



THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

VOLUME XXXIX 🍁 ISSUE 10 🍁 OCTOBER 2019 🍁 www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

Fall Festival Promises a Spooktacular, Falltastic and Boolicious Time!
See p. 12-14 for schedule of events, sponsors and more details!



Who: You, The Kids, Fido and Fifi!

What: Bloomingdale's Fall Fest...
Fun, Fun, and More Fun!

When: Oct. 26, 10am to 2 pm

Where: BSHS Stadium

This Month



BHA YOM ADDS NEW SPONSOR!

Page 3

BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

Page 6

COMMUNITY CALENDAR
LIBRARY HAPPENINGS

Pages 8-9

BSD: THE COMMUNITY'S
COMMON AREA CONNECTION

Page 10

BLOOMINGDALE OAKS SPECIAL
DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENT

Page 11

FALL FESTIVAL SCHEDULE AND
MORE

Pages 12-14

NATURES WAY ROAD DIET/
PUBLIC MEETING

Pages 14-15

SCHOOL NEWS

Pages 18-23

PLEASE  RECYCLE

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2013, 2014 & 2016

Hillsborough County
Neighborhood
Recognition Award

Best Communications
Newsletter Category

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Don't be afraid of the solitude that comes with raising your standards." *Ebonee Davis*

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: *Matt Marcinkowski*

Treasurer: *Grace Lewis*

Bobbi Ferraro

Carl Hallinan

Billy Hightower

George T. May IV

Rachel Santarlas

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

Website: www.BloomingtonHOA.com

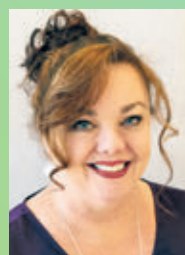
Design/Layout: Chris Pascucci, NTZ Studios (ntzstudios.com)

Staff Writers: Joe Harless, Wendy Knipp, Deidre Morgan, & Jane Owen

Student Reporter: Audra Nikolajski

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

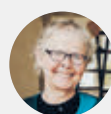
Community Publications Manager

1000 North Ashley Drive, Suite 700

Tampa, Florida 33602

(813) 731-2490

Email: adaly@tampabay.com



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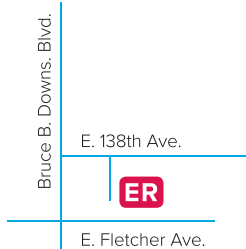
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Yard of the Month



Ace Hardware and Campo YMCA sponsor the BHA Yard of the Month

Send your Yard of the Month nominations to inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com or call 813-681-2051. Winners receive a \$25 gift card redeemable at Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale and one month free towards new membership at Campo YMCA. Members will receive 50% off a YMCA program.



Ted & Mary Ann Anderson 2302 Longmore Circle, Valrico, 33596 (Somerset)

Timeless Beauty

IN WINDOW TREATMENTS

When shopping for window coverings that fit your needs there are several things that you need to keep in mind:

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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

The Chadderton Group
Keller Williams Realty

813-601-5659

ronniemclaughlin@kw.com
www.chaddertongroup.com

It's hurricane season

What does your renters insurance cover?

I'd like you to meet renter Janice who rents in the Bloomingdale area. Like many of us, she was glued to the TV watching Hurricane Dorian wreak havoc with our nerves and the Bahamas earlier this month. According to NOAA, hurricane season lasts from June-November typically with 12 named storms, six which become hurricanes with three category 3 or higher. Those stats got Janice wondering about her renters insurance as it pertains to hurricane coverage.

There are typically three parts to renters insurance: personal property, personal liability and medical expenses, loss of use/additional living expenses. The deductible for our area is \$500-\$2,500.

In order for your **personal property coverage** to kick in, property has to be damaged or ruined by a listed peril on your policy. Hurricane-related perils that your insurance may cover include windstorms and hail (though check your policy — some renters insurance policies in coastal areas explicitly exclude wind and hail damage). Damage from fire and lightning is also covered.

Explicitly not covered by any renters insurance policy is **water damage from flooding** or storm surge.

If you're in a flood zone, it's really important that you buy a flood insurance policy to protect yourself from flooding damage during a storm. You can buy a policy that just covers the contents of your house, and then if your couch does get ruined during a storm, you can rest assured that it'll be covered either way.

Please check all facts with your insurance agent. Just like your Realtor, build a relationship with your insurance agent. If you need recommendations, give me a call at 813-601-5659.

Meet me on the bus!

Join me on Wednesday, Oct. 9 at The Mammography BUS at Keller Williams. Go online to tampabaymobilemamography.com and choose my office location 2350 E. State Road 60, Valrico to make your appointment. No script needed over age 40. All insurances accepted. Self-pay is \$150. No extra charge for 3D.



Neighborhood Snapshot - Bloomingdale Cove

Bloomingdale Cove is located at the end of Culbreath Road just south of Cimino Elementary. The neighborhood boasts 253 homes averaging 2,570 square feet. The community features a pond and a private park, which residents share with another Bloomingdale neighborhood, Somerset. The park has a basketball court, picnic tables, a small playground and walking trails. Fourteen homes have second floor bonus rooms.

In February 2017 when I first wrote about Bloomingdale Cove, I had reported an average sales price of \$240,292 at an average square footage of \$110.20. Currently, the average sales price over the past 365 days is now \$253,094 at an average square footage of \$119.74. Two of the sales were distress sales. Not including those two lower sales, the average sale price is \$262,100 and \$125.10.



Good Job, Bloomingdale!

In a September Tampa Bay Business Journal article, Niche.com rated Bloomingdale one of "Tampa's best suburbs for families." Read the whole article at:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/the-burbs>

Bloomingdale Ratings:

Overall grade: A	Diversity: A-
Good for families grade: A	Commute: C+
Public schools: B+	Cost of living: B-
Housing: A-	Crime & safety: N/A

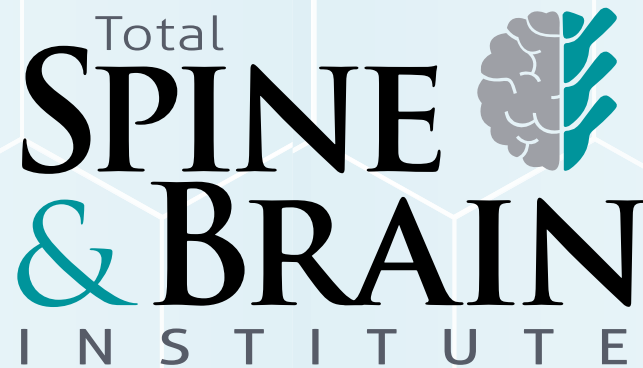
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BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

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

2019 Membership Drive Ends December 31! Your \$35 supports all community events!

Join the BHA and support our many programs for our residents and community! The 2019 Membership drive is ongoing through December 31! 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, look for the PayPal link and follow the simple instructions.



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.

Tuesday, October 8, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome. Call 813-681-2051 for information.

Monday, October 14, 6:30 p.m. / Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Monthly Trustee Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Call 813-684-6667 for information.

Thursday, October 17, 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.

BHA BRIEFS

Great News! Campo YMCA Joins Ace Hardware as a Yard of the Month Sponsor!

For over 10 years, Ace Hardware has sponsored our Yard of the Month program. This month, winners will receive the \$25 Ace Hardware Gift Card and from Campo Y, their first month free towards a new membership or if already members, 50% off a YMCA program.

Campo Y membership director Christian Hernandez offered the sponsorship to strengthen the relationship between their organization and the Bloomingdale community. The BHA has installed a Bloomingdale Gazette newspaper bin at the information desk inside the Campo Y building. Thank you, Campo YMCA!



Farewell, Dann Berkowitz!

BHA Board member Dann Berkowitz has left the board after serving our community for more than seven years. To name just a few of his contributions, Dann has served as the secretary, vice-president, scholarship chairman and volunteer coordinator. He has tirelessly attended nearly every BHA event and dragged his kids Sam and Nick along for the ride. Even more impressive, Dann enlisted the help of his wife Kate at every event as well. For the Berkowitz team, volunteering was a family affair. Dann's service and sarcasm will be missed. Thank you for being part of what makes our community special!



BHA BRIEFS (CONT.)

Update: Bell Shoals Roadway Project

Hillsborough County Press Release, Office of Neighborhood Relations

At this time, advance utility work is continuing along Bell Shoals from Bloomingdale Avenue to Boyette Road. Tree removals to allow TECO electric line placement is almost complete. New TECO transmissions lines are installed and complete.

Old poles and equipment are being removed. Removal was delayed due to Hurricane Dorian preparations. TECO Distribution crews are continuing to switch loads over to the new lines. MCI/Verizon has completed all of their work.

In the south end, Spectrum has completed installation and Frontier is completing their final connections now. Spectrum and Frontier will continue working on the north end of the project area.

Final work to relocate water, sewer, TECO People Gas, and remove old telecommunication lines will be completed with road construction.

A contract for road and bridge construction is expected to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners this month. Road and bridge construction is expected to begin Winter 2019, once the contract is awarded.



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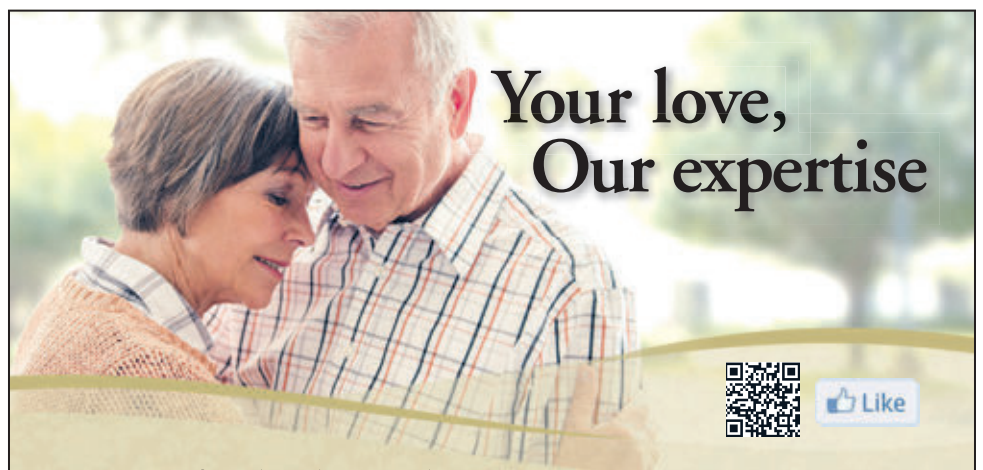
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FALL AND HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS!

Harvest Moon Farm 5- Acre Maze and More / 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Weekends through Nov. 10 / 15990 Stur St, Masaryktown (Brooksville)

This is to a family experience — with food and fun for all! We're open weekends in the Fall and Spring. Just a short country drive from Tampa in Sunny Florida. This will be our 6th season. In addition to our 5-acre maze, experience a 70-foot jumping pillow, pumpkin patch, cow train ride, pedal carts, tree house, mineshaft slide, spinning wizzer, pumpkin bowling and lots of Halloween themed barnyard games. Come out on select Saturday nights for our flashlight nights where guests can roam the maze in the dark. Tickets for the farm are \$11.95 plus tax for ages 3 and up; children two and under are free. For information, visit <https://www.harvestmoonfl.com/> or call 800-373-4811. Tickets available at harvestmoon-farm.ticketleap.com.



Fox Squirrel Corn Maze / Weekends only Oct. 5-27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. / 3002 Charlie Taylor Rd, Plant City // Cost: Adults: \$11 + tax (18 & older) Youth: \$10 + tax (3 - 17) 2 & under: Free Cash, Visa, Master Card and Discover for admission. NO ATM ON SITE. Most vendors are cash only. Admission price includes unlimited maze, hayride games, Pumpkins for sale and more. Website: <http://futchentertainment.com/>. NO PETS ALLOWED (except service animals). FREE Parking.



Creatures of the Night at Zoo Tampa at Lowry Park / Fridays and Saturdays from Oct. 5-26, 4 to 10 p.m. / 1101 W Sligh Ave, Tampa / Tickets at zootampa.org // The Zoo stays open late and animals lurk in the night until 10 p.m. with a haunting array of eerie and immersive Halloween adventures for the whole family. Don't worry, Mom and Dad - there's no horror or gore, just an impressive lineup of endless scares and startles for all! Enjoy up-close animal mingles, enrichment and chats throughout the night, including the returning favorite Bat Chat.



Haunted House On St Cloud / Every Friday and Saturday Night in October, 8-10 p.m. including Halloween / 311 N St Cloud Ave, Valrico // Come if you dare to the haunted house with different rooms! There is no haunted house like it! Walk into The evil psychotic butcher's room, the dark Forrest awaits you and so much more! There is a no-scare for kids too, just let us know. Don't miss out, we're dying to see you! www.facebook.com/HauntedHouseonstcloud. Donation of \$4 per person keeps the scares coming.

Busch Gardens' Howl-O-Scream 2019 "20 Years of Fear" / Dates and Times through Nov. 2 / 3000 E Busch Blvd, Tampa / Tickets at buschgardens.com // Take on terrifying haunted houses & roaming hordes. Howl-O-Scream 2019 unearths long-buried icons of the past and new nightmares as Busch Gardens Tampa Bay celebrates



"20 Years of Fear" with sinister surprises at every turn. Brave souls can venture through horrifying houses, terrifying scare zones and thrilling rollercoaster rides in the dark for 22 select nights. Run for your life as gruesome ghouls emerge from their tombs to twist your daydreams into nightmares. Howl-O-Scream is a separately ticketed event.

27th Annual Haunted Woods at Hillsborough River State Park / Oct. 18-19, 6-10 p.m. / Hillsborough River State Park, Thonotosassa // Sponsored by the Hillsborough River State Park Preservation Society, this event includes the Haunted Woods Trail and Coloring Contests. Food and refreshments will be available and music will be filling the air. There will be a Costume Contest both nights; all ages - 6 pm- Prizes! It is a safe alternative to Trick-Or-Treating! Bring the whole family and come walk through our Haunted Woods for a scary, fun time. Proceeds benefit the Hillsborough River State Park Preservation Society. Ages 13 and up \$10/each. Ages 12 and under Free! More Information: Ranger Station: 813-987-6771



8th Annual Gifts & Crafts Fair / Oct. 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. / The Bridges, 11350 Bloomingdale Ave., Riverview // Whether it is handcrafted decorations or personalized gifts, such as jewelry and handbags, pottery, candles, soaps, home décor and more, shopping for unique gifts could not be easier at the 8th annual Gifts & Crafts Fair. This one-stop holiday shopping event features over 30 vendors. FREE and Open to the Public. Interested vendors please contact Janet at 813-413-8900 or jnoah@thebridgesbvm.com.



Harvest Dinner & Auction / GFWC Valrico Service League, Inc. / Nov. 3, Starts at 5 p.m., catered dinner at 6 p.m. and live auction at 7 p.m. / Center Place, 650 Vonderburg Dr // Let's make a difference - is the goal of the VSL ladies. The group's main fundraiser for the year is the Harvest Dinner & Auction. Purchase tickets at Center Place through Oct. 18 at \$30. Proceeds help ECHO, Brandon Outreach Clinic, Center Place, Family Promise of Brandon, A Kid's Place, Real Hope Ministry, Hacienda Girls Ranch, and Canine Companions among others. For information, call Claudia Yake at 685-7998 or Sue Hadden at 685-6160.



Don't Forget The Fair!

The Hillsborough County Fair is October 17-20 and 24-27 at the Hillsborough County Fairgrounds located at 215 Sydney Washer Road, Dover. 2019 FAIR HOURS: Thursday 5 pm - 10 pm, Friday 5 pm - 11 pm, Saturday 10 am - 11 pm, Sunday 10 am - 8 pm. Admission for adults is \$7, students \$5, seniors \$4, and children 4 and under are free. Ride armbands are \$20 and arena events are \$10. Parking is free. In addition to the usual fun rides, concessions, and competitions, there is a new area for STEAM projects, competitions, and exhibits. For information, visit www.hillsboroughcountyfair.com.



Library Happenings

Libraries today feature a wide variety of offerings that go way beyond the simplicity of books. This ain't your great grandma's library! Learn sign language, hone your computer skills, play video and board games with old and new friends, and so much more. Check out the Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative online at <https://www.hcplc.org/> for everything available this month.

Are you a Budding Shakespeare?

Poetry Workshop / Oct. 19, 2 - 4 p.m. / Bloomingdale Library, McLean Community Room, 1906 Bloomingdale Ave. // Join poet Stephen Lindow for this innovative poetry workshop featuring writing exercises, word experiments and prompts, poets will play with images and sound. There will be time to write, share and discuss. Handouts provided. Spontaneity and the unexpected are your poem's friends'.



Trick or Treat in the Stacks!

Book-o-Ween! / Oct. 28, 4:30-5:30 p.m. / Brandon Library, Room 1, 619 Vonderburg Dr., Brandon // Families will participate in spooky holiday fun. Participants are encouraged to come in costume to trick or treat through the stacks. Event Type(s): Children's, Age Group(s): All



Is Gardening Your Passion?

The Hillsborough County IFAS Extension Service offers free plant clinics each month at public libraries throughout the County. The programs are given by volunteer Master Gardeners that are trained by the University of Florida. For a complete schedule of upcoming Master Gardener and Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ events, please refer to the following link: : <http://hillsborough.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml>



FLORIDA
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Master Gardener Library Program: Growing Sprouts and Microgreens / Nov. 6, 6:30-8 p.m. / Bloomingdale Library //

Learn how to grow delicious sprouts and microgreens. You can produce an edible crop in less than a week on your kitchen counter with minimal supplies. Grow year-round with no concerns about weather conditions and without fertilizers or pesticides. No gardening experience required. Presentation by Master Gardener Anne Marie Boehm. Don't forget to bring a plant or other gardening item for our fun Plant Swap. Brought to you by your Bloomingdale Library Master Gardener Team, Richard Seedroff, Elena Wright, Barbara Glotback.



Master Gardener Library Program: Organic Vegetable Gardening / Nov. 5, 6:30 p.m. / Riverview Branch Library, 10509 Riverview Dr. //

Learn the basics of growing your own vegetables. This talk covers planting seasons, pest and disease control, and varieties that thrive in Central Florida. The speaker will also cover types of vegetable gardening including: In-ground, Raised beds and Containers. Valuable hand-outs on vegetable gardening will be available in addition to topic related door prizes. Email amblibrary@gmail.com or call 813-205-6621 for more information.



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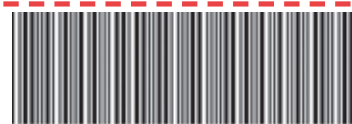


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BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL DISTRICT

MONTHLY REVIEW

By Tom Leech, President

October marks the start of the new fiscal year and for Bloomingdale the beginning of the funding increase that resulted from last year's assessment referendum. Several projects -- the Off-Duty Deputy Security Program, entryway modernization, enhanced Holiday decorations, and irrigation improvements -- began in anticipation of increased funding. You will see these programs continue in FY2020.

Entryway Upgrade

The entryway upgrade project is progressing nicely. Genesis | Halff completed the surveying and we expect to begin outreach to affected property- and business owners soon. Construction plans are being developed and I hope that in November, I will be able to tell you when we will begin construction on the new entryway signs.

The new signs at Bloomingfield and John Moore are not part of this program but were installed due to the age and deterioration of the old signs. That entryway will be upgraded to match our other community entrances as part of the revitalization program.



Off-Duty Deputy Program

We continue to see positive results and have received great feedback from our residents regarding the Off-Duty Deputy program. In August, this initiative received the further endorsement of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office through the appointment of a Liaison Officer dedicated to coordinate our program. As a result, a small cadre of Deputies has been identified to consistently patrol our community and will thereby get to know our neighborhoods better over time. If the opportunity presents itself, I would also encourage you to get to know our Off-Duty Deputies when you see them around Bloomingdale.

Sidewalk Repairs

The final phase of the sidewalk repair project began last month, four months earlier than planned. This



is the third of three phases intended to repair and replace sections of sidewalk damaged throughout the community by tree roots from mature oak trees. The District meets regularly with the county to ensure that issues -- including irrigation system damage and equipment clean-up and removal -- arising from the sidewalk repairs are remedied. While the District cannot control the speed at which the county responds, we will continue to work with Public Works to address the problems as swiftly as possible.

THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AREA CONNECTION

(Editor's Note: The Bloomingdale Special District's (BSD) monthly column will inform readers about the BSD, its mission and ongoing and new initiatives. The BSD 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.)

BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL DISTRICT

**3509 Bell Shoals Road
Valrico, Florida 33596**

(813) 684-6667 Office

(813) 684-2358 Fax

BSTD@verizon.net

<https://mydistrictwebsite.com/>

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

Tom Leech, President

Charlie Woodcock, Treasurer

Jay Kittle, Secretary

Joe Harless, Sr., Trustee

Russell Jones, Trustee

Randy Kehrmeier, Trustee

Claire Letkiewicz, Trustee

Monthly Meeting

As a reminder, meetings are held the second Monday of the month and all Bloomingdale residents are invited to attend the next meeting of the BSD on Oct. 14 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!

For information on the Bloomingdale Special District visit :

mydistrictwebsite.com/
[bloomingdale-special-taxing-district](https://bloomingdale-special-taxing-district.com/)



Bloomington Oaks Neighbors! An Important Message from your Bloomington Oaks Special Dependent Tax District Board!

We are looking for homeowners to volunteer to be Trustees on this board. We were established by Hillsborough County Ordinance 88-38 on Dec. 21, 1988, as amended for the Bloomington Oaks Subdivision.

We meet at 7:30 p.m. at a Trustee's home on the 3rd Monday of the month.

Responsibilities include establishing an annual budget and special assessment. The annual \$95 tax assessment is part of your Bloomington Oaks property tax bill listed under Non-Ad Valorem Assessments- BLOOMINGTON OAKS SDD.

In general, the district maintains the subdivision's wall and right-of-way along Bloomington Avenue including the planters. In addition, the board monitors contractor performance.

Recently the board decided to partner with Flock Safety for an auto tag surveillance system. Our goal is to make our neighborhood safer. Similar communities with Flock saw a 34% reduction in crime last year.

Please contact bloomingtonoaks31@aol.com to volunteer, express concerns or attend a meeting.



Bloomington Oaks Special Taxing District Board
Board members are all residents of Bloomington Oaks:

President: Bill Grace

Trustees:

Terri Cecchini
Fred Englehardt
Mariana Grace

George Langan
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Chuck Madison

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It's Baa-ack! Bloomingdale's Fall Fest Returns! **Free, Family and Pet-Friendly And Just Plain Fun! Don't Miss Out!**

This year's Fall Fest sponsored by your Bloomingdale Homeowners Association takes place at Bloomingdale High School's stadium on Saturday Oct. 26 from 10am – 2pm, rain or shine. More than 85 sponsors and vendors will take part in Bloomingdale's largest signature event which organizers anticipate will be attended by over 3,000 people.

There will be something for everyone:

- The first 300 guests/families will receive a complimentary goody bag.
- Trick or Treat Street, don't forget to bring a treat bag!
- Kid's Costume and Pet Costume Contests, Top three in each category win prizes!
- Bounce Houses and Obstacle Course X 3, Bounce Houses will be offered for different age groups!
- Craft Station
- Games at Various Booths
- Bake Sale from BSHS Students
- Jeremiah's Ice samples
- Food Trucks- Sarge's Smokehouse BBQ (premium barbeque), Times Square Pizza and Mr. C's Grilled Cheese. So come hungry!
- Demos from BSHS Drumline, Dancing for Joy, Captain Martial Arts and More!
- Art Contest and Exhibition featuring talented students from the High school and Burns Middle School.
- NEW!!! Local artisans selling items from potting benches, handmade bows, jewelry, art, signs and more!

DJ Rick Mondelli of Rhythm Makers will keep the energy high playing the latest tunes and emceeing the event.

Of the community-building event, Suzy Watts, BHA president and Fall Fest committee chair, said, "Events like our Fall Fest foster community pride, bring neighbors together, showcase our business partners and strengthen our community in many ways. We are looking forward to families enjoying the day and great weather!"

This event is free and open to the public. Bloomingdale High School is located at 1700 East Bloomingdale Avenue, Valrico. For more information, visit www.bloomingdalehoa.com.

Schedule of Activities

10:00 am	Welcome and General Announcements
10:30 am	Howl-O-Ween Pet Costume Contest
11:00 am	Costume Contest Children 6 and Under
11:30 pm	Costume Contest 7 and Older
12 Noon	Captain Martial Art Demonstration
12:30 pm	Dancing 4 Joy Demonstration
1:00 pm	Bloomingdale High School Drumline Performs
1:30 pm	Sponsor Booth Contest Winner Awarded
2:00 pm	Event Ends



A very special thank you to our over 85 Participants!



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Fall Fest Returns (Continued)

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County Proposes Reducing Lanes On Natures Way To Make It Safer Transportation planners want to put Natures Way on a "road diet"

By D'Ann Lawrence White, Patch Staff, Courtesy Reprint from Sep 27, 2019

The county is proposing reducing the four-lane portion of Natures Way to two lanes. (Google Earth)

Transportation planners think they have a way to reduce crashes and improve safety on Natures Way. They want to put Natures Way on a "road diet."

Residents complain that the loop serving as the main access road for the Bloomingdale East neighborhood has turned into a race track, with drivers frequently ignoring the 30-mph speed limit.

In more than one instance, the road has been used by teens for drag racing with deadly consequences.

Instead of turning to traffic-calming solutions like speed humps and traffic circles, the county is proposing to remove lanes from the road.

A section of Natures Way between Elba Place and Bell Grande Drive has four lanes. The county wants to spend \$1.95 million to narrow this section of Natures Way to two lanes with a median and center left-turn lane, along with bicycle lanes in each direction.

The project also calls for upgrading school zones for Alafia and Cimino elementary schools



and installing new signage and sharrow (shared lane) pavement markings on nearby sections of Natures Way, Culbreath Road, Glenhaven Drive, Greenhollow Lane and Springvale Drive.

To find out what Bloomingdale East residents think of the proposal, county hosted a public information meeting on Monday, Sept. 30 at 6:30 p.m. in the Bloomingdale High School cafeteria, 1700 E. Bloomingdale Ave. (See related story below.)

Planners believe the "road diet" will slow down traffic and improve safety for drivers, walkers and joggers, and bicyclists who regularly traverse Natures Way, especially the children who walk to Cimino and Alafia elementary schools, which are located on either end of the loop.

Downsizing roads is becoming a popular option among transportation planners to slow traffic and decrease accidents along roads like Natures Way, which has had more than 90 crashes since 2010.

This type of design that reduces road lanes has been nicknamed a "road diet." Studies have shown that eliminating lanes reduces crashes by 29 percent.

Natures Way Public Meeting Highlights Proposed Changes; Attendance Low

By Joe Harless

Hillsborough County hosted a public information meeting Monday, September 30, at the Bloomingdale High School cafeteria to gather input regarding the proposed improvements for the section of Natures Way Boulevard between Elba Place and Bell Grande Drive. About 25 people attended the meeting and according to one attendee the general mood was subdued.

“The plan is currently in the design phase,” Sandra Gonzalez a member of Capital Programs with Hillsborough County, said, “We intend to review citizen input for any particular improvements that might be suggested from citizen feedback.”

She said the project will be out of the design phase by the end of the year and work will hopefully start before June 2020.

The planned improvements call for the conversion of the existing four-lane roadway into a two-lane roadway with a median and center left-turn lane, along with a bicycle lane in each direction. Also, the project includes upgrading school zones for Alafia and Cimino elementary schools and

installing upgraded signage and pavement markings on nearby sections of Natures Way Boulevard, Culbreath Road, Glenhaven Drive, Greenhollow Lane, and Springvale Drive.

The goal of the project is to improve safety and accessibility for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Similar to the public meeting held last year to showcase the planned changes to Bells Shoals Boulevard, the attending citizens got the chance to review the project details, ask questions of the experts, and make comments on the project. The open-house format of the meeting stressed the importance of making the information on the changes available to the public.

Meeting attendance won't prohibit citizens from making comments on the project, either. Gonzalez stated anyone interested in viewing the project and making comments can do so online. Project information is available online at HCFLGov.net/CountyProjects. Questions about the meeting may be directed to Citizen Engagement at 813-272-5275.



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BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Deputy Clifford Fletcher and CSO Debbie Vijil

"One Team, One Family, One Community"

Halloween is right around the corner. Let's make it safe as possible.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office wants you and your children to be safe. If your children are trick or treating, ensure they are safe by going with them. Also consider attending one of many events that host safe environments for children.

Halloween Safety Tips:

- 1) Make sure costumes are light-colored or feature lighted or fluorescent accents.
- 2) Only go to homes with porch lights on. This is the signal that residents are participating.
- 3) Cross the street only at intersections and look both ways.
- 4) Check all treats before your children eat them.
- 5) Consider face paint instead of a bulky mask that can limit vision.
- 6) Use a flashlight during nighttime activities.
- 7) Drivers be aware of more pedestrian activity during the evening's festivities.

Take time to educate your kids about safety. Do your part. Your children learn from your actions.

Area Law and Order

Over the past month in Bloomingdale east and west, there were 91 traffic stops conducted, 22 citations issued and one driver arrested for DUI. One traffic stop resulted in arrest. Two traffic crashes with injury and five non-injury crashes occurred. Two warrants were served in the area. Forty-eight reports were written, which included four unlocked vehicle burglaries. One person was arrested for a drug law violation. Lock your doors and remove valuable items from your vehicles.

Want to Know What is Going on in Your Neighborhood?

Stay in tune with your community. Visit <http://webapps.hcso.tampa.fl.us/CallsForService>. This site will give you call information that has occurred in your neighborhood. All information will be added after the call is cleared.

Community Involvement Does Reduce Crime, Report, Report, Report!

If you notice any suspicious activity or a crime being committed, get all the information you can - descriptions of individuals, descriptions of vehicles and license numbers, and immediately call the Sheriff's Dispatch at 247-8200! Time is critical!

Next Bloomingdale Area Community Council Meeting (BACC)!

Don't Forget Our New Time!

Get involved; attend our monthly meeting as a neighborhood representative. Our meetings are on the third Thursday of each month - this month's meeting is **October 17 at 6 p.m.** at 3622 Erindale Drive. The BACC works directly with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to identify community concerns and find solutions to all types of problems. For information, call the Bloomingdale Community Station at 635-8040, or come by the station.

Sheriff's Sporting Clay Shoot Out Registration is Open!

The 2019 Sheriff Chad Chronister's Sporting Clay Shoot Out will be held Oct. 11 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hosted by the HCSO, the event is held at Tampa Bay Sporting Clays, 10514 Ehren Cutoff, Land O' Lakes. Registration will be on <https://hcsocharities.com/>.

HCSO Charities, Inc. remains devoted to identifying organizations or causes whose mission is committed to helping those in need. HCSO Charities, Inc. continues to assist families of our nation's Fallen Heroes and Wounded Warriors. We stand by families of law enforcement officers enduring dark hours and cherish the smile on a child's face after receiving benefits.

We hope you consider a donation to support this event. Your generosity will help make a difference in our community. Charities you will be helping are the Children's Cancer Center and the USO



Running/Biking/Walking Safety - or - Pay Attention, Darn it!

By Joe Harless

Bloomingdale traffic tends to be heavy and congested, which means community residents have to take extra care when maneuvering through it.

Due to the high number of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities in the Tampa Bay area, Hillsborough County has been focusing its efforts to raise traffic awareness and practices in an attempt to bring the numbers down.

To that end, the County adopted a Vision Zero policy with the goal of reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero. Similar Vision Zero goal resolutions have also been adopted by the Tampa City Council, Temple Terrace City Council, Plant City Commission, and by the School Board of Hillsborough County.

With that in mind, here are some things to keep in mind when moving with traffic as a runner, pedestrian, or bicyclist. Remember, paying attention is always the best strategy.

Running Safety

If you're going to run on the road, there's always the question of which side to run on. Conventional wisdom demands running on the left side against oncoming traffic so you'll be able to see approaching vehicles and, hopefully, the drivers will see you better since you're running towards them.



Continued on Next Page

But because obstacles like road work can occasionally force a runner to the other side, it's generally accepted to run on the side of the road that grants the runner optimum vision and the better chance of being seen by drivers.

Some of the other road running rules seem fairly obvious: don't run on busy roads, don't run on highways and interstates, don't run on heavily damaged roadways, and don't run through a road construction site.

Pedestrian Safety

The best defense for pedestrians rests with paying attention.

Like runners, pedestrians have no external defenses against moving vehicles. Keep in mind that crosswalks do not serve as an out-of-bounds safety area. A car can still hit you even when you're obeying the rules of the road, so be aware of your surroundings when walking near a road.

Observe the rules of the road, use the crosswalks and lights, and look both ways before crossing the street. Even roads with little traffic can still be dangerous.

Biking Safety

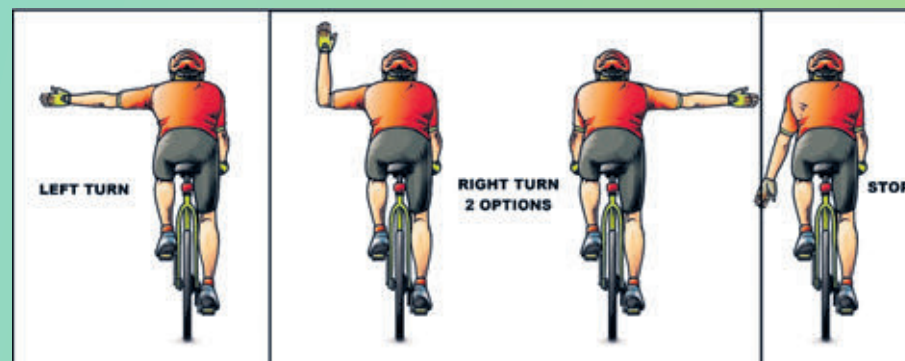
The basic rules for riding a bicycle in the state of Florida include obeying all traffic controls and signals, having a fixed seat, the number of riders/passengers being limited to the maximum number for which the bike was designed (i.e. one seat, one person), and keeping at least one hand on the handlebars at all times (even if riding with no hands looks cool, don't do it).

Oh, and the brakes have to work.

Because a bicycle qualifies as a vehicle, the rules of using them safely are a little more complex compared to running/walking. Bikers must ride as closely as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway unless passing, making a left turn, avoiding road hazards, travelling the same speed as all the other traffic, or when a lane is too narrow to safely share with a car.

Further, any bicycle operated between sunset and sunrise needs a lamp on the front projecting white light for 500 feet and red lights and reflectors on the rear that projects 600 feet. Finally, Florida's bicycle law prohibits the use of headphones, earbuds, headsets, and other listening devices while riding.

That last rule should be observed by anyone moving through traffic, whether as a pedestrian, runner, or bicyclist: ear stereos out, phone put away, and pay attention.



Biker Directional Signals

Left Turn: Extend the left hand and arm horizontally to the left side of the bike. In other words, stick your left arm out straight.

Right Turn: Extend the left hand and arm upward or extend the right hand horizontally to the right side of the bike. Arm out, bend the elbow, and point your hand up like you're about to wave.

Stop: Left hand down like you just dropped trash on the ground.



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October School News: A Look at What's Happening

Compiled by Deidre Morgan

**School
News!**



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

****No Early Release Days for the Month of October****



ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

- October 8 – Fall Pictures
- October 11 – End of 1st Grading Period
- October 17 – Chili's Family Night, 5-9 p.m.
- October 17-25 – Book Fair in the Media Center
- October 21-25 – Red Ribbon Week
- October 24 – Mathnasium Math Night, 6-7 p.m. in the Cafeteria
- October 29 – Report Card go Home
- November 5 – Kona Ice, 1:50 p.m. in the Hart Parking Lot

School Website

<http://alafia.mysdhc.org/>

Alafia PTA Information

Please sign up for updates and information at: alafiapta.membershiptoolkit.com
Also download the mobile app: membership toolkit. Check out the Alafia Elementary PTA Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/Alafia-Elementary-School-PTA.

Alafia Gator Store

Open on Mondays for K – 2nd & Wednesdays for 3rd – 5th from 7:10-7:35 a.m.

Gator Spirit Wear

Wear your School Spirit shirts on Friday's and get a Gator Buck! Purchase School Spirit items online at <https://alafiapta.membershiptoolkit.com/schoolstore>. Items purchased will be sent to your student's classroom.



CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

- October 11 – Cougar Spirit Shirt Day
- October 11 – End of 1st Grading Period
- October 11 – PTA General Assembly and Family Paint Night, 6-8 p.m.
- October 15 – SAC Meeting, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- October 18 – Cougar Spirit Shirt Day
- October 25 – All Pro Dads, 6:30 a.m.
- October 25 – Wear Red for Responsibility
- October 28 – Report Cards go Home
- October 28-November 1 – Red Ribbon Week/Dance Out Drugs
- October 28-November 1 – Cougar Challenge Prize Week
- October 29 – Cougar Cool Cats Ceremony: Character Trait is Responsibility
- October 31 – Story Book Parade, 8-9 a.m., Students come dressed as their favorite Story Book Character and bring a book to share.
- November 1 – Cougar Challenge VIP Party, 12:30-1:45 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room
- November 1 – Fall Festival, 4-7 p.m. in the Court Yard

Cimino Elementary FALL FESTIVAL

November 1st, 4-7PM
All welcome!

Please come join us for an evening of
Fun, Games, Food & Live Entertainment on the school grounds!

Tickets will be sold at the door.
(Cash only)

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times

School Website
<http://cimino.mysdhc.org>

Media Center

The Media Center needs volunteers! Please fill out a District volunteer form to get started. You may access the application at <https://community.sdhc.k12.fl.us/wps/portal/community/sdhc.home/sdhc.volunteer/sdhc.applyvolunteer/#/Volunteer>



BURNS BRUINS BANTER

October 8 & 10 – Volleyball Tryouts, 4:30 p.m.
October 10 – Music Picture Day, 9 a.m.
October 11 – End of 1st Grading Period
October 15 – PTSA Fundraiser, 9:20 a.m.-3:40 p.m. - During PE Classes
October 16 – PSAT Test, 8th Grade, 9:30 a.m.
October 17 – 8th Grade Field Trip, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. - JA Finance Park
October 25 – PTSA Fundraiser, Dodgeball, 2-4 p.m., PE Fields
October 29 – Report Cards go Home

School Website
<http://burns.mysdhc.org>



BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS

October 7 – Boys & Girls Golf vs Riverview, 2:30 p.m.
October 7 – Chorus Concert, 7-9 p.m., Auditorium
October 8 – Cross Country @ Al Lopez Park, 5 p.m.
October 10 – Swim Meet vs Jesuit @ AHN, 6:30 p.m.
October 10 – JV Football @ Plant, 7 p.m.
October 10 – Varsity Volleyball @ Plant, 7 p.m.
October 11 – End of 1st Grading Period
October 11 – Varsity Football @ Kathleen, 7:30 p.m.
October 14-15 – District Golf
October 15 – Cross Country County Championships @ Idlewild, 5 p.m.
October 15 – Swim Meet vs Durant @ BSAC, 6:30 p.m.
October 16 – PSAT, 9th, 10th & 11th Grade
October 18 – Varsity Football vs Lakeland, 7:30 p.m.
October 24 – ASVAB, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Auditorium
October 25 – Varsity Football vs. Strawberry Crest, 7:30 p.m.
October 26 – ACT Testing
October 30 – Reports Cards Available
November 1 – Varsity Football @ East Bay, 7:30 p.m.

School Website
<http://bloomingdale.mysdhc.org>

2019 Bloomingdale Senior High School Football Schedule

Overall 5-1	District 0-0	National Rank 380	State (FL) Rank 42
Date	Opponent	Location	Results
Aug. 16, 7:00 PM	@ Winter Haven Blue Devils	Denison Stadium Winter Haven	W 2 - 35
Aug. 23, 7:30 PM	vs. Newsome Wolves	Valrico, FL	W 28 - 13
Sep. 07, 7:00 PM	vs. Armwood Fighting Hawks	Valrico, FL	L 0 - 28
Sep. 13, 7:30 PM	@ Durant Cougars	Plant City, FL	W 0 - 35
Sep. 20, 7:30 PM	@ Plant Panthers	Dad's Stadium Tampa	W 10 - 22
Sep. 27, 7:30 PM	vs. Plant City Raiders	Valrico, FL	W 37 - 34
Oct. 04, 7:30 PM	vs. Tampa Bay Tech Titans	Valrico, FL	Not Available
Oct. 11, 7:30 PM	@ Kathleen Red Devils	Johnny Johnson Stadium Lakeland	TBD
Oct. 18, 7:30 PM	vs. Lakeland Dreadnaughts	Valrico, FL	TBD
Oct. 25, 7:30 PM	vs. Strawberry Crest Chargers	Valrico, FL	TBD
Nov. 01, 7:30 PM	@ East Bay Indians	Gibsonton, FL	TBD

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Bloomington High Hosts Hillsborough High School Bands, USF HOT Band

Sponsorships Available

By Audra Nikolajski

Bloomington High School's Rajun' Bull Band is hosting Hillsborough County's Marching Performance Assessment (MPA) at their stadium on Nov. 2. Every high school marching band in the county will perform their half-time show for spectators and a panel of judges. USF's Herd of Thunder Marching Band will also perform.

The public is invited to attend the all-day event. Spectators will be able to enjoy a wide range of marching styles during the performances. The show begins at noon. Purchase tickets on event day for \$10 or less, and guests will be able to choose from a variety of concessions items and food vendors.

Those interested in attending can keep informed via Bloomington Band's Facebook page: BSHS Rajun' Bull Band.

The Rajun' Bull Band and Bloomington Band Boosters would like to thank the following local companies that have stepped up to support this event: PepsiCo, Lindsolo Pressure Washing, Acropolis Greek Tavern, and JF Kicks.

The Rajun' Bull Band is asking for additional support from the community in the form of sponsorships and donations. Anyone interested in contributing to Bloomington's MPA Festival can contact Bloomington's Director of Bands, Jon Sever or the Bloomington Band Boosters at jon.sever@sdhc.k12.fl.us or 2019MPABloomington@gmail.com.



Photo: Timothy Boone



Gazette File Photo



A Jump Above the Rest – Jr. Bulls Cheer Camp

Brief By Deidre Morgan

Bloomington High School was the site for the annual Junior Bulls Cheerleading Camp held on Sept. 14. Students from Kindergarten through 8th grade got a chance to work with the JV and Varsity Cheerleaders. The students learned cheers, sideline dances and received a Bulls Cheer T-Shirt. The Junior Bulls also got to sit in the stands and cheer alongside the cheerleaders at the Homecoming game against Plant City. Go, Fight, Win!!

(Left) The Varsity cheerleaders lead the campers in a few cheer drills. Photo: Deidre Morgan

(Right) Members of the JV & Varsity Cheer Squad pose for a picture with some of the Jr. Bulls as they sign in for camp. Photo: Lois Hayes via Facebook



JV Football Team Puts in the Work

By Jane Owen

Bloomington's Junior Varsity Football Team is the largest JV team in school history. Led by first year Head Coach Shawn Council, coaches challenge the 56 players to focus and work hard in practice and on game day.

The team motto is "Strictly Business."

Council explained, "Once we step on that field and in that stadium, it is strictly business. We are there to do a job and win. I tell them, I understand you may have friends on the other team but friends can wait until after the game. After the game, let's be buddy-buddy. From the time we enter that stadium and the ball's kicked, we're strictly business from there on out."

The team is not only the biggest team ever; it also has the most returning players in recent years. With about 12 sophomores, Council says the freshmen players get the extra benefit from strong leadership and experience. Going forward, Bloomington's Varsity team benefits from these players that have kept playing freshmen through sophomore year.

Photos: Jane Owen



Head Coach Shawn Council and players after the Strawberry Crest game last month.



Bloomington JV is 2-2 for the season.

Durant	W	13-0
Armwood	L	6-40
Strawberry Crest	W	58-0
Newsome	L	0-17

They play Plant High at Plant on Oct. 10 at 7 pm.

Work. Earn. Play.



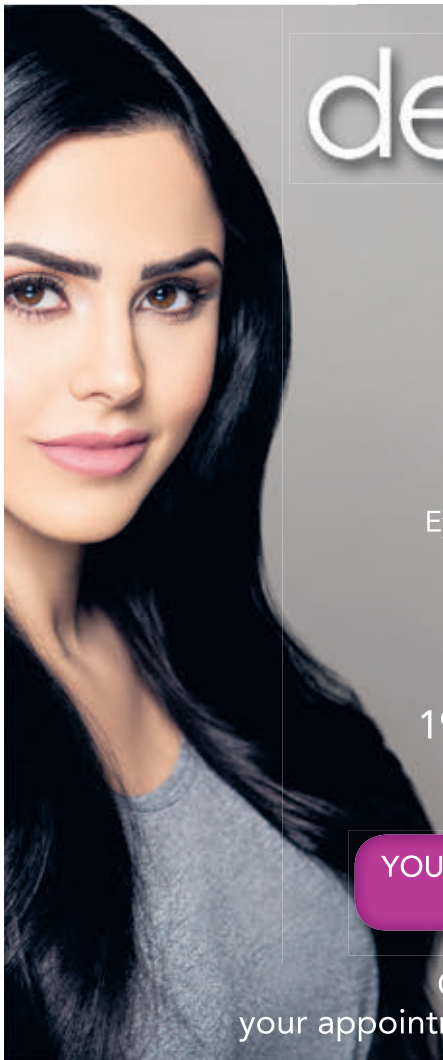
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SGA Fundraiser Starts New Tradition at Bloomingdale

By Audra Nikolajski

Bloomingdale's Student Government Association (SGA) have a new fundraiser and a new tradition at the school. Much to the excitement of the student body, students are now able to paint their parking spots in the lot behind the school.

Senior Class President Gabriella Martinez (17) said, "I wanted people to be more motivated to come to school and I thought painting parking spots would be a good start to that."

Once the idea was pitched and approved by the administration, it took some work on the behalf of SGA to get the fundraiser up and running. The SGA had to develop a system in order for parking spots to be sold, assigned, and enforced.

Task 1 – spray paint numbers onto the hundreds of parking spots. Armed only with stencils and dozens of cans of white spray paint, students spent many hours and several weeks in the blistering sun to complete this task.

Morgan Guarisco (18), SGA Vice President, remarked, "It was hot and very humid, but I had a blast painting the numbers."

Task 2 – sell the spots according to their freshly spray-painted numbers. In August, students arrived to purchase spots with Seniors given first priority.

One of the first in line was Alexander Bordin (17). He said "A bunch of people that I knew wanted to get parking spots all together, so we decided to go in as soon as it opened. It was insane; the line to wait was really long but I was lucky to be at the front of it." Bordin even brought donuts so that he and his friends had something to snack on during the long wait.

Task 3 – students submitted painting ideas for their parking spots. The SGA was thrilled at all of the students who wanted to participate, and they began to approve the submissions right away.

The Final Task – on Aug. 24, students came to paint. The results were incredible, everything from flowers to "Tangled" suns, to "F.R.I.E.N.D.S" icons adorn the spots.

Gina Baxter (17) painted her spot with "YIKES! I'm Late!" She enjoyed "eating, listening to music, and sharing with others" during the painting day.

Alexis Cole (17), the SGA President, stated, "Student Government was trying to promote school beautification by creating a colorful and fun project to paint your own parking spot. It allows everyone's inner creativity to come out. The parking lot will look amazing when all the spots are covered."

The fundraiser was very successful and the SGA hopes it will carry on for many years. Members are proud of the big step towards starting a tradition they know will outlast them. Now, SGA holds painting days one Saturday a month so that students may come in and decorate their spots anyway that they like.

Photos: Audra Nikolajski



Character Building at Cimino through Team Talks

By Jane Owen

On Thursdays, Bloomingdale Football team members greet students at Cimino Elementary. They welcome them at the front of the school, open car doors in the carline, give out high fives and offer words of encouragement for the kids to have a great day. Then, players meet in the library where they talk and read books to the kids.

Cimino calls the library sessions “Team Talks.” The players talk about a character trait the school is featuring and read books based on that character trait.

Team Talks began after Head Football Coach Jake Coulson talked to Principal Joanne Griffiths about getting the players involved at the school. Coulson participated in a similar program when he was in high school. His experience had a lasting impact; one he hopes will make a difference to his players.

Coulson explained, “I just wanted to get the kids involved with an elementary school. I wanted to get them involved in something bigger than themselves.”

Griffiths said they fit perfectly in the school’s plan for character education and sees the impact the players are having. “It really is an authentic experience where the students look up to them. Sometimes in a case like this they may listen to them even more than they listen to adults. They are so impressed with them.”

She knows the program’s impact extends beyond just the elementary students. “For the players as well as the students, it’s beneficial. It’s win-win,” she said.

Bulls Wide Receiver Gabriel Akpewero stated, “When I am on the field they are watching me. I have to set an example for them. So, in the future they want to do the same thing and help out.”

“Basically (we’re) just giving back, setting an example for kids. Maybe make them want to be a Bull,” explained Bulls Safety Khalil Brown.

Griffiths cannot say enough good things about the football players. “They are so polished and professional. They truly exemplify the character traits that we enforce. So when they come in in the morning, they are giving everyone high fives, they’re happy, they’re positive. It’s been a great experience.”

Coulson said, “Every Thursday they come back and say, ‘Coach that was awesome’.”

September’s character trait was respect. The emphasis on respect impacted both students and players. “I hope I was able to teach them to respect each other and say something nice to their brothers and sisters, go home and hug their moms and be caring people,” said Akpewero.



Left to right, Cornerback Waylon Blackmon (#7), Outside Linebacker Jake Little (#11), Wide Receiver Gabriel Akpewero (#8), and Safety (#20) Khalil Brown



Gabriel Akpewero, #8 Bulls Wide Receiver and #20 Bulls Safety Khalil Brown reading “What if I did That” by Ellen Javernick.



Left to right, Bulls Cornerback Waylon Blackmon (#7), Left Guard Jordan Lenth (#73), Safety Khalil Brown (#20), and Wide Receiver Gabriel Akpewero (#8)



Photos: Jane Owen



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