

# the Bloomingdale gazette

Complimentary

Official Publication of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association

Volume XX, Number 8

## BHA Membership Drive 2000

By Laura Frazier, Editor

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) 2000 Annual Membership Drive is under way. Notices were mailed to residents in June.\*

The BHA represents all of the residents of Bloomingdale East and West's 40+ neighborhood sections. Our Board of Directors is composed of non-paid volunteers residing in the community.

Through the collection of voluntary annual dues, the BHA serves Bloomingdale's 4000+ residents in many capacities. The BHA:

- Puts dues monies collected back into the community through such established and proven programs as the Bloomingdale Mobile Watch, Neighborhood Involvement Program and Deed Restriction Enforcement Program (please see web site for details).

- Holds monthly public meetings to hear and discuss issues directly affecting our neighborhoods (2nd Tuesday of each month, 7:30 p.m., Bloomingdale Community Offices, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Citgo plaza).

- Provides a community office for all Bloomingdale residents

- Owns The Bloomingdale Gazette, now in its' 20th year of publication, our forum for community news.

- Maintains a community web site ([www.bha-online.org](http://www.bha-online.org)) offering up-to-date news and information, including deed restrictions.

- Provides free e-mail updates to residents on timely community issues concerning crime and safety advisories, planning and zoning hearings, school boundary changes, etc.

- Acts as the residents' advocate for new sidewalks, streetlights, road signs and other necessary improvements.

- Provides our community with an official voice that speaks authoritatively

to Hillsborough County government officials and developers.

A recent survey showed that 90 percent of residents who responded felt that the BHA was a valuable asset to our community. With the support and volunteer efforts of our residents, the BHA will continue to assist residents in resolving problems, finding answers and maintaining Bloomingdale's standing as a beautiful, safe, family friendly community.

If you have any questions about the BHA or the dues drive, please call 681-2051. All residents are strongly encouraged to visit our community web site to register for free BHA e-mail updates.

\*If you have not received your dues notice, please use the form on page 12 of this issue. For more information, refer to page 2 for BHA phone, fax, e-mail and address contacts.

### Choose to make a difference

Dedicated to the memory of Stephanie Ann Culbertson, and to the preservation of our youth, "may they better understand how mortal they really are."



Captain Scott Walter, pictured with his family at the dedication of the Stephanie Ann Culbertson Community Center, chose to make a difference. See story on page 18.

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## Your Inside Connections

### The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Rd. • Valrico, FL 33594  
(813) 681-2051 • E-mail: BHA@CyberRails.com

Web site: www.bha-online.org

President ..... Ted Grable  
Treasurer ..... Pam Liguori  
Director ..... Patricia Radel  
Director ..... Ann Underwood  
Director ..... Rodney Biddle  
Director ..... Len Jasczak  
Director ..... Mary Cummings  
Director ..... Ken Clinton  
Director ..... Tony Diolosa



### Bloomingdale Mobile Watch Core Committee

Coordinator/Equipment Manager  
Tony Diolosa, ..... 681-1146  
Treasurer, Paul Kelmer ..... 681-9701  
Steven Heckel ..... 654-4266  
Brad Scharp ..... 643-5000  
Paul Warr ..... 685-7883



### Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132  
President ..... Bill Grace, 685-2817  
Treasurer ..... Fred Englehart  
Meetings .. Second Tuesday each month at 7:30 pm,  
3419 Cade Lane, Bloomingdale Oaks



### Share your news with the community!

Write to Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594  
Phone (813) 681-2051  
E-mail frazier1@tampabay.rr.com  
Fax (813) 651-1129

### Bloomingdale Special

**Taxing District** ..... 684-6667  
President, Thom Snelling ..... 681-9186  
Vice President, Tom Mackiewicz ..... 653-4145  
Treasurer, Don Cassels ..... 681-8855  
Corresponding Secretary, R. Dickey .... 689-2177  
Recording Secretary, Alice Burleson .... 685-1076  
Trustee, Tim Golden ..... 653-1337  
Trustee, Paul Almeida ..... 661-2018  
Property Manager, DPMI ..... 684-6617



### Meetings

All meetings take place at the Community Office at 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

**BHA Board of Directors Meetings**  
Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

**Special Taxing District Meetings**  
Second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.



## the Bloomingdale gazette

The official publication of the BHA  
3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594  
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Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Here kitty, kitty  
Hillsborough County adopts  
new animal ordinance**

On June 28, Hillsborough County commissioners voted unanimously to adopt a new county animal ordinance. Effective January 1, 2001, the ordinance calls for new restrictions on domestic cats, including the confinement of felines to the owner's property. Guidelines for the new ordinance are as follows:



- All dogs must wear identification tags when outside. Cats must wear tags around the neck or on the ear, or have a tattoo or microchip.
- All outdoor cats must be spayed or neutered.
- An existing policy for dogs will be extended to cats. Cats won't be allowed to go onto private property without the landowner's consent.
- Veterinarians must have rabies tags available and will display information on the new rules.
- Anyone selling more than 20 dogs or cats a year must register with the county to obtain a permit.

• Anyone striking or interfering with a service animal may be cited.

• Fines may rise for some infractions, and fines will be added to a number of violations that do not currently have them.

For more information, please call the Hillsborough County information line at 272-5900.

**Wanted: your news and photos!**

If you have news and/or photos that you would like to see published in the Gazette, please send it this way! We are seeking news and photos involving neighborhood happenings (neighborhood projects, block parties, special concerns or problems), school news (student and teacher awards, fundraisers, special events), sports news (sports team sign-ups, awards won, special ceremonies), club news, business news (new Bloomingdale area businesses or those owned by Bloomingdale residents, business move or remodeling, anniversaries), etc. If you have any questions, please call us at 681-2051. Feel free to fax your news to 651-1129 or e-mail to frazier1@tampabay.rr.com.

All material submitted is subject to editing for length and clarity and will be used on a space available basis at the discretion of the Gazette staff.

**BHA supports request for  
school bus service from Alafia  
Elementary to Rec Center**

By Laura Frazier, Editor

A group of parents of Alafia Elementary School students say they could use some help in transporting their children from the school to the after-school program offered at the Stephanie Ann Culbertson Rec Center in Bloomingdale West. Bloomingdale resident Susan Blaylock says, "We have been in touch with bus route Coordinator Sandy Katvala and School Board Administrator Bill Maxwell, and have been told that a bus route from the school to the rec center would not be possible because the route would cross school district lines."

Bloomingdale East students currently attend Alafia Elementary, while Bloomingdale West students (where the rec center is located) attend Lithia Springs Elementary School. "We felt that, since we (Bloomingdale East and West) are all one neighborhood, it was not unreasonable to request bus service for our kids," said Blaylock. "Our children just love the program at the rec center, and it is very affordable for working parents. But transportation is a problem. The distance and the danger of crossing Bell Shoals Road prohibit the children from walking or bicycling. Some (working) parents are having to pick up their children on a postponed lunch hour to bring them to the after school program."

Susan Blaylock attended the July 11 monthly BHA meeting

to present the parents concerns and request the support of the BHA. The board approved a motion to draft a letter to the school board supporting the request. Parents interested in supporting the request are invited to contact Susan Blaylock at 657-0433 or by e-mail at blayjr@mindspring.com.

**Bicycle Safety Contest winner**

Congratulations to Bloomingdale resident James Gordon. James entered our Bicycle Safety Contest (July issue) and answered 8 out of 9 questions correctly, qualifying him for the prize drawing. James rides away with a halogen bicycle headlight, courtesy of A.J. Barnes Bicycle Emporium in Bloomingdale Square.



Thanks to all who entered the contest. We'll post the quiz on our web site (www.bha-online.org) after August 15 in case you'd like to check your answers. Elementary and middle school students can enter our essay contest this month, "When I am 25..." for a chance to win a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate.

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## Residents request 3-way stop at Culbreath/Natures Way intersection

By Mack Austin

A number of parents of Alafia Elementary School students, along with members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association and the Alafia Elementary PTA, have expressed concern about pedestrian safety at the busy school crossing intersection of Culbreath Road and Natures Way. With school about to start soon and traffic in our area continuing to grow, something needs to be done as soon as possible to improve the safety for our elementary school children and their parents.

The Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) forwarded the following letter to Hillsborough County Commissioner Ronda Storms. Residents and parents are encouraged to write to Commissioner Storms (P.O. Box 1110, Tampa, FL 33601) to voice their concerns and support for this recommendation.

July 12, 2000

From: Bloomingdale Area Community Council

To: Commissioner Ronda Storms

Members of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) held their



The busy and often dangerous school crossing intersection at Natures Way and Culbreath Road. Photo by Mack Austin.

monthly meeting on June 15, 2000. The main topic of discussion was the serious safety concern brought to the attention of our Community Resource Deputy by many parents with children at Alafia Elementary School.

The main intersection at Alafia Elementary is located where Culbreath Road and Natures Way meet. Culbreath Road is a feeder road to Bloomingdale Avenue. It is one of the most direct routes used by Bloomingdale High students. The traffic on both Culbreath Road and Natures Way has significantly increased due to the growth in this area. A new YMCA will soon be completed, and the Bloomingdale Little league has also grown in numbers. Alafia Elementary has also had an increase

(continued on page 7)

## 3-way stop

(continued from page 6)

in enrollment. Parking for parents during a school day is a great challenge to say the least. It is almost non-existent.

The main safety issue involves the increased traffic flow at this intersection. Controlling the flow of this traffic on a school day is no less than dangerous for the crossing guard. Children have to cross Culbreath Road, hoping traffic will stop, with only a one-way stop sign on Natures Way.

The Safety committee for the Alafia PTA and many residents believe making this intersection a three-way stop would require the traffic flow on Culbreath Road to slow down and stop, thus providing the crossing guard with the needed restriction to better control the traffic. Protecting children crossing Culbreath Road would improve significantly.

Previous traffic studies indicated that a three-way stop was not warranted, based on statistics. When the children, heavy traffic and rushed drivers are mixed on a school morning, the reality of the danger is clear.

We would appreciate your assistance in providing the children and the parents who utilize this area with the maximum safety measures we recommend. Your assistance and concern are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mack Austin

BACC Safety Project Coordinator

## Bloomingdale Homeowners Association June 2000 meeting (abridged)

The June meeting of the BHA was held on Tuesday, June 20, 2000 at the Bloomingdale Community Offices.

President Ted Grable convened the meeting and, after the approval for the May minutes and the Treasurer's report, President Grable proceeding to standing committee reports.

The Membership Committee reported that the 2000 dues notices were ready for postage and would be mailed within 7-10 days. Rodney Biddle, chairman of the Community Relations Committee reported that the BHA web site has logged almost 4,000 visits so far. Len Jaszczak reported that the issue of installing streetlights on Culbreath would go to Deputy Maurer to see if there is a Sheriff's Department safety issue.

New business included attempting to recruit a volunteer in the community to act as a "historian" to the BHA. It was also approved to pay a nominal monthly fee to CyberRails to cover some of the costs of web posting. The BHA would like additional residents to serve on the Board of Directors and is particularly interested in appointing a Vice President and a Secretary.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.



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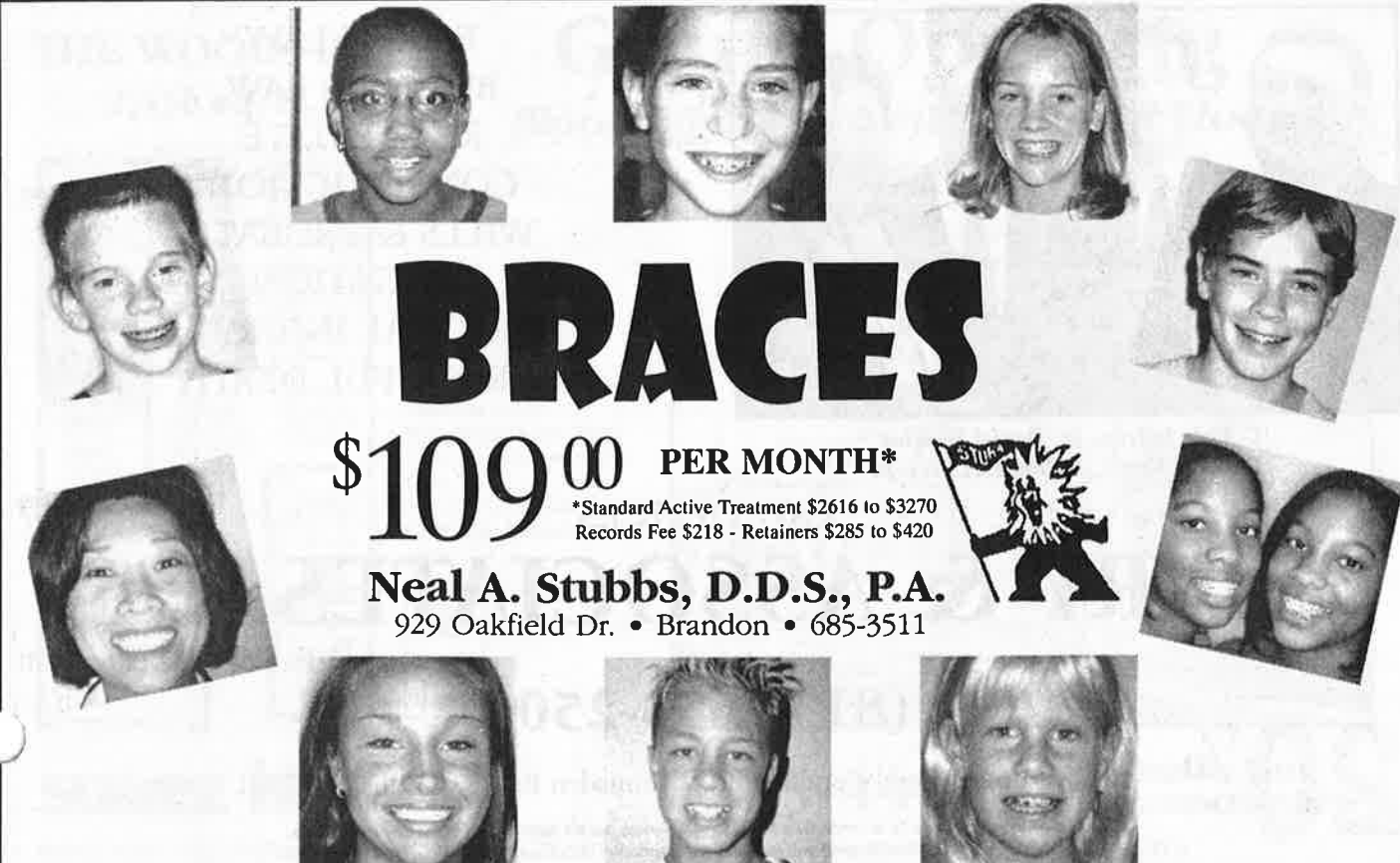
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## Bloomingdale Yard of the Month

By Rosie Trellis

You'd never guess that our August yard of the month was designed, planted and maintained by first time homeowners. Some of us long-time homeowners are still trying to discern the weeds from the grass, wondering what to plant where, and puzzling over what exactly a chinch bug is. But Susan and Steve Farmer of the Stratford Trace section of Bloomingdale East have everything under control.

The Farmers combined an expanded driveway and walkways with several mulched islands and beds to minimize the amount of grass in their yard. In fact, the entire back yard is blanketed in gravel. The semi-xeriscaped landscape, Steve says, "takes about 20 minutes two times a week to mow, edge and trim." An elegant 3-tiered fountain is the centerpiece of the front yard, bordered by lush tropical plants and palms. Dense boxwood hedges are carefully shaped, and juniper adds interest to the neatly mulched beds and islands. The yard is unique and tidy, and the plantings are beautifully arranged.

The Farmers may have the least grass in the neighborhood, but the lawn they do have is green and healthy. "We did have a chinch problem last year," Steve admits, "But before they



spread, I got a sod cutter, cut the infested area out, sprayed it with dursban, and laid in new sod. It was good as new after a few weeks, and the bugs were gone." This rookie is at the top of his game!

To nominate a yard for the yard of the month, please call, fax, write or e-mail the Gazette contacts on page 2. Winners will receive a \$25 Wal-Mart gift certificate courtesy of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

## Advice Sponsored by Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale

If you have a home cleaning, repair, maintenance or remodeling question, please mail, fax or e-mail it to the Gazette contacts on page 2 of every issue.

### Gas grill cooking grate not looking great

Q: After only 6 months of use, the cast iron cooking grates on my gas grill are caked with crud and rust. Is there any way to clean them, or do I need to replace them? How can I avoid this in the future?

A: We recommend Grease Grizzly, from the makers of Goo Gone. This is a powerful product that will tackle most grill grates. For heavy jobs, spray on full strength and let the product penetrate for 60 seconds. Then, mist lightly with water and allow it to activate for about 5 minutes. Agitate the surface with a sponge or bristle brush, and rinse with cold water. If the grate is rusted past the point of no return, it's time for a new grate.

Once your grate is either clean or has been replaced, keep in good condition by cleaning it after each use and keeping the grill covered between cooking times.



Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale owners Bruce and Greg Korte.

If you are in the market for a new grill, stop by the store and check out our selection of Ducane "buy your last grill first" gas grills. Ducane grills are famous for easy clean up, even cooking ability and lifetime warranty. Happy grilling!

## Bloomingdale Mobile Watch seeks volunteers

By Laura Frazier, Editor

Bloomingdale Mobile Watch is an organization of residents who work with our Community Substation and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department as a deterrent to crime in our neighborhoods. Volunteers are currently needed in several areas of our community to maintain and expand the existing patrol schedule.



Mobile Watch Coordinator Tony Diolosa.

Mobile Watch volunteers patrol an assigned area one night a month for three hours, with the objective to observe and report any suspicious or unusual activity to the Sheriff's Office. Volunteers do not become involved in stopping or apprehending anyone.

A recent community survey showed that over 80% of the respondents indicated that Mobile Watch was an important factor in maintaining safety in our neighborhoods. The Sheriff's Office has recognized our Mobile Watch program as a model that can be used by other communities who wish to establish similar organizations. For further information, or to volunteer for the Mobile Watch team, please call Coordinator Tony Diolosa at 681-1146 or e-mail amdio@gte.net.



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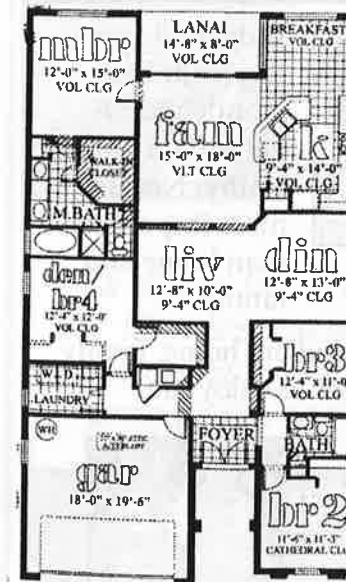
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## Property Manager's Report

June 2000

Submitted by Devney Property Management, Inc.

DPMI would like to thank the residents who take the time to report problems with our irrigation systems (see "Letters" in this issue). Please call Al Devney at 684-6617 to report any problems.

### Irrigation

- Brandon Irrigation repaired a broken main line in the Cambridge Cove system.

- DPMI added 8 spray heads to the John Moore system, 1 to the Rosemead system and 4 to the Bloomingdale Village system.

- DPMI increased the nozzle size of 78 heads in the Bloomingdale Village system.

- Ten spray heads, 2 rotors, 2 risers and 2 zone lines were repaired.

- Twelve lights were replaced

### Landscaping

- Planscape, Inc. replaced 3 crepe myrtle trees that had been destroyed by vandals.

- Yardworks, Inc. plugged areas at the John Moore entrance and on Greenhollow and Natures Way.

- A vehicle killed a palm tree at the corner of Greenhollow and

### Natures Way

- DPMI met with Planscape, Inc. representatives to discuss the beautification of the entranceway at Natures Way and Culbreath.

### Other

- Communities of America, Inc. pressure cleaned all the entranceway signs in Bloomingdale East and West.

- In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, DPMI picked up 12 bags of litter, 2 tee shirts, 5 socks, a blue blanket, a garden rake, a traffic cone, 2 hubcaps, a cordless phone and 14 cents. The beverages of choice were Coke for soft drinks, Busch for beer and Romanof vodka for distilled spirits.

## "Home Safe Home"

Hillsborough County Household Chemical collections  
South County collection site: 626 Golf & Sea  
Boulevard, Apollo Beach, (beside the Fire Station),  
Saturday, August 12, 2000, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Materials accepted include paints and solvents, automotive products, household cleaners, pool chemicals and lawn and garden supplies.

Materials not accepted include explosives, flares or bio-medical material.

Absolutely no commercial waste will be accepted.



## Welcome to Bloomingdale

Please send birth announcements to the Gazette contacts on page 2.

**TRIPLETS!!!** Brandon James, Jacob Thomas and Devin Charles Duckworth. Born May 27, 2000 to Heather and Don Duckworth.

Abigail Louise Glidden. Born June 11, 2000 to Stacy and Bill Glidden.

Joseph Angelo Pignataro. Born June 14, 2000 to Cheri and Paul Pignataro.

Brayden Montgomery Keen. Born June 19, 2000 to Colleen and Jason Keen.

Karlie Grace Campbell. Born June 20, 2000 to Adrian Campbell.

Gabriella Michele Almeida. Born June 21, 2000 to Michele and Jeremiab Almeida.

Matthew Richard Lindroth. Born June 22, 2000 to Tracey and James Lindroth.

Cassidy Brooke Hayes. Born June 25, 2000 to Laura and Matthew Hayes.

## Kid's essay contest

"When I am 25..."

Calling all Bloomingdale kids! What year will it be when you turn the ripe old age of 25? Where will you be, and what will you be doing? Working your way through medical school? Starting your own business? Perhaps raising your own family, or competing in the Olympics? Children from kindergarten through eighth grade are invited to put their thoughts in writing and enter our kid's essay contest. Two winners will receive \$50 Wal-Mart gift cards courtesy of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, redeemable for any of the store's great variety of merchandise including toys, games, cd's, sports equipment, video games and more.

The winning essays will be chosen by the Gazette staff, based on content and expression, in two categories; elementary school students and middle school students. Length should be from a few sentences for the younger elementary students to a few paragraphs for the middle schoolers. Primary elementary students are invited to submit drawings with captions as dictated to Mom or Dad.

Send your entry to The Bloomingdale Gazette, Essay Contest, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594, or e-mail to frazier1@tampabay.rr.com. Please include your name, age, school and grade, phone number and address. Entries must be received by Saturday, August 12. Good luck!

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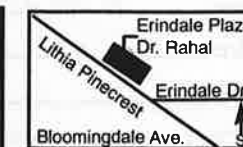
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Ages 10 and under.

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Haircut or  
Set & Style

One coupon per visit Exp. 9/1/00

## Bloomingtondale Senior High School News

By Mack Austin

### Drivers, be prepared!

All drivers, especially students and parents driving to school for the first time, should be prepared for delays. The widening of Bloomingtondale Avenue will take several more months, and the continued growth in our area will mean delays. All drivers must slow down, allow extra time for travel, obey the traffic laws and take extra precautions during bad weather.

Drivers are reminded that traffic flows one-way from the intersection at the light for drop-offs in front of the school. It is illegal to make a U-turn after turning in by the light. Do not drop off students in the school bus parking area. It is dangerous.

### Bloomingtondale PTSA welcomes new parents, students and faculty

The PTSA Board would like to extend a special welcome to parents, students and faculty who are new to Bloomingtondale High School. You are now part of one of the greatest schools in our state. The Bloomingtondale PTSA is very active in working with the administration, the faculty and the students in working to improve the quality of education at BHS.

## Our Kids Are At The Top of Their Class!

- Top rated academic program
- Versatile enrichment programs: drama, music, outdoor study, sports
- Spanish K-8, international travel for middle schoolers
- New 5,000 sq. ft. Media Center: Library, 2 computer centers, art classroom



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The Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin.

**Now Enrolling for 2000-2001 School Year**

## Bloomingtondale schools make the grade!

The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association extends congratulations and appreciation to the staff and administration of Bloomingtondale's top rated schools:

**Alafia Elementary School -- A**

**Burns Middle School -- B**

**Bloomingtondale Senior High School -- A**

### Congratulations!

The PTSA needs the support of all the members of the Bloomingtondale High family. High school is a very critical time in the lives of our young people that can include excellent educational opportunities, making lifelong friends and creating lasting memories. There are still some important committee positions available where dedicated, concerned parents can become an active part of our students' lives. Now is the time to get involved. Board meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm. Call 744-8018 ext. 263 to join this essential part of Bloomingtondale's programs.

### Reading program needs support

With the recent report of the outstanding progress on the FCAT scores, the Reading Program continues to enjoy success and needs your support. Magazines were collected over the summer months in order to give the program a great start, but many more are needed. Thousands of magazines are given to students to read as part of the program. Magazines can be dropped off at the Bloomingtondale Community Substation, at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenhaven, weekdays 8am - 5pm. Groups or clubs are needed to help pick up and deliver the magazines to the school. Please remove mailing labels.

Volunteers are also needed to listen to and assist students with their reading. Reading is scheduled each week on Monday/Wednesday/Thursday during second period (8:30 to 9:30 am) and fifth period (12:50 to 1:50pm). Each Tuesday, volunteers in the school cafeteria exchange candy for magazines. Call 74-8018, EXT 563 to become a part of this great program.

## Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association, Inc. 2000 Dues

\$20.00

Mail to: BHA; 3509 Bell Shoals Road; Valrico, FL 33594

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\*If you have access to e-mail, please include your address to register for free BHA e-mail updates concerning timely crime and safety advisories, planning and zoning hearings, school boundary change proposals, etc. If you have any questions, please call the BHA at 681-2051.

## Lawn CPR BHA sponsors free lawn maintenance clinics

By Basil Grussing

Did the spring dry season create brown patches in your yard that the weeds are busy filling in? Since almost all homeowners in the Bloomingtondale area have this problem, a volunteer group of homeowners, in conjunction with local businesses and sponsored by the BHA, is working at putting together a program for you. Local experts will help us understand how we can repair the damage of the past and keep the summer pests away from our yards. These programs will be held at the Culbertson Community Center in Bloomingtondale West on Monday and Tuesday, August 21 and 22, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. They will cover sprinkler installation, pest control, fertilization of the lawn and shrubs and general landscape planning.



We all know that the general appearance of our neighborhood impacts the property values in our area. If you aren't planning on selling now, chances are you will be one day. Your

yard's appearance, as well as the appearance of your neighbors' yards, will help determine how well your investment in your home performed. Also, in some areas, the deed restrictions spell out clearly that regular lawn mowing and weed control are required. To check your deed restrictions, sign on the BHA web site at [www.bha-online.org](http://www.bha-online.org). Go to the neighborhood sections and look yours up\*. We also think you will be very pleased with the other information on our area that is available for your use.

Since how our lots are maintained is a community-wide concern, and since we have so many different areas with differing concerns, we will work with neighborhood volunteers to get this information out to help improve our community. If you would like to participate in the project, please contact Basil Grussing at 689-1171 or [bgrussing@aol.com](mailto:bgrussing@aol.com).

\*Deed restrictions for some sections may not be available. They are currently being processed and will be added to the web site soon.

## MacDill Family Resource Center needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed to work at the MacDill Family Resource Center at 349 Pauls Drive in Brandon. People are particularly needed for Thursdays 2pm - 8pm and Fridays 12pm - 4pm. Please call 655-9281 for information.

**Get Ready for the 2000-01 School Year!**

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## Why do smart kids fail?

Your child can succeed in school. Our certified teachers help students of all ages build basic skills while developing self-confidence and the determination to succeed.

Weak Basic Skills

Frustration with School

Lack of Confidence

No Motivation

**HUNTINGTON LEARNING CENTER**  
*Your child can learn.*

Call 681-1500

FCAT, FL WRITES and BENCHMARK Preparation

Now enrolling for fall programs

**Bloomingtondale Community Substation Notes**

By Deputy Pete Maurer



Deputy Pete Maurer

**School starts on August 9**

Not long after this issue of the Gazette comes out, so will the shouts of excitement about school starting back, at least from the parents. But with this annual event comes some very serious concerns. The first and foremost is the safety of the hundreds of children walking and riding bikes to school, being driven to school and riding buses. I know of only one realistic solution

to providing them with the safety they deserve. All drivers must take the time to slow down, watch for the kids and make sure they have their seatbelts on!

**Stop both ways for school busses**

Hundreds of our children will be riding school buses. These buses do not have seat belts. The drivers have their



Traffic coming from both directions must STOP for school busses. Photo by Mack Austin.

hands full keeping these excited kids sitting down and holding on. It is the law that all cars must STOP BOTH WAYS for school buses. This applies to traffic on Bloomingdale Avenue, where there is no divided median. Drivers, give yourself more distance between the cars and especially the buses in front of you. Slow down.

(continued on page 16)



**TEMPLE**  
**CHRISTIAN ACADEMY SCHOOL**  
 2909 John Moore Rd.  
 689-7190

**Owner:** Ministry of Grace Baptist Temple  
**Director:** Ruben Nance  
**Ages:** Infants through Grade 8  
**Enrollment:** 100  
**History:** Founded in 1983

**Program:** Christian-based phonetic program using ABEKA curriculum.  
**Unique Features:** Back-to-basic philosophy with academic emphasis on math, reading and science. Computer, music and recreational sports programs also offered. Average class size is 10 to 15 students and all teachers have college degrees. The school's 5-acre campus is conveniently located in central Brandon.



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**TUTOR TIME**  
 Where children learn to feel good about themselves.  
**August 26<sup>th</sup> Sneak Preview**  
 10 am to 4 pm  
 3733 Canoga Park Dr., Brandon,  
**813-651-0779**

**The Dance Center**  
 Structured Curriculum • Professional Staff • Classical Ballet • Pointe Tap • Jazz • Acrobatics • Partnering • Professional Level Classes  
 Beginners through Professional  

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 Alice Holden Bock, Director 684-4282  
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**Children learn some pretty important things at Tutor Time...**  
 Tutor Time understands that nothing is more important than building a young child's self-esteem. So we have written our new curriculum, designed our facilities and trained our teachers to create a nurturing, developmentally appropriate learning environment. Children ages six weeks and up will not only acquire skills, but grow as peo-

**GRAND OPENING PREVIEW**

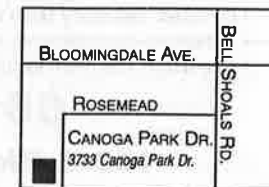
**Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**10 am to 4 pm**

See what everyone is talking about in Brandon. Visit us during the sneak preview of our new premier child care center.

**TUTOR TIME**  
 Where children learn to feel good about themselves.  
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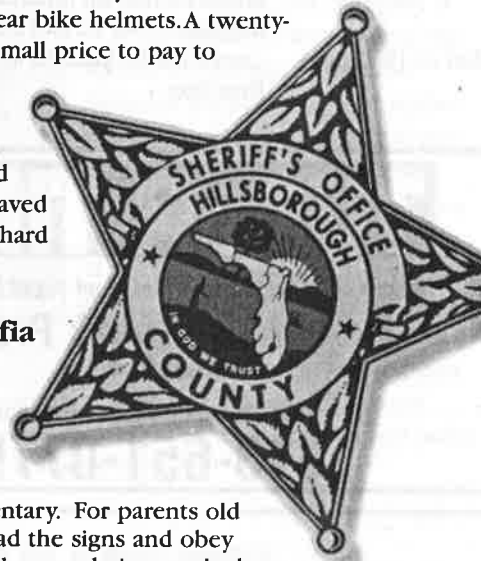


**Substation Notes**

(continued from page 14)

**Bike helmets save lives**

There will be many students riding their bikes to school, especially to Alafia Elementary. The law does require them to wear bike helmets. A twenty-dollar helmet is a small price to pay to avoid having your child becoming a statistic. Many incidents are on record about lives being saved by these pieces of hard plastic. USE THEM!



**Parking at Alafia Elementary**

There have been no significant changes to the parking situation at Alafia Elementary. For parents old and new, simply read the signs and obey them. Long-range plans are being worked to improve the situation, but being located on a corner lot does not leave much room to expand.

**Speeders will pay**

With the volume of traffic facing drivers this coming school year, especially with the construction on Bloomingdale Avenue, there will be no room for warnings. Drivers that choose to speed and run red lights will pay. Our new radar speed monitor will be utilized all over the Bloomingdale area, so be forewarned.

**Using neighborhoods to bypass traffic**

Several neighborhood streets that have been used in the past by drivers to bypass traffic have been identified and deputies will be patrolling them for speeders. Allow yourself extra time to get to work or school. Again, no warnings will be given.

**Bloomingdale Area Community Council seeks volunteers**

The Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) is seeking volunteers to represent several sections of Bloomingdale East and West, including Oakcrest. BACC members meet briefly on the 3rd Thursday of each month at the Sheriff's Substation on Bell Shoals Road to share and hear information relating to crime and safety issues in our neighborhoods. For further information or to volunteer for the BACC, please call the Substation at 635-8040 weekdays 8am - 5pm.

**Letters**

**Old Faithful spotted on Natures Way**

Q: On my early morning walks, I have observed some broken sprinkler heads on the west side of Natures Way and water gushing out of the system by the tennis courts. Would you please pass this on to "The Maintenance Guy?" And thanks for the constant efforts to keep Bloomingdale a wonderful place to live.

A: We forwarded your note to the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District (BSTD) and "The Maintenance Guy," Al Devney of DPMI, our Property Manager, also affectionately known as "The Guy in the Little Green Truck!" The BSTD is the agency that maintains our walls, entrances and common areas. Residents are encouraged to contact the BSTD as soon as possible when noticing broken sprinkler heads and the occasional geyser. Please refer to page 2 of the Gazette for BSTD and Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District contact names and numbers.

**Neighbor gives maintenance requests the brush off**

Q: Last year I lodged a complaint with the BHA about my neighbor's inability to mow his lawn and keep his house up. While he did finally start mowing his lawn, his reaction to the charge of not keeping up his house was to do some exterior

touchups with a few cans of white spray paint! Now it not only looks worse than it did before, it is an eyesore. If there's anything you can do, we would appreciate it.

A: BHA President Ted Grable says, "As you know, this type of problem is difficult to resolve. We will pass the information on to the Neighborhood Involvement Program (NIP) team to see what they can do." Volunteer NIP team members can help residents resolve deed restriction violations, county code violations and, in situations like this, just plain eyesores.

Q: We have recently relocated to Bloomingdale, and just received and paid for our annual membership to the BHA. We tried to search on the web site to find out what our deed restrictions are and how our area fits into your grand plan. When we did this, it told us there was no information yet. We really want to be part of the association and were told that we were. If we are not, can you tell us if we will be soon, or who has a copy of our deed restrictions at this time? We would also like to know what our \$20 goes towards. Is there a meeting we can attend to become better informed?

A: First, welcome to Bloomingdale. Your section is indeed one of over 40 individual neighborhood sections in Bloomingdale East and West, represented and served by the BHA. We would like to refer you back to our web site, bha-online.org for detailed information about our Homeowners

(continued on page 22)



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No appraisal on loans up to \$30,000  
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- Serving Bloomingdale since 1991
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### Choose to make a difference

With the help of a total stranger, family and friends of Stephanie Culbertson honor the teen, and the fragility of life, with the Stephanie Ann Culbertson Community Center

Story and photos by Mack Austin

We've all had those moments in our lives when we thought, "I'm going to see about ...," or "It would be great if someone would...," but for whatever reasons, we just don't seem to get around to it. That was not the case this time last year for Captain Scott Walter. Walter had just driven past the huge oak tree on Bloomingdale Avenue where friends and family had set up a memorial to Stephanie Culbertson, a Bloomingdale High teen killed in a tragic car accident at this very spot. He was concerned about the danger faced by the teens at the memorial. He decided to help them find a safer, more permanent way of honoring Stephanie's memory.

For the next several months Walter, along with Stephanie's family, friends and other concerned area residents, searched for a place where they could not only honor her memory, but also get the very important message across to the young people in our community that life is very precious and we are all mortal. A Hillsborough County Deputy investigating the scene of Stephanie's accident said, "It takes less than two seconds. If only she had her seatbelt on." That is how fast lives can change.

Deciding that he could make a positive difference by



This was the memorial set up last June to honor Stephanie Culbertson. It was located in a very dangerous spot next to the busy traffic on Bloomingdale Avenue. Friends and family, with the assistance of a total stranger, worked to find a safer, more permanent place.

assisting the family and friends of Stephanie was an important step for Scott Walter. He knew it would take time and commitment. As Commissioner Jan Platt said at the dedication ceremony for the memorial, "I respect the young people who would not take no for an answer." They believed in their project and persisted. This persistence came to the attention of Ed Radice, Hillsborough County Director of Parks and Recreation, who recommended that the Bloomingdale West Park building be dedicated in Stephanie's memory. Included with the dedication was a message to the youth in our community, "May they

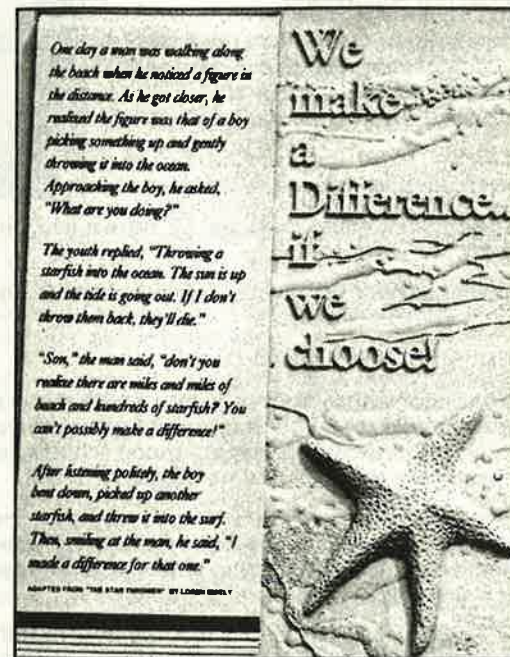
(continued on page 19)

### Choose to make a difference

(continued from page 18)

understand how mortal they really are."

One teen at the dedication said, "This dedication and celebration are also a memorial to the efforts and dedication demonstrated by Stephanie's friends and family and their love for her." Scott Walter took the time to make a difference in the lives of others. All of us have the opportunity to "choose to make a difference" in the lives of others by taking a sin-



The plaque presented to Scott Walter poignantly illustrates that we can all choose to make a difference in the lives of others.

gle action that doesn't require as much time as Walter's. Each time we get in our cars or with others in their cars, we can take the time to make sure everyone has their seatbelts on. Remember, "...only two seconds."



Stephanie's family and friends now have a safe, permanent place to honor Stephanie's memory and all our youth.

### SAFE program educates young drivers

To promote teen awareness of the critical importance of using seatbelts, a special program, "SAFE" (Students Alive from Education), will be offered at the Stephanie Ann Culbertson Recreation Center in Bloomingdale West. Paramedics present this special seatbelt awareness program to students and parents. The program graphically reveals the tragic truth about the need to wear seatbelts and not drink and drive. Dates and times will be announced. For more information, please call the Rec Center at 744-5907.

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**25% OFF**  
 Your Entire Purchase

Excluding rentals, candy and custom invitations. One coupon per customer per visit. May not be combined with any other offers. Exp. 9/1/00

## Residents on the defense with offenders

A Gazette report

On July 5, 2000, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) received an advisory from the Bloomingdale Community Substation that a registered sexual predator, Patrick Joseph Richards, had purchased a home in Bloomingdale East. On July 7, the BHA initiated a broadcast e-mail advisory to hundreds of Bloomingdale residents previously registered online for free BHA e-mail updates. Notices were posted at our community substation. Neighbors began disseminating the information by word of mouth and by distributing flyers in the community. These first steps of defensive resident action began to generate broad community awareness of the situation.

Unfortunately, a large number of sex offenders convicted prior to the 1995 Jimmy Rice act are exempt from current restrictions prohibiting them from living in family neighborhoods, near schools and churches, etc. Although Corrections Department officials do have the power to place limitations on the activities of those individuals (for example, no contact with minors, distance restrictions in proximity to schools, parks, recreation facilities, etc.), there are no legal restrictions as to where they may reside.

At the July 11 monthly BHA meeting, representatives of the Florida Department of Corrections and Bloomingdale Community Resource Officer Deputy Pete Maurer joined the BHA board members and a group of concerned residents to discuss the matter of Patrick Richards. Department of

### Patrick Joseph Richards

Address: 4006 Levonshire Place, Oakcrest Subdivision

Status: Registered sexual predator, ordered under parole supervision of the Florida Department of Corrections for a period of 30 years.

Offense: Lewd and lascivious behavior (coercive) with male minors.

Description: White male, age 37, brown hair, blue eyes, 5'10", 185 lbs.

Distinguishing: Mr. Richards walks with a distinct limp and frequently uses a cane.

Car: Silver 1980's model Cougar.

Restrictions: Absolutely no contact with minors, must keep physical distance from minors and places where minors congregate, including neighborhood schools, parks and specifically the Oakcrest subdivision's ponds.

Corrections Probation Specialist Carolyn Upshaw and Richards' assigned Parole Officer, Susan Williamson, addressed the standing room only crowd.

"Patrick Richards knows that the eyes of the world are on him," said Upshaw. "He may have no contact with minors. Although he is free to walk and drive around the area, he is instructed to avoid (placing himself in the immediate vicinity

(continued on page 21)



## Residents on the defense

(continued from page 20)

of any) minors." Upshaw indicated that Richards' convictions involve coercion of teenage males, with no prior record of forcible assault. BHA Board Member Mary Cummings commented, "By law, Patrick Richards has a right to live wherever he chooses. Bloomingdale residents have the right to live in a safe community. We also have the responsibility to treat this type of situation in a controlled and sensible manner."

Upshaw assured residents that Richards' actions are being monitored vigilantly. "Although we naturally would much rather have him living in an area less populated by children, there are two undercover Sheriff's Department Officers and a Department of Corrections officer residing within sight of his home. In addition," said Upshaw, "we will be making frequent unannounced drive bys and in-home visits."

"Anyone with concerns or suspicions about the activities of these types of offenders should make note of the situation, with a witness if possible, and call the Sheriff's Department dispatch," Maurer added.

Deputy Maurer discouraged residents from organizing protests and publicly posting flyers around the community. "There are other things we can do to deal with the situation," he said. Deputy Maurer indicated that County Commissioner Ronda Storms' office has been approached with inquiries

regarding a possible county ordinance prohibiting sexual offenders from moving into family neighborhoods.

Patrick Richards' attempts to move into a Seffner neighborhood earlier this year generated chaos and controversy in the community. BHA President Ted Grable acknowledged that, "Although this type of publicity can often spark a more negative than positive effect, we will continue to provide our residents with current information through our web site and e-mail updates. This is a perfect example of why our residents should register for free BHA e-mail updates," said Grable. "The Bloomingdale Gazette will continue to keep us informed of community news and issues on a monthly basis. But the most effective way for the BHA to distribute time sensitive advisories is through our e-mail system. We encourage all residents with internet access to register for BHA updates, and to share information with their neighbors."

### Important contacts

Sheriff's Non-Emergency Dispatch: 247-8200

Bloomingdale Substation: 635-8040, weekdays 8am - 5pm

Bloomingdale Homeowners Association: 681-2051

BHA web site: bha-online.org

BHA e-mail: bha@cyberrails.com

BHA meetings, 2nd Tuesday each month, 7:30pm at the Bloomingdale Community Offices, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Citgo plaza.

Commissioner Ronda Storms' office: 272-5740

FDLE web site: www.fdle.state.fl.us

FDLE offender/predator info: 1-888-357-7332

(continued on page 22)

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**Letters**

(continued from page 17)

Association and other important community information.

As for deed restrictions, you should have received a copy along with your closing documents. Some restrictions are not yet available online. Forty different sets of restrictions have had to be collected and individually scanned or re-typed. The restrictions for your section are currently being processed and will be available soon. If you have any questions, please call the BHA at 681-2051. The BHA meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Community Offices, 3509 Bell Shoals Road (just south of Bloomingdale Avenue in the Citgo Plaza), at 7:30 pm. We hope you'll join us at the next meeting.

**Residents on the defense**

(continued from page 21)

Residents are advised to check the FDLE website or call the FDLE information line (see box) for the addresses of other registered offenders that may be residing in their area. The database is easily searchable by zip code and/or street names. In addition, any residents who wish to organize and/or disseminate such information are invited to contact the BHA for assistance. Residents are also encouraged to attend the monthly BHA board meetings (see box).

BHA President Ted Grable says, "We will make sure that Bloomingdale remains a safe place to live through the cooperative efforts of our Homeowners Association, the Bloomingdale Sheriff's Substation, the Bloomingdale Area Community Council and Mobile Watch team, our communications mediums and, most critically, the support and volunteer efforts of our residents."

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<p><b>PAINTING</b></p> <p><b>Thomas Bratton</b> Painting Contractor</p> <p>Exterior • Interior Residential Commercial</p> <p>Wallpaper Removal Quality Workmanship Free Estimates</p> <p><b>Thomas R. Bratton</b> <b>813-655-3630</b> Hills, # Pa-2689</p>	<p><b>POOL CARE</b></p> <p><b>MAKE N WAVES POOL CARE</b></p> <p>Quality Pool Cleaning &amp; Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FULL SERVICE</li> <li>CHEMICAL ONLY</li> <li>SPLIT</li> <li>CUSTOM PLANS</li> </ul> <p>Keeping your pool clean &amp; clear, so you don't have to worry</p> <p>DEPENDABLE • RELIABLE AFFORDABLE</p> <p>PLANS AS LOW AS \$8 A WEEK <b>677-7502</b></p> <p>P.O. Box 2730 Riverview, FL 33568 Licensed &amp; Insured</p>	<p><b>REAL ESTATE</b></p> <p><b>Chris Hayden</b> Realtor</p> <p>Independently Owned And Operated By NRT Incorporated</p> <p>(813) 685-7755 BUS. (813) 654-3457 FAX 1-800-404-0117 BUSINESS Chay140@aol.com EMAIL</p> <p><b>COLDWELL BANKER</b></p> <p>RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE, INC. 1755 W. Brandon Blvd., Brandon</p>	<p><b>REAL ESTATE</b></p> <p><b>REALLY RECEIVES</b></p> <p><b>FRIENDS &amp; NEIGHBORS</b> 3248 Lihia Pinecrest Rd., Ste 102 Valrico, FL 33594 Office: (813) 651-5776 Fax: (813) 643-5776 Toll Free: (888) 270-7653 E-Mail: CC883@aol.com</p> <p><b>Ruth Creel</b> REALTOR</p>	<p><b>REAL ESTATE</b></p> <p><b>Home Sales Property Management</b></p> <p>Call <b>Linda Kay Nalle</b></p> <p>Preferred Realty Professionals, Inc. (813) 689-4298 (800) 432-1694 <a href="http://www.prpi.net">www.prpi.net</a></p>

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**NOTE:** Private Individuals may place a FREE 15 WORD AD here for the sale of personal items priced \$300 or under. Items over \$300 are only \$7 per ad. Call ARLENE at 662-1306 for information.

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**AUDIENCE/DISTRIBUTION:** 57,000 Community News Classifieds are published in all editions, with a combined reach of 57,000 select homes and businesses in Carrollwood, Northdale, Cheval, Villa Rosa, Brandon, Valrico, Riverview and Bloomingdale.

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Classifieds due on the 25th of the month for the following month.

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Mail: Community News; PO Box 271880; Tampa, FL 33688  
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Questions: 813-662-1306, Monday-Friday 9 a.m.—5 p.m.  
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