



THE

BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

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ISSUE 5



MAY 2019



www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

SUMMER IS COMING!

LOOK INSIDE FOR SWIM CLASSES AND SUMMER CAMPS



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PLEASE RECYCLE

WINNER

2013, 2014 & 2016

Hillsborough County
Neighborhood
Recognition Award

Best Communications
Newsletter Category

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Every time I return home from a session of camp, I feel like the guy from Castaway." #campconfessions

Photo: Deidre Morgan

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

Website: www.BloomingtonHOA.com

BHA Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Bloomington Community Office.

Directors at Large:

President: *Suzy Watts*

Vice President: *Sean Donahue*

Secretary: *Daniel Berkowitz*

Treasurer: *Grace Lewis*

Bobbi Ferraro

Carl Hallinan

Billy Hightower

George T. May IV

Beth Smedley

Charlie Woodcock



YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



WENDY KNIPP

Guest Editor - The Bloomington Gazette

3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

Valrico, FL 33596 - (813) 681-2051

Email: InBloomingtonNews@gmail.com

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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

Tampa Bay
Times

Community Publications Manager

11268 Winthrop Main Street, Suite 101

Riverview, Florida 33578 - (813) 731-2490

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Yard of the Month



Photo: Wendy Knipp

Chris & Maria Costa

3912 Butternut Court (Bloomingdale Estates)



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

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BHA COMMUNITY CORNER



DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

BHA EVENT CALENDAR

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

Jan. 1/ 2019 Membership drive ongoing! Join TODAY! / 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. An easier method is to use our PayPal option. Go to www.bloomingdalehoa.com, look for the PayPal link and follow the simple instructions.

Thursday, May 9, 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.

Monday, May 13, 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, May 14, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome. Call 813-681-2051 for information.

BHA BRIEFS

Board Meeting Highlights and Other Board News

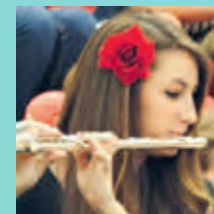
Discussion focused on the garage sale and how to make it bigger and better next year. 100's of buyers and sellers participated either searching Bloomingdale for treasures or providing the treasures!

A free shredding event is being planned for August. Details will be posted in the Gazette, on our website and on our BloomingdaleHOA Facebook page.

The board welcomed a new member Matt Marcinkowski, a Preston Woods resident. Read all about our newest volunteer next month! Welcome, Matt!

Scholarship Winner Announced!

Congratulations, Paige Vodopich! The BHA selected Paige as the 2019 Community Scholarship Winner. As in previous years, the competition for the scholarship was fierce. The board will present the award at the May board meeting and an article will follow in the June Gazette.



Bloomingdale's Animal House!

Bloomingdale Photographers and Pet Lovers! The Gazette wants your photos for Pet of the Month. We already accept pictures for our resident photo of the month, now, we want to see your "fur or fur-less" babies! Some will grace the cover, others will be highlighted in the issue! Send high resolution photos to inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com.



Tibby and Ava Carter



Leai and Kali Coy



Jenga Grinaldi



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May Community Calendar

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

TODAY!

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. / GIANT Book Sale / Bloomingdale Library, 1906 Bloomindale Ave. // ONE DAY SALE! Everything specially priced. Books, Movies & Music. All funds raised support programs at the library.



May 9, 6:30-7:30 p.m. / Accent Modification / Campo Family YMCA, 3414 Culbreath Rd // Are you a fluent accented English speaker who would like to gain confidence with American English pronunciation? Attain greater professional opportunities? Speak with increased clarity? Develop better public speaking and presentation skills? Sign up at the Y Welcome Center. Presented by Geneva Maresma, Speech-Language Pathologist.



May 11, 9 to 11 a.m. / Music for Toddlers and Preschoolers / Hillsborough Extension Free Child Care Training, UF/IFAS Extension, 5339 CR 579, Seffner // From a child's viewpoint, music is a mode of creative expression through voice, movement, listening and playing instruments. Learn easy age-appropriate ways to use music with young children that will also work for adults with and without musical talents. Questions? Contact Diana Converse at 813-744-5519 extension 54140 or converse@ufl.edu.



May 16, 10:30-11:30 a.m. / Cookies and Stories with a Cop! / Bloomingdale Library, 1906 Bloomindale Ave. // Join us as a representative from the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office reads stories and answers questions about working in law enforcement! Stay after the story for cookies and conversation. For ages 3 to 5.



May 18, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. / Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ 101 "Plants, Pollinators and Professionals – Making Gardening Great!" Workshop / UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County office, 5339 CR 579, Seffner // This workshop is open to all Hillsborough County residents. Cost: \$10 non-refundable, includes gift bag containing gardening book, rain gauge, hose nozzle, water bottle and free soil test, one per household. Workshop includes: 1. Right Plant, Right Place, 2. What Weeds Say About Your Landscape, 3. Edible Gardens, 4. Bees, Butterflies & Dragonflies and 5. How to Hire & Manage a Landscape Professional. Plant, recycled yard art & other vendors available. Bring your plant questions, leaf & insect samples & problems to our diagnostic table. View specimens through our microscope. Extension Agents, & Master Gardener Volunteers will be on

hand to answer your questions & provide recommendations. For information, visit <http://2019f101.eventbrite.com/>.



May 23, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. / Caregiver Wellness Workshop / The Bridges, 11350 Bloomingdale Ave, Riverview // If you are responsible for the care and well-being of an aging parent or spouse, you know that it is hard work. It can be physically and emotionally exhausting. Learn what studies say is really important in the areas of nutrition, exercise, sleep and mood by attending "What About Me? Why Self-Care is Critical for the Whole Family."

Cheryl Pruitt, MSW, Memory Disorder Clinic Coordinator at the University of South Florida, will share a few simple changes that can make a big impact on caregiver wellness. If you are a caregiver, self-care is critical to maintaining your quality of life. The workshop is free to attend. A light lunch is included. Space is limited. Call Janet at 813-413-8900 to reserve your seat.



25-27 May, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. / Memorial Weekend at The Landing // All Day, All you can eat ribs are returning for Memorial Weekend! Available Saturday, Sunday and Monday! Enjoy with \$5 Sam Adams 22oz drafts. Dine in only deal!

May 30, 4-6 p.m. / Bloomingdale HS Graduation 2019 / Florida State Fairgrounds, 4800 N US Highway 301, Tampa // Come celebrate with the newest crop of graduates!



Bloomingdale High School's Lockdown Procedures = A+

By Joe Harless

On April 3, someone called 911 claiming to be at Bloomingdale High School with a firearm and threatening to use it. The school went into an immediate lockdown while deputies responded and searched the school. It was determined that the threat was unfounded, and the lockdown ended.

This was a crucial test of Bloomingdale's preparedness." In accordance with Florida law, all public schools perform monthly lockdown drills to ensure teachers, staff, and students know how to respond to an active and immediate threat on campus. Spokesperson for Hillsborough County Schools, Tanya Arja, confirmed that Bloomingdale High responded flawlessly. She says, "The students and staff are trained on lockdown procedures and protocols. They all did exactly what they were trained to do."

In addition, parents were notified of the lockdown when it occurred and again when the all-clear was given. Arja states, "We want our parents to know we take all rumors or threats of violence seriously at our schools. We have an armed, trained officer on every campus."

The suspect was arrested and charged with misusing 911, making false reports of bombs and firearms, and disrupting school functions. Police believe that it may be the same person who threatened Clair Mel Elementary and Dowdell Middle School.



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BLOOMINGDALE

Special Taxing District

THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AREA CONNECTION

(Editor's Note: The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District's (BSTD) monthly column will inform readers about the BSTD, its mission and ongoing and new initiatives. The BSTD meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of the month at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. Questions? Call 813-684-6667 or email bstd@verizon.net.)

PLANS FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

By Tom Leech

As we are more than halfway through the current fiscal year, your Board of Trustees has already begun looking at our budget for the new fiscal year that begins on October 1, 2019. This will be the first budget to incorporate the assessment increase you approved last year. In relative terms, the District will have about 30 percent more revenue with which to work. Planning for the additional revenue began in November and I want to share some details with you.

In March, the Board hired Genesis Halff (yes, 2 f's) to redesign and rebrand Bloomingdale. We expect to have a design plan by mid-June, with the actual work beginning by November. First up will be Bloomingdale's eight external entryways. Look for new signage, lighting, and landscaping that offers a fresh, updated look to our community.

The pilot security program begun in February remains in place and under budget. Our security team is experimenting with different shift times and lengths of shifts to maximize effectiveness. The off-duty Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) deputies involved patrol the entire Bloomingdale community, performing traffic control, traffic monitoring, and security services. As of April 18, eight shifts have been filled and the Deputies have performed the following:

- 41 traffic stops with warnings
- 5 traffic stops with citations
- engaged two suspicious vehicles
- engaged one suspicious person
- responded to domestic dispute call
- transported one Bloomingdale resident to the hospital.

Although details are still being worked, we expect this program to become fully active in the new fiscal year.

The surveyors you may have noticed along Nature's Way are associated with the "traffic calming" plan scheduled to begin in Spring 2020. The four-lane stretch of Nature's Way will be trimmed to two lanes of traffic, separated by a raised median, with bike lanes on both sides. This project should help minimize excessive speeding and related traffic risks. Thanks to our partners at the Bloomingdale Homeowner's Association (BHA) for their tremendous effort to bring this safety project into being.

Finally, work related to the widening of Bell Shoals Road continues at a brisk pace. Crews have installed new power and telephone poles and shifted the lines over to the new poles. Construction on the segment adjacent to Bloomingdale is still about 2 years out, but I have been working with Hillsborough County to finalize the plans associated with this segment and to agree on the maintenance plan for landscaping in the new medians.

Your Board of Trustees is pursuing an aggressive strategy to address years of disrepair to our community. I am excited about our trajectory and hope you will enjoy the ride – and results. Here we go!

BLOOMINGDALE

Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Road
Valrico, Florida 33596
(813) 684-6667 Office
(813) 684-2358 Fax
BSTD@verizon.net

www.bloomingdaletaxingdistrict.org

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

Tom Leech, President
Bob Meginnis, Vice President
Charlie Woodcock, Treasurer
Jay Kittle, Secretary
Russell Jones, Trustee
Randy Kehrmeier, Trustee
Claire Letkiewicz, Trustee

Monthly Meeting

The residents of Bloomingdale are invited to attend the next meeting of the BSTD on May 13 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!

2019



Wanted: A Forever Home and Family!

Source: Hillsborough County



Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center (PRC) has many cats and dogs looking for their "forever" homes. The PRC is the only open-admission facility in the county, meaning it accepts dogs and cats regardless of breed, size or medical condition. Residents can visit the center or search online to view hundreds of adoptable animals. All pets are microchipped, vaccinated, registered, and spayed or neutered before adoption.

The PRC, located at 440 N. Falkenburg Rd., is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. For information, call 813-744-5660 or visit www.hcflgov.net/pets.

Here are just a few fabulous faces to choose from:

Tango



Tango is 3-year-old male who has lots of energy and loves to run and play. He is friendly with other dogs and cats and is currently working on his potty training.

Bubbles



Bubbles is a 1-year-old female who loves going for long walks, running around in the yard and initiating play. She is housebroken and has lots of energy.

Taffy



Taffy is an 11-month-old female who is sweet, playful and ready to be adopted.

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Bloomingtondale Residents Cleaned Up at Community Yard Sale!

By Joy Boisselle

There were great deals and steals to be had all over Bloomingtondale during the 4th Annual Community Garage Sale held April 6. From lemonade stands to fundraisers to meeting Eagle Scout requirements, sellers had something for everyone.



The family that yard sales together, stays together – Leslie Stark with kids Jett and Olivia.



Michele and Rudy Hernandez at 1111 Callista Avenue.
Photo: Bobbi Ferraro



The Bostrom Family in Bloomingtondale Estates had lots of baby items to sell.
Photo: Wendy Knipp



Photo: Joy Boisselle



Bloomingtondale West resident Lynne Koudela enjoyed visiting with neighbors while selling her stuff. Photo: Wendy Knipp



Photo: Joy Boisselle



Father-Son Duo Cooper and Alex Taylor



Kudos to 8-year-old Cali Trautman for making delicious baked goods and “just-right” lemonade to raise money for foster kids! Also pictured are brother Ben, Mom Amy and Dad Wes.



Photo: Joy Boisselle



BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

"One Team, One Family, One Community"

Summer Safety

We have all heard those words – usually as a reminder delivered by a cautious Mom. However, those words become even more important as summer approaches and kids spend a little more time on their own and with friends. This month is also Safe Kids Week, May 5-12, a time to celebrate kids, prevent injuries and save lives.

Summer is the most dangerous time of year for kids, according to a study released by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. The study "...found that May through August account for nearly half of all injury related childhood deaths, with July being the deadliest month."

Here are a few reminders!

First reminder: "Florida Safety Belt Law"
(Florida Statute Chapter 316.614)

It is unlawful for any person:

- To operate a motor vehicle in this state unless each passenger and the operator of the vehicle under the age of 18 years are restrained by a safety belt or by a child restraint device pursuant to s.316.613, if applicable; or
- To operate a motor vehicle in this state unless the person is restrained by a safety belt.
- It is unlawful for any person 18 years of age or older to be a passenger in the front seat of a motor vehicle unless such person is restrained by a safety belt when the vehicle is in motion.



For more information on traffic safety, teen driver tips or safety belt usage, contact the HCSO Community Outreach Division at (813) 247-8115. Remember, It's BELTS OR ELSE!

Second Reminder: Florida Sun is HOT!

Courtesy: <https://www.safekids.org>

- Protect your child with sunscreen 15 spf or greater
- Limit exposure
- Stay hydrated during outdoor activities



Third reminder: Florida's drowning death rate among children ages 1-4 is the highest in the nation. Enough children drown each year in Florida to fill three to four preschool classrooms. For information, Explore WaterSmartFL.com.

- Supervision: Supervision, the first and most crucial layer of protection, means someone is always actively watching when a child is in the pool.
- Barriers: Barriers physically block a child from the pool.
- Emergency Preparedness: In an emergency, it is critical to know CPR, to have a phone nearby, and to immediately call 911. Swim lessons and life jackets are preventive measures that save lives.

Campo YMCA - Junior Lifeguard Program - Ages 14-16
3414 Culbreath Rd., 813-684-1371

Ever wanted to become a Junior Lifeguard? Well now is your chance! Join our Junior Lifeguard Program and see if you have what it takes to become a Lifeguard! Ages 14-16. Registration is required. Space is limited so stop by our Welcome Center to register or register online at <https://bit.ly/2ur85TS> by May 31!



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*When cleaned using the GreenEarth® Cleaning process compared to the solvent most traditionally used by dry cleaners.

761620-1

SUMMER CAMPS

Compiled by Wendy Knipp

ANIMALS AND NATURE

Busch Gardens (day and overnight camps) - Tampa

Contact: buschgardens.com/
tampa/summer-camps
(813-884-4FUN)
Ages: Grades 5 – college



The Florida Aquarium - Tampa

Contact: flaquarium.org
(813-273-4015)
Ages: 3 - 18



ZooTampa at Lowry Park Zoo - Tampa

Contact: zootampa.org/camps
Ages: Grades K – 8th



Camp Osprey (day and overnight camps) - Wimauma

Contact: camposprey.com
(941-928-6860)
Ages: 7-15



ARTISTIC

Art Monkey - Lithia

Contact: artandicecream.com/summer-camp
(813-315-9803)
Ages: Pre-K and up



Bricks4Kidz – Brandon, Riverview, Lithia

Contact: bricks4kidz.com/florida-tampa
(813-5454282)
Ages: 4 ½ - 12
Locations: We Rock The Spectrum, The Venue in Riverview, Fishhawk Aquatic Center



Elite Animation Academy - Tampa

Contact: eliteanimationacademy.com/2019-summer-camps-tampa/
(813) 321-3939
Ages: 8 -17
What: drawing, animation



Firehouse Cultural Center - Ruskin

Contact: firehouseculturalcenter.org
(813-645-7651)
What: art, music, theater, cartooning, animation
Ages: 8-14



Florida Academy of Performing Arts/ Music Showcase - Brandon

Contact: FAOPA.org
(813-490-2787)
Ages: 5 and up



Straz Center/Patel Conservatory - Tampa

Contact: patelconservatory.org
(813-222-1040)
Ages: all



Winthrop Arts, Inc. - Riverview

Contact: winthroparts.org/
summer-camp-2019
(813-758-5161)
Ages: 5 and up



ATHLETIC/SPORTS/PARKS

Brandon Swim and Aquatic Center - Brandon

Contact: mybsac.org
(813-689-0908)
What: Day Camps
(TV Game Show weekly themes)



Cochrane Golf Schools @ Riverhills Country Club - Valrico

www.CochraneGolfSchools.com or
813-957-3205 Ages: 7-12



Coyotes Lacrosse – Lithia

Contact: coyotesyouthlacrosse.leag1.com
Ages: K-12



Freedom Sailing Camp - Clearwater

Contact: freedomailingcampoffloridainc.com
(727-224-1726)

What: Sail, paddle board, kayaking

*Asperger's and high functioning autism-friendly



Golden City Gymnastics - Brandon

Contact: goldencitygymnastics.com/summercamps (813-685-7770)

Ages: 5 and up



Hillsborough County Parks & Recreation - various locations

Contact: hillsboroughcounty.org/en/residents/recreation-and-culture/kids/action-folder/register-for-summer-camp

(813-744-5595)

Ages: 6-17

What: Traditional Camp, Teen Camp, Special Needs Camp



Ostingers Baseball - Lithia

Contact: ostingbaseball.com
(813-737-3000)

Ages: 7 - 14



Sky Zone Trampoline Park - Tampa

Contact: skyzone.com/tampa/programs/skycamp

(813-833-1740)

Ages: 5 - 14



Top Golf - Tampa

Contact: topgolf.com/us/play/kidzone/summer-academy

(813-298-1811)

Ages: 6 - 12



West Florida Flames Soccer - Brandon

Contact: brandonsoccer.com

Ages: 7-17



YMCA - Campo and Camp Cristina - Valrico, Riverview

Contact: tampaymca.org/letscamp

What: Day Camps and Specialty Camps



CULINARY

Rolling Pin Kitchen Emporium - Brandon

Contact: rollingpinonline.com

(813-653-2418)

Ages: 6 - 15



SCIENCE / STEM/ STEAM/ LEARNING

Mathnasium - Brandon

Contact: mathnasium.com/brandon

(813-655-6284)



Museum of Science and Industry - Tampa

Contact: mosi.org/summer-camp/

(813-987-6000)

Ages: K-8th grade



Tech Playzone - Tampa

Contact: techplayzone@gmail.com

(813-444-2267)

What: 3d printing and design, LEGO robotics, Self-driving programmable vehicles

Ages: 7-13



The Village Early Learning Center - Brandon

Contact: villageelc.com

(813-651-0779)

Ages: K-5th grades ANTS Camp and Summer VPK

(License #: CHC 430446)

For ANTS Camp, children who have completed K-5th grade are invited to join us for an incredible exploration of Arts, Nature, Technology, and Spanish. We have the best student to teacher ratios, and a wide variety of fun and educational activities, both on campus and on exciting field trips. This summer, we also offer FREE full-day VPK!



BPHAT Fitness Wins Competitions and Changes Lives

By Jane Owen; Photos by Matt Brewer

Bloomington's BPHAT Fitness gym is changing perspectives and transforming lives. Not only are their powerlifting teams excelling in competitions, but they are also debunking perceptions of powerlifters.

Powerlifting is an individualized sport where competitors attempt to lift as much weight as possible for one repetition in the squat, bench press, and deadlift. Competitors are placed into divisions based on weight class, age group, experience, and equipment (geared) or not (raw).

You won't find stereotypes at BPHAT. Their powerlifting team consists of males and females ranging from age 13 to 58 and includes a mom and two sons, a local minister and her son, a father and daughter and a paraplegic. At BPHAT, powerlifting is both strength building and relationship building. Owner Matt Brewer says, "While it's all about the individual effort, we do it as a team. Everyone cheers each other on."

Powerlifting is also an excellent way to build confidence in teens. Brewer says, "The confidence in kids that are in powerlifting is amazing. Confidence is one of the biggest things I have seen that it offers high schoolers."

BPHAT's USPA (United States Powerlifting Association) powerlifting team has set 3 world records, 6 national records and at least a dozen state records.

At the Battle of the Bay 5 competition in February in Tampa, 9 BPHAT lifters competed in the 3-day competition and all returned with medals: 7 first place medals, 1 second place medal and 1 third place medal. Two lifters qualified for Orlando Europa USPA Powerlifting Championships on Saturday, April 13. Both won Gold in their divisions.

BPHAT Fitness Gym is located at 3638 Lithia Pincrest Road in Valrico and offers one-on-one personal training, small group strength and fitness classes and powerlifting classes. For more information, visit www.bphatfitness.com or call 813-967-2036.



Madison Reed at the Battle of the Bay 5 Competition.



Catherine Greise working out at the BPHAT Fitness Gym.



Picture taken at the Battle of the Bay 5 Competition.

When Can Kids Start Learning to Golf?

By J.D. Carino (Bloomington CC campus)

The answer is very simple, as soon as your child WANTS to go to the driving range or golf course, it's time!

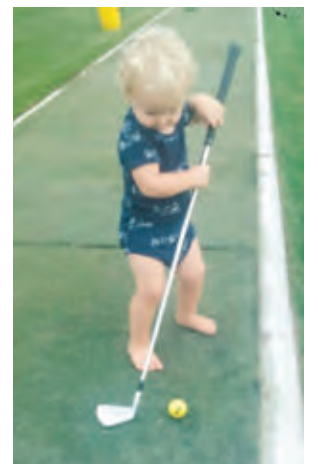
Make it enjoyable. At the early stages, a child only wants to spend time with you and have fun, so pars, birdies and eagles are irrelevant. Make sure they have the right golf clubs for their height and age. The wrong size clubs can be too long or too heavy. Both will cause a child to develop bad swings by compensating. U.S. Kids clubs are offered at ACE driving ranges and go by the height of your child not by their age.

For those parents who do not golf or those who would like another person to teach them, we offer a Little Lads and Lassies program at Bloomington Golfer's Club on Saturday mornings from 10-11am.

For more information, please visit www.CochraneGolfSchools.com or call 813-957-3205.



John E.S. Cochrane
GOLF SCHOOLS



Party Planet: Catering to our Community

Article and Photos by Jane Owen



With a focus on the local community, Party Planet may actually be the best party store on the planet. Whether you're throwing the best birthday party on the block or celebrating your graduating senior, this is the place to go!

Since Party Planet opened in December 2015, their top priority is listening to the needs of the customer. The owners, Patrick and Christine Broadnax, are in-tuned to their patrons and check with local schools to find out about spirit weeks and special events to make sure they have desired items in stock. Christine says, "When you think about it, there's so much that's in your life that a party store can be affiliated with—whether it's anniversary, birthday, graduation, baby shower, wedding. We're all about touching someone's life based on what's going on in their life."

The personal care extends beyond their kind welcome to customers. Christine says, "We share with customers and parents that if they are looking for something, we have 30 something vendors that we work with. We can locate items and bring them in. I can bring out my catalog and they can plan. We do all of those things as a courtesy."

So if you have a Bloomingdale High School senior, hurry in for all kinds of Bloomingdale-specific party supplies including napkins, plates, banners, hat dangles, hat signs, and "Go Bulls!" signs. They also have party supplies for Strawberry Crest, Brandon Eagles, Riverview, Durant, and Newsome.

Party Planet is located at 913 S Lithia Pinecrest Road in the plaza at the corner of Lithia Pinecrest and Lumsden. For more information visit www.facebook.com/partyplanetbrandon/ or call 813-324-7325.



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By Gwen Graverson

...HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

(Editor's Note: A column for our green and brown thumb gardeners penned by local garden enthusiast Gwen Graverson. Have a gardening question? Contact Gwen at inbloomngdaleneews@gmail.com.)

Hosta Perennials: Low Maintenance and Excellent Coverage

If you're exploring alternatives to traditional grass and want a beautiful low-maintenance yard, then the Hosta perennial may be perfect for you!

Hosta is a genus of plants which belongs to the lily family and retail for about \$15 at your local nursery. They come in different sizes and colors including shades of green, blue, yellow and white. Before you plant it, learn how much sunlight your Hosta can receive and make sure you leave enough room for it to spread into a full-sized plant. Soil should be kept moist, but not wet and morning watering is best. Mulch can be very helpful with keeping the soil moist. Don't forget to fertilize each Spring.

LOW maintenance doesn't mean NO maintenance! Hostas can be vulnerable to deer, slugs, and snails. Use fencing or plant daffodils around your Hostas to keep the deer away and scatter crushed eggshells to deter slugs and snails. A light scattering of sand or sawdust will work too.



Photo: Gwen Graverson

Hostas are just one good choice of landscaping. Groundcovers are the gardener's best friend so challenge yourself by increasing your planting beds up to 10% each year and you will realize after a few years that you love your lawn and garden more!



Photo: Bluestone Perennials



Photo: Gwen Graverson

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Want to learn more about Florida-friendly landscaping from Master Gardeners?

May 7 @ 6:30pm – Open class at the Riverview Library located at 10509 Riverview Drive. Attendees are encouraged to bring samples and questions for discussion. Presented by: UF/IFAS Extension/Hillsborough County (<http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/hillsborough/>).

Bloomington Real Estate Update

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



By Ronnie McLaughlin

The Chadderton Group
Keller Williams Realty

813-601-5659

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www.chaddertongroup.com



Open Permits Can Cause Headaches

When listing a home, our sellers are excited to tell us about all the updates they've completed such as replacing the roof or air conditioner, installing new windows or adding a screen enclosure. Whatever the improvement, it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to make sure your contractor has closed out the permits with the county once the project is completed. Perspective buyers won't know if the permit is open because of a simple paperwork error or if the inspection was never done, making it a liability to the seller. Open permits can delay the sale of your home and put your closing in jeopardy.

If you're thinking of selling and would like us to check the permit status on your home, give me a call at 813-601-5659. It's quick, free and could certainly save you time and money down the road.

Neighborhood Snapshot - Pine Grove Condos

Pine Grove Condos is located between Springvale Drive and Bloomington Avenue. There are 104 2-story condos located on Pine Knot, Big Pine and E. Lost Pine Way. The neighborhood offers a community pool which is maintained by the HOA. One condo sold over the past 365 days at \$154,000 or \$100.98 per square.

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May 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



May 6 - 10 - Teacher Appreciation Week

May 27 - Memorial Day - No School

May 30 - Bloomingdale High School Graduation - 4:00pm @ Fairgrounds

May 31 - Last Day of School



ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

May 6 - 10 - I-Ready Testing - 1st Grade

May 7 - 8 - FSA Math - 3rd - 5th Grade

May 9 - 3rd & 4th Grade EOY Science

May 9 - 10 SSA Science - 5th Grade

May 9 - Burns Open House for Incoming 6th Graders - 6:00pm

May 13 - 17 - I-Ready Testing - Kindergarten

May 15 - Last Day for Book Check Out

May 16 - 5th Grade Class Field Trip

May 22 - Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

May 28 - Alafia Alumni - HS 2019 Graduating Class "Clap Out" - 8:00am

May 29 - 5th Grade Beach Bash

May 31 - 5th Grade Farewell Program

May 31 - 5th Grade Clap Out - 11:30am

Gators—Show your school spirit—Wear Blue or School Spirit Shirts on Fridays!!

4th 9 weeks Media Center Reading Challenge - Earn a Popsicle Party

In each grade the Homerooms with:

**Most Reading Counts Points by May 17th

**Most MyOn Minutes by May 17th



CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

May 15 - 5th Grade Field Trip

May 22 - Clap-out at Cimino for Bloomingdale High seniors who attended Cimino - 8:30am

May 24 - 5th Grade Party/Spring Dance/General Assembly

May 30 - Talent Show

May 31 - Clap-out for 5th graders - 10:30am



BURNS BRUINS BANTER

May 9 - Open House for Incoming 6th Graders - 6:00pm

May 10 - Mother's Day Breakfast - Cafeteria - 8:00am

May 20 - PTSA General Meeting - Burns Café - 6:30pm

May 23 - 7th & 8th Grade Awards Ceremony - Gym - 7:00pm

May 24 - PTSA 8th Grade Semi-Formal Dance - 6:00pm



BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS

May 6 - AP US Govt/APES Exams

May 7 - AP Spanish/Physics 1 Exams

May 7 - Chorus Banquet - The Regent - 6:00pm

May 8 - AP Lit/AP Euro Exams

May 9 - AP Chem/AP Psych Exams

May 10 - AP USH/AP Computer Science Exams

May 13 - AP Bio Exams

May 13 - Guard Audition Information - Cafeteria - 6:00pm

May 14 - AP Calc/AP Human Geo/AP Art Exams

May 15 - AP Lang/AP Macro Exams

May 16 - AP Comp Govt/AP WH/AP Stat Exams

May 16 - Football Spring Game - 6:30pm

May 17 - AP Micro/AP Music/AP Com Science Exams

May 17 - Last Day for Seniors

May 18 - Graduation Rehearsal - Auditorium - 9:00am

May 18 - Drama Musical - GODSPELL - Auditorium - 6:00pm

May 20 - 21 - Senior Exams

May 20 - 22 - Guard Auditions - Cafeteria - 4:15pm

May 22 - Clap-out at Cimino for Bloomingdale High seniors who attended Cimino - 8:30am

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Grad Photos Wanted!

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Email inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com or call 813-681-2051 for information.



Bloomingdale Athletes Sign Letters of Intent

Brief and Photos by Deidre Morgan

Supported by family, friends and their coaches; Bloomingdale Student Athletes Jacob McDonald, Antonio "Tank" Pineda, Malik Womack and Jon Owens signed their National Letters of Intent on April 9 to play sports at the collegiate level. Jacob McDonald will be attending Catholic University of America to play Soccer, "Tank" Pineda and Malik Womack will be playing Football for RPA College and Jon Owen will be attending Seattle Pacific University for Track and Cross Country. Congratulations to the athletes and their families!



(From left) On April 9, Jon Owen (Seattle Pacific University, Soccer), Malik Womack (RPA College, Football), Antonio "Tank" Pineda (RPA College, Football) and Jacob McDonald (Catholic University of America, Soccer) signed their National Letters of Intent at Bloomingdale High School to play sports at the next level.

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Sandy Neel Retires after 34 Years of Excellence

Article and Photos by Jessica Hinson

After 34 years of teaching orchestra, Sandy Neel will soon be retiring from Burns Middle School as one of Hillsborough County's longest tenured teachers. Her impact on students and our community is far-reaching.

As a pioneer of string instrument education in Hillsborough County, she was vital in creating the curriculum for the performing arts wheel. She also served as Founder of the Hillsborough All County Orchestra and is a former conductor for the Tampa Bay Youth Orchestra and the Patel Conservatory Youth Orchestra.

She led by example as an active member of the Rosewood Quartet, a local string quartet that performed at events and fundraisers. Each year Mrs. Neel's orchestras earned superior performance ratings at the Florida Orchestra Association Music Performance Assessments, Solo & Ensemble music festivals, and she consistently had students place positions in All State and All County orchestras.

Her talents are truly endless – from being a black belt in taekwondo to raising show goats – and her love for Star Wars is like no other.

At her core, Neel's genuine love for teaching her students made her students want to do better. If you know her, she has lots of "Neelisms" but you know her favorite motto, "Don't practice until you get it right, practice until you can't get it wrong." Her saying and her devotion motivated many students to come in early for additional practice.

Mrs. Neel conducted her last concert with Burns' orchestra on April 25 at Bloomingdale High School. Surrounded by life-long friends, family and students (past and present), the show was both spectacular and emotional.

Burns Middle School Principal, Matthew DiPrima stated "Sandy Neel is an inspiring and special person. She is the light when there may be darkness. I would end up in her classroom when I needed a respite at work. Her orchestra classes would always bring a smile to my face and a hop to my step. She is truly 'The BEST leading the REST'."

Room 139 at Burns will soon be empty of Mrs. Neel's "Neelisms" but her legacy there will live on forever.



Bulls Football is Back in Action

Brief and Photos by Deidre Morgan

Spring practice for the Bloomingdale Bulls Football team is underway. New Head Coach Jake Coulson had his team on the field and ready to blitz the new season ahead of them. The team is preparing for the Spring Game on May 16. The season gets underway on August 16 with a preview game against Winter Haven. Good luck to Coach Coulson and the team on the upcoming season!



When the whistle blows the players sprint to the sidelines.



The line is in position waiting for Coach Coulson to call the play.



John Goodwin (left) and Wa'Myron Howard take a break from practice to smile for the camera.

Bloomindale Seniors Reflect on Trip to Prague and Vienna

By Jane Owen

Bloomindale High School Music Department students and families traveled to Austria and the Czech Republic during Spring Break (March 15 – March 22). Everyone experienced the trip of a lifetime and seniors especially loved capping their final high school year with this trip. Seniors had a unique experience feeling just a bit freer to share their talents with the ease that comes from 4 years of high school musical experience. These are some of their memories.

Bre Jenkins was part of the orchestra and says, “It was an amazing way to end our senior year. I loved touring Prague. The city was so beautiful and so different from anything that can be found in the US. I love the architecture and the history behind the buildings. And being there with my friends and family just added to the experience.”

Lindsay Gaertner sang in the chorus and played the flute in band. “My favorite part of the trip was being able to go inside and tour the different castles. The art work and architecture were so unique and different from anything we have in the states. This trip has taught me to appreciate the history around me.”

Percussionist Nick Berkowitz says, “My favorite part of the trip was definitely the parade in Prague. We just had fun with it and were able to perform without even needing to think about it. The part I’ll remember most is the little things that happened, like inside jokes between the people on the bus or just getting to explore new countries with my friends. This trip will have a lasting impact on me because it really allowed me to focus on just living life to the fullest while I was there.”

Band mellophone player Erin English said she is glad she got to experience the differences between the people and the history of the region. But also, the cultural and language difference provided lessons and humor. “When ordering food in Prague I couldn’t read the menu and the waiter didn’t speak English. So, I ended up ordering Hovezi tataracek, Steak Tar Tar (raw steak). Not my favorite but different. Everyone got a laugh!”



Bre Jenkins Photo by Bobbit Jenkins



Lindsay Gaertner Photo by Sharon Gaertner



Lindsay Gaertner Photo by Sharon Gaertner



Erin English Photo by Jane Owen



Nick Berkowitz
Photo by Jane Owen



Bloomingdale Art Students Showcase Talent

Brief and Photos by Deidre Morgan

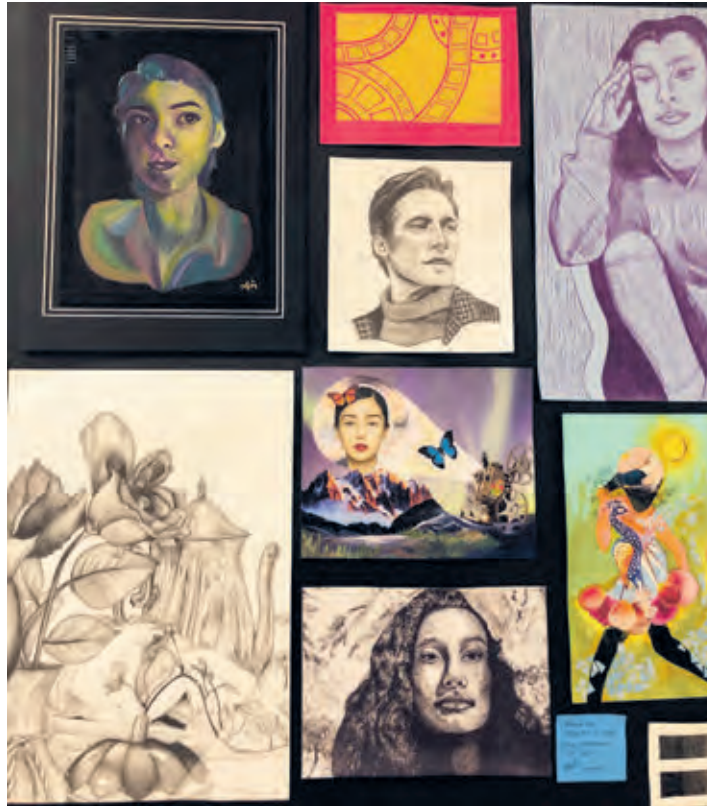


Julia works on a design for the play GODSPELL.

Art students at Bloomingdale High had the chance to display their talents to the whole school during the Bloomingdale Art Show. Teachers had the opportunity to bring their classes down and view all the awesome art work displayed along the Art hallway. Mrs. Diana Speedy, Bloomingdale's Art Teacher for the past

20 years, was so excited to share what her students have been working on all year.

The students could choose to do group projects or do solo projects. There were 5 categories that the students could submit their art work; Studio Art 2D, Portfolio Drawing, Creating Art 2D, Creating Art 3D and Access Drawing. Some of the students had the privilege of showing their work at the Tampa Museum of Art and the Dali Museum. A few students are also working on set designs for the play GODSPELL that will be held at Bloomingdale on May 16 – 18. Thank you, Mrs. Speedy and your students, for making the hallways at Bloomingdale High School brighter!



This display board represents Studio Art 2D which is a combination of sketchbook drawings, class and home projects.



9th grader Isabel not only displays her artwork on paper, but she also shows her love of art on her face.

Burns Middle School's Art Teacher Wins Award

Brief and Photo by Wendy Knipp



Congratulations to Art teacher Pamela Reeves at Burns Middle School! She was recently honored with "Middle School Art Teacher of the Year" from the Hillsborough Art Education Association.



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Final Thoughts - Leaving for College

By Jon Alfano

We are honored to have had Jon write for our paper. He is an outstanding writer, a hard-working contributor and we wish him all the best in his very bright future!

Even as I'm writing this article, it still boggles my mind that I have even made it to this point, but alas, I have almost finished high school. On May 28, I will graduate and move on to the next phase of my life. A lot of adjustments and challenges will be coming my way, but I am overwhelmingly excited to begin college. I am attending the University of Central Florida with Journalism as my intended major, and I could not be more thrilled.

Writing has been a passion of mine for a while now and I am extremely grateful to have been given the chance to write for The Bloomingdale Gazette for over a year and my school newspaper for two years. I've always had a bit of trouble expressing myself and this has given me a chance to get my thoughts out there in a way I never have before. I can't wait to hopefully make a career out of something I enjoy doing so much.

I could be here all day naming people who have helped me, but I'll try to keep things brief. I could not have possibly asked for a better group of school friends. They've helped me through a plethora of situations, made the bad times good and the good times better. It's impossible to put into words how grateful I am for every single one of them.

More importantly, I must thank my family for guiding me through life thus far, especially my mother. She has always supported me in everything I do, and was always there for me, which amazes me considering how much of a pain I was at times.

I have so much more that I could say, but I'd just be rambling on. I might be getting repetitive at this point, but it really is surreal that in less than a month I'll be able to call myself a high school graduate!



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Brenda's Featured Bloomingdale Listings



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4401 LOMA VISTA DR



1803 VISTA RIVER DR



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