



# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

VOLUME XXXVIII ❧ ISSUE 12 ❧ DECEMBER 2018 ❧ [www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com](http://www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com)

## Bulls Make History!

See the story on pp 12-13



Courtesy: BSHS

**Santa, TODAY,  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.,  
Details on p. 6**

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The noblest art is that of making others happy." P.T. Barnum

### *This Month*



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# 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 Bloomington Community Office.

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

**Vice President:** *Suzy Watts*

**Secretary:** *Daniel Berkowitz*

**Treasurer:** *Grace Lewis*

### Directors at Large:

*Sean Donahue*

*Bobbi Ferraro*

*Carl Hallinan*

*Billy Hightower*

*Beth Smedley*

*Charlie Woodcock*



## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



### JOY BOISSELLE

#### Editor - The Bloomington Gazette

3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

Valrico, FL 33596 - (813) 681-2051

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

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

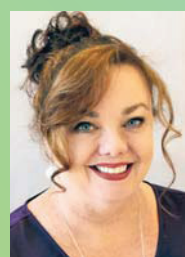
Design/Layout: Chris Pascucci, NTZ Studios

Staff Writers: Joe Harless, Jessica Hinson, Wendy Knipp,

Deidre Morgan, and Student Reporter: Jon Alfano

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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



### ANDREA DALY

#### Community Development

#### Program Manager, Advertising

11268 Winthrop Main Street, Suite 101

Riverview, Florida 33578 - (813) 731-2490

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Yard of the Month



Photo: Wendy Knipp

Ellen Van Eepoel 421 Bloomingfield Drive Brandon, 33511 (Bloomingdale West)



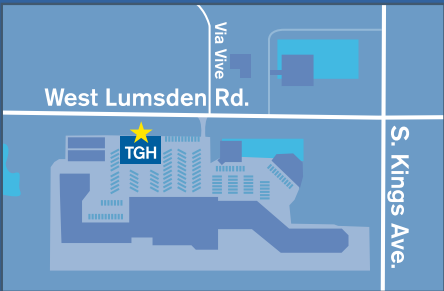
Yard of the Month is sponsored by Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale. Send your Yard of the Month nominations to: InBloomingdaleNews@gmail.com or call (813) 681-2051

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



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# BHA COMMUNITY CORNER



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## 2019 Membership Drive begins in January!

Thank you to our residents who supported the BHA and its many programs and services in 2018. All membership donations, that's 100 percent, benefit the community.

The 2019 Membership Drive will start in January 2019. Be on the lookout for your membership drive letter and green donation card. **Your \$35 annual membership fee supports** The Fall Festival, Annual Clean-Up Days, Advocacy for community improvements to county officials, The Award-Winning Bloomingdale Gazette, The HOA website, Facebook and Twitter Pages, Community-Wide Garage Sale, Santa Visit and Charity Food Drive, Yard of the Month and a Scholarship and Community Service Hour Program.

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 payment. 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.

The BHA is an IRC 501(c) (4) non-profit organization, run entirely by unpaid volunteers who live in your neighborhoods. 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.



## 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 will help you promote your event on our Facebook page.

**Monday, Dec 10, 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 11, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting,** Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome. Call 813-681-2051 for information.

**Thursday, Jan 17, NEW TIME: 6 p.m. / Bloomingdale Area Community Council** chaired by Hillsborough County Deputy Cliff Fletcher, Bloomingdale Community Station, 3622 Erindale Drive, 813-635-8040. Learn about safety and security issues affecting our community. Note: No December Meeting!

## BHA BRIEFS

### Thank you, Joanie Wilson!

With heavy hearts, the BHA Board of Directors bids a very fond farewell to Joanie Wilson. Joanie served on the board since August 2013 as a BHA Director at Large and this last year as the Association Secretary.

While no longer Bloomingdale residents, Joanie and her husband Jeff have left a lasting impact on our community and its residents. Joanie has been a mainstay at all BHA events always greeting others with a ready and winning smile.

When she first joined the board Wilson said, "Serving on the board gives me the privilege of contributing to our community and knowing that I can be one small voice on a team of individuals who have Bloomingdale's best interest at heart." And, contribute she did!

We thank you for your dedication and we will miss you, Joanie!

Joanie and Jeff Wilson are no longer Bloomingdale residents, but they still have strong ties to the community. Pictured are Jeff and Joanie, Realtor Ashley Carlisle (Daughter of Billy Hightower, BHA Director) and mortgage broker Correa Insua.



Joanie Wilson and Commissioner Stacy White at the 2017 Fall Festival.



Joanie Wilson begs Santa to take her off the "Naughty List."



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**December Community Calendar**  
PLEASE CHECK THE BHA COMMUNITY CORNER FOR ACTIVITIES  
AND EVENTS RIGHT HERE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

# TODAY!

## Hey Bloomingdale! Santa is here!!

Santa Visit and Charity Food Drive, Saturday, Dec. 1, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Village Early Learning Center, 3741 Canoga Park Drive/ The Santa pictured is the BHA's actual Santa. He is terrific! Bring the kids, both two- and four-legged for a photo, crafts, balloon art and a gift from Santa! Bring a non-perishable donation for those in need!



## OTHER HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS!

**Christmas Lane / Now to Dec. 24, each Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 6-10 p.m. / Charlie Grimes Ag Building at Plant City's Florida Strawberry Festival** // Christmas is coming to the Florida Strawberry Festival! There are many Christmas displays, food, carnival rides, and a Kidzone, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be available for photos every night! Enjoy Living Nativities each Thursday, Friday and Saturday night during which area churches will present a 20 minute Living Nativity with live music, live animals, an outdoor set and an angel! There is live local entertainment every night and Fritzzy Brothers One Man Circus nearly every night. Check our website at [www.ChristmasLane.com](http://www.ChristmasLane.com) and our Facebook page for more info and photos from last year's event. Note: Open on Christmas Eve (Monday) and Santa will be with us from 6-8 p.m. only that night (before leaving to make deliveries!). There will be no entertainment (live music, children's entertainer) on Christmas Eve. Wheelchair accessible, Free Parking, Service Animals Only in vests (no chairs are available for rental). Service Animals Only, No pets allowed.



**Sing the Glory Cantata / Dec. 16, 10:30 am / The Presbyterian Church of Bloomingdale / 710 E Bloomingdale Ave / 813-654-3699**



**Valrico Holiday Market - Bullfrog Bazaar/ December 16, Noon – 4 PM / Bullfrog Creek Brewing Co., 3632 Lithia Pinecrest Rd** // Get your holiday shopping done while supporting local businesses! There will also be a Dog Ugly-Sweater Contest so make sure to bring Fido in his festive gear. Find something for everyone! Our vendors create unique items and we want to give them the opportunity to showcase their items while giving you the opportunity to buy them all with a cold beer in your hand and a belly full of food truck goodness. Antiques, art, baked goods, beauty products, children's items, clothing, flowers, food trucks, jewelry, musicians, paper goods, pet items, plants, records, Vintage Clothing, Vintage Housewares. If you are a vendor and would like to inquire about showing your wares at our market please email [kara@thevent.co](mailto:kara@thevent.co)



**Holiday Lights in the Gardens / Now - Dec. 30, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. / FL Botanical Gardens, 12520 Ulmerton Rd., Largo** // The annual "Holiday Lights in the Gardens" is a seasonal escape into a wonderland of twinkling lights and fun entertainment. Over 1 million LED lights shine highlighting our plants and in nature-themed or holiday-themed light displays. This is a family-friendly event with nightly entertainment, including visits with Santa. Refreshments are available, as well as Holiday-themed gifts at the Botanical Bounty Gift Shop. The event begins at 5:30 pm and a \$4 suggested donation is encouraged for entry. All donations support the ongoing maintenance, upkeep and expansion of the Florida Botanical Gardens. Parking: Main event parking is located at 12211 Walsingham Road, Largo; Additional limited parking is also available at 12520 Ulmerton Road. There will be entertainment most nights and St Pete Concessions is on site every evening to provide food, drinks, and ice cream- so come hungry! For more information, visit <https://www.visitstpeteclearwater.com/event/holiday-lights-gardens/5412>.

**River of Lights / Select nights Now - Dec. 30 / Pirate Water Taxi, Tampa RiverWalk (near the Tampa Convention Center and Sail Pavilion), Tampa/ 813-223-7999 / TICKETS@ [www.piratewatertaxi.com](http://www.piratewatertaxi.com)** // A Tampa tradition returns! Hop on the Pirate Water Taxi for Tampa's most unique holiday celebration. View festive decorations, lighted bridges and other surprises along the Hillsborough River. River of Lights features a whimsical narration, Christmas Carolers, hot chocolate and a holiday cookie for all! There is no better way to experience the Holidays in Tampa! [info@piratewatertaxi.com](mailto:info@piratewatertaxi.com)



**Snow on 7th Parade / Saturday, Dec. 8, 6-9 p.m. / Ybor City Chamber of Commerce / 1800 E 9th Ave, Tampa** // Ybor Collaborative is hosting its 8th Annual Snow on 7th Parade featuring 15+ local high school Marching Bands under a sky of snow! Join Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn and Santa Claus for this FREE family friendly event. At 6pm in Centro Ybor, the pre-show will feature local children's dance groups talent to get visitors into the holiday spirit. At 7pm The Tampa Bay Pride Band will usher in the official start of the parade with Mayor Bob Buckhorn in the lead and the snow will begin to flow from the rooftops like magic in Florida. Marching bands from all over Hillsborough County will continue the holiday cheer with other special guests included. Santa and Mrs. Claus will signal the finale of this special holiday tradition.

## GENERAL EVENTS

**How to Maintain Brain Fitness / The Bridges Retirement Community** // Just as our bodies need exercise to stay fit, our brains need exercise to maintain cognitive abilities. Dr. Jerri Edwards, professor and researcher at USF College of Medicine Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences, presents "The Aging Brain: How to Maintain Brain Fitness." On Tuesday, Dec. 4 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Dr. Edwards will explain what happens to cognitive abilities with age, how we can maintain our cognitive abilities, what makes brain fitness programs effective and how to choose a brain fitness program. The workshop, held at The Bridges, 11350 Bloomingdale Ave., Riverview, is free to attend and includes lunch. Space is limited. Call Janet at 813.413.8900 to reserve your seat.



**Master Gardener Plant Clinic / Dec. 5, 6:30-8 p.m. / Bloomingdale Library, 1906 Bloomingdale Ave.** // Turn your brown thumb green! Join master gardeners on the first Wednesday of every month through May 19. This month's topic presented by Master Gardener Verna Dickey is "Landscape Design." Love gardening but not sure how to put the pieces together to create a durable and visually appealing landscape? This presentation will cover the basics of designing a beautiful Florida-Friendly Landscape. Learn simple design principles and techniques to fashion an attractive, low-maintenance landscape. Presentation from Master Gardener Laurie Potier-Brown. Don't forget to bring a plant or other gardening item for our fun Plant Swap. Many free UF/IFAS publications will be available as well as information on other clinics and workshops offered from your Hillsborough County Extension Office. <http://sfty.ifas.ufl.edu/hillsborough>.





# AS OUR COMMUNITY EXPANDS, SO DO WE.

You may have noticed a few new faces in the neighborhood. It seems Riverview and the South Shore area is growing at a record pace. The area has added new developments, shopping centers, restaurants and a new hospital. Well, kind of. To meet the needs of this growing community, BayCare's St. Joseph's Hospital-South is growing too. We're currently investing in a two-phased expansion that will be completed in mid 2020. Once completed, we'll have an expanded emergency department with 55 exam rooms, including 14 dedicated to pediatric patients. We'll also have added a five-story patient tower with an 18-bed observation unit, 36 additional private patient rooms, 12 progressive care rooms, a dedicated 12-bed pediatric unit and space for a future neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). As a community-based hospital, we're doing all this because we believe that a growing community needs a hospital that's doing the same. To learn more: [StJosephsSouth.org](http://StJosephsSouth.org). **Humanity at Work™**.



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## Bloomingdale Real Estate Update

*(Editor's Note: Real estate columnist Ronnie has lived in Bloomingdale for eight years with her husband and two children, a son attending University of Florida and daughter at Bloomingdale High School. A productive Realtor, she is also active in the Girl Scouts.)*



By Ronnie McLaughlin

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### Neighbors helping neighbors

When my friend Rachel needed help weeding her gardens, she went on Facebook and asked for recommendations. One response was from Rebecca Mrazek, a Bloomingdale resident, and Mom to 11-year-old Carson.

Carson, the youngest of three boys, wants to play tackle football this season and he understands that participating in sports is expensive. Carson jumped on the opportunity to help a neighbor while also helping his parents pay for his second season of football.

When I heard about this middle school boy who worked hours after school to help with my friend's curb appeal and help his parents, I had to meet him! I asked Carson what motivated him and he said, "Tackle football is so much money."

I asked his mom why she takes the time to drive him, help him and train him on proper gardening. She explained that she wants her children to have "skin in the game," another way of saying being involved in achieving the goal.

Carson is a role model to other children who want to have personal investment in their goals. And, he is teaching us to remember to reach out to neighbors for babysitting, dog walking, laying mulch, weeding, and other small jobs where neighbors can help neighbors.



Photo: Ronnie McLaughlin

### Neighborhood Snapshot Fox Run

Fox Run, managed by the same HOA as The Greens, is located between Culbreath, the golf course, and Natures Way. The neighborhood consists of 103 homes averaging 2,755 square feet, 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Nineteen of the homes line the golf course and there are also a few homes with a pond view. The homes were built between 1988 and 1995, with one newer home built in 2007. Nine pool homes sold over the past 365 days averaging \$123.51 per square foot – Omitting a bank-owned sale, the average per square foot cost is \$126.52.



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# Like This, Not That: What Residents Should Know about the Bloomingdale Community

By Joe Harless

## Mandated versus Non-mandated Neighborhoods

While the various neighborhoods making up the Bloomingdale community are similar, the neighborhoods themselves fall under two types of classifications: mandated or nonmandated.

Both neighborhood types have uniform standard requirements that must be followed. In simplest terms, the nonmandated neighborhoods have governance by various County ordinances rather than a set of HOA rules.

The mandated neighborhoods feature several mandatory features, including the homeowners association, deed restrictions, and annual mandatory assessments. By comparison, the nonmandated neighborhoods adhere to the minimum standards which get enforced by County ordinances rather than a mandatory HOA.

There can also be subtle differences in other rules, as well. A mandated neighborhood may not allow a homeowner to park a recreational vehicle in their driveway, while a nonmandated neighborhood just down the street may allow it if within county standards. Per county ordinances, garbage cans in all communities must be stored out of sight on non-trash collection days. Mandated neighborhoods may have even more restrictive rules for garbage can storage.

While these rules can sometimes be annoying, they exist primarily to keep Bloomingdale attractive and ensure that property values are maintained.

## Mandated

Living in a mandated neighborhood usually means having to maintain your property to a certain set of rules. By making use of deed restrictions, mandated neighborhoods include a set of rules the residents have to follow if they choose to live there. The rules tend to cover a wide variety of homeowner concerns, from how often to cut the grass to what colors a house

can be painted to ensuring home maintenance and repairs are completed in a timely fashion.

## Non-mandated

County ordinances not deed restrictions govern non-mandated neighborhoods. County ordinances are basic standards and generally are not as restrictive as deed restrictions.

While the Bloomingdale community does require homeowners to keep their houses maintained, nonmandated homes fall under the jurisdiction of County governance to enforce those maintenance rules. Basically, if you're walking through a nonmandated neighborhood and come across a house in need of repair work, you may contact the BHA or County code enforcement. The BHA can report your complaint and you can remain anonymous.

## Know the Rules

Not sure if your neighborhood is classified as mandatory or nonmandatory? Not to worry; the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association currently features 30-plus deed restriction documents available for viewing and downloading at [www.bloomingdalehoa.com](http://www.bloomingdalehoa.com).

Got questions? Email [bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@gmail.com).



File Photos



Since 2016, 16 Bloomingdale neighborhoods no longer have active deed restrictions. However, these neighborhoods are governed under county code ordinances enforceable by county code officers.

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Profile By Wendy Knipp

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Dr. Jason Edwards and his team provide quality care to area residents. Courtesy Photo



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Photo: Wendy Knipp

## Plants Need Rest for a Quick Start in Spring

Paula Staples, UF/IFAS Public Education Program Coordinator

Would you like to be awakened every night to drink water and eat food? No? Neither would your plants.

During fall, plants prepare to go dormant. Much like a bear hibernates, plants slumber for several months once the cooler temperatures of winter arrive. Continuing to water and fertilize your lawn as you did during the growing seasons of spring and summer is not only wasteful but stressful to plants.

Every living thing needs a restful sleep. Be mindful of plant needs. Apply only enough water for plants to stay hydrated, about ½" of water every seven to ten days, and no fertilizer until spring. Your plants will be rested and ready to grow when warmer weather returns.

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PR88279\_5x5.5





*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, in Bloomingdale West.*



## Pa-Rumpa-Pum-BAM!

I truly love Christmas songs. Really, I do. I love Silent Night. Jingle Bells. I'll Be Home for Christmas. I even love to dust off Nat King Cole and wallow in the idea of chestnuts roasting on an open fire. Although, where you'll find those here in the sub-tropics beats me. Yes, I love Christmas songs. Except for "The Little Drummer Boy."

Everywhere I go, that kid dogs my tail. I walk into a grocery store, and there he is, thumping away. Wander into the pharmacy, and he's already blaring over the loudspeakers. I head for the mall, and he beats me there, dragging his drum along with him. By the time Christmas actually gets here, I'm "Pa-Rumpa-Pum-Pummed" up to my eyeballs and ready to do something unseemly with those drumsticks. And I'm not referring to the ones on the turkey.

And let's face, it: I find it hard to believe that banging away on a drum was the only gift he could think of. He's never heard of free babysitting?



Now, that's something every parent could appreciate. I also find it difficult to comprehend why any new mother, no matter how patient and saintly, would give the go-ahead to a strange child who wants to pound on a drum next to her sleeping newborn's head. Really? Why don't you pass out kazoos to everyone else in attendance and hook up surround sound while you're at it?

I know, I know. This is hardly the "Christmas Spirit" you've come to expect from me over the years, is it? Usually, I'm all ooey-goey and fairly spilling over with "Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men." Yeah, well, I got my first unseasonal dose of "The Relentless Drummer" in a big box store on OCTOBER FREAKING 31ST and I'm now about ready to pound the little percussionist into dust. Well, maybe not quite that. But, I swear, I have very nearly reached the summit of "Pa-Rumpa-Pum-Pummel."

Merry Christmas, anyway. And may it be free of annoying musicians.

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# An UnBULLievable Season: Bulls Make History

By Deidre Morgan

At the start of the football season Coach Max Warner only wanted to improve the team's record and maybe get to the first round of play-offs. Not only did the Bloomingdale Bulls improve their record, they made it the 3rd round of the 2018 FHSAA Football - Class 7A Play-Offs!

With an overall record of 11-2 and a district record of 5-1, this team made history.

During play-offs, Bloomingdale first beat Riverdale High School with a score of 45-8, the first play-off victory in the school's history. Up next was Palmetto and the Bulls came away with a 21-14 win. Just after Thanksgiving, the Bulls faced the number 1 ranked Venice Indians in the Regional Finals. The Bulls led 32-36 at the beginning of the 3rd quarter, but came up short losing 57-32.

Coach Warner said he is so proud of the team and of how much they have grown on and off the field. What they have accomplished has put Bloomingdale and Valrico on an epic course that has changed the culture of the community. Congratulations to Principal Sue Burkett, Coach Max Warner, the coaching staff and football team for making history!! Go Bulls!

## Best. Season. Ever.

Overall 11-2   District 5-1   National Rank 192   State (FL) Rank 24

Date	Opponent	Result
8/25	@ Newsome (Lithia)	(W) 42 - 0
8/31	Chamberlain (Tampa)	(W) 32 - 0
9/7	Middleton (Tampa)	(W) 51 - 0
9/21	@ Lennard (Ruskin)	(W) 53 - 0*
9/28	@ East Bay (Gibsonton)	(W) 13 - 6*
10/5	Strawberry Crest (Dover)	(W) 51 - 0*
10/12	Tampa Bay Tech (Tampa)	(W) 33 - 24*
10/19	@ Plant City (Plant City)	(L) 24 - 10*
10/26	Durant	(W) 42 - 0*
11/2	@ Robinson	(W) 48 - 14

2018 FHSAA Football - Class 7A Play-Offs		
11/9	Riverdale (Fort Myers, FL)	(W) 45 - 8**
11/16	Palmetto (Palmetto, FL)	(W) 21 - 14**
11/23	Venice (Venice, FL)	(L) 57 - 32**

District Game = \*  
Playoff Game= \*\*



Bulls defensive line contributed greatly to the success of the season. Courtesy Photo: Scott Purks, Special to Tampa Bay Times



Tegan Hanks, daughter of BSHS teacher Heather Hanks, shows her Bull Pride while rooting for the team in Venice. Photo: Heather Hanks



Charles Montgomery hands the ball to #25, Dominic Gonnella. Photo: Maddy Shepard



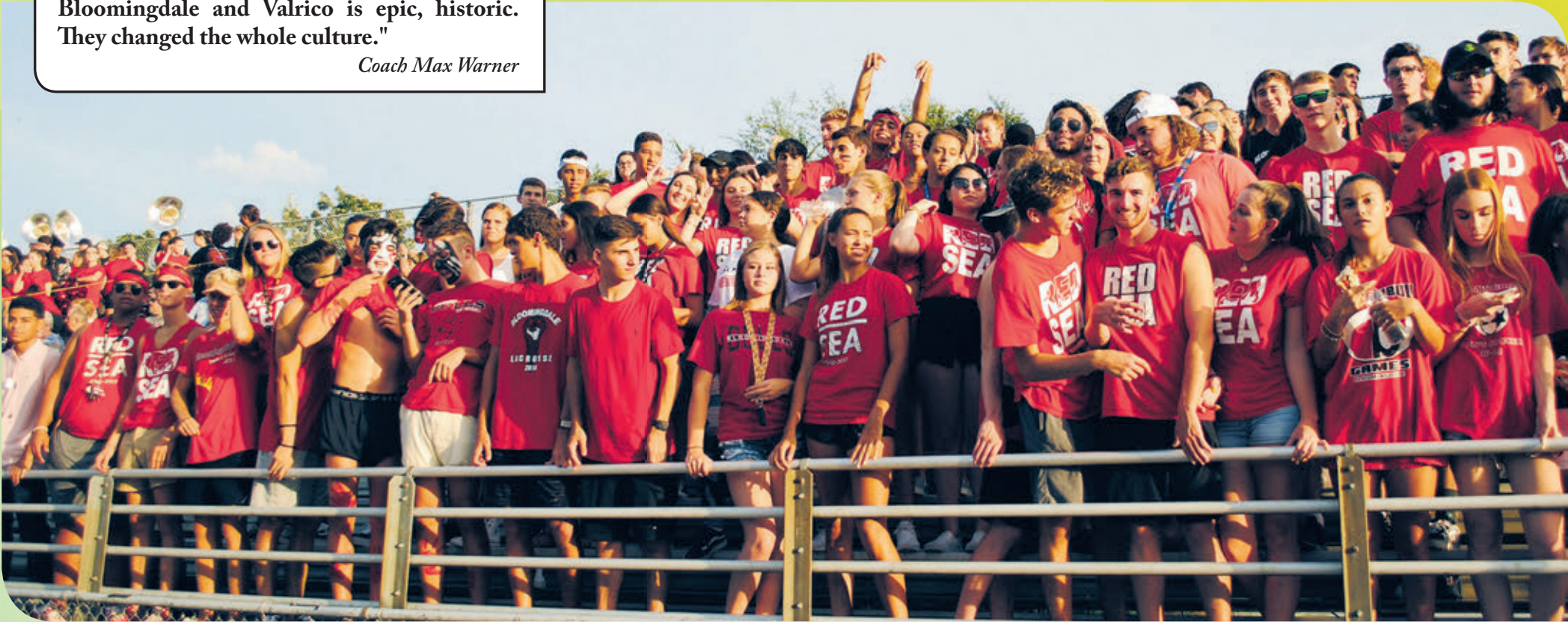
The team celebrates their first play-off win against Palmetto. Photo: Deidre Morgan



The loss to Venice HS in the Regional final can be summed up in one photo, pictured #89 Justin Keijers. Courtesy: Lois Hayes

"What they've [the Bulls have] done for Bloomingdale and Valrico is epic, historic. They changed the whole culture."

Coach Max Warner



The Red Sea / Photo: Deidre Morgan

"We've got a special group of guys. We've talked all year about making history."

Coach Max Warner



Wide Receiver Terrel Ferrell catches a pass in the end zone for a touchdown against a Palmetto defender. Photo: Maddy Shepard



Charles Montgomery (10) runs the ball down the field in the first quarter against Palmetto. The Bulls won the game 21-14 on Nov. 16. Courtesy: Tampa Bay Times/ BRONTE WITTPENN



The cheerleaders cheer the team on from the sidelines. Photo: Deidre Morgan



The Bulls offense gets set for a touchdown play. Photo: Deidre Morgan



Melanie Skinner with sons Joe and Charlie. Photo: Michael Skinner



Malik Womack closes in on Chamberlain quarterback Bruce Jackson. Courtesy: Bloomingdale Football



"It's been an unbelievable run." Coach Max Warner File Photo







# BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Deputy Clifford Fletcher  
and CSO Debbie Vijil

## "One Team, One Family, One Community" *Happy Holidays from the HCSO!*

### Safety First

Distraction are everywhere these days and can be difficult to avoid. We at the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office want you to have a safe holiday season. Drivers and Pedestrian's set aside the smartphones, electronics devices and headphones.

Your eyes and ears are your best tools for keeping safe. Stay alert and watch out for each other. Take time to slow down and look at what others are doing around you. And, know and follow all traffic signs and signals.

Learning to anticipate and never assume someone is going to give you the right of way. Make eye contact with others on the road. Make sure you see and acknowledge one another, particularly when turning, stopping and starting. Don't forget to decrease speed limits in school zones and in neighborhoods where children are present.

Remember, Cyclists have all of the same rights and responsibilities as a motor vehicle and must obey the same rules when travelling on the road.

### Holiday Tips

The Holiday Season is here... many of us will be busy shopping, traveling and celebrating. The HCSO wants all of our residents to have a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Here are safety and security tips to help you stay safe and secure this season.



- **Shoppers** - Be cautious and aware of your surroundings. Don't get in a big rush and be careless. Do not leave your car unlocked, especially with the engine running. Do not leave packages or other valuables in your car. Lock them in the trunk out of sight. Don't invite thieves to take advantage of you because they will. Lock up your vehicles at home too. There have been several auto burglaries in our area.
- **Homeowners** - Prepare and secure your home before you head out for holiday traveling or even just for shopping. Burglars drive through neighborhoods looking for "easy targets." Don't let your home be one! Most burglaries can be prevented by taking a few simple steps...check door and window locks for proper operation, add simple security items paying special attention to doors. Two of the most vulnerable areas are your garage doors and garage side doors. They both give open access to your home. Thieves look for these "open targets."
- **Drivers** - No one wants to be involved in an accident, especially one involving a drunk driver. So, don't drink and drive or ride with those who do! Talk to your teens about the dangers of drinking and driving. Set the right example! A few minutes discussing the dangers and setting strict rules can save your teen's life.
- **Runners and Bikers: Don't get hit!** Residents who run or bike in our area can protect themselves by wearing light colored clothing and reflective vests or clothing. Runners should run on the sidewalks, not in the street! I have seen people running early in the morning in the roadway barely visible. If you can't be seen you will get hit.

### Area Law and Order

Between Oct. 12 and Nov. 12, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office conducted 18 traffic stops in the Bloomingdale area. Those traffic stops resulted in 12 traffic warnings and six citations with two arrests. There were also two DUI arrests. Other reported incidents include three drug violations and 11 vehicle burglaries.

### Do your part

Community involvement is critical in preventing and stopping crime. The key is timing. Contact the Sheriff's Dispatch Center as soon as you notice something unusual happening. This will give us the best chance of catching suspects. Any delay in reporting will significantly hinder an investigation. If you see something, call us.

**Remember if you see something say something. The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office non-emergency number is (813) 247-8200.**

### The Community Council will meet next year on Jan, 17, 2019!

#### *Looking for a way to get involved? Join Citizens Patrol!*

The Sheriff's Citizens on Patrol Program is very successful. Residents should work together with these dedicated volunteers to make our neighborhoods more secure. Consider becoming a part of this great team.



Gazette File Photos



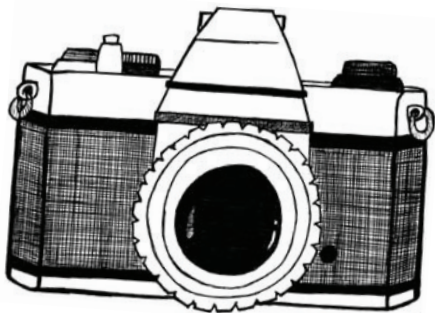


## Resident Photos of the Month

Bloomington residents continue to delight with their photo talents!

Want to show off your photography skills? Photos can be of anything you are proud of and want to share – send people, landscapes, parties, animals, just about anything! Send your photo to [inbloomingtonnews@gmail.com](mailto:inbloomingtonnews@gmail.com) and share your talent with the community! Photos need to be close to 1 MB or greater resolution.

Photos: Chris Dennard/Bloomington Ridge



Roseate Spoonbill photographed at the Orlando Wetlands



Belted Kingfisher photographed at the Viera Wetlands in Titusville.



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# BLOOMINGDALE

## Special Taxing District

### THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AREA CONNECTION

By Miriam Leech, BSTD Staff

*(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.)*

#### Actions and Pictures Speak Louder than Words!



The long-awaited wall repair on Erindale Drive and Culbreath Road began on Oct. 29 after delays in the permitting process. The wall was originally damaged on July 1 when a truck drove through the wall and into a resident's pool. With the wall repair now complete, the new, for the second time, Bloomingdale Ridge sign could be reinstalled.

Photo: Wendy Knipp



BSTD Vice President Bob Meginnis removed downed limbs on Friday, Nov. 2, after a squall went through the neighborhood. Property Manager Rick Pitrowski and even a few residents assisted in the efforts to clear the sidewalk on Erindale Drive until Buccaneer Landscaping could finish the job that following Monday.



#### Monthly Meeting

The residents of Bloomingdale, as always, are invited to attend the next meeting of the BSTD on December 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Community Offices, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. If you would like to speak at the meeting, members of the public are allotted 3 minutes to make comment or ask questions per Hillsborough County policy. Hope to see you there!

Christmas decorations have returned to Bloomingdale early. In appreciation for the community's support for the tax assessment increase, the BSTD trustees voted to fund decorations for this year but plan on even more next year when the increased tax money becomes available. Banners, along with garlands and lights at the eight entrances to the community, were installed on November 1.



A broken service wire caused a loss of power on Erindale Drive in October, resulting in no irrigation. The BSTD acted quickly to bring in a generator on Oct. 26 to restore power and irrigation while boring and electrical repairs could be made. The result was saved turf and a restoration of green color to the thoroughfare.



## Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa The Reason for the Season

By Jon Alfano

The holiday season is a time that brings great joy to many people across the country. With the holidays comes a chance to unwind, escape from the pressures of school and work, and spend quality time with loved ones.

The highlight for many would come with the holidays themselves, with Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa all bringing people together for fun times and festive celebration. While we all love these holidays immensely for the joy they bring us, much of the history and traditions behind them goes unnoticed among all the celebration, so take just a moment to learn about these events.

Being the most widely celebrated winter holiday in the United States, Christmas gets most of the attention in popular culture. It is fairly common knowledge that Christmas is used to celebrate the birth of Jesus in Christianity, but contrary to popular belief, it is not seen as the be-all and end-all holiday in Christianity. Instead, that honor is given to Easter, which honors the resurrection of Jesus.



Celebrated from December 2 to December 10 in 2018, Hanukkah in Judaism celebrates the rededication of the Holy Temple. The most recognizable symbol of the holiday is easily the menorah, which holds nine flames with each one being lit every night of the celebration. Before the nightly lighting, blessings are recited with traditional songs sung after the candle is set ablaze.

Perhaps the least known of the major winter holidays, Kwanzaa is a festive celebration of African history and culture observed from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1. Similar to Hanukkah, Kwanzaa revolves around a special candleholder called the kinara. A kinara holds seven candles, three red, one black, and three green. Each candle represents a key trait of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.



Happy Holidays to all!

## Bloomington Scout Gives Back

Brief By Deidre Morgan

Bloomington High School Junior and Life Scout Nick Klaeren collected over 1,725 pounds of food for donation to Metropolitan Ministries to feed the homeless. Nick set up collection sites at the Winn Dixie's in Fishhawk and Bloomington and had collection barrels outside of his home in the Somerset neighborhood. Nick filled 11 barrels, 5 large bags and a box all filled with canned goods, desserts, box cereal and box sides. He also received over \$260 in cash and gift cards. Nick took on this service project so he could earn the rank of Eagle Scout. He is a member of Boy Scout Troop 79 of Brandon. Nick is the son of Dan and Michele Klaeren. Congratulations Nick on a successful project for such a worthy cause!



Courtesy: Michele Klaeren

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# December School News: A Look at What's Happening

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

Compiled by Deidre Morgan



**Winter Break: December 24, 2018 – January 7, 2019**



## ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

2nd 9 weeks Media Center Reading Challenge:  
Meet your grade level's goal by Dec. 21:  
KG — Complete Teacher's Reading Logs  
1st Grade — 10 RC Points or 300 myOn minutes  
2nd Grade — 15 RC Points or 300 myOn minutes  
3rd Grade — 25 RC Points or 300 myOn minutes  
4th Grade — 35 RC Points or 300 myOn minutes  
5th Grade — 45 RC Points or 300 myOn minutes



*Meet the challenge and earn a wintery pencil, eraser, and bookmark! And, earn the fun of having cozied up with good books!*

### EXTRA CHALLENGE!

Classes in K-2 and 3-5 with most MyOn minutes & most RC points get a "snowball" fight in January!

## Spirit Fridays

Remember to wear your Alafia shirts on Spirit Fridays! Shirts are sold in "The Mint" Wednesday mornings from 7:30- 8 a.m.

## Tuesday Folders

Each year students receive an Alafia folder on the first day of school. These folders then serve as "Tuesday Folders" for the remainder of the year. Every Tuesday these folders will be sent home with pertinent information, forms, newsletters, etc. from the school, the PTA, and sometimes from the county. By sending home all informational fliers only on Tuesdays, we hope to eliminate confusion about when information is coming home. Your child will STILL get papers from teachers on any day of the week, but those will be academic. Please send BACK the folders every Wednesday.



## CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

Dec. 3-7 – Fall Book Fair  
Dec. 6 – Reading Night/Winter Concert and Santa Visit, 6-8 p.m.  
Dec. 10-14 – Santa Shop open all day  
Dec. 11 – Chili's Spirit Night  
Dec. 18 – PTA Board Meeting  
Dec. 21 – All Pro Dads, 6:30 a.m., Multipurpose Room

## The Winter Wonderland Shoppe Needs Help!

The Wonderland Shoppe will be coming to Cimino Dec. 10. Many volunteers are needed to make the shop a success for our students. Below is the link for the volunteer sign-up. Thank you for volunteering! <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4aacac2da4fc1-wonderland>



## BURNS BRUINS BANTER

Dec. 1 – Poinsettia Pick Up, 9:30 a.m., Room 146 and Bus Loop  
Dec. 4 – Band Concert, 6:30 p.m. @ Bloomingdale High School  
Dec. 5-7, Give a Note Band Fundraiser  
Dec. 6 – Burns Chorus Winter Concert, 6:30 p.m. @ Bloomingdale High School  
Dec. 7 – PTSA Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m.  
Dec. 7 – Family Movie Night, 7p.m. in the Courtyard  
Dec. 14 – Give a Note Delivery Day  
Dec. 17-21 – Semester 1 Exams  
Dec. 18 – Dad Group Meeting, 7 p.m. @ Beef O'Brady's, Bell Shoals



## BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS

Dec. 3 – One Act Performance, 6 p.m., Auditorium  
Dec. 3 – 14 – Winter EOC's  
Dec. 4 – Boys & Girls Soccer @ Brandon – 6 p.m.  
Dec. 4 – Boys & Girls Basketball @ Plant City – 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 4 – Booster Club Meeting, 7 p.m.  
Dec. 5 – Cheer Competition @ Blake, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 5 – Boys & Girls Basketball @ TBT, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 7 – Boys & Girls Soccer @ King, 6 p.m.  
Dec. 7 – Boys & Girls Basketball vs East Bay, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 8 – JV Boys Basketball vs Wharton, Plant, 9 a.m.  
Dec. 8 – JV Girls Basketball @ Plant City, 9 a.m.  
Dec. 10 – Orchestra Winter Concert, 6:30 p.m. – Auditorium  
Dec. 11 – Boys & Girls Soccer vs Armwood, 6 p.m.  
Dec. 11 – Boys & Girls Basketball @ Durant, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 11 – Chorus Winter Concert, 7 p.m., Auditorium  
Dec. 12 – Brooker Concert, 6 p.m., Auditorium  
Dec. 12 – Cheer Competition @ Jefferson, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 12 – Boys & Girls Basketball @ Strawberry Crest, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 13 – Band Winter Concert, 7 p.m. – Auditorium  
Dec. 13 – Boys Soccer vs Robinson, 7 p.m.  
Dec. 11 – Boys & Girls Soccer @ TBT, 6 p.m.  
Dec. 14 – Boys & Girls Basketball vs Robinson, 6:30 p.m.  
Dec. 15 – JV Girls Basketball vs King, 9 a.m.  
Dec. 15 – JV Boys Basketball @ Durant, 9 a.m.  
Dec. 19 – Jr. Ring Ceremony, 6:30 p.m., Auditorium  
Dec. 27 – Cheer Practice, 9 a.m., Cafeteria  
Jan. 4 – Cheer Practice, 9 a.m., Cafeteria



## BULL BRIEFS

### Senior Yard Sign Lacrosse Fundraiser

For details, go to <https://docs.google.com/senior/signs>.



### Running of the Bulls 5k



The second annual Running of the Bulls 5k is at Bloomingdale High School on Jan. 19, 2019. This event brings the community together and 100 percent of the race profit goes to the support our BSHS students. The 5k was started by the Bloomingdale Band Boosters to support the band program. New this year, part of the proceeds will support our high school athletic teams!

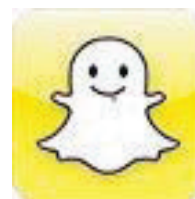
The race begins at 8 a.m. It starts and finishes on the track. Runners and walkers are both welcome. FitNiche Events is timing the race. To support an athletic team, select that team during the registration process.



Date: Saturday, Jan. 19, 2019.  
Time: 8 a.m. at Bloomingdale Senior High School. Cost: \$30. Register today: <https://fitniche.com/event/running-bulls-5k-2/>. Like the Running of the Bulls 5k Facebook page for the latest information: <https://www.facebook.com/bloomingdalebulls5k/>.

Thank you to our many local business sponsors. Acropolis Greek Taverna in Winthrop Town Center is the 2019 Title Sponsor.

### Stay Connected with the Bulls!







## Memorial Fund Set Up For 19-Year-Old Killed On Bloomingdale Ave

By D'Ann Lawrence White, Patch Staff *Courtesy Reprint*

The community is invited to support the family of 19-year-old Tanner Roper by contributing to a memorial fund through GoFundMe.

On Tuesday, Nov. 13, the teen was struck by a car on the crossing walk at Bloomingdale Avenue and Culbreath Road. He was on his way to pick up a job application when he reportedly stepped into the path of a car.

He was flown to Tampa General Hospital where he died of his injuries on Wednesday, Nov. 14.

In his death, however, Roper saved many lives, said his uncle and godfather, Zach Roper.

"Within this tragedy, the family has been given an overwhelming feeling of fulfillment and pride in Tanner's selfless decision to be an organ donor," said Zach Roper. "Because Tanner was a healthy and strong 19-year-old boy, he was able to give the gift of life to so many people in need of life-saving measures that only he could provide including lungs, eyes, liver, kidneys, skin, pancreas and heart."

Roper said selflessness was a hallmark of his nephew's personality.

"Anyone who knew Tanner knows he would give you the shirt off his back," he said. "I think it's fitting that even in this time of grief and sadness, he was able to be so selfless and provide for others in desperate need."

Roper grew up in Bloomingdale, attending Cimino Elementary, Mann Middle School and Bloomingdale High School where he was active in the JROTC.

"Tanner was very patriotic and was hoping to join the military," said Zach Roper. "One of the main values of our military is self-sacrifice for the greater good of others. I can't help but think that through this tragedy Tanner was able to uphold that motto of self-sacrifice by giving the ultimate gift of life."

Roper said he started the GoFundMe page to help the family with medical and funeral expenses.

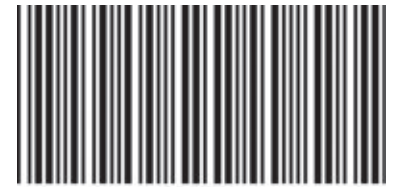
"At this time, let's help them be able to focus on honoring Tanner and healing as a family," he said.

As of Nov. 25, over \$13,000 had been donated to the fund.



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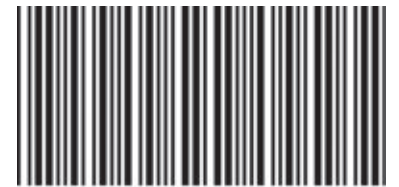


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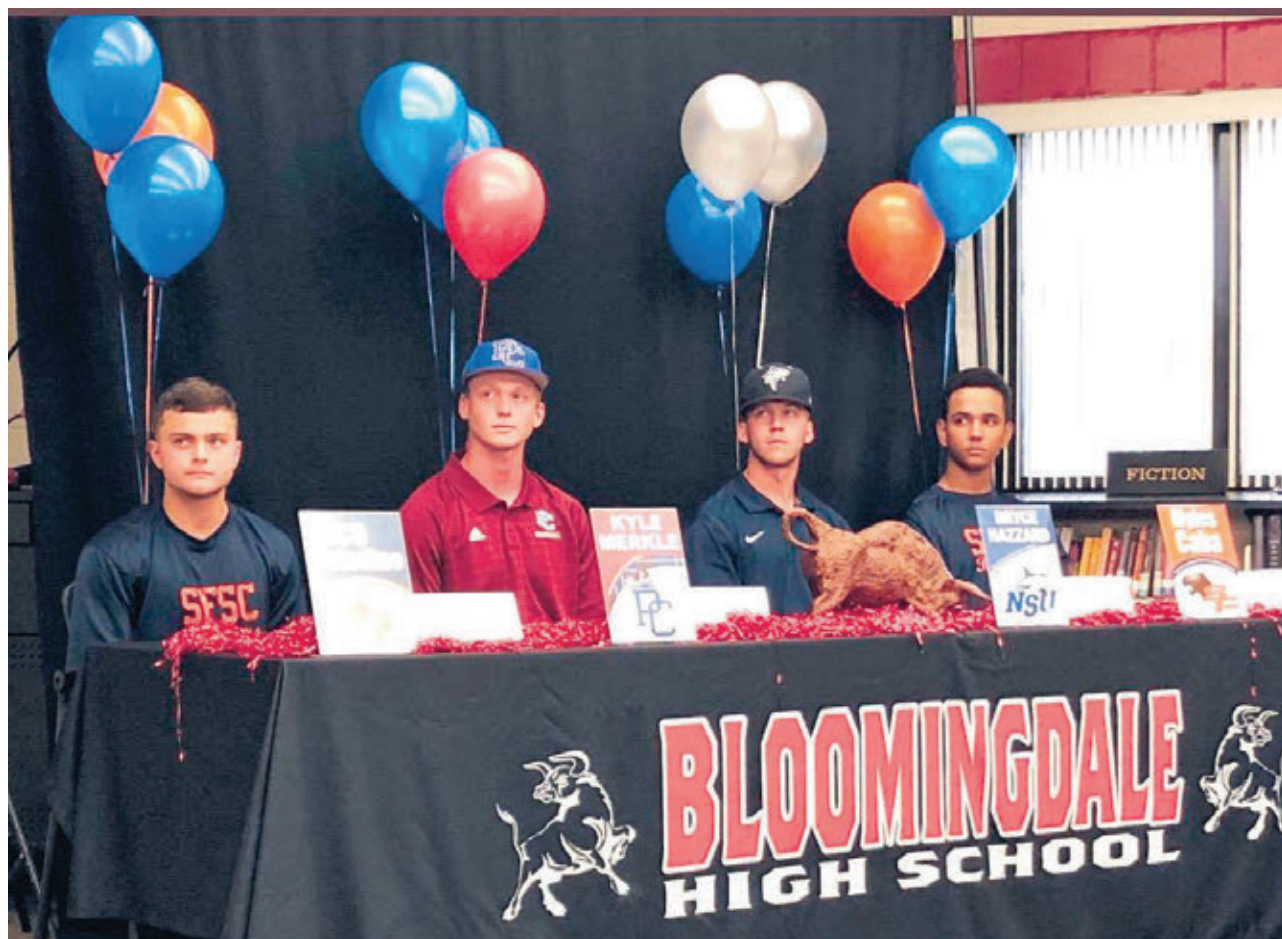
## Bloomingdale Baseball Hits Grand Slam with Athlete Signings

Brief By Deidre Morgan

On Nov. 14, four Bloomingdale High School Baseball players committed to playing the sport they love on the collegiate level. Nico Saladino (South Florida State College) Kyle Merkle (Presbyterian University), Bryce Hazzard (Nova Southeastern) and Myles Caba (South Florida State College) signed their National Letters of Intent in front of family, friends, coaches and teachers. Bloomingdale High Baseball Coach Kris Wilken said, "These young men exemplified talent, passion and commitment to the sport of baseball and I was very proud of them all on not giving up on their dream." Congratulations and Good Luck to all the athletes.



Photo: BSHS Twitter



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# **Bloomington Cadets Impress at Air Force JROTC Athletic Competition**

Brief/Photos By Wendy Knipp

Bloomington High School is very proud of its Air Force JROTC program. On Saturday Nov. 3, a select group of their most athletic cadets, a group called The Raiders, competed in a grueling physical fitness competition against schools across Florida. Not only did each of their teams perform extraordinarily well, but their Freshmen Co-Ed Team won 3rd place overall. The all-day competition took place at Avon Park High School and included categories such as push-ups, sit-ups, shuttle runs, the flex-arm hang, and the 1-mile run. Congratulations to The Raiders on a job well done!

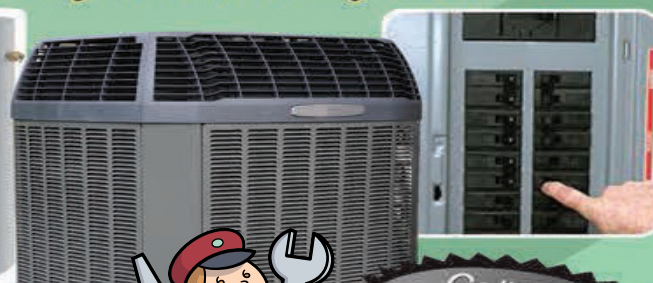


Freshmen Co-Ed Team. Back row: Marco Alvarado, Michael Knipp, Ryan Marquis;  
Front row: Itamar Rivera, Brianna Munoz.

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## Santa Feels the Love from BSHS Drumline and Chorus

Brief/Courtesy Photo: Cheryl Kehrmeier

Santa Claus came to Bass Pro Shops on Saturday, Nov. 10 with his mini-parade led by the Sickles High School JAFROTC Color Guard and the award-winning Rajun' Bulls drum line from Bloomingdale High School! Then he lit the store Christmas tree with the help of carolers from the Bloomingdale High School chorus program.

Cheryl Kehrmeier, Bass Pro Shops Promotions, Events & Community Relations, said, "I was so excited to have Bloomingdale High in my parade this year! They did a GREAT job welcoming Santa!"

Santa's Wonderland at Bass Pro Shops will be open different times every day for FREE photos, crafts, carousel rides and games until Dec. 24. See [www.basspro.com/santa](http://www.basspro.com/santa) for details on dates and times.



Members of the Rajun' Bull Drumline welcome Santa to Brandon! Top Row, Left to Right: Jeremy Butler, Caleb Hamilton, Blake Gladders, Carter Prince, Evan Hydock, Santa Claus, Nick Berkowitz, Nathan Gross, Jason Cution, Timothy Turaga (above), Sebastian Wilches (below), Jackson pepe, Ryan Pruitt, Evan Mauch, and Matt Allen. Bottom Row, Left to Right: Belle Moran, Connor Kurto, Connor Ford, Cole Wloczewski, Harley Gagnon, Angelica Negron, and Mason Cervi.

Photo: Dann Berkowitz



## Making Music, Rajun' Bull Style!

By Kelly Porter, Rajun' Bull Band Publicity

On Oct. 27, the Bloomingdale Rajun' Bull Band and Crimson Guard earned straight Superior ratings at their Marching Performance Assessment (MPA). All high school bands in the district performed for ratings in several categories: Music 1, Music 2, Visual Performance, General Effect, Percussion and Auxiliary. For the 32nd year in a row, Bloomingdale earned the highest possible rating in every category.

This year, the Rajun' Bull Band and Guard performed a show with music from the movie "The Incredibles 2". The 250-student ensemble began practicing in August for this performance.

Bloomingdale's next performances include a Winter Concert on Thursday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. in the Bloomingdale Auditorium. In March 2019, the band will perform in Vienna, Austria and Prague, Czech Republic.

Courtesy Photos: BSHS



Bloomingdale Rajun' Bull Band performs at District Marching Performance Assessment.

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## Basketball Bulls Selected

Brief: Deidre Morgan

The 2018-2019 Junior Varsity (l.) and Varsity Basketball (r.) squads are ready to roll into a full court press for an exciting season under new Head Coach Shawn Vanzant.



Photos: BSHS Twitter



## Perfecting the College Essay

By Jon Alfano

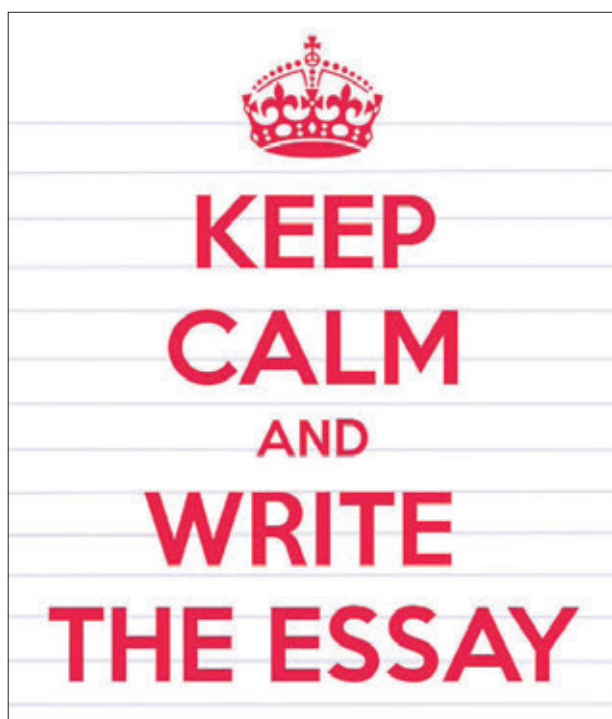
The college application process can be grueling and has many moving parts. One of the most tedious and dreaded parts is writing the college essay. During my application process, I learned a few tips on how to perfect the college essay.

Regardless of what topic you decide to write about, you must conduct proper research. Reliable online sources are extremely important. For example, if you are asked why you are interested in attending a school, you can search for facts and statistics to back up your responses. Those facts and statistics can come from the school itself or a reputable outside source. That will improve the quality and clarity of your essay, and more importantly, displays your ability to justify your claims with viable evidence.

Once you've written your essay, it's important to have others review it and give their input for possible revisions. Some schools have a dedicated group of students who are proficient in writing that will help improve your essay through critiques and tutoring sessions.

If that option is not available, there are many online writing centers that can provide useful tips for essay improvement, such as the Purdue Writing Lab (<https://owl.purdue.edu>). Your English teacher would also be a good person to review your essay and provide feedback. Of course, even just reviewing with a parent can be very beneficial.

Good luck on those college essays!



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# *We Wish You a Merry Christmas!*

At Christmas my heart is so full! I'm reflecting on blessings of family, friends and people I love. We are so grateful for the year we've had helping families in Bloomingdale buy and sell their homes. I hope you enjoy the season and have someone to share your joy with!

Merry Christmas!

*- Brenda*



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