



THE

BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

VOLUME XXXIX ❧ ISSUE 12 ❧ DECEMBER 2019 ❧ www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!
CELEBRATE OUR
COMMUNITY!**

**SANTA
IS HERE
TOMORROW!
DETAILS ON P.4!**



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MUSICIANS, ARTISTS, SINGERS
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PLEASE RECYCLE

Photo: Wendy Knipp

WINNER

2013, 2014, 2016 & 2018
Hillsborough County
Neighborhood
Recognition Award
Best Communications
Newsletter Category

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"You have to look life in the face, doing what you can where you can." *Valerie Harper*



YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

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

Email: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com

Website: www.BloomingdaleHOA.com

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

President: *Suzy Watts*

Vice President: *Sean Donahue*

Secretary: *Matt Marcinkowski*

Treasurer: *Grace Lewis*



Directors at Large:

Bobbi Ferraro

Billy Hightower

George T. May IV

Charlie Woodcock



JOY BOISSELLE

Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette

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Student Reporter: Audra Nikolajski

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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



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Tampa Bay
Times



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

Selling over the Holidays?

There are currently 45 homes actively for sale in Bloomingdale! Are you thinking about selling your home over the holidays?

If so, here are a few tips on decorating your home for your holiday showings!

The best idea is to create a cozy vibe with your holiday décor while at the same time keeping the scheme depersonalized. It is important that the buyers can see themselves living in the house, which means avoiding personal pictures and homemade ornaments.

Remember to make each room look spacious. Place a few of your more neutral holiday collections throughout the house and store the remaining for next year. Start boxing up anything that creates a clutter appearance in the home, particularly if you will not use them again until you are in your new home.



Remember that curb appeal is important. Keep outdoor decorations to a minimum.

You've got this! Keep a good calendar, remove the items you won't need until after your move, and remember to only focus on what you can control - like organizing a closet.

Neighborhood Snapshot - Bloomingdale Village

Bloomingdale Village is a gated community that shares an entrance off Natures Way with the Bloomingdale Golfers Club. It consists of 57 homes located on Ballybunion Way, Bellerive Place, Crooked Stick and Cypress Point Place. 14 homes boast views of the golf course and most of those have private pools. In November 2017, I reported that four pool homes sold over that year at an average square foot of \$124.45. From November 30, 2018 - November 30, 2019, 1528 Crooked Stick Drive sold for \$310,000 or \$114.81 square feet (private pool) and 1538 Crooked Stick Drive sold for \$285,750 or \$121.75 square feet (no pool).

MLS statistics were based on rough property lines. Sales not entered into MLS did not count in these statistics.



SHOP LOCAL FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

BayCare HealthHub™ Farmer's Market

Saturday, December 21
9am–1pm

2470 Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico

For all your last-minute holiday shopping needs, stop by the BayCare HealthHub Farmer's Market. Featuring fresh produce, local honey, homemade jam, baked goods, handmade gifts, a food truck and more. Fun activities for the kids, including free face painting.

For more information or to inquire about
being a vendor: BayCare.org/FarmersMarket



BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

2019 Membership Drive Ends December 31! Thank you for your support this year. 2020 Membership Drive Cards will mail the first week of January. Our costs are again \$35 for the year.

Please enjoy our final Gazette of 2019. It is a celebration of our community, residents, schools and students.



FREE
PHOTOS
WITH
SANTA

PET
PHOTOS
TOO!

33rd Annual

Charity Food Drive
& Santa Visit

Sunday, December 8, 2019 • 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.

The Village Early Learning Center
3741 Canoga Park Dr. in Brandon

Event is FREE.

Please bring a non-perishable food donation.

Bring your camera for a photo with Santa

Updates will be posted on Facebook and in the Bloomingdale Gazette.



Your Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, in partnership with The Village Early Learning Center continues its holiday tradition for children benefitting an area food bank. For more information, call (813) 681-2051 or email: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com

BHA Community Office: 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33596 • Monday - Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
(813) 681-2051 • Email: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com • BloomingdaleHOA.com •  [BloomingdaleHOA](https://www.facebook.com/BloomingdaleHOA)

Distribution of this information does not imply endorsement of this activity or event by Hillsborough County Public Schools.

Farewell, Beth Smedley!
BHA Board member Beth Smedley has left the board after serving our community for more than five years. To name just a few of her contributions, Beth spearheaded the community's garage sale and has been an integral volunteer at all community events. She has lent her considerable creative talents for all marketing and graphics products produced by the BHA and refurbished Santa's throne and sled for the BHA's annual Santa visit. Beth's selfless service will be missed. Thank you, Beth!



Former Board member Beth Smedley and her husband, Brian.

Gazette is the Best AGAIN!
Adding to the resident win column is the Gazette Staff! For the 4th time, the Gazette has earned the Hillsborough County Large-Scale Communications Award. The award was presented at the County



Continued on Next Page →

Neighborhood Conference on Nov. 2 at the Tampa Sheraton. Pictured are reporter Jane Owen, reporter Deidre Morgan, Editor Joy Boisselle and reporter Wendy Knipp. Not pictured are reporter Joe Harless, student reporter Audra Nikolajski and our exceptional columnists. The majority of Bloomingdale Gazette staff are residents in the community – hence, our unofficial motto: “For Residents, By Residents.”

Way to Run, Jane!

Congratulations to Bloomingdale resident and Ace Gazette Reporter Jane Owen! Owen recently completed her first ultramarathon – the Inaugural Marine Corps Marathon 50k on Oct. 27 in Washington D.C. The Gazette staff is proud she is on our team!



Congratulations, George May!

George May, former Bloomingdale HOA president, was awarded the Neighborhood Outstanding Volunteer Leadership Award also on Nov. 2 at the County Neighborhood Conference. George served more than 10 years on the board in various leadership positions and still continues to serve on the board today. His lead by example philosophy earned him this prestigious county recognition.



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.

Monday, December 9, 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, December 10, 6:30 p.m. / BHA Monthly Board Meeting, Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Residents always welcome. Call 813-681-2051 for information.

NO HCSO BACC MEETING THIS MONTH! Deputy Fletcher will see you in January!

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**18 MONTHS SAME AS CASH
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December Community Calendar

Tampa's Wonderland of Lights & Santa's Village / Now through Jan. 5 / Hillsborough County Fairgrounds / <https://thewonderland-oflights.com> // Located just east of Brandon,

this premier holiday light show and winter festival is a spectacular celebration. The Drive Thru is open through Dec. 31 from 6-9 p.m.

Sunday through Thursday and 6-10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. At the end of your journey, you can visit our Village where we have circus attractions, a wolf exhibit, amusement rides, camel rides, and even photos with Santa!



Christmas Lane / Now through Dec. 24, 6-10 p.m. / Florida Strawberry Festival Grounds / www.ChristmasLane.com //

Christmas Lane is a winter wonderland with dazzling displays, trees ranging from 4-40 feet, thousands of lights and more! Meet Santa, Frosty the Snowman, Rudolph, elves and more, enter the KidZone and our Living Nativity. Enjoy nightly shows, rides and food.



Winter Village - Go Walking In A Winter Wonderland / Now through Jan. 5, open daily Monday through Thursday from 4 to 9 p.m., Friday from 4 to 10 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 9 p.m. / Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park, 600 N. Ashley Drive / <http://www.wintervillagetampa.com/> //

The Winter Village features an outdoor ice-skating rink along the Hillsborough River, holiday light shows choreographed to music and other activities.



For the 2nd year, the **Winter Village Express** will make its way from Whiting Station to Ybor City and back on the TECO Line Streetcar. This one-hour excursion features a holiday sing-along, holiday trivia, milk and cookies, and more on Sundays through Dec. 22. Service begins at 3:25 p.m. with a car leaving every hour until 7:25 p.m. Tickets are \$10 per person.



Breakfast With Santa / Dec 14 at 9 – 11 a.m. / Campo Family YMCA, 3414 Culbreath Rd // Members ONLY!!! / We hope you'll join us for our annual Breakfast with Santa! Registration is required! Sign up at the Welcome Center by Dec 10. Breakfast activities include: Pictures with Santa, crafts, games, and so much more!



9th annual Winter Wonder Ride / Dec. 14, check-in by 4 p.m. / Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park, 600 N. Ashley Drive / www.wintervillagetampa.com // Light up your spokes, put on your dancing shoes, and get ready to ride; the Winter Wonder Ride is back! A charity bike ride that funds the purchase of bikes and helmets for at-risk kids. There will be a post-ride celebration at Winter Village featuring headline entertainer Ceelo Green.



Bull Frog Creek // Our December Market has gone to the dogs and will feature a dog costume contest sponsored by Toastee Pups! Food Truck, Live Music, and Beer! Every 3rd Sunday of the Month from noon to 4 p.m. If you are interested in becoming a vendor email kelly@bullfrogcreek.com



Winter Fest 2019 / Dec. 20, 3-6:30 p.m. / The Village Early Learning Center, 3741 Canoga Park Dr. // Winter Fest is a great time to be entertained by all the students of The Village! Join us for fun, food, and festivities!



Riverwalk Lighted Boat Parade / Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m. / Tampa Riverwalk, 600 N. Ashley Drive // This FREE holiday event along the Riverwalk includes a large route with multiple public viewing areas. The official judging station will be located at Sparkman Wharf. Plan to get to the event early! While the parade starts at 6:30 p.m., crowds will find their viewing spots early.



DECEMBER LANDSCAPE TIPS FROM UF/IFAS EXTENSION

- Check and clean irrigation filter.
- Set irrigation frequency to once every 7 to 14 days.
- Replenish mulch.
- Troubleshoot entire irrigation system and clean, adjust or replace malfunctioning components.
- Buy spouse a micro-irrigation starter kit, drought tolerant plants, and a new rain shut-off device as gifts and make sure they are installed.

Living Plants for Christmas That Can Give All Year Long

Paula Staples, UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County
Public Education Program Coordinator

Not sure what to get someone on your list? Giving the gift of a Christmas plant that can live outdoors is a good solution for someone that may not have a specific present request on his or her Christmas list. Once the holidays are over, the plant can grow outside.



The University of Florida has a website for plants that are good holiday gifts that continue to embellish our landscapes all year long. Look at the suggested selections at <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/design/outdoor-living/holiday-gift-plants.html>

If you'd like to add a flowering winter landscape outside your home, include some winter flowering trees and shrubs. Using one or two of these larger flowering plants in your landscape design can anchor or complement the landscape perennials and small shrubs you select to include in your yard. <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/winter-flowering-trees-and-shrubs.html>

Go to <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/hillsborough/?topic=home-landscapes> to find solutions for your yard and learn what other services UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County offers residents.



Christmas cactus is a popular gift plant during the holiday season because of its colorful blooms and easy-care reputation. Plus these plants are widely available at garden centers and supermarkets.



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BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Deputy Clifford Fletcher and CSO Debbie Vijil

"One Team, One Family, One Community"

AREA LAW AND ORDER

Between Nov. 1 through 24, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office conducted 83 traffic stops in Bloomingdale east and west. Those traffic stops resulted in 68 written warnings, five citations and three arrests. There were 15 total crashes and three DUI arrest at various Bloomingdale entrances and within the subdivisions. Also, 14 arrests were made for various crimes in the Bloomingdale area.

Remember to watch out for what is happening in your neighborhoods and if you see something make sure to call Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Non-Emergency number: 813-247-8200.

We at the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office want you to have a safe holiday season.

DRIVE SAFELY

Drive safely isn't just a saying or slogan. Look at the signs you see along the roadway. They mark intersections and roadways where loved ones have died as the result of a crash. These memorial markers are a reminder to drivers and pedestrians alike.



Distraction are everywhere these days and can be difficult to avoid. Drivers and Pedestrian: set aside the smartphones, electronics devices and headphones. Your eyes and ears are your best tools for keeping safe.

Stay alert and watch out for each other. Take time to slow down and look at what others are doing around you. And, if you can't put your phone down while driving you better get ready to pay your citation. Starting January 2020, citations can be issued if you are holding the phone while your vehicle is moving. Up until now mostly warnings have been given to create awareness.

Here are some of the basics:

- Starting January 1, 2020, drivers can be pulled over just for being on their phones while driving. They will face fines of \$30-\$100 plus court costs and three points on your license, which can be eliminated by passing a safe driving class.
- Police must get your permission to check your phone, otherwise they need a warrant. They cannot check your phone records through your mobile provider unless there is a crash where someone is killed or hurt.



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. **NO MEETING IN DECEMBER**, see you next month. 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.

- The law does not apply when your vehicle is stopped.
- The law does not apply when using maps or navigation.
- There are exceptions for using your phone for safety alerts, like traffic and weather, or for using your phone to call.
- You are also excepted from the law if you are using your phone to call police or report an emergency.
- When driving in school and work zones, you cannot be on your phone at all, and must use a hands-free device.

Complete information is available at: www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/107/BillText/er/PDF

Drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists need to know and follow all traffic signs and signals. Learning to anticipate other's actions will help increase everyone's safety. Never assume someone is going to give you the right of way. Making eye contact between people on the road will let you know that you see each other. Decrease speed limits in school zones and in neighborhoods where children are present.

Drivers! Wear your seat belts at all times and do not get behind the wheel if you have been drinking. The results can be devastating to more than just you! Remember, cyclists have all of the same rights and responsibilities as a motor vehicle and must obey the same rules when travelling on the road.

Finally, slow down, stop at all stop signs and above all be a courteous driver.

HOLIDAY SAFETY

December and January are filled with holiday activities including shopping and parties. We want our residents to have a safe and enjoyable holiday season. Following these safety and security tips will help each of you stay safe and secure this season.

WHILE SHOPPING: Be extra cautious and stay aware of your surroundings and your actions. Don't get in a big rush and be careless. Shop in groups when possible. Do not leave your car unlocked. Do not leave packages or other valuables in your car. If you must, lock them in the trunk. Lock up your vehicles at home also.

WHILE TRAVELING: Secure your home before you head out for holiday traveling or shopping. Burglars watch for homes and vehicles that are "easy targets" – garage doors and vehicles left open. Don't put on FACEBOOK that you are out shopping or traveling. This information can get into the wrong hands!

From your local Bloomingdale Station, Have a great holiday season!

Cliff & Debbie

Bloomingdale Square Facelift Nears Completion

By Joe Harless

Construction and expansion work on Bloomingdale Square continue at a furious pace.

No updated information has been released on the opening date for the new Publix on the official Publix website. Sources indicate a December opening, but in the meantime, the existing Publix will remain open. L.A. Fitness is slated to occupy the former Publix spot sometime next year.

Located next to the new Publix is Home Centric. The home décor and gift store opened to great fanfare and is enjoying grand opening festivities through this Sunday.

Perhaps the biggest addition to the Square is the independent storefront next to McDonald's. The standalone structure occupies the plaza's parking lot space best recognized as the spot where fireworks tents appeared in the summer and Christmas trees were sold during the holidays.

Anchored by a First Watch closer to Bloomingdale Avenue and a Chicken Salad Chick on the other end, the structure includes the Banfield Pet Hospital, Pacific Dental Services, a GNC store, and a Jersey Mike's.

As of November, only eight spots in the plaza remain unoccupied, with most of the spots located between the Bealls and Dollar Tree stores in the back corner. Any interested business can visit the Regency Centers website or contact the leasing agent at 813-664-4823.







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Behind the Byline Welcome our New Student Reporter Audra Nikolajski

By Jane Owen

One could describe Audra Nikolajski's involvement with the Gazette as a matter of the heart. Reporting for the paper combines two of her passions—writing and being involved in the community.

Audra's passion for writing led her to the Gazette. One of her teachers at Bloomingdale High School found out about the student reporter position and shared the possibility with Audra because of her love of writing.

"I have wanted to contribute to a local newspaper for a long time and so I was over the moon when I heard about the opportunity."

Her favorite part of working with the paper is meeting people in the community. "My favorite thing about writing for the Gazette is getting to meet all sorts of amazing people. Our community has some incredible individuals and I love getting the chance to meet, talk, and learn from them."

Audra is a senior at Bloomingdale High school where her love of community service is ever present. She is the President of the BETA club, which is a service and leadership club that actively seeks ways to help the school and community.

A life-long Bloomingdale resident, Audra lives with her parents, Andrew and Lori Nikolajski and her cat Annie. Audra was just accepted at the University of South Florida where she intends to go to college and triple major in psychology, education and journalism.

When she is not writing for the paper, Audra enjoys reading and watching movies. Dean Koontz is her current favorite author and Phantom of the Opera and Avatar top her movie list. A self-described movie fanatic, Audra says you will find her in the theater for any new Star Wars, Marvel, Disney or horror movie. However, most often you will find her working on the high school year book for which she has been the editor in chief for the last two years.

Audra says that as the only student reporter, she can contribute a unique perspective to the Gazette. "I can report as an insider for all of the high school-based articles, and for those that are not high school based, I still find that a teenager's perspective can be useful and unique."



Editor's Note: Behind the Byline will introduce our community to the many talented and dedicated people who are the backbone of this award-winning newspaper. All but one of our writers live in Bloomingdale, thus our unofficial motto, "By residents, For residents."

Boardgames: Never be Bored Games

By Audra Nikolajski

When we are very young, we learn how to play boardgames. We begin with Candy Land, move on to Chutes and Ladders, then to Clue and Monopoly. The most dedicated and passionate of us though, turn to games even more advanced and complex like Terraforming Mars and Pandemic.

These are games that happen to be two of the most popular games amongst the Brandon Boardgamers. You can identify a Brandon Boardgamer from his or her sizeable boardgame collection and love for playing the games.

Mike Horn, Brandon Boardgamers founder, started playing when he was 12 years old. He founded the group by placing a note on a bulletin board 26 years ago and the group has been growing and changing ever since.

"We play games and we have fun, that's the whole point," Horn said.

During their meetups, the group plays many different types of games. Some games, called filler games, take 30 or 40 minutes to play, while other games take between 8 to 10 hours. The group enjoys them all, regardless of playing time.

The first person to answer Mike's bulletin board notice, George Van Wallendael, loves to play cooperative games. "I've often found that some of the best lessons that we learn in life are not lessons that are taught with the purpose of being taught, but through various other means. Through boardgames we learn to cooperate," he stated.

Every Wednesday Brandon Boardgamers gather at The Alley to play their favorite games. They have various other meetups, including one at the Bloomingdale Public Library on the fourth Saturday of every month.

They range in age from 20 – 70 and some members drive from as far as Zephyrhills and Holiday, Florida to play with the group. They welcome new members with open arms and a seat at their gaming tables. If anyone is interested in joining, they need only find the Brandon Boardgamers Meetup online, www.meetup.com/Brandon-Boardgamers/.



In Memoriam: Elizabeth "B.J." Stelter

By Jane Owen

B.J. Stelter, the honoree of the Bloomingdale Community Scholarship Fund, passed away on Oct 2, 2019.

Stelter served as Bloomingdale High School principal from 1992-2006. She retired on May 12, 2006. Stelter held a special education degree from the University of South Florida. In 1970, she started her career with Hillsborough County schools as a Special Education Department Head at East Bay High School. In 1978, she transferred to Brandon High School where she worked as an Assistant Principal for 12 years. In 1991, she became the principal at Horace Mann Junior High School. Two years later, on February 17, 1993, Stelter officially assumed her position as principal at Bloomingdale High School. Her first official day as principal was celebrated with a winter pep rally.

Stelter served our Bloomingdale community for 14 years as the second principal of Bloomingdale High School. In 2005, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association created the B.J. Stelter Scholarship to honor her outstanding service and dedication to our community.

The B.J. Stelter Scholarship is awarded yearly to a high school senior based on their community service, extra-curricular activities, academics, an essay and letters of reference. More information about this year's B.J. Stelter Scholarship will be posted online soon.

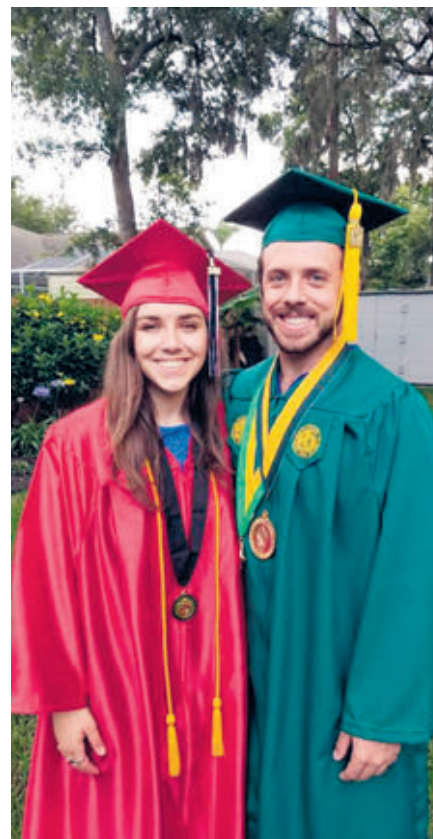
B.J. will long be remembered by the community she loved and served, her friends and family and also by students who receive the community scholarship named in her honor.



Former BSHS Principal B.J. Stelter loved her students and they her.



Stelter was called a "consummate professional" by her staff and peers.



Rachel and Chris Santarlas, 2018 Graduation from Bloomingdale and The University of South Florida respectively. Chris Santarlas received the B.J. Stelter Community Scholarship in 2015. Recently, he was accepted to USF's Medical School. Principal Stelter would be proud!

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MAINTAIN 21-POINT CLEAN & TUNE <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">Backed By StayRun GUARANTEE</div> <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> \$29⁹⁵ <small>\$80 Value</small> </div> </div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE Not available for same-day or weekend service. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Price is per unit. System must be in working condition. See dealer for details.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.7em;">Blmngdl0419 IERNA's 813-324-1304</p>	REPAIR SAVE ON NEXT REPAIR <div style="font-size: 2em;">\$25 OFF</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE Cannot be combined with any other offer. Cannot be applied to Clean & Tune Service or Drain Service. See dealer for details.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.7em;">Blmngdl0419 IERNA's 813-324-1304</p>	REPLACE FREE ULTRA-VIOLET LIGHT <div style="font-size: 2em;">SAVE \$600</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">W/ PURCHASE OF NEW A/C MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE Cannot be combined with any other offer. Offer valid when purchasing a complete 15+ SEER Bryant comfort system. Cannot be applied to past purchases or estimates. See dealer for details.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.7em;">Blmngdl0419 IERNA's 813-324-1304</p>
PLUMBING MAINTAIN PLUMBING INSPECTION <div style="font-size: 0.8em;">INCLUDES: - Inspection of Safety Features - Dye Testing of All Toilets - Inspection of All Exposed Piping - Inspection of All Sink Drains - Inspection of Emergency Shut-Off Valves & More</div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 0.8em;">Backed By StayRun GUARANTEE</div> <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> \$69 </div> </div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE Not available for same-day or weekend service. Not a repair service. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Not available on past services. See dealer for details.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.7em;">Blmngdl0419 IERNA's 813-324-1304</p>	PLUMBING REPAIR SAVE ON NEXT REPAIR <div style="font-size: 2em;">\$40 OFF</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE DISCLAIMER - Cannot be combined with any other offer. Based on 20% discount of total repair bill, up to \$40 maximum. Does not apply to service call fee, past work or estimates. See dealer for details.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.7em;">Blmngdl0419 IERNA's 813-324-1304</p>	PLUMBING REPLACE NEW H.E. WATER HEATER <div style="font-size: 2em;">SAVE up to \$250</div> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE Cannot be combined with any other offer. Total savings varies on equipment; \$150 savings on standard electric/gas water-heater, \$250 savings on GE Hybrid Heat-Pump water-heater. Cannot be applied to past purchases or estimates. See dealer for details.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 0.7em;">Blmngdl0419 IERNA's 813-324-1304</p>

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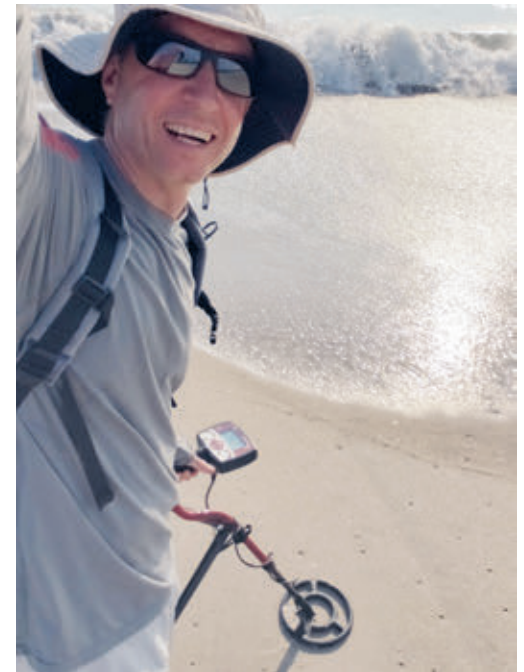
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Bloomington Through Your Lens!

Bloomington Photographers! The Gazette wants your photos! We want your “fur or fur-less” babies, wildlife, and just about anything that highlights our people, pets, places and things. Some photos will grace the cover; others will be highlighted in the issue! Send high resolution photos to inbloomingtonnews@gmail.com.

This column was introduced this year! Here are just a few photos from our super-talented residents!



Jim Siedlack and his family are 15-year Bloomington residents who love to hunt for any bounty left by Spanish shipwrecks.



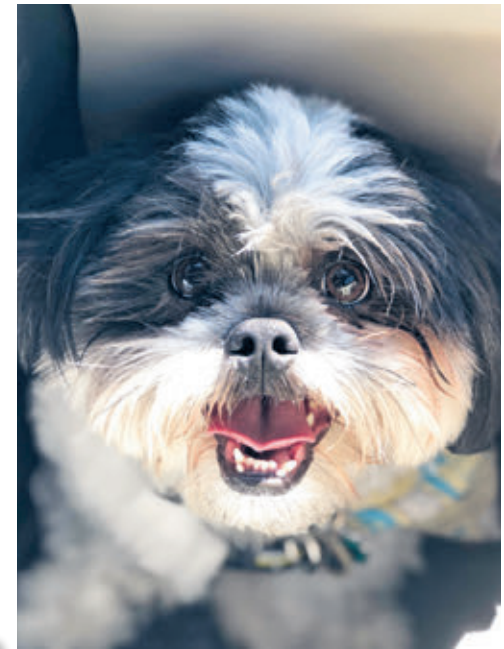
Simba Moran



Buffalo Singer



Milo



Mookie dePolo



Kiki Monroe



Amy Homolka



Amy Homolka



Amy Homolka



ale residents. One early morning, they journeyed to the treasure coast near Melbourne, FL
wrecks from the 1700's. No tangible treasure found, but still treasure none the less.

Tom and Miriam Leech



Piper & Kiki Monroe



Felix Kulesa



Ginny Langham



Piper Monroe



Penny Campbell



Amy Homolka



Amy Homolka



Stephanie Langham



By Deidre Morgan; Photos by Deidre Morgan (unless otherwise noted)

We Don't Rebuild - We Reload - Bull Pride

One of the first things Jake Coulson said when taking over as Bloomingdale High School's Head Football Coach was, "the program is going in the right direction, we just want to keep the train moving." And keep it moving he did!

Finishing with an overall record of 9 - 3 and a district record of 2 - 1. The team had another successful season. The Bulls pulled off an upset over Plant City on Homecoming night with a 37-34 OT win. The Bulls finished the regular season with a 25 - 21 victory over East Bay and gained a spot in the 2019 FHSAA Football State Championship, Class 7A Play-Offs.

The 1st round of play-offs pitted Bloomingdale against Winter Haven. The Bulls came out on top 14 - 7 and moved on to the 2nd round. Next up was cross town rival, the Armwood Hawks. The Bulls put up a good game but lost 20 - 9.

The Bulls have no reason to hang their heads - they had a great season with many accomplishments.

Nine players have been named to the All-Conference - Federal Division.

First Team Honors: Wide Receiver - Gabriel Akpewero, Defensive Back - Phillip Riley, and Defensive Lineman - Quinton McCoy.

Second Team Honors: Center - Conner Pouchie, Wide Receiver - Maurice Frost, Linebacker - Jamarion Neal, Defensive Back - Jayden Williams, Running Back - Dominic Gonnella and Defensive Lineman - Jack Sykes.



Coach Jake Coulson gives a victory speech to the team after a Homecoming overtime win over Plant City.

Next up for the team is the Awards Banquet and NLI Signing Day, where several players have already committed to further their academic and athletic journeys.

Congratulations to Principal Sue Burkett, Coach Coulson and his staff, the players, cheerleaders and most importantly, the families and community for all their support.

"Football is football and talent is talent. But the mindset of your team makes the difference." Robert Griffin III

Homecoming



The 2019 Homecoming Queen Gabriella Martinez and King Kendale Robertson.



Senior Gina Baxter waves to the crowd before taking the field at half time as a member of the Homecoming court.

Congratulations, 2019 Hall of Fame Inductees

This year's Hall of Fame Inductees from left to right: Sue Peet, Dave Tennian, Tony Thomas, Jr. and Erica Woodard-Broussard. Not pictured is Chris Akers.

Sue Peet - Former Bloomingdale Girls Soccer Coach. Coach Peet is the winningest coach in Bloomingdale history including a state title in 2001, state runner up 2006, Regional champions 2000, 2001, 2006 and District champions in 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2008.

Dave Tennian - Bloomingdale's former Boys Soccer Coach. In 1993 Coach Tennian led the Boys Soccer team to the first State Championship in the school's history. Tennian was named the Tampa Tribune High School Soccer Coach of the Year in 1993 and 1998.

Tony Thomas, Jr. - Thomas played Baseball and Football at Bloomingdale and went on to play baseball at FSU. In 2007, he was named the Collegiate Baseball Play of the Year. Tony was drafted by the Cubs in the third round in 2007 and has continued to play professional baseball.

Erica Woodard-Broussard - Erica played Girls Basketball and is the second leader scorer in school history with 1,232 career points. She also holds the school record for most rebounds in a game (26) and in a season (306).

Chris Akers - Akers played Boys Basketball and holds the record for most points in one season, most points in one game, most field goals made in a season, number two all-time in points and number 3 all-time in most field goals made in a career.



By Deidre Morgan; Photos by Deidre Morgan (unless otherwise noted)

Cimino Cougar Cool Cats Take the Field on Senior Night

Cimino Cougar Cool Cats stormed the field and ran with the Bulls on Oct. 25! The kids ran out onto the 50 yard line ahead of the team, it was a very exciting activity for the kids!



Senior Night October 25th

Senior Night was a bitter sweet time as seniors reflected on their time as high school athletes, band members and cheerleaders. The seniors were announced before the game and escorted onto the field by their friends and family.



Senior Cheerleader Morgan Robertson had the support of sister 'Tori and her parents Dawn and Scott Robertson.



Senior Quinton McCoy was escorted by his parents, Fred and Rena McCoy.

Junior Cheer Camp and Middle School Band Night

On October 4, the Junior Bulls Cheer Camp participants put their new skills to the test. Sitting with the Bulls Junior Varsity cheerleaders, the group enjoyed cheering for the football team.



Middle School Band night was a big thrill for Burns Middle School and Dowdell Middle Magnet School as they took the field with the Rajun' Bull Band.



Junior's Joe Skinner and Kylee Sutherland-Maxwell are all smiles after a successful year of football and cheer.



Pep Rally Comes to Alafia Nov. 1

The Rajun Bull Drumline and Lady Bull Cheerleaders energize Alafia Elementary Students and teachers at a morning pep rally on Nov. 1!

Photo by Matt Kurto



Photo by Lois Hayes



Drumline and Chorus Welcome Santa to Bass Pro Shop Nov. 16

Photos by Cheryl Kehrmeier



The Christmas Tree at Rockefeller Center: Behind the Scenes By Gwen Graverson

This year marks the 87th anniversary of the Christmas Tree at Rockefeller Center. The tradition started during the Great Depression while the center was under construction.

The Tree, along with the holiday decorations, stands as a holiday beacon for New Yorkers and visitors alike. In December 2001, people from around the world came after 9/11 to see the Tree decorated in a patriotic red, white and blue. That year, the Tree was 81 feet tall and was from Wayne, NJ.

Today, more than half a million people pass by the Tree every day, making Rockefeller Center the epicenter of New York City's holiday celebrations.

The trees over the years have been Balsam Fir, White Spruce, Bruce Fir, with the Norway Spruce being the most popular. The first tree was 33 feet tall, and the tallest on record was 100 feet tall from Killingworth, CT, displayed for the 1999 Holiday season.

This year's Tree is a 77 feet tall Norway Spruce from the Village of Florida (Orange County), NY. The tri-state area has been the main hub for the trees. At least one tree came from Ohio.

This year's tree is a gift from Carol Schultz, who planted the tree in 1959. "I always said, 'You're going to be up in Rockefeller Center someday' and...when I see the tree lit up, I'm probably going to cry."

The tree was transported by a flatbed truck and erected at Rockefeller Center Nov 9; the lighting ceremony was on Dec 4. It requires at least 45,000 multi-colored LED lights and 5 miles of wire to illuminate the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree. The Christmas tree lights are powered by 300 solar panels that are installed on the roof of One Rockefeller Center.

Back in 2004, a 550-pound Swarovski star first adorned the top of the tree. It featured twenty-five thousand crystals and one million facets and was nine-and-a-half feet in diameter. The following year, the addition of LED lights made the star look as if it were radiating light from its core to its tips. That same year, the tree selection was a Norway spruce, at 71 feet tall, from Suffern (Rockland County), NY, my childhood hometown.

What happens to the tree after the Holiday season is over...

For the thirteenth consecutive year, the 2019 Christmas Tree will be donated to Habitat for Humanity. Once the holidays have passed and crowds have dispersed, the tree comes down and is milled, treated and made into lumber that is used for home building. Each year, the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree continues to be a symbol of hope, and was an inspiration the children's book, "The Carpenter's Gift," written by David Rubel and illustrated by Jim LaMarche in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity.

Editor's Note: Bloomingdale resident Gwen Graverson writes our Blooming in Bloomingdale column and other articles of interest. Gwen and her husband Scott are military retirees who enjoy giving back to their community. We enjoy having residents sharing their expertise and passions with us in the Gazette!



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Celebrating Our Community

The Rajun Bull Band and Crimson Guard Reign Supreme Brief and Photos by Jane Owen

Florida Band Association Marching Band Music Performance Assessments were Saturday, Nov. 2 at Bloomingdale High School. Nearly 30 High School marching bands performed their half-time shows for spectators and a panel of judges. The Rajun Bull Band continued its history of excellence with Superior rankings.



Seniors on the field at MPAs received special recognition.



The Bloomingdale Bulls Football including coaches turned the tables on the Rajun Bull Band. The team assembled in the stands to support the band during their day of competition!

Celebrating Our Community

Great American Teach-In

By Audra Nikolajski, Student Reporter

Once a year in Hillsborough County, schools hold The Great American Teach-In. This event is an opportunity for guest speakers to visit elementary, middle, and high school classrooms to share information about their careers with students. It exposes students to jobs they might not have considered before.

This year's event was Nov. 21. Guest speakers suited up and went to schools all over the county. They ranged in professions from military officials to doctors to programmers and more. Students are encouraged to ask questions as establishing a dialogue between the speaker and students often yields the best results.

At Bloomingdale Senior High School, Mrs. William's English class was visited by Ashley Gonzalez and Manuel Gonzalez. Manuel is both a pro wrestler known as The Juggernaut and a professional chef.

He fielded all sorts of questions from the students about his profession, but the most important advice he gave was about life, "Never let society tell you that you are less than who you are," Gonzalez said. The class was visibly affected by his words.

Perhaps that's the best part of the Great American Teach-In – speakers share their careers, but students receive much more than that. Even just one student – speaker connection makes the program worth it.



Manuel Gonzalez, pro wrestler and chef, talks to BSHS students during the Great American Teach-In.

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Art Teachers Join Forces To Benefit Students

By Wendy Knipp; Photos by Diana Speedy & Pamela Reeves

Art teachers Diana Speedy and Pamela Reeves from Bloomingdale High School and Burns Middle School respectively, share a close friendship and mutual respect. In addition, they love their students and want to nurture and promote their students' artistic talents.

Speedy said, "Since Pam teaches at Burns, a feeder school to Bloomingdale, we decided to collaborate together to help promote the arts at our schools and in the community." They've done this by bringing the students together for activities such as art contests and enrichment programs.

Most recently, the teachers collaborated to hold the 2nd Annual Art Show at Bloomingdale's Fall Fest on Oct. 26. Students submitted their artwork under different categories and respected former Art teacher Karen Marcos (www.karenmarcos.com) judged the show and picked the winners.

The teachers also created after-school enrichment programs that meet once a month to teach new artistic skills. Speedy visits Burns' art students monthly to work with them and occasionally high school students will join her to help teach the middle school students. Speedy enjoys getting to know the middle school artists so she can build a rapport with them and encourage them to get involved with the high school art program.

Collaborative Art Journals is another way that the schools are working together. Select students from each school create a personalized journal with suggested art-related topics listed on each page. Students then exchange the journals and other students create works of art in response to each page's suggested topic. Speedy stated, "This creates a dialogue between students, which encourages creativity & collaboration."

Speedy and Reeves are proud to cultivate the talent of their students. "I'm proud of my students when I see them working hard, creating meaningful work, earning 5's on their AP exam, winning contests and seeing them become successful creative individuals," explained Speedy.

Our community is very lucky to have such wonderful teachers.



Burns Art Contest Winners were First Place (pictured): Gianna Untied Leonard, followed by Second Place: Sofia Lopez, Third Place: Kassie DuPont and Honorable Mention: JadyN Beverly.



Bloomingdale High School Art Contest Winners were: 1st place (pictured) - Las Penas by Sophia White, pictured, 2nd place - Colorful Octopus by Madison Ellis, 3rd place - My Friend's Dog by Isabel Baudrit, Honorable Mention - Delicious Apple by Serenity Shephard, and Participation Award - The Gnarly Green Tree by Alyssa Sideratos

Cimino Makes Veterans Day Meaningful For Students

Article and Photos by Jane Owen

Cimino Elementary School's Veterans Day ceremony on Nov. 8, provided a special surprise for one Cimino student and a teaching moment for the rest. Before the event, first grader Sophia Lee wrote a speech about her dad, Col. Stephen Lee, currently serving in Iraq.

Surrounded by her mom and younger sister Alexandra, she read her speech to the school and other veteran guests. Without her knowing, Cimino staff via Facetime brought her dad up on the screen behind her.

She proudly told everyone about her dad's service then received a tremendous surprise as she was guided to turn around by her principal, Joanne Griffiths. Sophia could not contain her emotion when she saw him smiling and talking to her.

Her mom, Elizabeth Lee said it was beautiful for Sophia to give her Veterans Day speech about her dad in front of her dad. The entire school got a chance to hear from Col. Lee and to witness communication from a deployed soldier to his family at home.

Elizabeth said the Cimino ceremony was significant for the students because it helps them with a basic understanding of and respect for what Veterans put on the line for our country. "Children understand the feeling of safety, and knowing that there are people keeping our country safe is a very comforting notion to them."

The Veterans Day ceremony welcomed and honored Cimino family veterans. Elizabeth said, "We are so proud to represent my husband in his absence. He would be the first to tell you that the reason he and so many others are deployed in support of the war on terror, is so that those of us back home can celebrate and enjoy the freedoms of America that they're defending."



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December School News: A Look at What's Happening

Compiled by Deidre Morgan

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

December 23, 2019 – January 3, 2020 – Winter Break – No School
January 7, 2020 – Students Return to School



ALAFIA ALLIGATOR ALLEY

School Website: alafia.mysdhc.org

Facebook Page: Alafia Elementary PTA

Dec.17 – Bella's Pizza Family Night, 5 p.m.to close, Eat in or take out, Please #Alafia so that the school will get 10% of all sales.

January 7, 2020 – Kona Ice @ Hart parking lot, 1:50pm

Alafia PTA Information

Please sign up for updates and information at: alafiapta.membershiptoolkit.com
Also download the mobile app: membership toolkit

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! School Spirit items can be purchased online <https://alafiapta.membershiptoolkit.com/schoolstore> Items purchased will be sent to your students classroom.

Media Center

Our Media Center is ALWAYS looking for Volunteers to come in and help, sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054ca5ae2fa5fb6-oct>



CIMINO COUGAR CENTRAL

School Website: cimino.mysdhc.org

Facebook Page: Cimino Elementary Media Center and Cimino PTA

Dec.7 – A/R Workshop Cimino Spirit Night

Dec.9 – Three Bulls Spirit Night, 4-10 p.m., 15% of your receipt donated back to Cimino PTA

Dec.10-13 – Santa Shop, Multi-Purpose Room

Dec.17 – Cougar Cool Cats Awards, CARING, 8-9 a.m.

Dec.17 – Chick-Fil-A Spirit Night, 4-10 p.m.

Dec.20 – All Pro Dads, Wear Orange for Caring, 6:30-7:30 a.m.

Spirit Wear

Wear your Spirit Shirt every Friday!

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

School Website: burns.mysdhc.org

Facebook Page: Burns Middle School PTSA

Follow us @BurnsPTSA

Dec.7 – Poinsettia Delivery, 8-10 a.m. at the Bus Ramp

Dec.11 – SAC Meeting, 8:15am, Media Center

Dec.14 – Dads Group, 11 a.m.- 2 p.m., Metropolitan Ministries

Dec.16-20 – Semester Exams



BLOOMINGDALE HIGH BULL BUSINESS

School Website: bloomingdale.mysdhc.org

Facebook Page: Bloomingdale Senior High School

Follow us @BloomingdaleSHS

Dec.7 – JV Boys Basketball @ Plant City, 9 a.m.

Dec.7 – JV Girls Basketball @ Durant, 9 a.m.

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



Dec.9-13 – Winter EOC (End of Course) Exams, Algebra 1, Geo, US History & Bio

Dec.9 – Winter Chorus Concert, 7 p.m.

Dec.10 – JV Wrestling @ Brandon, 5:30 p.m.

Dec.10 – Boys & Girls Basketball vs. East Bay, 6:30 p.m.

Dec.10 – Winter Band Concert, 7 p.m.

Dec.11 – ESE Holiday Bazaar, 8:30 a.m.

Dec.11 – Brooker Winter Concert, 6 p.m.

Dec.11 – Boys & Girls Basketball @ Brandon, 6:30 p.m.

Dec.13 – Reveille at Flagpole, 8:15 a.m.

Dec.13 – Boys & Girls Basketball v TBT, 6:30 p.m.

Dec.14 – Robotics Competition, 7:30 a.m., Seven Rivers Christian School

Dec.14 – eSports Tournament, 7:30 a.m., Auditorium

Dec.14 – JV Boys Basketball @ Riverview, 9 a.m.

Dec.14 – JV Girls Basketball vs Armwood, 9 a.m.

Dec.16 – Football Banquet, 6 p.m., Cafeteria

Dec.17 – Semester Exams Periods 1 & 2

Dec.18 – Semester Exams Periods 3 & 4

Dec.18 – Ring Ceremony, 6:30pm - Cafeteria

Dec.19 – Semester Exams Periods 5 & 7

Dec.20 – Semester Exams Periods 6 & 8

Make a Difference with the School Student Services Department

The Student Services Department is starting a clothing and school supply resource closet and we need your help! If you have new or gently used clothing appropriate for high school students that you no longer need or want, consider donating to us to help students in need. As you shop for school supplies, consider donating them to us to give to students who need them. Together, we will make a difference! For information, contact Flossie Parsley, School Social Worker, at 744-8018, Ext 261.

2020 Graduation Dates Announced – Florida State Fairgrounds

Bloomingdale High School: May 22, 2020 at 8 p.m.

Durant High School: May 23, 2020 at 4 p.m.

Newsome High School: May 26, 2020 at 9 a.m.

Riverview High School: May 26, 2020 at 4 p.m.

Strawberry Crest High School: May 28, 2020 at 8 p.m.



ATTENTION BSHS SENIOR PARENTS

The Bloomingdale Lacrosse team has started its annual Graduation Yard Sign fundraiser.

You may have seen them in your neighborhood the past two graduation seasons. We are looking to increase those views! Please take advantage of our early bird purchase price. Help us spread the word even if you do not have a 2020 graduate! Form and payment directions can be found using this link: <https://forms.gle/sBQ5wHrRqGZUH99>

Signs are scheduled to start production at the beginning of April and delivered at the beginning of May. Please contact Coach Borowski@gmail.com for any questions, comments, or concerns. **Go Bulls!**

2020 BULLS GRADUATION YARD SIGNS

Congratulate a senior you know by purchasing a yard sign to be displayed in their front yard.



Signs will be delivered early May 2020.
If you have any questions, please email CoachBorowski@gmail.com.

Bloomingdale 5k to be Held January 18



The 3rd annual Running of the Bulls 5k will be held on Saturday, Jan. 18. The 5k starts at 8 a.m. at Bloomingdale High School.



Runners and walkers are welcome to participate. The race supports Bloomingdale High School students and all proceeds go directly to the Bloomingdale Band and Bloomingdale athletic teams.

The 5k is chip-timed by Fitniche Events. Participants receive a dri-fit shirt and 5k finishers earn a medal.

Registration is \$30. Register online at: <https://fitniche.com/event/running-of-the-bulls-5k/>

Find updates about the 5k on the Running of the Bulls 5k Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bloomingdalebulls5k/>



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