

BHA Briefs

Monthly Meeting

Members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association are invited to attend this month's meeting on Tuesday, April 9, at 7:30 in the Community Office's new location in the Royal Oaks of Bloomingdale. The Community Office has moved to 3244 Lithia Pincrest, Suite 103, next door to Kim Hall's Dance Studio. Residents have the floor at the top of the meeting.

New Board Member

Dave Lowe, president of the River Crossing Homeowners' Association, has joined the BHA board.

Lowe and his wife Beverly have lived in River Crossing for six years coming from the Town N Country area. They have two children Andrea, 10, and Keith, 7.

Lowe said he joined the BHA board to improve communication between the two organizations.

NIP Report

Ah, spring at last! But, boy is there a lot of brown foliage due to the cold weather. The azalea are magnificent and those who water have beautiful green lawns. Now, if we could only get everyone to park their cars off them and onto their driveways.

As reported before, parking your car on your lawn is a deed restriction violation everywhere in Bloomingdale. Cards are sent to anyone who doesn't comply or just doesn't know it is a deed restriction.

Calls coming into the community office have been very slow. Remember, if you see anything in your neighborhood that you think is a deed restriction violation, please call the community office at 681-2051 and we'll try to take care of any complaints.

Also, remember we're all volunteers and we do the best we can. Sometimes we can't devote as much time to the program as we would like, that's why we're always looking for new volunteers.

As stated before, the area between the homes on Sweetleaf Dr. and Park West is county property with Tampa Electric Co. easement. Trespassing is prohibited. The county has installed a fence on both ends and soon signs will be posted.

Homeowners on Sweetleaf Dr. had to pay a premium for their lots to have their property back up against the conservation area, so please comply with the no-trespassing signs.

Deed restrictions vary from one section of Bloomingdale to another, so if you have any specific questions, contact the community office and we'll do our best to answer your questions.

The main reason we are all involved in the NIP is to keep our neighborhoods looking clean and attractive and a place we're all happy to call home.

And since our homes are one of our biggest investments, it's very important to keep our property values up and a place anyone would be proud to live in and be from.

Care to improve your neighborhood? Call and join us in the Neighborhood Involvement Program.

Membership Update

The 1996 BHA membership drive has been very successful thus far. With many dues payments still out, the BHA is encouraged by the 30 percent response already received only three months into the year. Remember, dues are for the calendar year not for the 12-month period from the time they were paid.

Leading the way are the residents of Fox Run, who have more than 65 percent membership. In second is Chadds Ford with nearly 50 percent and The Greens follow with just over 40 percent. There's a close race between the residents of River Crossing, Augusta Village, Stratford Trace, Fairway Manors and Windsor Woods for the next five places.

Residents of the Bloomingdale communities are still receiving packets, which are being mailed in manageable numbers and not necessarily by subdivisions. Dues are \$20. Packets will include a notice of dues, Mobile Watch volunteer sign-up form and an informative brochure about the BHA and other area organizations. If you haven't received your membership information, it will be forthcoming in one of the many mail-outs still remaining.

New Homes Tour Reveals New Bloomingdale



The majestic entrance to Cambridge Cove is a hint of the grand homes that lie beyond the gates. Cambridge Cove is one of eight new subdivisions springing up in Bloomingdale South.

by Chris-Ann Phillips

Residents of Bloomingdale East who have not ventured past their neighborhoods lately are in for a surprise. Making the circuit around Nature's Way, it's apparent Bloomingdale is hitting maximum density.

Eight new subdivisions sprouting homes in a variety of price ranges and lot sizes have consumed the remaining undeveloped land in south Bloomingdale.

With names like Bristol Green, Somerset and Heritage Park new home buyers might think they're in the Northeast, not west central Florida. Cove seems to be a popular trend in names as well with Cambridge Cove and Bloomingdale Cove joining the already-established The Cove, formerly known as Culbreath Cove. The Links and Bloomingdale Golfers Club leave no question as to where these homes are situated.

Traveling south from Greenhollow, is the first new walled community. Schmidt Brothers has not officially named the corner property, but Bloomingdale Villas is the

operating title. It will feature 18 zero lot line homes that will range from 1400 to 2000 square feet at a cost of between \$130,000 and \$170,000. A model is expected to be completed in two to three months.

The next stop is the prestigious Cambridge Cove just past Chadds Ford. The gated and guarded community features mini-estates by Ken Franklin. The award-winning homes on the 16 lakefront and 62 wooded lots range in price from \$250,000 to \$500,000.

Next on the tour stop is the Bloomingdale Golfer's Club Village. The single family deed restricted community features lots on golf course and lake frontage. Lots begin at \$38,500 and it is scheduled to open in December.

Continuing south on Nature's Way is Bristol Green across from River Crossing. MI Homes and MacRiley Homes are developing this area of 75-foot sites for single family homes that begin in the \$120s.

See HOMES, page 11

Residents Express Interest In Reclaimed Water

by Rozel Sculli

Reclaimed water for irrigation in residential subdivisions is becoming popular in neighborhoods around Hillsborough County and interest among Bloomingdale residents has grown in the last two months.

So much so that areas such as Fox Run and The Greens have requested a feasibility study for their areas and their homeowner's associations will be meeting soon with James Holland, reclaimed water improvement unit (RWIU) manager for Hillsborough County.

The Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association has agreed to act on behalf of the East and West residents where private asso-

ciations such as those in Fox Run and The Greens do not exist.

Holland met with the BHA last month to promote the use of reclaimed water, highly treated wastewater approved for watering lawns.

"The wastewater has undergone advanced treatment," Holland said. "It is filtered and chlorinated, and the suspended particles are less than .5 parts per million. It is odorless, clear and not harmful to pets, but the Department of Environmental Protection has only approved it for irrigation."

Holland said that Bloomingdale has already been identified as a feasible reclaimed water service

area. The service is currently in use at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club, and if his meetings are successful in Fox Run and The Greens they could become the first residential areas in Bloomingdale to introduce reclaimed water to their neighborhoods.

Water lines will be installed where the interest is and the cost would be shared by all the homeowners in the service area known as an RWIU.

The cost of running water lines is amortized over a 20-year period and shared by homeowners on a pro-rata basis. A one-time connection fee of \$40 and a monthly user charge of \$6 provides unlimited usage.

The amortized amount

to each homeowner depends on the number of homes in the RWIU.

"The more we have in an area the more reasonable the assessment," Holland said.

The BHA will be working in the next few months to identify an RWIU. Once an area has an interest of 50 percent or more, a letter is sent to Holland expressing interest, stating the homeowners are aware of an assessment, and requesting a feasibility study.

Once the study is conducted, said Holland, he will meet with the homeowners group representing the identified area to give cost details.

See WATER, page 11

BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY PAGE

Letter To The Editor



Resident questions the intent of this sign on Bloomingdale Avenue.

Dear Editor:

Ever take a close look at the signs placed in your community regarding county projects?

(This picture) is one of my favorite. Note "Impact Fees at Work". What this means is that impact fees are your friend.

And what about "Building Today for a Better Tomorrow." The county commissioners allow over-development in your area then they improve the road system to the glee of taxpayers. And then the cycle starts again.

Robert F. Sawallesh
Valrico

Our Times

Solution To High Water Bills In Sight

by Rozel Sciulli

We have two articles in this month's *Gazette* that begin "Ah, spring!" So I was tempted, but thought better of it.

Spring, however, does remind us that we need to start watering our lawns again. Time for those already high water bills to skyrocket. Not only will lawns require care, but swimming pools will be in greater use.

Sure would be nice to find a solution to water woes that doesn't include the government dictating the number of days we can water our lawns and wash our cars. Has anyone actually turned in a neighbor for using waters outdoors on the wrong day?

The really scary part is that it's getting worse. What could be next? Showering or bathing every other day? And how would that be monitored? Would county officials, desperate to save water, have us place automatic shut-offs on our main valve that cuts off the water supply on even-numbered days?

Sounds like a futuristic movie.

As ludicrous as that seems, it's not outside the realm of reality in the future.

County residents, particularly those in Bloomingdale, have been offered a solution. Reclaimed water.

Here are the advantages - 1. the supply is endless. 2. no restrictions (water your lawn all day everyday if you want) 3. our precious drinking water source is protected from depletion in this century 4. a significant difference will be evident in your water bill (not immediately, but bills are only going up and this assessment would remain the same.)

The disadvantages - 1. it's initially costly 2. it is not recommended for drinking 3. the petition of 51 percent of the residents of an area is all that's required (response in areas such as Carrollwood has been greater). But what that means is, the 49 percent, let's say, who don't sign on will have to pay for it anyway. 4. an in-ground sprinkler system is required for use

The cost is a 20-year commitment and involves the expense of running reclaimed water lines to each area. Naturally, the more people who share the cost the less the

amount. Suffice it to say, if all of Bloomingdale approved the introduction of reclaimed water to the community, the cost would be a lot less than say if only the folks in Fox Run wanted it. The details are outlined in the front page story. It's worth your consideration.

The way I see it, the county is going to get your money either way. You can pay the county and have restrictions and brown lawns, or pay the county and have no restrictions and green lawns.

The BHA will be asking for volunteers to gather community input. Don't sit with a \$200 water bill five years from now and wish you had acted today.

Call the community office at 681-2051, if you'd like to help. For now, we'll be taking names and phone numbers. Someone will get back to you.

Homeowner Association Liaisons

David Lowe, president of the River Crossing Homeowners' Association, had a great idea. Why not join the BHA board to create a voice for River Crossing on the larger BHA. Both the BHA and River Crossing will benefit from Dave's decision.

Certainly the BHA represents all of the nearly 4,000 homeowners of the entire Bloomingdale communities. But it's often difficult for all the specific area's needs to be communicated. Likewise, the BHA sometimes feels it is not reaching every homeowner within the various sections. Now, as the page 1 story indicates, there are eight new areas under construction. It will be important for each of those areas to have an active voice in the greater community.

Others should follow the example of Dave Lowe. Not necessarily the president of each association, but a liaison from each should attend the monthly BHA meetings. Report back to their association the actions of the BHA, and bring to the larger group, the voices of the residents within their area.

Why didn't someone think of this sooner?

OFFICERS

BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
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681-2051

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Bloomingdale Special Taxing District

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Rick Pitrowski President 684-6667
Chris Hering Vice President 654-0235
Joe Ligouri Treasurer 681-9655
Tom Snelling Corresponding Secretary 681-9186
T. Szabo Recording Secretary 684-2547
Peter Aluotto Trustee 685-0727
Keith Wilson Trustee
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Bloomingdale Mobile Watch

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LaWayne Wyatt Coordinator/Scheduler 685-2072
John Britton Treasurer 681-1553
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The Bloomingdale Gazette

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MEETINGS

All meetings take place at the Bloomingdale Community Office. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District

Second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

BHA Board of Directors

Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District

First Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Mobile Watch & Neighborhood Watch

Watch this listing for dates & times. The meetings are held on a per need basis.



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Share this joyous occasion with your neighbors and have a keepsake to add to your wedding memories.

The Gazette will focus on the details of your nuptials - the theme colors and flowers, an elaborate description of the bride's gown, and complete listing of the wedding party. Give us reception details and other special information like family traditions that may have been incorporated in the ceremony. Best of all, we will include a photograph of the bride or bride and groom.

Best of all - It's Free!

Mail the following information to *The Bloomingdale Gazette*, 3244 Lithia Pinecrest Rd., Suite 103, Valrico, FL 33594, or call the Community Office at 681-2051 and leave your name and address. We will mail a form to you immediately.

Name _____
(Bride and groom, first and last names)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
(if address is out of town, please ALSO give address of Bloomingdale resident)

Local telephone _____ Wedding Date _____

Bloomingtondale Widening Projects On Schedule ...and other roadway in's and out's

Special to The Gazette

Driving along Bloomingtondale Avenue isn't a breeze these days, with major road construction under way, but the good news is that the projects are on schedule and one portion will be completed by late summer.

The widening of Bloomingtondale from John Moore east to Bell Shoals is nearing completion, according to county roads department spokesman Steve Valdez. Crews are transforming the rural two-lane street into a five-lane roadway, with improved drainage, turn lanes at intersections and traffic signals. Total cost is \$4.5 million.

Still under design is the eastern leg of the Bloomingtondale

improvement program, extending from Bell Shoals to Lithia-Pinecrest. Construction should begin in late 1997. The project is expected to cost \$5.2 million for the 1.5-mile section. Part of the roadway will be widened to five lanes, with the remaining part a four-lane divided highway.

Meanwhile, another strip of Bloomingtondale, from U.S. 301 east to Kings Avenue, is just beginning its construction phase. The \$10 million project includes widening the road from two to five lanes, improving the intersections at 301 and Providence Road, adding sidewalks, installing water lines and sewer pipes, building a new bridge over Buckhorn Creek, building three stormwater detention ponds and creating a wetlands area. Construction is expected to be completed by summer, 1997, Valdez said.

Construction Q & A

The following questions pertain specifically to the Bloomingtondale area and were part of the many questions posed to County Commissioners at a Town Hall meeting in late February attended by more than 100 Brandon residents.

Q. Why does it take so long to construct a road? Two years to widen a 1.5-mile strip of Bloomingtondale is too long.

A. Roads are much more complicated - and more expensive - to build today than years ago. When the county widens a roadway, it not only puts down additional pavement on the surface, but it also completely removes all underground and above-ground utilities and replaces them adjacent to the new roadway. This utility relocation is done so any future utility work will not require the new roadway to be disturbed. Utility relocation along Bloomingtondale involves Tampa Electric Co., People's Gas Co., Paragon Cable, water lines and an ammonia pipeline.

Roadways are also kept open during construction, which often involves constructing temporary lanes. Similarly, we must work around businesses and residences so they have access to their driveways at all times.

Also, our roadway projects are competitively bid by private contractors whose profit margin is directly related to the time it takes to complete a project. Therefore, it is in



Construction along Bloomingtondale has progressed to the Bell Shoals intersection, where utilities are being replaced along the roadside.

the best interest of the contractor to complete a project in as short a time as possible.

The Bloomingtondale project to widen a 5.5-mile stretch from U.S. 301 to Lithia-Pinecrest was divided into four phases so that the entire roadway would not be torn up at one time.

Q. We need more sidewalks. My kids can't ride their bikes to school or to their friends' homes along Lithia-Pinecrest and Bloomingtondale.

A. Sidewalk projects are listed in priority order, using a calculation that factors in neighborhood need, safety considerations, and cost. Requests for specific projects can be submitted to Steve Valdez at 272-5275.

Public Meeting

A public meeting to discuss traffic problems along Hidden Lake Drive will be held April 16 at Brooker Elementary School at 6:30 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss solutions to reduce excessive traffic and speeding along the road. A possible solution could be the installation of speed humps such as those found on Bloomingfield Drive.

A recommendation to the County Commissioners will be based on the outcome of this meeting.

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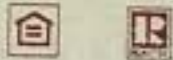
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Bits 'N Pieces



by Shannan D. Powell

Spring is here, finally, and residents throughout Bloomingdale are breaking out of winter hibernation. From gardening to camping to art festivals, residents are welcoming the season with open arms.

Garrido-Ryan Nuptials

Former Bloomingdale resident Michelle Lee Garrido and James Patrick Ryan were united in marriage at St. Stephen Catholic Church on March 16, in a Catholic Mass, double ring ceremony.

Given in marriage by her father, the bride wore a full-length white satin gown with a beaded bodice and long sleeves. The gown had a sweetheart backline with appliques and hanging beads across the back. The bride



Mr. and Mrs. James Ryan

wore a princess-style, elbow-length veil with a beaded tiara. She carried a cascade of roses, stephanotis and ivy.

The maid of honor was the bride's sister Carla J. Garrido of Los Angeles. The bridesmaids were Donna Garrido McAuley of Seffner, sister of the bride; and sisters of the groom Margaret Ryan Kirby of Titusville, and Maryann Ryan Humphries. They wore emerald green, tea-length gowns with wildflower arm bouquets.

F. Patrick McCabe of Cleveland served as best man. The ushers were Thomas Sasham of Cleveland, Randy Kirby of Titusville, and Robert Ryan, Jr. of Brandon.

Guests for the wedding came from all over the world, including the brides' maternal family from England and her grandmother from Guam.

Instead of lighting a unity candle, the couple followed a Guamanian tradition called the "Belu" where both the bride and groom are draped in a wedding veil.

The bride is the daughter of former Bloomingdale residents Jose Garrido of Upland, Calif. and Wendy Garrido of Sherman Oaks, Calif. She is a graduate of Hillsborough Community College and is employed by Baxter Health Care as a

nurse.

The groom is the son of the late Stanley C. Ryan and Louise E. Ryan of Valrico. He is a graduate of the University of South Florida and is employed by Paxon Broadcasting and works with 820 "The Team" on WZTN.

Following the reception at the River Hills Country Club, the couple took a Western Caribbean Cruise. They will reside in Brandon.

Fox Run sets annual sale

The Fox Run social club wants to help residents with a little spring cleaning. On Saturday, April 13, Fox Run residents will hold their sixth annual neighborhood garage sale, from 8 a.m. until noon.

About 25 homes are expected to participate, with a variety of goods available from furniture and toys to clothes and books.

Signs posted throughout the neighborhood

will indicate participating streets. With a tradition of good turnouts, the social club expects just as many bargain hunters to fill the drives and garages of Fox Run.

Kepics celebrate big month

Bloomingdale West residents Jan and Jennifer Kepics welcomed a new addition to their family last month.

Kaitlyn Suzanne Kepics was born March 4 at Columbia Regional Hospital Brandon. She weighed in at 7 pounds, 9 ounces and was 21 inches long.



Kaitlyn Suzanne Kepics

"Katie" has been lavished with gifts from her big brother Kyle, who turned 6 March 21; from paternal grandparents Robert and Mary Kepics of Leechburg, Pa.; from maternal grandfather John Skok of Arnold, Pa., and from dozens of other family members and friends.

Kaitlyn will do well to follow the example led by her brother. Kyle, a member of the 5- and 6-year-olds Little Dragons class at Brandon TaeKwonDo, recently took home three first-place trophies from a class tournament. He topped his peers in controlled sparring, form and obstacle course.



Kyle Kepics

Scouts' Derby fun finish

Bloomingdale East resident A.J. Bowen sped to a second-place win in the annual Cub Scout Pack 610 Pinewood Derby.

Bowen and his packmates of St. Stephen Catholic Church received car kits for Christmas and worked throughout the beginning of this year to make them speedy.

During a March 16 and 17 campout on church grounds, the scouts raced against one another to determine winners.

Next step for the racers will be the district finals in Plant City.

Pack 610 joined the Boy Scouts of St. Stephen for the campout. About 50 boys and their accompanying adults participated in a weekend of sporting, hiking, cardboard vehicle races and campfire programs.

By Sunday, it appeared that some of the scouts were itching to get home with a few reminders of the fun they had - cases of poison ivy!

Artist to show in Trinidad

Cheryl Jorgensen of Bloomingdale East will be taking some work home with her in June. A native of Trinidad, Jorgensen, has been granted a one-artist show in that country during which she will proudly display her various Caribbean watercolor paintings. It has been a while since Jorgensen has been home to Trinidad and she is very excited.

See BITS, page 5

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ELFERS - PASCO SQUARE - 7307 S.R.54.....	376-7307
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Evening Hours by Appointment

BITS, from page 4

In addition, her painting "Blue Cactus" won first place in professional watercolors at the 1996 Strawberry Festival in Plant City. Her work can be seen currently at the Sarasota Visual Arts Center.

Eagle Scout

Matthew Alan Lovejoy of Bloomingdale East is the newest Eagle Scout from Valrico Troop 61. Matt is the son of **Tim and Margaret Lovejoy**. He is 16 and a student at Bloomingdale High.

Matthew started in Scouting when he was in Cub Scout Pack 61 at Buckhorn Elementary. Under Scout Master **Al Neubaum** he was tapped out for Order of the Arrow, was an assistant patrol leader and senior patrol leader. Matthew earned 22 merit badges including the 12 required for Eagle Scout. For his Eagle project, Matthew installed

a library at The Arbors Retirement Home. He organized a book drive with his fellow scouts for book donations. He then sorted and stamped each book with identification and typed an index of all the books available and distributed it to the residents. Matthew delivered and set up the books at the Arbors and has made a trip back to add more books.

Matthew also enjoys sports, playing in local indoor and outdoor soccer leagues, and enjoys skateboarding. He also plays guitar in a band.

Artists flood festivals

With such an active art festival season, it should be no surprise to find Bloomingdale residents among the lists of winners.

Sue Allen of Bloomingdale East received an American Frame Award for her watercolor artwork featured in the Florida Sun Coast Watercolor Society's annual open show at the Sarasota Visual Arts Center. This year's show "Watercolors 13" was a juried event that awarded Allen \$150 for her work.

The Greens resident **Doreen Myers** took fourth in nonprofessional water colors at the Strawberry Festival. Myers who has been painting for five years, more

actively in the last two, is proud to announce that her work can also be seen with Allen's in "Watercolors 13".

Private sewing instructor and Bloomingdale East resident **Lucy Snyder** took home second in original design for her quilted wallhanging, during the Florida State Fair.

Area resident **Bethany Bresee**, 9, could keep a lot of older stitchers on their toes.



Bethany Bresee

During the Strawberry Festival, Bethany won first and best-of-show for her outfit, first for the Christmas wallhanging and quilt and second for the decorative T-shirt.

Another 9-year-old festival veteran is Bloomingdale East resident and Alafia Elementary student **Tina Lananna**. She placed first for her Christmas dog and her quilt with retriever print in the Strawberry festival. The canine fan won an honorable mention for the quilt and second place for the dog in the state fair. Tina has been sewing for more than two years.

Lindsay Reid, 13, is a student at Burns and a Bloomingdale East resident who has apparently been very busy preparing for her

entries in the festival and fair. At the fair, Reid placed first for a ribbon bouquet, a flannel shirt, a romper and a robe. She took second for a baseball sweatshirt, loveable T-shirt, and a recycled lint sculpture. A Raggedy Ann tie doll won third place. In the Festival, Reid won first place and grand champion for the romper. She collected three more firsts for the ribbon bouquet, flannel shirt and Raggedy Ann tie doll. Reid has been sewing for six years and is a four-year veteran of the fairs.

Hillsborough High Reunion

The Class of 1941 from Hillsborough High School will celebrate its 55-year reunion Oct. 5 at the Airport Hilton Hotel. More than 400 letters and invitations have been sent to classmates, but many have not been located. If any graduate has not been contacted or knows of a classmate who has not been contacted, call **Doris Terry Pearce** at 988-4527.

What's happening

Two noteworthy art events are upcoming in the area, and feature a few of the Bloomingdale artists mentioned above.

The Brandon League of Fine Arts will hold its annual ArtFest at Regency Square on April 20.

There will be a student show at Center Place during April. Art class students at the center will be able to show off a bit of what they have been learning.

For all people interested in genealogy, the Greater Brandon Genealogical Society holds monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at St. Andrew's Methodist Church (corner of Bloomingdale and Bryan). The meetings start at 7 p.m. For information call Jean at 662-9210.



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A Moment In Time

by **Ellen Abramson**

The baby was finally asleep. The two-year-old (without a doubt) needed his diaper changed.

It was the pre-polyester age and a mountain of ironing still beckoned.



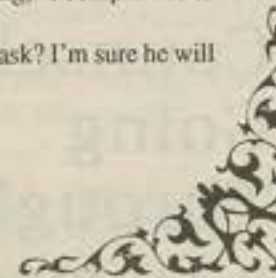
My elderly mother-in-law sat in her room peacefully rocking and my husband, freshly showered, was reading the paper.

Oh, no! The green beans were scorched! I turned off the burner and slamming the back door behind me, I sailed across the street to my parents' home.

"I'm snowed under and there sits Stan, reading," I complained to my mother.

Quietly and calmly she said, "Ellen, did you ask? I'm sure he will help if you just ask."

She was so right.



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Church and Synagogue News

The Promise Of Spring

by Ellen Slovacek

Ah, spring! It is the renewal of life, the budding of tiny flowers, the chirp of fat little robins. Spring in all its glory, symbolizes the resurrection of life after the long, cold winter.

Only the blind could miss the symbolism of resurrection, when witnessing the mass of humanity that comes alive during a good 50-percent-off sale. Yes, renewal comes in many forms.

Ever try to drive on 275 when the Lightning are playing in town? Just where did all of these people come from anyway?

The answer is clear. They were resurrected.

How else can you explain church attendance doubling for Easter services? I love Easter. I love the cute little marshmallow bunnies and chicks that come in pink and yellow, and they're sugar-frosted, too. But probably, nothing beats those wonderful imported chocolate eggs. Mix those with the marshmallow bunnies, and you've got yourself a basket.

Of course, Easter is much more than sales at the mall and sweet goodies. Which reminds me, does it seem to you that the trend has been leaning toward a tree for every holiday? Have you seen the Easter lights you can buy? Easter lights, Halloween lights, tiny decorations to hang on tiny trees. What's next - St. Patrick's trees? Why not? They're already green.

Commercialism has reared its ugly head in all of our holidays, to the point where it is getting ridiculous. Not that I'm anti-fun, but when holiness loses out to haughtiness, I have to draw the line. What am I talking about?

Take a look around at church on Easter Sunday. You'll see all kinds of new dresses. Now I love to shop as much as the next person, but when it gets to the point that

someone stays home from church because they can't afford to buy a new dress, well, that's haughtiness and just plain sad.

God doesn't care what you wear, as long as you are there to worship Him. These musings probably are not making a lot of sense to you, but let me close with a challenge:

This Easter season, gather your family around you for a moment and express to them your thoughts and feelings about life, death, the resurrection, and what part God plays in all of this. Tell them of your love for them. If you do this, I promise it will be an Easter they will always remember.

Here's what's happening:

Members of **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints** will be enjoying their 166th annual general conference broadcast from Salt Lake City, Utah on April 6-7. More than 7 million members from around the world will be tuned in to listen to the inspired words of President Gordon B. Hinkley.

All sessions of the conference can be viewed at the Mormon church located at 1412 John Moore Rd. Saturday and Sunday sessions will be held from noon to 2 p.m. and 4 to 6 p.m. The Sunday morning session will be preceded by a broadcast of *The Spoken Word* featuring the world renowned Mormon Tabernacle Choir. That program will begin at 11 a.m. The public is invited and there is no charge.

The **Living Savior Lutheran Church** has started a new Bible class on Tuesday mornings. The course is entitled "God's Master Plan: New Testament." This course provides an expansive introduction to the New Testament and is designed for both the novice and advanced Bible student.

Classes are Tuesdays at 10 a.m. For more information, call 681-2375.

The **Presbyterian Church of Bloomingdale** will be the site of a "swing into spring" yard sale Saturday, April 13

beginning at 8 a.m. The sale will benefit the work of the Missions Committee and Congregational Care. Home baked goods will be included in the bargains.

The entire worship service on Sunday, April 14, will be conducted by the youth of the church. The service begins at 10:30 a.m. and the public is invited.

Sunday, May 5, is Older Adult Sunday and the service will be conducted by the 49ers (plus). Differences in worship experienced by several participants over the years will be shared during the service.

April School Calendar

April 1-5	Spring Holidays
April 8	Return to school
April 24	Noon dismissal

Note: Bloomingdale High graduation has been scheduled June 5th, 8 p.m. at the USF Sun Dome.



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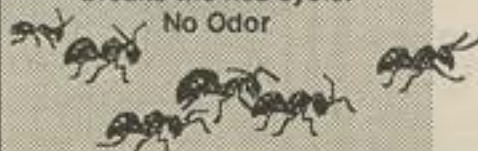
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Lithia Lynx



Jamie Mahan, a second grader at Lithia Springs Elementary, has won the 3M billboard art competition. Her artwork entitled "My World in Colors" won first place in the Hillsborough County Elementary Division.

Her picture of spring flowers was submitted by Mary-Ellen Houghton, Lithia's artspecialist. Jamie's composition will be enlarged and exhibited on a billboard located on Highway 41 North.

A reception at the Tampa Art Museum and one at the Channel 10 Television Studio were held in her honor. Jamie received

Matt Krenz shows off the award winning "Diamonds Are Forever" drug-free pins.

several plaques and a \$100 savings bond. Mrs. Houghton received a 3M overhead projector for the Lithia Springs art department.

"Diamonds are Forever" drug-free pins won first place at the Florida State Fair Youth Division. The children won ribbons and the Lithia Springs art department won a cash award.

The pins (840 in all) reflected some subject important to each student in grades 1-6. Depicted were hobbies, subjects in school and pets to remind each student that

they are special and to remain drug-free and healthy. Pins were made of clay or plastic and other recycled items.

This craft can be done at home in spare time so that students can use their time constructively. A grant provided by the PTA enabled completion of the project.

Each year, student examples are sent to the state fair to be displayed. This is the third consecutive year Lithia Springs was awarded first place.

Students have already begun working on next year's entries, drug-free dragons.



Jamie Mahan's colorful art won a major award for herself and Lithia Springs whose art specialist is Bloomingdale resident Mary-Ellen Houghton, right.



Summer Riding Camp at Paragrim Riding Academy

June 11-June 21
July 9-July 19
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Limited enrollment. Call Patsy for more details. Camps are designed for beginners through advanced.

Gator Tales



Teacher Appreciation Week is May 6-10. Let's be sure to show our appreciation to them for all they do to teach and help our children.

Battle of the Books for all fourth graders starts May 7. During a 16-week period the students are asked to read from a list of 30 high interest titles. At the end of the period, a local school battle of the books contest is held to determine the winning team within the school. The winners will then advance to the area battle to compete against other school teams. The winners will then advance to the district-wide battle. Good luck, Alafia fourth graders!

Market Day pick-up is April 23. Thanks to Belinda Kimbrough who has been heading up this project but will be moving soon.

Student Council will sponsor a pizza party on Thursday, May 2, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the school cafeteria. The National Pizza Company will be providing the all-you-can-eat pizza with 10 different toppings to choose. Also included in the \$2.75 price for children and \$3.50 for adults is salad and a drink. There will be a bake sale for all who have a sweet tooth. Proceeds will go to the school.

Attention all those parents who have a kindergartner starting next year. Kindergarten Round-up is May 7 at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria. This is a great way for them to see what is ahead for next year. How exciting!

Alafia Bike Rodeo April 20

by Ruth Brunson

Alafia PTA will sponsor a Bike Rodeo and Safety Fair for their students on Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. until noon in the school's parking lot.

Terry Fink's State Farm Insurance Agency will play a major role in the organization of the Bike Rodeo and Safety Fair by providing volunteers to help and in setting up the skills course. As always, many of the parents will volunteer also.

A special guest will be there - Geoffrey the Toys R Us giraffe will be on hand for the morning which will feature bicycle safety skills tests and equipment safety checks.

Alafia has recognized two special volunteers for Volunteer of the Year. They are Dr. Szabo, who has worked in the clinic every Wednesday for eight years, and Mrs. Joanne Scully, who has been instrumental in assisting all education areas of the school. She is also on the PTA board.

Volunteer week at Alafia is April 21-27. Remember to thank them, or do something nice for a volunteer.

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The Perfect Easter Basket

Traditionally, baskets were used at Easter time for gathering eggs, but a long time ago someone got the idea of filling baskets with assorted goodies. When the card and candy makers got into the act, the goodies became more elaborate. And, today, Easter baskets look more like pastel-colored, oddly shaped Christmas stockings because of the variety of gifts that will fit into them.

Surprisingly, a survey of area elementary children revealed that candy is still the No. 1 basket filler.

So what makes the perfect Easter basket? Read what the kids say.

Eggs of all varieties topped the list (as long as they weren't of the hard-boiled type) - chocolate are best; then there's "the kind the bunny rabbit lays," said one child; and plastic eggs filled with money.

They also like their plastic eggs filled with jelly beans "because if they're loose, then they fall through the grass." And, black jelly beans are a definite no-no "because they taste nasty."

A chocolate bunny is essential to any

well-stocked basket. But apparently, as with animal crackers, there is a certain order in which to consume the bunny starting with the tail (the ears and face are last)!

Following the two highest vote getters, basket fillers became a matter of personal taste. Kids want gum, sweat-tarts, Skittles, M & M's and a variety of candy bars.

They also want toys - and here's where the Christmas stocking similarities come in. Silly putty and crayons were the least expensive toy items named. But a Barbie Doll in an Easter Basket? Stuffed animals are okay, but how about a remote-control car? Not good enough? Well, then there's a birthstone ring or CDs!

And the least favorite item children find in their baskets - marshmallow chicks or fruit.

So, parents, that special morning is approaching. You've read what the kids want - now buy what you want so you can raid their baskets.

Girl Scouts Celebrate Birthday

by Christine George

On March 10, 1996, Girl Scouts from all around came to the second annual Girl Scout Sunday Birthday Celebration. This year's event commemorated the 84th year of the founding of Girl Scouts.

The celebration was held at Kings Avenue Baptist Church. The Scouts opened with a flag ceremony which was performed by Troop 329. They held a candle lighting ceremony in which one person from each troop participated.

The guest speaker was the Rev. Charles Richard, Jr.,



Girls Scouts and Brownies from the area gathered month to celebrate the second annual Girl Scout Sunday.

number of participants as compared to last year.

In the words of a Daisy Scout, Stephanie, "That was fun! I hope we get to do it next year."

pastor of Kings Avenue Baptist Church.

Brownies from Troop 1057 presented a Worlds of Girl Scouting candle lighting ceremony followed by singing from Troops 65 and 582.

The event was coordinated by Connie George who expressed her happiness with the increase in the

Student Spotlight



Kristen Panfilio

The United States Achievement Academy announced that Bloomingdale East resident **Kristen Panfilio** has been named an All-American Scholar.

Kristen, the daughter of Joe and Wendy Panfilio, is a junior in the International Baccalaureate Program at King High School. She was nominated for the honor by Mrs. Allen, a teacher at the school.

In addition to her academics, Kristen is a member of the King softball team and a Thespian.

The USAA has established the All-American Scholar Award Program to offer deserved recognition to superior students who excel in the academic disciplines. The All-American Scholars must earn a 3.3 GPA or higher. Only scholars selected by a school instructor, counselor or other qualified sponsor are accepted. These scholars are also eligible for other awards given by the USAA.

Kristen was also named a National English Merit Award Winner and a National Leadership and Service Award Winner by the USAA. These awards are based on a student's academic performance, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit and dependability.

Kids Calendar Rated G

Easter Visit

Mrs. Easter Bunny will visit children at Eckerd Drugs in Bloomingdale Square between 1 and 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 6, for charity.

Janet Koszty, manager of the store's Eckerd Express Photo Department, said photographs will be taken of children with Mrs. Bunny for \$2 each.

Proceeds will be donated to the Children's Miracle Network that benefits research and care for children afflicted with cancer, heart and muscular diseases, birth defects cerebral palsy and AIDS.

Brandon Regional Library

Toddler Time is every Tuesday at 9:20 and again at 9:45 a.m. for ages 24-36 months. There is a caregiver

Hats
Off



Booker T. Washington Honor Roll

Students named to the principal's honor roll at B. T. Washington for the second grading period are Alexandra Acevedo, Christopher Bancroft, Patrick Bolchoz, Sara Boraiko, Christine Cook, Erin Cox, Kari Donaldson, Karen Dunlap, Jennifer Englehardt, Tara Escribano, Emily Hawkins, Anu Jacob, Elizabeth Johnson, Tracy Johnson, Laura Kochansky, Ashley Linville, Matthew List, Christopher Lucchese;

...also Dawn Malcolm, Michael McDonald, Rachael McIntosh, Stephanie Murray, Courtney Nichols, Ryan Palmer, Brittany Parkhurst, William Rounds, Peter Ruiz, Daniel Schultz, Christopher Sclafani, Michael Scott, Metta Smeed, Nanecia Smith, Dolores Souto, Andrew White, Katie Wichrowski, Jennifer Wilson, Heather Winger, Kristin Wray and Jane Yates.

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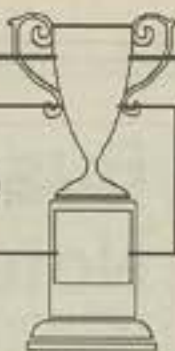


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Sports Salute



Janss Honored

The most honored athlete at Bloomingdale High so far this year is soccer team captain and most valuable player Emily Janss. The senior was picked as a prestigious Parade All-American, only one of two girls from Florida. And she won the Jose Alvarez Award indicative of the best female soccer player in Hillsborough County.

Janss, who scored 38 goals for the Bulls this year, has played soccer since she was 5. Besides leading the Bulls to the Region semi-finals, she is also a member of the Town N Country Heather, an under-19 select team that is the defending national champion. Janss also hopes to make the National Olympic Developmental team. She has been a member of the state and regional team since she was 15, and made the national squad when she was 16.

Region Cup Champs

The 15-under South Hillsborough Red select soccer team captured the Region C Cup title last month by defeating Northdale 3-2, and 1-0 in the same weekend. They will join the winners of the state's three other regions in the President's Cup tournament April 20 and 21 in Plantation, Fla.

Coached by Bloomingdale West resident Richard Oros, the Red worked their way up through the loser's bracket, after falling to Northdale early in the tournament.

Along the way the Red defeated Seminole, North Fl. Myers, and ASA out of Hudson to make it to the finals.

Area residents on the Red, which is made up of players

from all over Hillsborough County, are Ben Bailey, Steve Dvorak, Rio Oros from Bloomingdale and South Oak resident Michael Guarnieri.

In the first game of the finals, the score was tied 2-2 with 10 minutes remaining. Playing center forward Rio Oros scored the winning goal on an assist from Andrew Morris. In the championship game, center forward Peter LaBarbera scored the winning goal 20 minutes into the first half. Then it was left up to the defense and goalie Adrian Washington to shut down Northdale.

By The Numbers

Bloomingdale's athletes are among the county's leaders this spring in softball, baseball, and track.

Matt Smith led the baseball Bulls with a .441 average at the end of March, and Windsor Woods resident Brian Merkle was at .400. On the mound, East resident Henry Safer has the best record on the Bulls' staff at 3-1 with a 2.33 ERA and averaging more than one strikeout an inning.

Rachel Peterson and Heather Wright lead the softball team. At the end of March, Peterson was hitting .452, while Wright was at .435.

In track and field, senior Katie Mitchell, state champion in cross country and a finalist for the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce amateur athlete of the year, had the county's best time in the two-mile event. She was the only Bloomingdale girls' track athlete to be in the top three in any event.

For the boys, the two-mile relay team of Stephens, Elkins, Goldon, and McCormack led the county at the end of March.

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Bulls' Athletic Calendar

Baseball & Softball

April 9 at Brandon

April 12 vs. Plant City

April 13 at Leto

April 16 at Chamberlain

April 18 vs. Robinson

Tennis Home court - Hidden Palms

April 8 Girls v Plant City

Boys at Plant City

April 11 Girls at Plant

Boys v Plant

April 15 Girls v Robinson

Boys at Robinson

April 18 Girls at TBT

Boys v TBT

Golf

April 10 Girls at River Hills

April 11 Girls at Bloomingdale

Boys at Babe Zaharis

April 15 Western Conference

at Summerfield

Track and Field

April 9 Girls at Plant City

April 12 Sophomore Conference

at King

April 19 Western Conference

at Hillsborough

April 26 District Meet

May 4 State Regionals



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Brandon Sun Cove realtor Luana Russell, right, is congratulated as the top realtor for 1995 by manager Darlene Hutton.

Business Notes



Russell Tops for 1995

Realtor and Bloomingdale resident Luana Russell has been recognized as the top selling associate by Sun Cove Realty in Brandon for 1995 and is a recipient of the Chairman's Circle Award.

"She has been in the real estate business for 20 years and helped more than 1,000 families find their dream homes," said office manager Darlene Hutton in making the announcement.

Russell is "goal oriented and believes in high visibility in her community and in being very involved," Hutton said. "She and her husband Woody keep up with all the facets of technology and are intensely focused on the ever changing needs of her buyers and sellers.

In sales, Russell is in the top one percent of the country's realtors. She was the first realtor to introduce "the team concept" in real estate services to this area. Her team, with her husband, include realtor Chelita Houston, Linda Genco and Diane Schoeffel.

A participant in national real estate studies and panel

discussions, Russell also conducts studies in local real estate market trends.

In addition to the credentials of CRI and GRS, she is a member of Bell Shoals Baptist Church, the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce, Women's Council of Realtors and a director on the board of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

In addition, she is involved in several community activities including the American Heart Association, Children's Miracle Network and Alafia Elementary School.

Real Estate Moves

Putting Family Ties To Work

by Michael Davis

In movies and television shows depicting "by-gone" eras, families are portrayed as having strong ties between parents, children, aunts, uncles and grandparents. Relatives seem to join together in close-knit unity, sharing their prosperity and giving each other emotional and financial support when needed.

Today, these are opportunities to return to the values shared in earlier times. Younger family members, just starting out, can be provided assistance with down payments on a first home. Others, already established in a home, might benefit by receiving funds to be used as purchase money, secured by a first mortgage, resulting in a lower interest rate.

By making funds available to family members for down payments and mortgages, parents, grandparents and other relatives can earn favorable interest rates on their savings. Secured by mortgages or other collateral, the use of "family money" could work to the benefit of both borrower and benefactor.

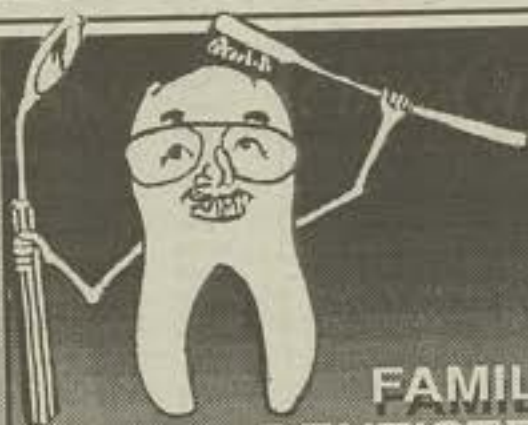
The relative making the loan may receive more interest than what their current investment provides, and the one borrowing might benefit by a slightly lower rate than would be available from a conventional lender. Either way, the family benefits. Younger members of the family can begin building security through equity in a home, and those moving up may improve their financial position through interest savings.

Home ownership has historically provided a long term increase in financial security. Properly secured loans from one family to another for home buying purposes can provide financial growth, strength and security, not to mention emotional satisfaction.

Whether you are planning to buy, or have money to invest, talk to a family member first. Put your family ties to work for the good of the family.

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BHA Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association will be Tuesday, April 9, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Office, Royal Oaks of Bloomingdale Plaza. This month's meeting will consist of election of board officers. Homeowner concerns and issues

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are always welcomed. The meeting is open to all dues-paying members and all newcomers are invited to attend.

STD Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District trustees will be Monday, April 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Office, 3244 Lithia Pinecrest, Royal Oaks of Bloomingdale Plaza. The meeting is open to all Bloomingdale homeowners.

Burns Registration

Burns Middle School will have registration for new students who are not currently in the Hillsborough County school system on April 9, 10 and 11. Registration for incoming 6th, 7th, and 8th graders will be on a first come, first served basis from 9 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. at the Burns Campus, 600 Brooker Road.

For registration requirements or questions call 744-6777 for sixth grade, and 744-8383 for seventh and eighth.

HOMES, from page 1

Rounding the bend and traveling east toward Culbreath, are the two entrances of Somerset, a community of Morrison Homes. Somerset is bordered to the south by county recreational property that is projected for development as a passive park.

Across Culbreath is the new Suarez development, Bloomingdale Cove. It actually signals that the end of construction is in sight. It's planned 200 single family homes will range in price from \$117,000 to \$145,000 with square footage ranging from 1665 to 2381. They will be built to the southern most point in Bloomingdale bordered by a wooded nature preserve and pond.

WATER, from page 1

Once the assessment is known, 51 percent of the residents of the RWIU must sign a petition requesting reclaimed water. This petition is then presented to the Board of Hillsborough County Commissioners for approval.

"Legally all that's required is 51 percent," Holland said. "But the commissioners like interest to be up around 55 or 60 percent."

Even those homeowners who do not sign the petition will be assessed a fee if the reclaimed water system is approved for their area.

Holland explained that the cost of water usage is on the rise, and while homeowners may not realize a significant savings immediately, the savings will be evident in future years as rates increase. He said homeowners with water bills around \$100 will break even.

A recent County Commission vote increased the rate for potable (drinking) water use by 4 percent, with an additional 4% expected before the end of the year, and an environmental fee of \$1.50 was approved.

Holland said from the time the petition is approved to the system being in the ground is approximately 18 months. "Your water bill might not be \$100 now, but what will it be in 18 months," Holland said. "To wait to act on this for

Bike Safety Rodeo

Alafia Elementary School will hold a Bike Rodeo and Safety Fair April 20 from 9 a.m. until noon in the school parking lot. It is free and open to all children of Bloomingdale.

BLFA Artfest

The annual Brandon League of Fine Arts Artfest will be held Saturday, April 20 at Regency Square Mall. The works of local artists in various media will be on display and for sale.

Book Drive

The Tampa/Hillsborough Public Libraries invite residents to donate new or used best sellers for their use. Used books can be taken to Barnes & Noble at Brandon TownCenter Drive. They will be collected the first weekend of every month beginning April 6.

Heading north on Culbreath is The Links, a guarded golf course community being built by Sunrise Homes. With lushly landscaped models open for viewing, the homes of The Links begin in the \$150s and link up with The Greens of Bloomingdale Ridge to the north.

At the corner of Erindale and Culbreath, are the moderately priced homes of Heritage Park, whose models are named after American presidents. With backyards bordering Erin Arbor to the east and Windsor Woods to the north, the 17 acres will boast a community of less than 70 homes.

When completed, the new construction will add 1,000 new single and multi-family homes to Bloomingdale.

three or four years would be defeating the purpose because it will cost more then."

Water lines would run on the opposite side of the street as fire hydrants. There already is a line going in down Bloomingdale from the Valrico pumping station.

Classifieds

GARAGE SALE:
Sat., April 13th, 8am-12pm, Fox Run Subdivision, off of Culbreath, in Bloomingdale.

HELP WANTED:
Part-time secretary/administrative aid in Bloomingdale, 10-15 hrs./wk., flexible schedule. Send resume to 3930 Northridge Dr., Valrico, FL 33594.

FOUND:
Pair of man's glasses found in Bloomingdale. Call the Community Office at 681-2051.

FOUND:
Cockatiel, call 684-5796.

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Cockatiel, cinnamon color, very missed. Call 684-5796

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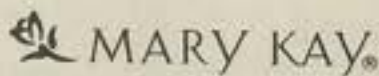
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