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43
YEARS

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

Vol. XLIII



ISSUE 5



MAY 2023



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for details

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Times

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

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BNA BRIEFS

BNA CALENDAR

Tuesday, May 9 / BNA Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m.

Thursday, August 3 / Bingo Night at Bullfrog Creek Brewery to benefit Seeds of Hope Food Bank

Saturday, September 9 / Community Garage Sale

Sunday, December 3 / Santa Visit



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Just \$35 annually helps keep our community programs going. Please send your membership in today and be part of making Bloomingdale a great place to live! Membership can be paid through PayPal!

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At the bottom of the homepage, click Membership.



CALLING ALL 2023 GRADUATES!

We want your graduation photos for our June and July issues! The Gazette wants to help you celebrate your upcoming graduation moments, including pre-k through college graduations, Alafia and Cimino clap outs, formal pictures, parties, and more!

For the June issue, send your graduation photos or selfies to inbloomingalenews@gmail.com by May 26. At a minimum, identify those in the photo from left to right, the school graduating from, and the plans of the graduate.

Photos need to be no less than 600x600 resolution, but preferably 1 mb or better for best results. We will do the rest! Don't forget to provide contact information just in case there are questions.





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Adopt Don't Shop for Your Next Furry Family Member

Foster or Adopt to Help Rescues and Shelters

By Michelle Colesanti



Celebrate Be Kind to Animal Week in May and Year Round

We should all care about the safety and protection of animals whether they are our family pets or the wildlife living around us. Be Kind to Animals Week has been celebrated during the first full week in May since 1915 and helps bring awareness to those we share this planet with. This year it takes place May 7-13.

How can you participate during this week or any day? By adopting your next family pet from a shelter or rescue. If you have the time and space, fostering a cat or dog until a 'fur-ever' family can be found is not only rewarding but potentially lifesaving for the animal.

Dave and Stephanie Creasman were asked by 4 Lucky Dogs Rescue, a small local rescue that works with one behavior dog at a time, about potentially fostering a dog who had been in at least eight homes without success. If returned to the shelter, he would have been euthanized. They already had a dog named Darby from the rescue and had fostered one other dog previously, so they agreed to foster him until proper placement could be found.

Maxx was an underweight 18-month-old red-bone coonhound/Rhodesian Ridgeback mix who did not fit in at other homes. The Creasman's found training classes where he truly excelled, and eventually, he started fitting in with the other dogs.

Dave said, "We started training Maxx on scent training in our back yard and he routinely surprised us with how fast he could find things that we would leave for him. This led us to take him to barn hunts where he was the most vocal dog. We also were totally surprised to discover that Maxx enjoyed swimming, and if left alone outside for a few minutes, would start swimming laps."

Robin Marsh of 4 Lucky Dogs Rescue said, "Maxx was a big project and he turned out to be very successful. It took a lot of people working as a team to get them there." Eventually, the Creasman's decided to officially adopt Maxx. Now, more than two years later, he has settled in as part of the family.

When thinking of getting a new furry family member, there are so many reasons to adopt rather than purchase one from a breeder or a pet store.

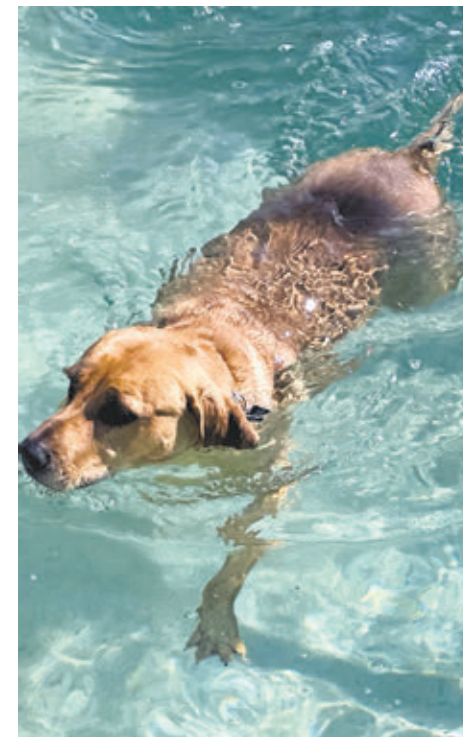
Anne Cogley is the team leader for Harley's Heroes Action and Awareness Valrico Group. This nonprofit, which is currently in 40 states as well as Canada, Australia, and the UK, creates awareness about puppy mills which are the source of overpopulation.

She said, "By adopting and not shopping you are saving two lives. The wonderful pet you adopt, and the next lucky one who will then move into your pet's previous shelter kennel or foster home. I believe that adoption is always the best option. If puppy mills didn't exist, 75% fewer dogs would be in shelters and rescues.

The Creasman's lives have been greatly impacted by sharing their home with Maxx.

Dave added, "Adopting Maxx is one of the best decisions we have made as a family and our lives would be less exciting without his daily adventures. Maxx is truly one of a kind and our world is a better place because of him."

Falkenburg Animal Shelter, at 440 N. Faulkenburg Rd. in Tampa, receives new cats and dogs daily. If interested in a new pet, please consider adopting it from the county shelter. For more information, visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/residents/animals-and-pets/pet-adoption/adopt-a-dog-or-cat.



Maxx has found his fur-ever home with the Creasman family. They were asked to foster him and eventually fell in love and decided to adopt him.

YARD OF THE MONTH

ELI SANTOS
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The Yard of the Month is sponsored by Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale and Campo YMCA.

Send Yard of the Month nominations to: bl.neighbor1@gmail.com or call 813-681-2051. Winners receive a \$25 Gift Card to Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale and a 1 month family membership, plus join fee to the Campo YMCA.

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May is the Month to Celebrate Mom

By Amanda Ragan

From wiping away tears, to encouraging every achievement, a Mom's job is endless and often thankless. However, there is at least one day set aside to honor all that Mom's do, and this year that is Sunday, May 14th. Here are some of our top suggestions on ways to celebrate Mother's Day!

Take Her to a Show

If music is the way to your Mama's heart then you are in luck! From music under the stars, to the chance to see a star, there are several wonderful shows going on in Tampa this Mother's Day.

Melissa Etheridge

7:30pm - 10:30pm

Ruth Eckerd Hall

Tickets range from \$49.50 - \$59.50

Nu-Blu (Bluegrass)

6pm - 10pm

Skipper's Smokehouse

\$7.00 per person

Pops In The Park

7:45pm

Julian B Lane Riverfront Park

FREE!



Take Her to Brunch

If sipping on "Mom"osas while enjoying a feast with the family is what you think Mom would like most, make sure to make reservations early at one of these amazing locations!

Hotel Haya's Flor Fina

Three Course Brunch Experience: 10am - 3pm

Featuring live music and the chance to create beautiful bouquets

Adults \$65 | Children \$35 | Children under 5 are complimentary

Jackson's

10:30am - 2:30pm

\$44.99 per person

Maestro's at the Straz

11am

\$55.50 per person

Rusty Pelican

Four Course Brunch Experience: 10am - 4pm

Adults \$82 | Children \$35 | Mimosas \$30

Yacht Starship

10am or 2pm

Adults \$69.95 | Children \$59.95

Make Some Memories

Escape the ordinary and enjoy spending time together at one of these memorable events.

Goat Yoga

Dancing Goat Farm 9:30am - 10:30am

\$25.00 per person

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Henry B. Plant Museum

12pm - 5pm

Moms get in FREE!

Mother's Day Themes & Tea

May 13th 1:00pm

The Italian Club, 7th Ave Tampa

Adults \$45.00 | Children \$25.00

For information email: gildafcapitano@aol.com

Pinot Palette's: Mimosas with Mom

May 13th - May 14th

Times and prices vary based on class and supplies

(813) 618-3064

Shopping at Seminole Heights Sunday Morning Market

Noon - 4:00pm

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MAY CALENDAR

- May 4: Star Wars Day
- May 5: Cinco De Mayo
- May 6: National Nurses Day
- May 8: Lag B'Omer Starts
- May 12: Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- May 14: Mother's Day
- May 15: National Chocolate Chip Day
- May 19: Bike to Work Day
- May 20: Armed Forces Day
- May 25-27: Shavuot
- May 28: Pentecost
- May 29: Memorial Day

MAY OBSERVANCES AND FUN FACTS

May is observed as National Bike Month, National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, National Mental Health Awareness Month, Lupus Awareness Month, and Lyme Disease Awareness Month

May's Birthstone: Emerald

May's Flowers: Lily of the Valley and Hawthorn

May Astrological Sign: Taurus (till 20th) and Gemini (starting on the 21st)



Brandon Ballet Offers Summer Ballet Intensive Program

By Edward De Freitas, Student Reporter

B The summer months are especially crucial for young dancers in training. The lengthy break from classes during the school year enables students to get much necessary and needed rest and relaxation from workload. Yet, it's also a wonderful time to devote more time and focus on interests and hobbies such as dancing. A way for young dancers to do this is through summertime intensive programs where dancers can keep previously learned abilities and make them current again, support athletic prowess and ability and develop in unique new ways that aren't possible through the school year.

This summer Brandon Ballet offers a great Summer Ballet Intensive program for older dancers and up and coming recruits to the ballet world. Summer Ballet Intensives are a wonderful way for dancers to improve their techniques, gain performance experience, and connect with other dancers in the area and find new friends. This program typically last from 1-4 weeks depending on age, style, and level of technique where dancers will be trained in two groups and be involve daily classes in ballet technique, point technique, variations, and other dance styles as well such as modern, jazz, partnering, African and more. This is the most ideal amount of time to seek out development and growth in dancing skill, performance, and artistry, meanwhile still having time for other pursuits. These dancers are offered the chance to receive tailored specific instruction based on skill in an intensive yet supportive and rigorous environment where they can grow personally. Dancers also have the chance to work with guest teachers and choreographers, attend lectures and workshops on dance, wellness, and health-related topics taught by those in the field, and attend and perform in a final recital at the end of the program.

Overall, this Summer Ballet Intensive program can be a valuable investment for any young dancers who are serious about pursuing a career in dance offering substantial benefits and returns. This program will be held at Brandon Ballet from Monday June 5th to Friday June 23rd from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm and in person auditions will be held at Brandon Ballet on Tuesdays from 6:00-9:00 pm and Thursday from 7:30-9:00 pm. If you can't audition in person, you can read the requirements for their online audition on their website at brandonballet.org/summer



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Easter Bunny Visited Bloomingdale April 2



The Easter Bunny made its way through the Bloomingdale communities delighting families on April 2, with planned stops along the route for visiting and pictures. The Bunny greeted close to 500 people! Children and families coming out to meet the Bunny were also met by Bunny assistants (high school student volunteers and BNA members) who loved sharing the excitement and handing out the BNA's signature duckies. The event was sponsored by the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association.

A complete album of pictures is available on Facebook, see QR code above.





Donation Made to Seeds of Hope of Food Bank



As the Bunny traveled through the Bloomingdale communities on April 2, his bunny assistants collected non-perishable food for Seeds of Hope. Additional items were brought to the Bloomingdale Community office. The donations were delivered to Seeds of Hope on April 5.

Thank you to everyone who donated food!

The BNA is supporting Seeds of Hope in 2023! Seeds of Hope provides a weekly food distribution to the community at 710 E. Bloomingdale Ave. For more information, visit: sohopefl.org

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! On Thursday, August 3, the BNA is hosting a Bingo Night at Bullfrog Creek Brewery to benefit the Seeds of Hope food bank. Plan to have fun playing Bingo while supporting this great organization!



Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association President Suzy Watts (far right) with volunteers at Seeds of Hope.



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Contest Details: Contest runs from April 1-July 1, 2023 • Take dated photos of before and after • Submit name, address, phone number and photos to bl.neighbor1@gmail.com by July 1, 2023

Riverfest 2023 Offers Tribute Bands, Lantern Parade, Balloon Glow, and More

By Michelle Colesanti

Bring your family to the 2023 Tampa Riverfest, which will take place Friday and Saturday, May 5 and 6 on Tampa's Riverwalk.

Tampa Riverfest will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 5 and 6. The free event spans the entire length of the Riverwalk with food trucks, and beer tents as well as plenty of family-friendly activities and events showcasing Tampa's cultural institutions, local musicians, and restaurants.

Tampa Riverfest presented by Publix Super Markets will include Taste of Riverwalk on Friday night and RiverFiesta on Saturday. The Taste of Riverwalk, sponsored by Stella Artois will be held from 5:30 to 9 p.m. on May 5 at Curtis Hixon Park. Enjoy culinary offerings from various local restaurants such as Driftlight Steakhouse, Anchor and Brine, Yacht StarShip, and more.

On May 6, RiverFiesta will provide a delicious opportunity to try a variety of tacos, bowls, and nachos while enjoying all the other aspects of Riverfest.

A wristband purchase is required for access to the food tent area on both nights. Wristbands cost \$15 for three samples and \$20 for five samples.

A full concert series of tribute bands will take place on the main stage in Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park. Live music will take place from 5-10 p.m. on May 5 and 10 a.m.-10:30 p.m. on May 6.

Participants decorate their own paper lanterns and can join the one-mile Riverfest Lantern Parade that illuminates the Riverwalk on May 6. It starts at 8:30 p.m. at Water Works Park and ends in Curtis Hixon Park. You can create your lanterns from 6-8 p.m. at a workshop taking place under the Water Works Park gazebo. Kits will be available to purchase on the day of the event.

Riverfest's Hot Air Balloon Glow is one of the highlights of this event. Each evening you can watch hot air balloons light up the sky at sunset (weather permitting).

Start your day in a positive way by joining an hour-long morning Yoga flow on May 6 at 9 a.m. at Curtis Hixon Park. The class is donation-based and will be instructed by Robin LC with The Calm Collective. No registration is necessary. Everyone is encouraged to bring a mat. All levels welcome, rain or shine.

The Florida Wiener Dog Derby will take place on May 6 at Curtis Hixon Park with races and contests throughout the day and a start time of 10 a.m. This is likely the largest Dachshund gathering in Florida. This family day of fun includes the Best Nose, the Speed Trap, the Costume Contest, the Kissing Contest, the Best Tail Contest, and, of course, Dachshund Racing. Wiener dogs from the age of 4 months to 18 years old will race in many age categories. For more information, visit <https://thetampariverwalk.com/events-news/events/wiener-dog-derby.html>.

Parking will be available at multiple lots and street-metered spaces near the event. Curtis Hixon Park is located at 600 N Ashley St. in Tampa and Waterworks Park is at 1701 N. Highland Ave. in Tampa.

For more information or to register for the various events requiring registration, or to find out more about the tribute bands making an appearance, visit <https://thetampariverwalk.com/events-news/events/riverfest.html>.





ECHO Thrift Store Opening on Bloomingdale Ave on April 27

By Jane Owen

Echo's thrift store manager Annmarie Macaluso loves the community focus of Echo.

ECHO



Finding a good home for things you don't use anymore is a solid move any time of year. Donate items to Echo's new thrift store and you will be giving to people in crisis in our community.

Echo's mission is to assist residents of Hillsborough County in crisis with emergency food and clothing, offering life stabilizing programs and resources. Echo has two resource centers, one in Brandon and one in Riverview. Its Brandon thrift store has provided clothing and housewares for the resource centers since 2021.

A second Echo thrift store is opening on April 27 on Bloomingdale Ave. The additional space will allow Echo to process more donations, support more neighbors in need, and create additional funding for Echo's many community initiatives.

Echo's thrift store manager, Annmarie Macaluso, loves the mission and community focus of Echo.

"Echo is community based. We live here. We work here. We help here," Macaluso said.

According to Macaluso, the new Bloomingdale store will primarily support the Riverview resource center. The support process will be the same as it has been for the Brandon Resource Center. Resource centers send invoices of

what they need. The thrift stores fill the items, and they are picked up and taken to the centers daily. Leftover items at the thrift stores are sold and the profit supports Echo's programming.

Macaluso explained that the new store provides more giveback to what Echo is already doing but beyond that, it gives back to this area of the community.

"I look at our thrift store as its own give back to the community. We try to keep things here reasonable. People can come and shop and find nice things for their family. A lot of people are struggling who might not need assistance, but things are a little tight and we are more affordable," Macaluso said.

Echo's Bloomingdale thrift store is located at 815 W. Bloomingdale Ave. It is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Donation hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on those days.

Donations of clothing and housewares are accepted. Baby seats, large toys and furniture (with the exception of small accent pieces) cannot be donated.

To learn more about Echo, visit echofl.org. Specific thrift store information can be found at ECHO Thrift | ECHO - Emergency Care Help Organization (echofl.org).

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Cimino Elementary Celebrates 20th Anniversary

By Jane Owen

Cimino Elementary School commemorated its 20th anniversary on April 6th with a rededication ceremony. Cimino opened in 2002 with Sandra Frost as principal. The school is named after Richard Daniel Cimino. Cimino Principal Joanne Griffiths described him as a civic leader and true advocate for children, education, and service. Rosalind (Roz) Creager and Matt Creager, daughter and grandson of Richard Cimino, attended the celebration. Roz Creager shared memories of her dad and a poem that inspired him.

"If (my) dad were here with us today, with a big teasing smile, he would say, 'this is my school and these are my kids!'" Roz Creager said. The celebration began with a surprise performance by the Bloomingdale Senior High School drumline. It included a presentation of colors by Cimino students, performances by the Cimino choir, a message from school board member Patti Rendon, a message from Cimino's teacher of the year, Kara Mara (read by 3rd grader Olivia Campo), sharing of Richard Cimino's Legacy (read by 5th grader Colin Kurto), reflections of a former student (Madison Skonie), a recognition of years of service for Cimino Faculty and Staff and special recognition to Debbie Coleman on her upcoming retirement.

"My grandfather loved his family and friends and was an active volunteer in the community. He would have been tickled to see all the students at the rededication. He loved kids. He loved to hunt, fish and cook. He had a booming voice, loved to joke and tell stories. Poppy, as I called him, would have said he didn't deserve to have a school named after him. Then he would have grinned, winked and said, "but I'll take it proudly." And we don't have the words to express how proud he would have been," Matt Creager said.

In attendance at the celebration was former principal Cindy Dowdy (2012-2017), former principal Debby Talley (2006-2012), School Board Member Patti Rendon, Jaime Gerding, Region 4 Superintendent, and many teachers and staff from the inaugural year of the school. After the ceremony, these special guests were invited to a reception in the media center.



Matt Creager and Rosalind (Roz) Creager, grandson and daughter of Richard Cimino.

Cimino Elementary Celebrates Raising \$8200 for Relay for Life with Kiss the Pig Event!

On the afternoon of Friday, March 31, Cimino's Coach Daniel Macko kissed Rowdy the pig as a grand finale to outstanding fundraising for Relay for Life!



The Relay for Life team, co-captained by teachers Barbee Reeves and Tina Macko, raised \$8200 by fundraising with coins for a cure and a kiss the pig contest.

Five buckets were set up in the courtyard and each day students would bring in money to donate to the teachers they wanted to kiss the pig. Coach Macko was the winner with his bucket bringing in \$600!

Rowdy didn't mind Coach Macko's kisses and got bonus kisses from Principal Joanne Griffiths and Assistant Principal Anne Fiorita.



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Bloomingtondale's Coach Church Named Wrestling Coach of the Year

By Jane Owen

Bloomingtondale High School's Wrestling Coach, Coach Mark Church, was named this year's Joel Medgebow Memorial Wrestling Coach of the Year. He was presented the award at the Hillsborough County School District meeting on March 30. The award is given yearly to honor the memory of Robinson High School wrestling Coach Joel Medgebow.

Coach Church took over as head coach this year at Bloomingtondale after serving as an assistant for the last 5 years. He decided he could not leave the athletes after the previous coach, Dennis Kitko, moved overseas.

He not only didn't leave them, he led them to victory. Ten wrestlers competed at Regionals; six wrestlers competed at States; and four wrestlers finished the season as state medalists. Church is also the assistant girls wrestling coach.

Sara Bogue, Bloomingtondale High School's Athletic Director, says Church teaches resilience.

"Coach Church has done a phenomenal job with our wrestling team. It has been exciting to watch him turn a really good program into a great program. He challenges the boys to be better wrestlers every day and they have responded," Bogue said.

The wrestlers have benefitted from his strong work ethic.

"Coach Church is a great coach because he is always there for us ready to work. He always pushes us to our limits, and he helps us learn from our mistakes," said junior wrestler JR Singer.

Coach Church focuses on conditioning and teaching basics. He credits the wrestlers, administration and parents that believed in him.

"None of it would have been possible if it weren't for the kids who believed in me as much as I believed in them especially as a first-year head coach! I was honored from day one that the admin, coaches, wrestlers, and parents all entrusted me, which allowed me to keep it simple and just focus on wrestling," Church said.

"It was definitely humbling to receive such an award from my fellow coaching peers. It's also really cool to have my name on the same trophy with my mentor and coach- the legendary Russ Cozart!" Church added.

He wrestled under Russ Cozart at Brandon High School. Church was the 1995 State Champion for 112 lbs.



Three Bloomingtondale Lacrosse Captains Admitted to Service Academies

By Jane Owen

"If everyone is thinking alike, then someone isn't thinking," is a quote by George S. Patton, one of the best-known American generals in World War II. His words mean that if every person is thinking the same, then every person is just a follower.

Ryan Mothershed Cases, Lelyn Kirby, and Simeon Rate are leaders. They are all captains on the Bloomingtondale High School Lacrosse team. They also have all accepted prestigious appointments to US service academies. Cases and Kirby will attend the United States Naval Academy. Rate will attend the United States Air Force Academy.

Bloomingtondale's lacrosse coach Cody Gray says it is very rare to find the leadership qualities they possess as high school athletes. They lead by example and exude accountability.

"They've demonstrated immense accountability. In both holding themselves accountable, but even more importantly their teammates. This can bring a lot of confrontation to the table if done incorrectly. However, I trusted them both seasons as their coach to do so in a radically candid manner. They cared personally, but also challenged their teammates directly. This balance is extremely hard to accomplish even for some of the best leaders in the world," Gray said.

All three students had different reasons for applying to the academies. Cases will be 4th generation military; Rate's dad and brother attended the Air Force Academy; Kirby felt the Naval academy would give him tools for success to help others.

The desire to serve is what will continue to make them good leaders:

"Growing up I knew that no matter what I did after high school I wanted to serve others," said Simeon Rate.

"What inspired me to apply to the academy is my desire to do good and give back to my country," said Lelyn Kirby.

"Having received the appointment I know that I'm no longer doing things for me but for those around me because everything is not about me at this point it's about us," said Ryan Mothershed Cases.

According to Coach Gray, their combination of leading by example with effective communication led players to follow. Simply put, he says, they are an inspiration for others and will have a huge impact on our county for years to come.



BSHS Lacrosse Captains accept positions at US service academies: (from left to right) Simeon Rate (United States Air Force Academy), Ryan Mothershed Cases (United States Naval Academy), and Lelyn Kirby (United States Naval Academy).

School Board Member Patti Rendon Purchases Art from BSHS Student

School Board member Patti Rendon approached BSHS art teacher Pam Reeves about wanting artwork for her District office. Reeves said she knew 10th grader Alan Martinez's artwork of Tampa Bay called "Hometown" was the perfect piece.

"I knew the work would have to not only be exemplary but also representative of the area," Reeves said.

Martinez is in Bloomingdale's 2D2 advanced art class.

"Selling your first piece of art especially at this age is such a memorable and rewarding experience. I am so thankful to Ms Rendon for opening up this opportunity to Alan," said Pam Reeves, BSHS Art Teacher.

(L to R) Principal Dr. Marcos Rodriguez, School Board Member Patti Rendon, 10th grader Alan Martinez, and art teacher Pam Reeves.



BSHS Track Athletes Win County Championships

Hillsborough County Track Championships were at Wharton High School on April 12.

Congratulations to these County Champions from Bloomingdale High School!

- Boy's 4x800: Wisney Cherident, Brandon Witherow, Thomas Schilling, Devon Douglas
- Boy's 4x400: Simon Castillo, Michael McGee, Derek Owens, Christian Bodnar
- Boy's 800: Wisney Cherident
- Girl's 800: Makenna Mach



Girl's 800 County Champ, Makenna Mach, and Boy's 800 County Champ: Wisney Cherident

Congrats, Bulls!



4 x 400 County Champions: Simon Castillo, Michael McGee, Derek Owens, Christian Bodnar

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