Reads!

Read these books in preparation for the Library's February adult book discussions:

- Whodunit Book Club: *The Lost Island* by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child, Thursday, Feb. 5 at 1 p.m.
- *Bookman's Tale: A Novel of Obsession* by Charles Lovett - Monday, Feb. 16 at 7 p.m.
- *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Leo Tolstoy - Saturday, Feb. 21 at 10:30 a.m.



## Essentials Celebrates Grand Opening

By Miriam Leech

Essentials full-service day spa celebrated the Grand Opening of its new location at 3405 Brook Crossing Drive on Jan. 21 with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Opened four years ago by Bloomingdale residents Kim (pictured with scissors) and Joey Didona (pictured cutting the ribbon), the spa was previously located on Bloomingdale Avenue west of John Moore Road.



Photos: Miriam Leech

Attending the event were Brandon Chamber of Commerce members as well as clients and invited guests. Said Joey, "Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being here." Added wife Kim, "We are excited about what's to come."

The new location offers a plush setting and expanded services with 14 massage rooms, including one especially for couples, a party/relaxation room (pictured below), facials, hair services, skin care, waxing, as well as manicures/pedicures. It also offers a convenient location for Bloomingdale residents who wish to spend an extended day of beauty and relaxation without driving to downtown Tampa.



For information about Essentials services, call 813-681-1110 or visit: <http://brandonesentials.com>.

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

### March 9-13 – Spring Break, No School

#### ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

**Feb. 12** – Read Your Heart Out! Come enjoy a Family Literacy Night from 6-7:30 p.m. Teachers will read stories, there will be cookies and juice for the kids and there will be information on Florida Standards Reading.

**Feb. 19** – Spirit Night, Chili's, Lithia Pinecrest Rd, 5-9 p.m.

**Feb. 21** – Spring Carnival, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Have fun on bounce houses and playing carnival games. Open to the community. Unlimited bouncing is \$10 per child. There will also be food trucks including Little Italy Meatballs, Jimmy's Sliders, Tasty Tortilla, Revolution Ice Cream and Churro Express. Other activities include a cakewalk, book fair and local vendors. For information, contact Deb Gibson at hootsnestfl@gmail.com

**March 5** – Spirit night, McDonald's, Bloomingdale Ave., 4-8 p.m.



#### CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

**Feb. 12** – Spirit Night, California Pizza Kitchen, Brandon Town Center Mall. Be sure to mention Cimino when you pay for your order so the school will get credit. This is an all-day event.

**Feb. 13** – All Pro Dad's: A monthly get together for kids and their dads. Meet in the Multi-Purpose Room at 7 a.m. Enjoy a great free breakfast and bonding with our kids, raffles and more.

**Feb. 13** – Wear Purple for Perseverance

**March 6** – Field Day, Come join us for annual Field Day, a morning of outdoor games and exercise for the kids. This is an all-day event.

**March 6** – Wear Pink for Patience

#### Copy Team.

Have a few hours to spare on Fridays? Interested in helping out our fantastic staff by becoming a member of the copy team? We are looking for a new member to join us on Fridays to help make copies and laminate. Flexible hours and no experience necessary. If you would like to help out, contact CiminoPTA@gmail.com

#### PTA Membership

Support this school year's programs by becoming a PTA member. Just fill out a membership form at [www.ciminopta.com](http://www.ciminopta.com) and return with \$6 to your child's teacher. You may send cash or check made out to Cimino PTA.



#### BURNS BRUINS BANTER

**Feb. 11** – PTSA General Meeting, 8-9 a.m., breakfast will be served.

**Feb. 16** – Dance, All grades, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

**Feb. 20** – Fitness Challenge, 9-10 a.m.

**Feb. 26** – Soccer vs Eisenhower, at Bloomingdale HS, 6-7 p.m.

**March 2-6** – FSA Writing Test, three sessions per day for 90 minutes.



#### Put Your Name in Lights

The PTSA is excited to offer a new opportunity to celebrate your student's achievements! For just \$15, our "Name in Lights" program allows parents to order a special message displayed on the Burns electronic marquee. For birthday messages, you can have a complimentary cupcake delivered to the birthday girl or boy at lunch! Order forms available at [www.burns.mysdhc.org](http://www.burns.mysdhc.org).

#### BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS

Check out the BSHS calendar at <http://bloomingdale.mysdhc.org/> for more February events.

**Feb. 10** – Report cards distributed

**Feb. 12, 20, 21, 24, 27** – Baseball/Softball at Bloomingdale

**Feb. 18, 23, 24** – Lacrosse at Bloomingdale

**March 1** – Flag Football Pre Season at Bloomingdale



#### BULLS BRIEFS

**Beauty and the Bull Pageant:** A BSHS tradition, Beauty and the Bull, a junior class fundraiser, is Feb. 11 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium. The pageant features professionally judged beauty and talent segments. Audience votes also help to select the winners. Proceeds benefit the junior class for events such as prom. Jake Cannon, a 2016 class officer, encouraged all Bloomingdale area residents to attend. "It should be a lot of fun, we have some really great contestants this year," he shared. Pre-sale tickets are on sale now and can also be purchased at the door. (Provided by: Mallory Hillary)

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

**School Day SAT:** The school day SAT is Feb. 25. Exam information will be distributed to students during junior programming. Update changes of address with the school as registration tickets will be mailed to the student's home address.

**Address Changes:** Should you have had a change in address, phone number or email address, come by the front office to update your child's emergency card. It is imperative we have correct contact information in case of an emergency. We also periodically send our reminder messages through the Parent Link system that allows us to text you, email you or phone you.

**Business Partners:** The Bloomingdale Academic Foundation is looking for business partners to support our great school and promote their businesses at the same time. We are also accepting donations for the upcoming semester. The foundation's goal is to put money directly back into the classrooms. Contact Michelle Hernandez [president@bloomingdaleacademics.org](mailto:president@bloomingdaleacademics.org)

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** The FAFSA is available now. Please visit [fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov) for more information, helpful video tutorials, and to complete a practice form. You do not have to wait to file your 2014 taxes to begin the FAFSA process. Colleges and universities cannot award any need-based aid unless the FAFSA is completed.

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

**Scholarships:** New opportunities are posted daily at <http://www.bloomingdaleguidance.org/>. There are over 85 scholarships available through the Hillsborough Education Foundation. Visit [www.educationfoundation.com](http://www.educationfoundation.com) to apply

**Bloomingdale PTSA Scholarship Award:** The Bloomingdale PTSA Scholarship Award honors two graduating seniors (one female, one male) at BSHS who demonstrate a positive attitude toward scholarship, leadership and community service. The \$500 award is to be presented at the senior breakfast in May.

Eligibility requirements:

- GPA of 2.5 or higher (unweighted)
- 2015 graduating BSHS senior who will attend an accredited four year or two year college or university or trade school (proof of acceptance required)
- Demonstrated leadership abilities in school, through club membership, community service or other extracurricular activities or has overcome challenges or obstacles during their high school years at BSHS
- Parent/guardian or student is a member of Bloomingdale PTSA by March 27, the scholarship deadline. Membership can be submitted with the application. Applications are available at <http://bloomingdaleptsa.org/>.

Applications are due to Nicole Usher, Bloomingdale College and Career Counselor, no later than March 27. Scholarships disburse directly to the winner's college/university/trade school.





## Rising to the Top Again? BSHS Crimson Guard Begins Competition Season

By Nicole Cluck

After an unusually long and winning football season, Bloomingdale High School's Crimson Guard shifted from fall marching season to winter competition season. For new members, marching season allows time to learn the basics; for returning members, it is all about honing their timing and precision. For all, marching season set the foundation for bonding and working together as a team.

On Jan. 24, color guards from all over Florida competed at The Florida Federation of Colorguards Circuit (FFCC) Colorguard Premier West event held at Durant High School in Plant City. Winners received a coveted FFCC winter guard plaque.

Bloomingdale's junior varsity team competed in the Scholastic AAA class earning a respectable fourth place finish. The varsity team competed in the Scholastic A class where they secured a second place berth. In total, 63 teams competed in the highly competitive event.

Coach Billy Sullivan was proud of both teams in their first competition of the season. More importantly, he stressed that the first competition is about showing what the team is capable of and what is to come in the future. The Crimson Guard has a reputation for entertaining and winning shows.

Next up for the teams is another FFCC event today at Plant City High School. According to the FFCC website schedule, the JV team will perform at 2:55 p.m. followed by the varsity team at 7:18 p.m.



The Crimson Guard's JV Team performed a show titled, "On the Shore" and earned a fourth place finish at an FFCC colorguard competition held Jan. 24 at Durant High School. Both JV and Varsity teams are focused on preparations for the FFCC Championships in March.

Photo: Holly Cluck





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The Rajun' Bulls marched into the New Year in "Roman Holiday" fashion. The pride of Bloomingdale High School entertained crowds with selections from this year's halftime show, Bulls on Safari, when they marched in both the Frascati Street Show and the Rome New Year's Day Parade.

Nearly 300 students and adults representing the BSHS music department enjoyed this unforgettable trip to Italy. The seven-day experience offered students more than just sightseeing (and terrific food)—each music group performed in venues unique to Rome and Frascati. Chorus students were showcased at the Duomo (Frascati), St. John's Lateran and St. Peter's Basilica; the Orchestra played at Aldobrandini Museum (Frascati) and Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Piazza del Popolo.

Included in the trip were opportunities to visit the Colosseum and Roman Forum, Pantheon, Vatican City, Catacombs and the ancient city of Pompeii. Witnessing the Pope's New Year's Blessing in St. Peter's Square was an historic and special treat!

Senior clarinet player Josh Johnson remarked, "Rome was a once-in-a-lifetime trip! It was amazing to have 300 friends along with me every step of the way—even trying to cram 300 of us into a single restaurant was something to remember forever."

The Rajun' Bull Band brought 107 of its 275 members, and was one of 16 marching units from the U.S., U.K. and Italy to march in the town of Frascati (a popular Roman day trip destination). In Rome, the atmosphere and Roman crowds made the New Year's Day Parade an entirely different experience. The parade followed the Pope's New Year's Day Blessing and drew over 100,000 spectators, many of whom marched right alongside and amongst the bands.

Jon Sever, BSHS Fine Arts department chair and band director summed it up best. "The Rome parade was like nothing we've ever been a part of. From the narrow streets and excited, encroaching Roman crowds to dodging the occasional taxi, garbage truck and fire engine, this was truly an experience not to be forgotten!"

Photos: Bonnie Steele



The Rajun' Bulls entertain Rome New Year's Day Parade goers. Seeing the large crowd gathered on the Spanish Steps to get a better-than-street level view of the action was a favorite moment for many.



Rajun' Bulls brave brisker than usual temperatures in Frascati, Italy during the town's annual Street Show.

Band members line up in Rome's famous Piazza del Popolo for the start of Rome's New Year's Day Parade. Behind the band are symmetrical churches, Santa Maria dei Miracoli and Santa Maria in Montesanto.







## Bloomington's Best of the Best... Recognizing Excellence in Our Community

Staff Report

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

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### Congratulations to Arianna Martinez, February's Best of the Best Student of the Month!

Bloomington High School junior Arianna Martinez is an ambitious and focused student leader. With one year to go before graduation, she is already well on the road to accomplishing her future goals.

In her nomination, Martinez was described as a "star" student currently holding the top GPA in the Class of 2016. A modest description for sure as this student is currently in or has been a member of no less than ten school organizations including Mu Alpha Theta (Math Honor Society), Rho Kappa (Social Studies Honor Society), sophomore and junior steering committees, Thespians, and the Student Government Association (SGA). With her senior year remaining, a certain prediction would be that that number will increase.

She is most proud of her election as vice president of the junior class SGA. Citing the accomplishment as "a huge influence on her life," Martinez said, "[Winning] allowed me to become even more of a leader and become a stronger force in my school and in my personality."

Most students are pursuing their high school diplomas and getting ready for prom. Not so, Martinez – she hopes to earn her high school diploma and complete her college associate degree at the same time. She is currently eyeing college options that meet her education goal of attending medical school and long-term career goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon.

School is not the only setting where this stellar student shines. Wanting to help others has led her to volunteer at All Children's Hospital, Relay for Life, and at her school. "There's always someone who needs help, and I don't have any reason for not being the one to help them."

Gisela and David Martinez are the proud parents of this exceptional Bloomington student. The family, including siblings Gabriella and David Jr. live in Preston Woods.

*Keep up the great work, Arianna!*



The best part of the BHA's BOB program is learning about the outstanding young people in our community. Pictured are Arianna Martinez (far right), February's Best of the Best winner and her siblings, Gabriella and David Jr. Photo: The Martinez Family



## Mr. and Miss. Bloomington: Fitness Takes the Stage

By Nicole Cluck

Securing orange tans and building ripped muscles coupled with no junk food may seem like an odd combination to some, but for Mr. and Miss Bloomington contestants these are their commandments leading up to the Mr. and Miss Bloomington Contest. The annual event held Dec. 17 focuses on bodybuilding and overall fitness.

Students of all grades come together to watch their friends and classmates flex their muscles and perform a routine to music. This is not just an event to see toned and tanned bodies. Contestants are judged on their poses and their overall presentation. Judges saw many strong performances throughout the night but two students flexed above the rest.

Junior Dasha Hamilton and senior Mitchell Colen, crowned 2014-15 Mr. and Miss Bloomington, demonstrated their fitness skills to an enthusiastic and appreciative crowd. For Mr. Bloomington winner Colen, fitness is a lifestyle. He believes "you get out what you put in" which is why he trained hard with a friend to help keep him accountable. "Everything comes down to one night," he said, seeing his win as a reflection of his hard work.

For Miss Bloomington winner Hamilton, it was the backstage experiences, which made it an "overall fun experience" for her. Pam cooking spray, a contestant must-have, was used to add a shimmering effect to the contestants' bodies. However, she explained the spray was very slippery and helped create a comical upbeat environment, lessening tensions and helping the contestants bond as a group.

For everyone – contestants and viewers – the crowd-pleasing event was more than a bodybuilding competition. It was a bonding experience that created lasting memories for all.



Photo: Nicole Cluck

Fitness routines thrilled the crowd at the Mr. and Miss Bloomington bodybuilding contest held Dec. 17 at the BSHS auditorium. Contestant Dennis Hamilton lifts Elizabeth Jackson (left) while Dasha Hamilton flips across the stage on her way to earning the title of Miss Bloomington.





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