



THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

Vol. XLIV



ISSUE 1



JAN. 2024



WWW.BLOOMINGDALE.LIFE

THIS MONTH

HAPPY NEW YEAR BLOOMINGDALE

BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION INC.

P.O. Box 6313 • Brandon, FL 33508

BL.NEIGHBOR1@GMAIL.COM • BLOOMINGDALE.LIFE

PLEASE CORRECT NAME BELOW IF DIFFERENT. BNA MEMBERSHIP INVITATIONS ARE MAILED TO THE OWNER ON FILE WITH THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR. RECENT CHANGES WITH THAT OFFICE MIGHT NOT BE REFLECTED HERE.

Your Name
Your Address

PLEASE PROVIDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS SO WE MAY CONTACT YOU IF NECESSARY.

2024 BNA MEMBERSHIP INVITATION

\$42 to Join or Renew!

Return This Card With Payment



2024 Membership \$42
Community Scholarship Donation \$
Total Enclosed \$
Check Number #

Scan the QR code to pay via PayPal



LIFE WRITING CLASSES
RESUME AT THE LIBRARY
Page 4

BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY
CLEAN UP DAY
Page 7

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR
SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY
Page 8

BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY
STATION INFORMATION
Page 13

BLOOMINGDALE 5K
JANUARY 13
Page 14

BSHS JROTC
Page 15

PLEASE RECYCLE

JOIN THE BNA TODAY!

BLOOMINGDALE YEAR-IN-REVIEW PAGE 9

WINNER

2013, 2014, 2016,
2018 & 2019

Hillsborough County
Neighborhood
Recognition Award

Best Communications
Newsletter Category

“Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year.” *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

THE AWARD-WINNING

BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

LIKE US ON  **FACEBOOK!** www.facebook.com/BLGazette



Jane Owen
Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette
P.O. Box 6313, Brandon, FL 33508 - (813) 681-2051

Design/Layout: Chris Pascucci, NTZ Studios (ntzstudios.com)
Staff Writers: Michelle Colesanti, Nick Nahas & Amanda Ragan
Student Reporter Edward De Freitas

The official publication of the BNA since 1980, delivered free to Bloomingdale residents on the first Wednesday of each month.



Andrea Daly
Senior Marketing Manager
adaly@tampabay.com

Tampa Bay Times

BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. Box 6313, Brandon, FL 33508 (813) 681-2051

Email: Bl.Neighbor1@gmail.com Website: www.Bloomingdale.Life

Follow on Facebook: www.facebook.com/Bl.Neighbor1

BNA board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Regional Library.

President:
Suzy Watts

Directors at Large:
Laney Balis

Vice President:
Sean Donahue

Kalyn Dukes

Treasurer:
Grace Lewis

Bobbi Ferraro

Kiersten Sutton



Jessica Robertson
BNA Office Manager

BNA BRIEFS

BNA CALENDAR

January 23, Tuesday, 7-8 p.m. / BNA Meeting / Bloomingdale Regional Public Library - McLean Family Community Room / Community is invited to attend.

February 3, Saturday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. (or until bins are full) / Bloomingdale's Annual Clean-Up Day.

March 17, Sunday, 10 a.m - 1 p.m./ Bunny Visit

JOIN THE BNA!

\$42 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!**

Scan the QR Code to the right or visit <https://bloomingdale.life>. At the bottom of the homepage, click Membership.




Yard of the Month nominations can be made by emailing bl.neighbor1@gmail.com or calling 813-681-2051.



HAPPY
New Year

**Limited Time!
Unlimited Shine!**

Get our most popular
Unlimited Wash Club Memberships
choice of: Exterior Works
or Exterior Jules Premium

\$30

a month for the first 2 months.

VIEW PACKAGES AT JULESCARWASH.COM
HURRY DEAL EXPIRES 01/19/24

RIVERVIEW

10060 US HWY 301 SOUTH
NEXT TO
HUNGRY HOWIE'S
813-231-9274

BRANDON

654 W. BRANDON BLVD.
NEXT TO
EINSTEIN BAGELS
813-681-2764

FISHHAWK

16529 FISHHAWK BLVD.
NEXT TO
OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE
813-657-2015

231723

0000321672-01

Local Resident Roland Tiso Releases Memoir

By Michelle Colesanti



Bloomington resident Roland Tiso has written his memoir about the participation of multinational forces and organizations in the Iraq War and the Middle East. The book will be available in January.

In Strange Company is an interesting, informative, and exciting account of Tiso's service, capturing his experiences from 1994-2004, the last 10 years of his uniformed service as an officer in the Army.

In the book, Tiso describes the planning that characterized the strategy and operational requirements for an Iraq war plan that was the basis of an invasion of Iraq if such an action was deemed necessary. The brain trust, study, and meticulous design of this plan were all but discarded in 2003, the result of which was a somewhat chaotic situation in Iraq after our combined forces swiftly and competently defeated the Iraqi Army and captured Baghdad. What followed was an insurrection fomented by terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda, disenchanted former Iraqi military officers, the Iranians, and various religious factions that found us lacking in terms of manpower to adequately suppress their activities and seal Iraq's borders. We continue to pay for this error to this day.

Tiso began his story back in 2005, a year after retirement from the Army, but only recently completed it.

He said, "I took it off the shelf in June 2021, a year after I retired from defense contracting, and finally found what was needed to bring it all together into a coherent and organized work of true value.

Tiso served in Iraq from 1997-98 with the United Nations forces observing the demilitarized zone between Kuwait and Iraq that was established in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War.

Following that assignment, he traveled extensively throughout the Middle East for two years as the Executive Assistant to the Commander of U.S. Central Command (General Anthony C. Zinni, USMC). Tiso then went to Egypt to command U.S. Task Force Sinai, the U.S. peacekeeping contingent serving with the Multinational Force & Observers.

He noted, "These assignments placed me in close working relationships with military leaders of numerous foreign armies with which I interacted daily and discussed at length in the book. I have tried to simplify the more technical aspects of military planning and operational art to enable everyone to better understand them."

Tiso hopes the book will be purchased by people from all walks of life.

"The book's forward is written by General Zinni, something of which I am immensely proud," he added.

He intends to donate proceeds to veteran causes with his first objective to donate to the Fisher House at the Haley VA Hospital.

To purchase the book, visit www.casematepublishers.com/9781636243948/in-strange-company/ or find it on Amazon.com.

Life Writing Classes Resume at Bloomingdale Regional Library in January

By Michelle Colesanti

One of the most valuable gifts you can pass on to your family is the sharing of your unique life stories with future generations.

After a long hiatus due to the Covid pandemic, the Bloomingdale Writer's Connection (BWC) will again be offering a 10-week Life Story Writing (LSW) class at Bloomingdale Regional Library starting on Friday, June 19 at 10:30 a.m.

The class is for all skill levels and is generously funded by the Friends of the Bloomingdale Library, making it free to participants.

Once completed, you will have written at least nine new life stories and will have an organized writing portfolio to which you may continue to add.

According to Val Perry who has coordinated these classes for 17 years, "Participants report that taking the life writing class has positively changed their lives. Through writing short stories every week, younger people often find a new life direction, while retired people learn an appreciation for their lives. In addition, if shared, everyone's life story adds to the history of this area."

The writing coaches are trained to help writers at all skill levels. The goal of a class participant might be to just leave a legacy of their lives for their families, or themselves, gain some self-direction, or rekindle their past enjoyment of writing to publish a book.

Each class meets for about two and a half hours each week. Many people find the course to be therapeutic because the classes invite them to reflect on their lives and gain new

perspectives. A different theme is visited each week. Hands-on activities and group interaction help participants to recall long-forgotten memories.

Susana Mueller, a 2016 participant said, "I can't believe it's been eight years since I took the class and how the 10-week Life Story Writing course at the Bloomingdale Library has enriched my life by teaching me how to tell my life stories. Once the course ended, it allowed me to gather and write with others who have taken the course. The class was a springboard to publishing several books and producing my podcast, *Cuban Stories on the Green Plantain*."

According to Perry, "After the class ends, if the participant wishes to continue writing their life stories, free support is available, including monthly writing groups. Over the years a large community of writers and friendships have formed resulting in many local families receiving the precious gift of life stories from their loved ones."

For more information, contact Perry at LifeWritersBloom@msn.com, or by cell (phone or text 813-653-9591). You can also pick up a brochure in the foyer of the library.



Val Perry (r) and Ann Shaklee (l) present Susana Mueller (center) with a certificate for completing the Life Writer's class. New classes will begin on Friday, January 19.

YARD OF THE MONTH

MICHAEL & SUE PERRY
1421 DUMONT DRIVE, VALRICO



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.

New Year Specials!

0% Interest
for 60 months

BEST FINANCING
in Tampa Bay

Good or Bad Credit!
Free Second Opinions

♥ WE SUPPORT
LOCAL VETERANS,
FAMILIES AND
ANIMALS ♥

Get over
\$4500 off
a new **HEAT PUMP** or **AC**
with rebates
and tax credits
combined

\$79
NEW YEAR'S TUNE UP SPECIAL
(First-time customers only)

\$200 off
Duct Cleaning
(Valid January 2024 only)

Air Masters
of Tampa Bay, Inc. Since 1983
Air Conditioning & Heating

CALL TODAY! 813-964-7155

Family Owned & Operated since 1983 • 4th Largest Trane Dealer in Florida
Home Advisors / Google Guaranteed Contractor / CMC 1249497



Hablamos español.



0000316501-01

*0% Interest - Good or Bad Credit, 99% Approved Rate! Subject to credit approval & credit limit.

Now offering INDEPENDENT LIVING with complimentary services for a savings of \$3600 a year!
Call for details and a tour!

Assisted Living Facility #AL13150

Call Jill Andrew, Director of Marketing, to learn more!

Assisted Living

"Tessera Brandon... Living your lifestyle."

Memory Care

"Living the present... cherishing the past."

TESSERA BRANDON
AN EMBASSY HEALTHCARE ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY

1320 Oakfield Dr., Brandon 33511 • (813) 607-6880

tesserabrandon.com

Located in the heart of Brandon close to I75, Hwy 60 and Hwy 301

0000316509-01

Community Celebrates Bell Shoals Road Expansion with Ribbon Cutting

By Jane Owen

After more than four years, construction on Bell Shoals Road is set to be completed. This afternoon at 2 p.m. a formal ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of the Bell Shoals Road improvement project took place.

Carl Harness, Chief Human Services Administrator for Hillsborough County, began the celebratory meeting. District 5 Commissioner Donna Cameron-Cepeda and District 4 Commissioner Micheal Owen spoke.

In December, Chris Wilkerson, Senior Media Relation Strategist with Hillsborough County, said all lanes of traffic on Bell Shoals Road are set to reopen by Dec. 30.

BNA President Suzy Watts was onsite, thrilled to be part of the dedication and to be able to support our community.



Residents and Commuters Can Now Enjoy an Improved New Corridor

From www.hillsboroughcounty.org

Hillsborough County has nearly 1.5 million residents and continues to grow in population. The steady increase leads to more people on the roads and congestion. Bell Shoals Road in Valrico exemplifies a high-traffic road in a booming area. However, with a recent major expansion of the corridor complete, the road is now open and already improving travel for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

The 3.1-mile corridor has two new vehicle lanes, bike lanes, and sidewalks in both directions. A new traffic signal has been added at Starwood Avenue, and the existing signals at Glenhaven Drive, Rosemead Lane, and Bloomingdale Avenue have been upgraded. In addition, the existing bridge over the Alafia River was widened.

These tremendous enhancements will accommodate higher traffic volumes, improve stormwater drainage, and boost the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Additionally, they will increase access to transit and alternative transportation while preserving infrastructure assets.

The Bell Shoals Road project cost just over \$70 million, including land acquisition and construction. The project was paid for with a variety of funding sources, including the Community Investment Tax (CIT), Federal Grants, and Mobility Fees.

Improving infrastructure in Hillsborough County

The new Bell Shoals Road corridor is the latest in a string of massive infrastructure projects in Hillsborough County, including the Bruce B. Downs expansion, the Citrus Park Drive extension, and the Paseo al Mar overpass connecting U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 in South County. All of these projects increased safety for drivers as well as pedestrians and bicyclists, and improved mobility across the county.

CrossRoads Produce Opens Second Location Outside Riverhills Shell Gas

By Jane Owen

For 12 years, CrossRoads Produce has been providing local fresh produce, local honey pantry items, and plants to the community. Kurt and Penny Pendergrass opened CrossRoads Produce by the crossroads of Hwy 39 and Lithia Pinecrest Road in 2011 with a mission to serve people in the community.

“I tell all of my employees that we are a service company that sells produce. We are here to serve the community,” Kurt said.

One of the many ways CrossRoads Produce serves the community is by providing the freshest produce and plants. To do so, Kurt purchases daily from local farms of all sizes, from a 5-acre farm in Dover to Spivey Farm in Plant City.

In November, CrossRoads Produce opened its second location outside the Riverhills Shell Gas Station. Station owner Todd Kane said second location came about after Osprey Observer Editor Marie Gilmore suggested their partnership would be a way to offer both businesses’ customers expanded options.

“I am thankful for it because not only is it one small business supporting another, it gives our customers another option in the area,” Todd said. “It also gives us both, with increased business, opportunities to support our local charities.”

Through their businesses, both Todd and Kurt regularly give to local charities like Seeds of Hope, Small But Mighty Heroes, A Kids Place and local churches. For two businesses dedicated to the people they serve, the pairing is perfect.

CrossRoads Produce customers at the new location will have the same great service and also be able to get gas or stop in at the convenience store.

Todd is thrilled with expansion and the future for both businesses.

“It’s going to be, for them and for the station, a really great 2024.”

Kurt shared a few CrossRoads highlights. For the first few months of the year, fresh local strawberries will be plentiful. Customers can buy as little as one piece of fruit or buy in bulk. If they don’t have an item, they will try to get it. They will deliver locally on request and offer wholesale pricing.

CrossRoads hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Kurt shared that sometimes they will be open outside of those hours: “If we are here, we are open!” CrossRoads Produce’s new location is 4330 Lithia Pinecrest Road. For more information visit, www.crossroadsproduce.com





Bloomingtondale Neighborhood Clean-Up Day is February 3

Safe Medical Disposal Information

We are unable to accept unwanted medications at our Clean-up Day. But we have some great alternatives for you.

Our trash is burned in Hillsborough County. Medication can be placed in an empty jug, add soap and water. Seal it and put it in your trash. This prevents kids, adults and children from getting hold of discarded medications. The sheriff's office 2310 N Falkenburg Road and CVS 1010 Bloomingtondale have unwanted medication drop boxes.

Please do not flush medications. Our water processing may not be able to remove all substances.



Bloomingtondale's Annual Clean-Up Day

Saturday, February 3, 2024

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (or until bins are full)

Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance Facility

1629 Natures Way (behind Alafia Elementary School)

Commercial dumpsters • Shredding • Electronic recycling
Donation to a local charity

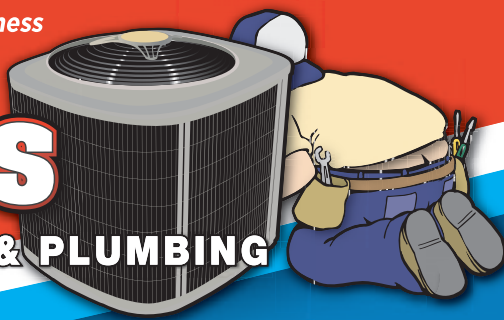


www.Bloomingtondale.Life, Bl.Neighbor1@gmail.com

**Keeping Bloomingtondale
Beautiful (and Safe)!**

IERNA Your Trust — IERNA Your Business

IERNA'S
HEATING, COOLING & PLUMBING



**100% SATISFACTION
GUARANTEED**
FREE ESTIMATES
from our Comfort
Consultants

\$1200
UP TO
TRADE-IN CREDIT

Offer ends 1/31/2024. Visit IERNAair.com/Coupons for details.



IERNAair.com

\$50 OFF
ANY COOLING OR
HEATING REPAIR

Must present coupon at time of service. See IERNAair.com/Coupons for details.



IERNAair.com

\$400 OFF
UP TO
**A REPLACEMENT
WATER HEATER**

Must present coupon at time of service. See IERNAair.com/Coupons for details.



IERNAair.com

EMERGENCY **HOTLINE** (727) 616-0090

www.IERNAair.com

© By Ierna's Heating & Cooling. All Rights Reserved. LICENSE #CAC1813676, #CFC1429475

0000316415-01

2024 Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association Membership Drive Underway!

The Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association has been serving our community since 1979. The BNA is working to make 2024 a year filled with improved services and programs for our community! The \$42 annual membership fee supports community events and programs such as the community clean-up day, scholarship for seniors, the annual Bunny and Santa visit, and community garage sale. Check your mailboxes in January for the BNA's annual membership drive letter and scholarship donation request. Your mailer will contain a letter, front and back, with details about the association's role, events, programs, and a scholarship donation request. A membership card and a return envelope is also included. Go to www.bloomingdale.life for more information.

Join the BNA today! Make checks payable to the BNA and mail them to P.O. Box 6313, Valrico, FL 33508. Another option is to use PayPal. Scan this QR code to pay with PayPal.



Join by February 15th to be entered into a drawing for Bloomingdale area business gift cards held on February 27th!

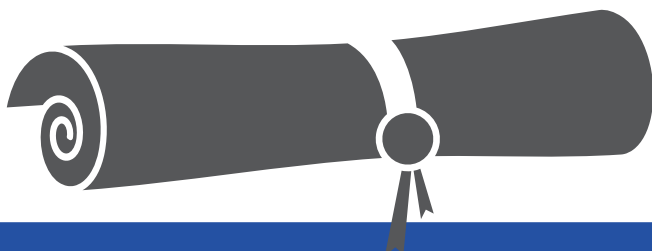
Bloomingdale Neighborhood Scholarship Application is Open!

The Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association (BNA) created the Bloomingdale Community Scholarship Fund in 2006 to assist outstanding Bloomingdale High School Seniors who plan to continue their education in college or vocational school programs. The \$2,000 scholarship named in honor of the late Bloomingdale Principal B.J. Stelter serves to reward high school seniors and encourage them to pursue a college career.

To be eligible, applicants must be residents of the Bloomingdale community, and the applicant's parent/guardian must be a current member of the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association. In addition, the applicant must have at least a weighted 3.2 grade point average at the time of scholarship disbursement, and must be accepted at a two- or four-year accredited college or university. The application selection criteria includes Community Service, Extra-curricular activities, Essay, Academics, and Letter of Reference. Applicants will be judged solely on merit, not financial need.

The application is generally available in January of each year at the high school's guidance office, the BNA office, and on this website. The winning student will be announced at the May BNA board meeting.

To get more information, email bl.neighbor1@gmail.com or visit: <https://bloomingdale.life/government-services/bloomingdale-community-scholarship/>





Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association

Bloomingdale Bunny Visit

Sunday, March 17
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.



Please bring food donations for Seeds of Hope Food Bank.
Parade route will be posted on Facebook
www.Facebook.com/BL.Neighbor1
and www.Bloomingdale.Life



Look for Signs in the Neighborhoods!



For more information about this event,
email BL.Neighbor1@gmail.com

Attention Bloomingdale Seniors!

IMPORTANT DATES

FEB 1 – APRIL 1
Applications Accepted
APRIL 1
Application Deadline
APRIL 23
Winner Announced



Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association

Bloomingdale \$2,000 Community Education Scholarship

REQUIREMENTS:

Candidate

- **Must be a resident** of the Bloomingdale community.
- Must be a graduating senior accepted at a 2 or 4-year college or university. Proof of acceptance is required.
- Weighted 3.2 GPA

Candidate's Parent/Guardian

- **Must be a resident** of the Bloomingdale community.
- Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association 2024 membership **dues must be paid prior** to the scholarship application deadline. Membership drive begins January 2024. **Deadline is April 1, 2024.**
- Proof of residency is required.

Selection Criteria

- Community service
- Extra-curricular activities
- Well-written essay
- Academic Standing
- Reference letters

Scholarship information will be available January 2024 online at Bloomingdale.Life and at Bloomingdale High School.



BNA Community Office: P.O. Box 6313, Brandon, FL 33508 • (813) 681-2051 •

bl.neighbor1@gmail.com • www.bloomingdale.life

January



Mario Gallegos becomes Executive Director at the Campo YMCA

May



Cimino Elementary Celebrates 20th Anniversary

September



Bloomingdale Community/BNA Donates Food and \$1369 to Seeds of Hope

February



BSHS Music Department Performs in London New Year's Parade

June



BNA Announces Gabriella Counterman as the B.J. Stelter Community Education Scholarship Winner

October



BNA Hires New Office Manager

March



BNA Sponsored Clean-Up Day A Success

November



Alafia Elementary Starts New Drum Ensemble

April



BSHS Grad/Actor, Shane Obedzinski, Celebrates 30 Years Anniversary of The Sandlot (pictured left with co-owner, Charlie Jonathan)

July



Bloomingdale Special District Moves Office

August



BNA Awards Residents \$500 with Beautification Award

December



BYSA Players Compete at World Series MLB Pitch Hit & Run Event

BLOOMINGDALE

Santa Visited Bloomingdale in December!

By Jane Owen

Santa Claus visited Bloomingdale in early December. Lured by the opportunity to enjoy a warm winter day before he went back to the North Pole to prepare for Christmas, Santa had the best time with Bloomingdale families. The weather on December 3 was perfect for the top-down drive through the neighborhoods. Along the way, Santa had the assistance of Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association (BNA) Volunteers and Bloomingdale High School's National Honor Society. Santa's helpers, the elves, handed out candy canes and the BNA's holiday themed ducks. The BNA was thrilled to be able to bring Santa to Bloomingdale for over 35 years!



Taste of Bloomingdale

Have a family recipe that you absolutely LOVE? Have a family dinner favorite? Dessert that is always a hit? Come across a recipe on Pinterest that you tried out and it was FANTASTIC!?!

The BNA would love for you to share your recipes! Visit the BNA Facebook page and comment on the pinned post or email your recipes to inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com

SCALLOPED CORN

White Sauce:
 2 T butter
 2 T flour
 1 c liquid (all liquid from corn and enough evaporated milk to make 1 c)
 1 t salt
 12 oz can whole kernel corn
 2 eggs, beaten
Topping:
 2 T butter
 1/2 c bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 350.
 Melt 2 T butter. Blend in flour. Gradually add liquid and cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Add eggs and cook for a few more minutes. Mix in corn and salt and turn into a greased casserole.
 Combine crumbs with 2 T melted butter. Sprinkle on corn mixture.
 Set in shallow pan of water. Bake at 350 for 45 – 50 minutes.

Submitted by Tricia Thompson

CROCK-POT SOUTHWEST CHICKEN CHILI

Ingredients:

- ↳ 1 Large White Onion
- ↳ 1 Jalapeno – diced
- ↳ 2 cans (10.75 oz) Rotel Fire Roasted Tomatoes and Chilis
- ↳ 2 can (8 oz) Tomato Paste
- ↳ 1 c Chicken Broth
- ↳ 1 can (10.75 oz) Black Beans
- ↳ 1 can (10.75 oz) Mexican Corn
- ↳ 1 Red Bell Pepper – diced
- ↳ 2 cloves Garlic – minced
- ↳ 3/4 tsp Cumin
- ↳ 1 1/2 tsp Chili Powder
- ↳ 1 tsp Oregano
- ↳ Salt & Pepper to taste
- ↳ 4 oz Cream Cheese

Directions:

1. Place all ingredients in the slow cooker, veggies on the bottom with the chicken on top.
2. Cook on low for 6 – 7 hours.
3. Remove the chicken, shred it, add it back in and stir.
4. Add the cream cheese and stir completely.
5. Cook additional 10 – 15 minutes.
6. Serve in your favorite bowl, top with cheese.

Submitted by Laney Balis



THE AWARD-WINNING BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

YOU CAN ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE!

Delivered monthly to over 5,200 homes reaching 23,000 residents. Distribution points include the Bloomingdale Library, Campo YMCA and our local schools.

Contact: JESSICA PETROSKI
jpetroski@tampabay.com
(813) 731-8021

Tampa Bay Times
 tampabay.com

VOTED BRANDON'S #1 ROOFING COMPANY 8 CONSECUTIVE YEARS!

SAVE MONEY ON HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE



Tampa Bay's leading family-owned and operated roofing company, **Shingle Masters** provides every re-roof customer with a wind mitigation inspection to measure hurricane protection, saving most homeowners hundreds of dollars each year on insurance.

Shingle Masters also maximizes roof ventilation to lower cooling costs and extend the life of the shingles.

Financing Available. Lifetime Workmanship Warranty Available.

Shingle Masters Roofing & Construction (813) 661-4600
www.Shingle-Masters.com
 Licensed Certified General Contractor // CGC 1513621
 Licensed Certified General Contractor // CCC 1328724



Bloomingdale Shines During the Holidays

Photos by Amanda Ragan

Bloomingdale was full of beautiful holiday displays and decorations throughout the season.



JANUARY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 6: Epiphany

January 7: Orthodox Christmas

January 9: Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

January 14: Orthodox New Year

January 15: Martin Luther King Day

January 15 - January 19:

Martin Luther King Celebration of Human Rights Week

January 25: Opposite Day

January 27: International Holocaust Day

January Observances and Fun Facts:

The January birthstone is Garnet. The January flower is a Carnation. January Astrological Sign: Capricorn (until the 19th) and Aquarius until the end of the month.

Month Celebrations Include:

National Mentoring Month, National Glaucoma Awareness Month, Cervical Health Awareness Month, National Blood Donor Month and Birth Defects Prevention Month.



Want to share a community event in The Gazette or on the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association Facebook page? Email inbloomingdalenews@gmail.com



Feeling Stress? Look for the Glimmers in Your Life

From /www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/newsroom

While the holidays are filled with celebrations and time spent with loved ones, they can also cause mental stress. According to the American Psychological Association, nearly nine in 10 adults said that financial stress, missing loved ones, and potential family conflicts cause them stress during the holiday months.

It's important to find the "glimmers" in your daily life to help mitigate feelings of stress. Finding glimmers simply refers to the idea of recognizing the small moments of joy in your daily life. A glimmer can be anything from spotting a rainbow to petting a dog or cat.

If you're feeling holiday-induced stress, remember to open yourself up to experiencing the glimmers in your life. Here are ways you can find daily glimmers in Hillsborough County:

Enjoy the Outdoors

- There are several opportunities to find glimmers in the outdoors. You can kayak or canoe on Hillsborough County's scenic rivers, creeks, and waterways, or take a stroll at one of the many Hillsborough County parks and nature preserves. You might even spot a few local and migratory bird species!

Find a Hobby That Brings You Joy

- Whether it's reading, cooking, or even trying a new instrument, Hillsborough County libraries provide a wide array of resources that can help you expand your knowledge and try new hobbies. Stop in your local library or visit the HCPLC website to learn more.

Spend Time with Animals

- If your idea of a glimmer is playing with animals, consider visiting Hillsborough County Pet Resource Center (PRC). Visit the PRC website for more information on available animals if you're ready to adopt a furry friend. There are also opportunities to get involved through volunteer and foster programs.

Mindful Mondays Mental Health Resources

Mindful Mondays promotes different ways you can make your mental health a priority but not take up too much of your busy schedule. From chair yoga virtual classes to tips on how to decompress after a long day, Hillsborough County's Mindful Mondays has various interactive resources for you to access no matter what day or time it is.

Interested in mindful videos that help improve your mental health? Check out the Mindful Monday's YouTube Playlist.



Mindful Mondays: Take a Tour of Edward Medard Park
Hillsborough County
439 views 2 years ago
For more tips and resources on mental health and wellness visit HCFLGov.net/MindfulMondays
The Official Hillsborough County, Florida Government YouTube channel is powered by Hillsborough Television (HIV), find m... more



BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY STATION NOTES

By Community Resource Deputy Clifford Fletcher
"One Team, One Family, One Community"

The deputies at the Sheriff's Office will continue to strive to provide Bloomingdale and the surrounding areas of Hillsborough County with a safer place to live and raise our families. That is our reason for being here. To make your lives safer and provide a more secure place to live. We will continue to work directly with concerned residents from the community through groups like the Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) and Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association.

Some current crime trends in the area are cyber scams and social media fraud. Your first line of defense in awareness of how these scammers will pressure you to act now. Never send money to unknown person(s) via Crypto, wire transfer, MoneyGram, or gift card. Scammers will pretend to from an organization you know, they will pressure you to act now, and they will insist you pay in a certain way. Social media scammers will try and befriend you and ask you for money. Be in the know and go to <https://consumer.ftc.gov/features/pass-it-on> for more information on scams like health, home repair, romance, grandkid, and investment. Before you act, think, tell someone – a friend, family, a neighbor, or call us at 813-635-8040.

Over the past two months, Bloomingdale East/West has had one residential burglary, three vehicle burglaries, four thefts, Three DUI, one drug related investigation. There have also been nineteen traffic crashes with property damage, and eleven injury traffic crashes.

Some issues that continue to contribute to crime in our community include those that we constantly remind our residents about including open garage doors, unlocked vehicles and valuables left in vehicles. Lock your homes and your vehicles! Please do your part to reduce crime. Another way you can help is by starting a neighborhood watch group. Deputies cannot be everywhere at all times. They may not even notice a car or truck that does not belong in your neighborhood. However, those who live in the community will know if strangers are in the area. Neighborhood Watch Programs are a great help to the Sheriff's Office. There have been many cases where good neighbors reporting unusual activities have been instrumental in catching criminals. All a Neighborhood Watch needs to be effective is an alert group of people willing to call the Sheriff's Office when a crime or suspicious activity is observed. Being an alert group will send a message to strangers in your neighborhood that your community watches out for one another. For more information on our programs visit <https://teamhcs.com/> or call us at District V 813-318-5400.

Happy New Year! Be Safe.



ARRGH You Ready For Gasparilla 2024

By Amanda Ragan

It is time to unfurl your Jolly Rogers, as Gasparilla is once again on the horizon, promising a whirlwind of festivities that will captivate audiences of all ages. So mark your calendars, gather your crew, and get ready to experience everything Gasparilla 2024 has in store for Tampa Bay!

Kicking off the Gasparilla festivities on January 20th, 2024 is the Ashley Children's Gasparilla Parade presented by Chick-fil-A. This family friendly event provides an alcohol-free environment to ensure that our wee mateys are the focus of this fun filled day! This free event starts at 4:00 PM and ends at 6:30 PM and is immediately followed by a firework display. So dress your little buccaneer in their best bandanna and eyepatch and be prepared to haul back a treasure trove of pirate booty.

However if you like to catch your beads while drinking your favorite brew, the Seminole Hard Rock Gasparilla Pirate Fest on January 27th is for you! This year marks the 106th invasion presented by Ye Mystic Crew of Gasparilla. The invasion sails into the Tampa Convention Center once again demanding the key to the city of Tampa Bay. After the pirates take over the city, they then parade down the streets starting at 2:00 PM. The Parade is free to attend, but if you want to reserve seats you can visit: <https://www.gasparillatreasures.com/tickets>.

Next in the lineup, is the Gasparilla Music Festival, February 16th - 18th. This year's headliners are Young the Giant, Louis the Child, Big Gigantic, and Lake Street Drive, but with over 50 musical acts there is something for everyone. Tickets can be purchased for one, two, or all three days of the festival. Ticket prices range from \$45 - \$500 and can be purchased now by visiting <https://gasparillamusic.com/tickets/>.

Saving the best for last is the Gasparilla Festival of the Arts, March 2nd and 3rd. Held at the Julian B. Lane Riverfront Park, the festival hosts artists from all over the country in addition to featuring live entertainment, children's activities, interactive experiences, and a wide array of food and drinks.



Artwork by Tampa native Sean Parrish winner of the 2022 Oxford Exchange \$1800 Merit Award,

Tampa native Sean Parrish and winner of the 2022 Oxford Exchange \$1800 Merit Award, "loves the amount of community support this event provides to local artists." This year the organization plans to award nearly \$100,000 in prize money and scholarships to emerging and professional artists. The event is free to attend and runs from 9 AM - 6 PM on Saturday March 2nd, and from 10 AM - 5 PM on Sunday March 3rd. From more information about the Gasparilla Festival of the Arts visit <https://gasparillaarts.com/festival> and to see more work by Sean Parrish visit his instagram page (@seanparrishart).



Run Into the New Year with Bloomingdale High School's 5k!

By Jane Owen

Bloomingdale High School's 7th annual Running of the Bulls 5k is Saturday, January 13th. The 5K is a favorite community event bringing in runners and walkers from all over the area, current students and BSHS alumni.

The 5k supports the Bloomingdale band and is made possible by local business sponsorships such as Title Sponsors Acropolis Greek Taverna, The Jeep Depot, and Reed&Reed, Attorneys at Law.

Bloomingdale High School Band Director Jordan Frazee is incredibly thankful for the community's support.

"The Running of the Bulls 5K helps the band in many ways, including but not limited to: purchasing new instruments, sheet music, classroom equipment, and so much more. Our band is so grateful for the community's support, that we have decided to give back in the form of two scholarships to two deserving seniors at Bloomingdale High School." Frazee said.

The Running of the Bulls 5k starts at 8 a.m. at Bloomingdale High School. It starts and finishes on the track and uses the sidewalks, roads, and parking lots on campus. Registered participants receive a Dri-FIT shirt and finishers receive medals. The race is timed by Bay City Timing and age group winners receive medals. Registration is \$35. To register for the 5k, go to: <https://raceroster.com/events/2024/79941/running-of-the-bulls-5k>

Questions? Email: Bloomingdalebulls5k@gmail.com





BSHS JROTC Participates with Wreaths Across America

By Jane Owen

On December 16, the Bloomingdale JROTC participated in Wreaths Across America at Serenity Meadows Memorial Park in Riverview.

“In 2022, Wreaths Across America and its national network of volunteers placed more than 2.7 million sponsored veterans' wreaths on headstones of our nation's service members at 3,702 participating locations. This was accomplished with the support of more than 5,000 sponsorship groups, corporation contributions, and in-kind donations from the transportation industry across the country.” www.wreathscrossamerica.org.



Cadets Gideon Smylie, Lizzy Feldbauer, Hunter Kraus, Emily Soto, Noah Cundiff and Christian Menth with wreaths for Wreaths Across America



BSHS JROTC Presents Colors at Gary Sinise Foundation's Snowball Express Opening Ceremony

By Jane Owen

On December 5, the Bloomingdale JROTC Color Guard presented the colors at the Inaugural First Responder Snowball Express at Disney World's Coronado Resort.

Lt Col Robert Marasco was proud for the BSHS Air Force JROTC Color Guard to be part of the program.

“The Snowball Express is an organization dedicated to serving children who have lost a parent serving on active duty since 9/11.” Lt Col Marasco said.

According to the Gary Sinise Foundation website, the Gary Sinise Foundation Snowball Express serves the surviving spouse/guardian and children of fallen heroes. For more information about the program, visit: www.garysinisefoundation.org/snowball-express



BSHS Air Force JROTC Cadets at the Snowball Express on December 5: From left to Right: Baylie Lewis, Jason Rebeca, Dylan Pennenga, Joshua Rivera, Danielle Ostrander, Ethan Pennenga, Yarelle Martinez, Zach Warren, Elizabeth Feldbauer, Zach Leiner, Abi Gonzalez



BSHS Air Force JROTC Cadets at the Snowball Express on December 5: From left to Right: Baylie Lewis, Angelo Arena, Jason Rebeca, Joslyn Czerwinski, and Freddi Valentin.

CHEERS TO A

Happy New Year

2023 WAS AN AMAZING YEAR FOR THE BRENDA WADE TEAM!!

OVER 275 HOMES SOLD

OVER \$175 MILLION IN VOLUME

#1 AGENT IN TAMPA

#1 AGENT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

CHEERS TO HOPING 2024 IS THE BEST YEAR YET!!



813-655-5333
1709 Bloomingdale Ave. Valrico, FL
Brenda@BrendaWade.com | www.BrendaWade.com



0000315523-01