



THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

VOLUME XL 🌿 ISSUE 6 🌿 JUNE 2020 🌿 www.BloomingtondaleHOA.com

Like the Hawaiians, we have learned that Ohana is everything! Take nothing for granted. Chalk artist is 16-year-old Summer Hogenmiller, see p. 7.



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Newsletter Category

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THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

Bloomington Homeowners Association, Inc.

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

Email: Bloomington.Homeowners@gmail.com

Website: www.BloomingtonHOA.com

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

President: *Suzy Watts*

Vice President: *Sean Donahue*

Treasurer: *Grace Lewis*

Directors at Large:

Bobbi Ferraro

Billy Hightower

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 Wednesday of each month.



ANDREA DALY

Tampa Bay
Times

Community Publications Manager

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BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

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The Association Needs You!

Do you care about our Bloomingdale community and want to take an active role in its future? Then, the Bloomingdale Association wants you to become part of "Team Bloomingdale." The Board consists of 12 directors, and there are currently six director and three alternate director positions available. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office at 6:30 p.m.

Board members serve the community in a variety of ways, which include working on committees that oversee the BHA's programs and services. Some committees require more effort than others, but all board members find ways to contribute according to their talents and desires. Committees include: Santa Visit, Community Clean-up, Fall Festival, Scholarship, Neighborhood Standards and more.

Not sure you have the time? The BHA encourages all interested residents to attend a few board meetings to see the Association at work, and to determine if joining the board is a good fit. Remember, current board members are residents like you who have the betterment of the community as their number one goal.

Membership 2020 Update

The Association appreciates your continued support. Make your \$35 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.

Our Bloomingdale Gazette continues publication although at a decreased page count. Publication is now on the first Wednesday of the month. Contact the Tampa Bay Times for distribution issues. Or, email inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com if you did not receive your paper.

We continue to spread positive news in and around our community. We will focus on our graduates for one more month before turning to more balanced news coverage. Our Gazette hopes to represent the best of our community. Have a story about or picture of some of our shining stars? Send to inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com.

MONTHLY EVENTS

BHA Monthly Board Meeting / June 9, 6:30 p.m. / Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road / Tuesday, June 9 @ 6:30 p.m.

Bloomingdale Area Community Council / HCSO Security and Safety meeting, ~~Cancelled Until Further Notice~~

Garage Sale ~~Postponed to Sept. 5~~

NEW! Fall Community Clean-Up / October 3

Santa / December 6

THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AREA CONNECTION

TOM LEECH, BSD PRESIDENT

Virtual Meetings Continue in June

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, BSD meetings are online. Regular monthly meetings are held the second Monday of the month and all Bloomingdale residents are invited to attend the next meeting of the BSD on Monday, June 8 at 6:30 p.m. You can access the regular monthly meeting via GoToMeeting at this address: <https://www.gotomeet.me/MiriamLeech/regular-board-meeting-of-the-bloomingdale-special->. If you would like to speak at the meeting, please email the office manager at bstd@verizon.net.

Members of the public are allotted 3 minutes to make comment or ask questions per Hillsborough County policy.

Hope you can join us!

For more information on the Bloomingdale Special District visit <https://mydistrictwebsite.com/> and search Bloomingdale Special.

FY21 Budget Hearing

Over the last couple of months, we all have been challenged due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The Board met in April and May via teleconference so that we could continue our budget process and conduct other District business.

This month, we will hold the annual Budget Hearing where the Board will review and adopt the budget for next fiscal year. Details are below.

The Public Hearing for Bloomingdale Special District FY21 Budget is also Monday, June 8 at 6:15 - 6:30 p.m. You can access the budget hearing via GoToMeeting at this address: <https://www.gotomeet.me/MiriamLeech/public-hearing-for-bloomingdale-special-district-f>. All residents are welcome to dial into the video conference, listen and ask questions prior to the budget adoption.

New Trustee

I want to welcome Kristine Schroeder as the newest member of the District's Board of Trustees. Kristine is a longtime resident of Bloomingdale and also serves as the President of the Somerset Homeowner's Association. Welcome, Kristine!

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
Russell Jones, Trustee
Randy Kehrmeyer, Trustee
Claire Letkiewicz, Trustee
Kristine Schroeder, Trustee



Bell Shoals Road Project Well Underway

By Joe Harless

Work on Bell Shoals Road continues, with alterations becoming more noticeable. The project, classified as CIT 69112000 under the County's Capital Improvements Projects, widens the 3.1-mile corridor, which runs from Boyette Road to just north of Bloomingdale Avenue, from the current two-lane undivided rural road into a four-lane divided urban facility. A wider road was needed due to the population growth the area as experienced in the last 20 years.

So far, the traffic pattern at the bridge just before Boyette Road has been altered to accommodate the road work currently being performed. Stumps of several trees that had been cut down to make room for the road widening and utilities have also been removed, and heavy machinery has become a standard sight when driving down the road.

Aside from the road widening, the traffic signal at Starwood Avenue and Bell Shoals Road is now fully functional. Traffic signals at Glenhaven Drive, Rosemead Lane, and Bloomingdale Avenue will also be upgraded.

The neighborhood signs in front of Bloomingdale East were briefly taken down but have since been replaced. Eventually, new entryway signs spearheaded by the Bloomingdale Special District will replace all community entrance signs.

Sidewalks alongside Bell Shoals remain open but machinery, equipment and construction activities will limit usage in certain sections. Upon completion, the Bell Shoals Road corridor will also feature a bicycle lane and new sidewalks in both directions, not to mention an improved drainage system for heavy rains.

According to Hillsborough County, the project will cost nearly \$70 million and will be completed in late 2022. Representatives stated Bell Shoals will never entirely close during road work.

Project information can be found online at HCFLGov.net/CountyProjects. Direct questions to Citizen Engagement at 813-272-5275.



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Natures Way Safety Plan Moves Forward

By Joe Harless

Despite COVID 19 concerns, county representatives have confirmed plans to move forward with work on Natures Way.

“The project will still go on as planned, as far as I know,” Robert Tramel, Hillsborough County Public Works, said in an e-mail.

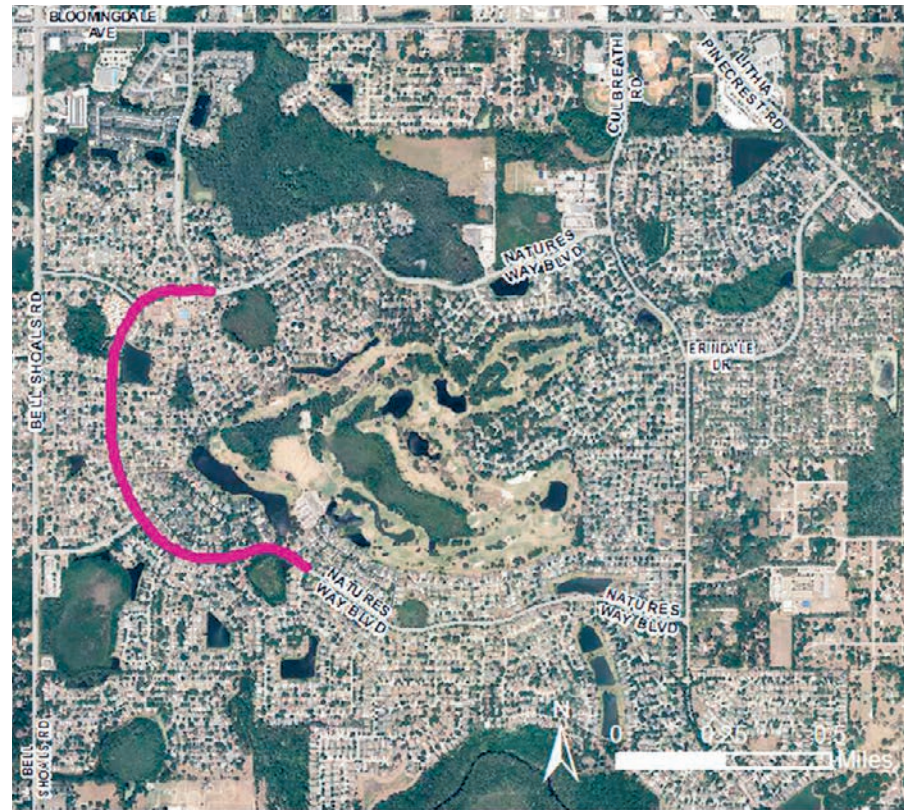
While still in the design phase as of late March 2020, the Natures Way Boulevard - Multi-modal Safety Enhancements or County Project 69665000, involves converting a 1.24-mile segment of Natures Way, specifically the four-lane stretch that includes the access points at Springdale Drive, Greenhollow Lane, and Glenhaven Drive.

The existing four lanes on Natures Way will eventually be converted into two lanes and a dedicated turn lane. Bicycle lanes will be added with pavement markings and signs on collector roads.

Objectives for the project include increasing traffic safety for the numerous pedestrians and bicyclists that travel on the community roadway while improving road access. Project estimates for the changes run to approximately \$1.2 million.

The Natures Way project coincides with the heavy road work being performed on Bell Shoals Boulevard and the red-light traffic cameras used at the intersection of Bell Shoals Boulevard and Bloomingdale Avenue, all three projects reflecting the ongoing efforts to make vehicle and pedestrian traffic safer in the general Bloomingdale/Valrico area.

Plan estimates for the Natures Way project had originally listed the construction duration to start in early 2020 and conclude sometime in early 2021. However, dates have changed as County officials work to find the best ways to keep the public safe due to the COVID 19 virus. For information, contact 813-635-5400 or visit Hillsborough County's At Your Service.



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HC Media Release

COUNTY NEWS



Hillsborough County Florida

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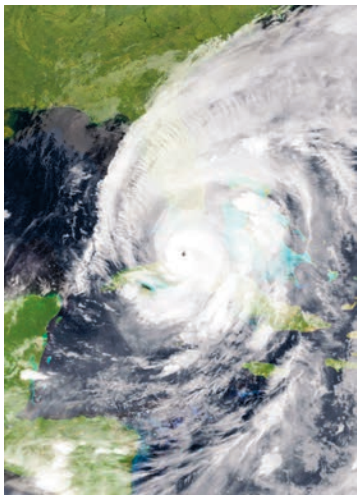
During the 2020 Florida Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday Ongoing – June 4, stock up on qualifying disaster preparedness supplies exempt from tax. For information and a list of qualifying items, visit floridarevenue.com/disasterprep. #DisasterPrep2020

It's the perfect time to start or beef up your family's disaster kit in time for hurricane season, which begins June 1 and lasts through Nov. 30. Supplies such as flashlights and tarps, as well as expensive items like portable generators are included. In the wake of recent hurricanes Michael, Irma, and Matthew, state leaders have changed their definition of preparedness. They say people should plan to stock up on essentials and build a disaster supply kit to last at least seven days. **Don't procrastinate!**



Busy Hurricane Season Predicted For 2020; Are You Ready?

NOAA Media Release



An above-normal 2020 Atlantic hurricane season is expected, according to forecasters with NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, a division of the National Weather Service. The outlook predicts a 60% chance of an above-normal season, a 30% chance of a near-normal season and only a 10% chance of a below-normal season. The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is forecasting a likely range of 13 to 19 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 6 to 10 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including 3 to 6 major hurricanes (category 3, 4 or 5; with winds of 111 mph or higher). NOAA provides these ranges with a 70% confidence. An average hurricane season produces 12 named storms, of which 6 become hurricanes, including 3 major hurricanes.

As with every hurricane season, the need to be prepared is critically important this year.

“Social distancing and other CDC guidance to keep you safe from COVID-19 may impact the disaster preparedness plan you had in place, including what is in your go-kit, evacuation routes, shelters and more. With tornado season at its peak, hurricane season around

the corner, and flooding, earthquakes and wildfires a risk year-round, it is time to revise and adjust your emergency plan now,” said Carlos Castillo, acting deputy administrator for resilience at FEMA.

“Natural disasters won't wait, so I encourage you to keep COVID-19 in mind when revising or making your plan for you and your loved ones, and don't forget your pets. An easy way to start is to download the FEMA app at www.fema.gov/mobile-app.”

NOAA's outlook is for overall seasonal activity and is not a landfall forecast. The Climate Prediction Center will update the 2020 Atlantic seasonal outlook in August prior to the historical peak of the season.

Hurricane preparedness is critically important for the 2020 hurricane season, just as it is every year. Keep in mind, you may need to adjust any preparedness actions based on the latest health and safety guidelines from the CDC and your local officials. Visit the National Hurricane Center's website at hurricanes.gov throughout the season to stay current on any watches and warnings.

9 Ways to Prepare for Hurricane Season

- ✓ Have a plan in place.
- ✓ Register now for HCFL Alerts.
- ✓ Know your evacuation zone.
- ✓ Pack an evacuation kit.
- ✓ Prepare your pets.
- ✓ Register for Special Needs Disaster Assistance.
- ✓ Get your property storm-ready.
- ✓ Help your business weather the storm.
- ✓ Stay informed with HCFLGov.net.

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For assistance registering, call 813-272-6602. For post-disaster assistance, call Emergency Management at 813-272-6600.



Sidewalk Artistry Revisited

Talented artist Summer Hogenmiller provided the Gazette with some of her sidewalk art for the June issue. Her goal according to Mom, Toni Ebersole is to “bring happiness to our neighbors during this challenging time!”

Summer and her family joined the Bloomingdale community last July from Buffalo, NY. Since then, Summer has completed her Sophomore year as a Bloomingdale Bull where she is active in the Rajun Bull Band and is a member of the Lady Bulls Basketball Team.



Courtesy: Photos

Art from the Heart Contest Sponsored by Merit, Inc.

Website: <http://meritcares.org>

Last month, Bloomingdale residents were treated to several sidewalk artists' work in the Gazette. This month, we are excited to announce that Merit, Inc, the community's property manager is sponsoring a sidewalk art contest called "Art from the Heart."



Many people are looking for ways to keep children busy and more people are walking their neighborhoods than ever before. So, let's dress up that concrete with a contest!

Here's how it works:

- Merit will buy chalk and drop it off at your house, if requested. (E-mail admin@meritfl.com if you need chalk)
- Your kids create chalk artwork on sidewalks and/or driveways.
- You send us photos of your children creating their masterpiece and the final piece.
- We will choose winners from different age groups in each community on the last day of each month.
- Winners will receive a surprise.
- Photos will be posted to this website for others to see (names and ages will be kept private).

To enter, e-mail the photos, property address and children's names and ages to Admin@meritfl.com. The contest runs through the end of July.

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CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2020

For the Bloomingdale Gazette, this is the second month of our extended graduation coverage. We want to ensure that the Class of 2020 have positive reminders of this milestone and not just COVID 19 memories. It is one small way we can contribute.

For June, we focus on Bloomingdale High School's Seniors, the Senior Sendoff and Staff Appreciation. The Bloomingdale Gazette will devote one last issue in July to the Class of 2020. Send your pictures of any graduation event to inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com.

Courtesy Graduate Photos



James Kowasic / BSHS



Taylor Townley (McKenzie) / BSHS / Attending Florida Atlantic University (FAU) to major in Health Sciences.



Many graduates traveled in style for their diplomas.



Bloomingdale's Fire Station 7 helped s...



Dominic DiPiazza / Foundation Christian Academy / Began EMT Class on May 18 / Attending University of Tampa in the Fall to study Criminology



Morgan Guarisco / BSHS / Honor Court, SGA Vice President, Swim Team Captain / Attending UCF to major in Event Management



Event planners created the perfect photo op for the graduating Bulls.



"I'm like 2020% done!"

"My dear terrified graduates, you are about to enter the most uncertain and thrilling period of your lives." — Lin-Manuel Miranda

At senior send-off, Principal Sue Burkett said, "May 22 was a 'no-brainer' for our seniors. There was no way they were sitting home on graduation night thinking of what should've been! Through the rain, it was the best seeing their faces and how grateful they were we didn't let the day go by."

This quarter took away a lot from all of us, but it also gave us a lot of mutual appreciation, compassion and gratitude for our kids and our staff! Bloomingdale is a family, and we really do miss being together!"

Photos: Deidre Morgan, unless otherwise noted



Send off the Bulls in style with Quint 7 onsite!



Photo: Jane Owen

Special ride for a special day.



Graduate Morgan Robertson / BSHS / Varsity Cheerleading, Squad Co-Captain / Florida State University to major in Marketing / Awarded a \$2,000 Triple-Impact Competitor scholarship from Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA)



"You're on your own. And you know what you know. And you are the one who'll decide where to go..."
— Dr. Seuss

Nick Klaeren proudly displays his senior parking spot featuring Bender from Futurama at the May 22 Senior Send-Off.
Courtesy Photo



... proclaimed one!



Principal Sue Burkett took photos with the more than 490 students who participated in the senior send-off.

School Board Member Melissa Snively and BSHS Principal Sue Burkett share a proud moment at the BSHS Senior Send-off on May 22.
Courtesy Photo



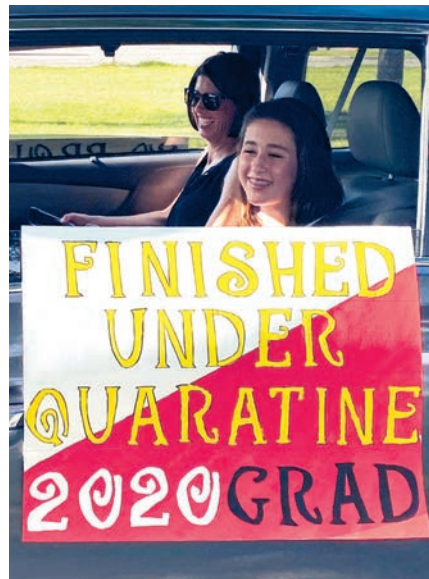


“Fall forward. Every failed experiment is one step closer to success. You've got to take risks.” — Denzel Washington

Photos: Jane Owen



Red Letters waiting eagerly for the graduates!



“Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.” — Henry David Thoreau

HEADS UP, BSHS BULLS!
Graduation Date has been set for July 15 at 8 p.m. FL State Fair Grounds... Details TBA!

Thanks, High School!

A Letter from Audra Nikolajski, BSHS Class of 2020

On May 22, with nearly 600 of my classmates, I graduated. I did not cross a stage, but I did drive across the student parking lot at Bloomingdale Senior High School, so suffice it to say that my high school years are over. This is my letter to you, high school, to thank you for all you gave me and my fellow graduates.

Dear High School,

First, thank you for the spirit. You taught us how to celebrate each other. With raucous cheers of 2-0-2-0 we became a unified class. We became a student section, and not simply a student. Thank you for introducing us to high school traditions, through them we became a new version of ourselves.

Second, thank you for the support. Within your halls, inside your classrooms, and among your inhabitants we found our place. For many, it was not a location at all, but a person. You brought us together. Within your walls, we were not alone.

Third, thank you for the lessons. Not just class subjects, though those were important too, but life lessons. There were days when we ended friendships, got into arguments, lost games, fumbled a play, forgot our lines, missed a deadline, or ceded an election. Through our hardships, we prevailed and came out stronger. With every lesson, we grew into ourselves.

Finally, high school, thank you for the memories.

Thank you for the teachers who cared about us. Thank you for the relationships we forged. Thank you for the laughter and also the tears. Thank you for the people we met, the people who made our day, and the people who made our entire four years.

Though one day you will be a distant memory, you will always play a part in who we become. Thank you for everything, high school. We leave you very different people than when we arrived.



Courtesy Photo
Minotaur Design Editor Katie Lee (l.) and Gazette Student reporter Audra Nikolajski show off the newly minted BSHS Yearbook.

Showcasing the Best of the Best: Isabella Manera Wins Community Scholarship

By Wendy Knipp



Congratulations to Bloomingdale High School senior Isabella Manera for winning the Bloomingdale Community's 2020 B.J. Stelter \$2,000 Scholarship. This scholarship, sponsored by the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, is gifted annually to one exceptional senior to assist with college expenses.

Manera's success has been a combination of her love of learning and her passion for helping her community. After final GPA calculations, this scholar will near the 7.00 GPA mark, an amazing accomplishment. She also has enjoyed being on the swim team and participating in clubs such as the National Honor Society and the National Beta Club.

Outside of the classroom, she has completed over 236 community service hours with organizations including Relay for Life, Team TRIDENT (assisting the disabled), The INCREDIBULLS games for the special Olympics, Fishhawk Animal Clinic, and Southeastern Guide Dogs where she raised and trained puppies.

This top-notch student also won The President's Gold Volunteer Service Award and was awarded the Henry Hicks Memorial Swimming Award by Hillsborough County.

She said, "Volunteering has always been such a rewarding experience and brought me so much fulfillment. I have truly enjoyed all the time I have committed to volunteering in the community and I hope to continue giving back."

Manera is honored to be this year's scholarship winner. "I have lived in the Bloomingdale community for my entire life. I feel so blessed to be a part of such a friendly, helpful, and diverse neighborhood. I have made some amazing connections with neighbors, friends, teachers and coaches who have all helped shape who I am today."

Manera lives at home in Bloomingdale with her mom and dad, Stacy and Claudio. She will be joining her brother Noah at the University of Florida in the Fall and plans to study veterinary medicine. Congratulations, Isabella!



Great families make great students! Isabella pictured with Dad Claudio, Mom Stacy and brother Noah.



Making a difference at the IncrediBulls Games (photo by Gabe Jones).



While working with Southeastern Guide Dogs, Manera became passionate about veterinary medicine.



Winning comes naturally to this student-athlete!

Out and About!

Courtesy Photos



Another de-stressor is walking and hiking. Liam and Henry Crawford take a hike down to the Alafia River.



Resident Jackson Grafton takes it slow and easy with his sloth friend. Enjoying recreation time is one way to beat the stress of quarantine.



Happy Belated Birthday, Henry Crawford!



With COVID 19 changing how we celebrate, more is more! On May 4, John Collins celebrated his 72nd birthday in grand style with his grandson Landon King. Collins and his wife moved into Bloomingdale East in 1982 and are the original owners of their home. Want some celebration signs for your event, contact Front Yard Smiles at 813-455-6583.

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BSHS Staff Feels the Love

On May 8, Bloomingdale High School administrators and parents' groups thanked school staff for their dedication and work over the past year, but especially during this last quarter of unprecedented service to their students and craft. Athletic Booster Club president Stacey Donahue spearheaded a drive-through parade where teachers received a backpack full of goodies collected from area businesses.

"This year more than ever, teachers needed to be not just appreciated, but honored," said Principal Sue Burkett, adding, "They rewrote their entire playbook in one week and figured out brand new ways to teach and communicate. The administration wanted them to know how grateful we were for all they were doing and how challenging all this eLearning was!"



Donahue's motivation to create this event started when she realized teachers were missing their special events too. Teachers traditionally enjoyed a week of breakfasts and lunches created and served just for them.

Upon learning that administrators were giving teachers backpacks, Donahue rolled up her sleeves and decided to fill each backpack with the help of the Booster Club. Businesses donated coupons and other gifts to celebrate the teachers. No one Donahue contacted said no to her request as everyone thought it was a great idea to show the staff some love!

On the day of the event, teachers drove through, some with family members, to pick up their appreciation backpack. There were smiles from all and some shed tears of joy.

"I only wish I could have done more for them! This has been such a strange time for the school staff and I was happy to show them how much they are appreciated," explained Donahue.



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Cimino Kindergarteners Learn through Giving

By Jane Owen

With inspiration from their teacher Kerri Pepe, many Cimino kindergarteners and their families decided to be part of a service project. In collaboration with Nativity Catholic Church's Peanut Butter and Jelly Ministry, students and their families made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the homeless.

Not only was it a lesson in giving, it was also a lesson in sandwich making for many of the students. Pepe said many of the Kindergarteners had not made sandwiches before and so their efforts were more than a mission of love. They were also a learning activity.

"My son Nathan Pepe does it [Peanut Butter and Jelly Ministry] with my mom for service hours," explained Pepe. "I thought it would be a great family project to help the community." Many families enjoyed it so much they plan on continuing to do it.

To participate or for information about this service opportunity, contact Nativity Catholic Church via their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/PeanutButterandJellyMinistry/.



Courtesy Photos



Charlotte and Finley McDonah with Fiona, the family's German exchange student proudly display their offerings for Nativity Catholic Church's Peanut Butter and Jelly Ministry. Fiona attends BSHS.

CJ Daniels gives a happy thumbs up!



For Leighton Woody, PB and J sandwich making is better with a smile!



PB and J making is all about the jelly for Thomas Rowens.



The Salmeron family fully embraces the giving and learning opportunity provided by their teacher Kerri Pepe.

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Courtesy Photos

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