

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXX
Number 8

AUGUST 2010 • THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980



Photo by DAnn Lawrence White

A father explains to his daughter the fate of the Tampa police officers and the need to raise money for their families.

Helping the fallen

Big Belly Burgers and the Renegade Pigs Motorcycle Club partner for a fundraiser to help the families of two fallen Tampa police officers. See story, page 14.

INSIDE

School Is In

Bloomington Avenue is home to the area's first college. See story, page 4.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Weather forecast for tonight: Dark."

George Carlin



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We will be collecting school supplies for the children in need in Hillsborough County until September 1st.

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Brandon Regional Hospital

BRH HAPPENINGS: AUGUST/SEPTEMBER COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES

THE MOM AND BABY SUITES

(Please call for dates, times and locations)

Brandon Regional Hospital provides a variety of educational classes for expectant parents, including:

- GESTATIONAL DIABETES
- PREPARED CHILDBIRTH SERIES
- INTENSIVE CHILDBIRTH
- PRENATAL TOURS
- PRENATAL BREASTFEEDING
- NEWBORN CARE CLASS

HEART HEALTHY NUTRITION CLASS

Wednesday, September 1 • 2:30pm

Palm Room (located in the Brandon Regional Hospital Cafeteria).

This class meets the first Wednesday of each month and includes an overview of nutrition management of blood lipid/cholesterol. Review includes healthy low-fat suggestions, dietary fiber recommendations and dining out tips.

NUTRITION FOR CANCER PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

August 11, September 8 • 2:30pm

Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom B, Suite 260.

This class is held the 2nd Wednesday of each month and includes an overview of nutrition guidelines for cancer prevention and nutrition care during cancer treatment.

OUTPATIENT DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT

August 18, September 15 • 8:30am

Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom B, Suite 260.

This class educates patients on how to live and manage diabetes.

PRE-OP JOINT REPLACEMENT CLASS

(Please call for dates and times)

at South Bay Hospital.

WOMEN'S HEALTH SERIES

All seminars held at Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom B, Suite 260.

POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES TO HYSTERECTOMY

Thursday, August 5 • 6:30pm
presented by David Epstein, MD

PELVIC ORGAN PROLAPSE & URINARY INCONTINENCE

Tuesday, August 17 • 6:30pm
presented by Ignacio Armas, MD

WHEN DO PERIODS SIGNAL A PROBLEM?

Thursday, August 19 • 6:00pm
presented by Stephen Zweibach, MD

TEEN TALK PROGRAM

Wednesday, September 1 • 6:30pm
presented by Jill Hechtman, MD

FREE SCREENINGS

PERIPHERAL ARTERIAL DISEASE (PAD)

August 7, September 16 • 9:00am
Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom B, Suite 260.
By appointment only.

PERIPHERAL VASCULAR DISEASE (PVD)

August 28, September 25 • 9:00am
At South Bay Hospital. By appointment only.

COMMUNITY SEMINARS

All seminars held at Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom B, Suite 260.

EFFECTIVE SURGICAL SOLUTIONS FOR WEIGHT LOSS

August 26, September 16 • 6:30pm

presented by Alfredo Fernandez, MD

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<http://brandonregionalhospital.ballywhointeractive.com>

LAP-BAND® SEMINAR

August 3, September 7 • 6:30pm

presented by Lee J. Grossbard, MD and P. Krishnaraj, MD

LUNG CANCER - THE LATEST SURGICAL TREATMENTS

Tuesday, August 31 • 6:30pm

presented by Richard Picciocca, MD

SAME DAY SPINE SURGERY

Wednesday, September 15 • 6:00pm

presented by Larry Fishman, MD

ARE YOU READY FOR H1N1?

Thursday, September 23 • 6:30pm

presented by Rafael Martinez, MD

SUPPORT GROUPS

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

August 12, September 9 • 10:45am

Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom A, Suite 262.

CARDIAC SUPPORT GROUP

August 12 • 6:30pm

Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom B, Suite 260.

SURGICAL WEIGHT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

August 26, September 16 • 6:30pm

Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom A, Suite 262.

THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S MAN TO MAN SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, September 7 • 6:30pm

Oakfield Medical Plaza, Classroom A, Suite 262.

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free to Bloomingdale
residents on the first
Saturday of each month.

College opens in Bloomingdale

By D'Ann Lawrence White

Whether they're embarking on their first career or changing careers, Bloomingdale residents now can train at a college in their own back yard.

Southern Technical College recently opened at 608 E. Bloomingdale Ave., offering career training for students looking to enter electrical or medical office and billing fields.

At the 22,000-square-foot college campus, students can earn associates of science degrees in medical assisting, medical billing and coding, electrical trades, technology and applied electronics technology, including heating, ventilation and air-conditioning repair. The campus is undergoing a three-phase remodeling project that will include state-of-the-art computer, electronic and medical labs along with a library and administrative offices.

"This is for the nontraditional student who wants to start a career in a shorter period of time," said Southern Technical College Dean Walt Wilfong, "people who've already been out there working and want to start a new career or get ahead in the career they're in. It's for the high school graduate who's had to put his college on hold or for the older worker looking for a career change."

And, in this unstable economy, Wilfong expects to attract a number of students who have been laid off from jobs and are looking to start new careers.

The age of the students at the college will range from recent high school graduates to the 60s, he said.

"We researched programs that were needed in the area that employers were looking for and came up with these offerings," said Wilfong.

He said there is a high demand for medical assistants in doctor's offices, clinics and hospitals as well as a need for medical billing specialists to handle insurance and claims.

"And, in Florida, there's always a need for qualified air-conditioning repair technicians," he



By D'Ann Lawrence White

Southern Technical College recently opened at 608 E. Bloomingdale Ave., offering career training for students looking to enter electrical or medical office and billing fields.

said. "And our electrical trades technology programs are geared to Hillsborough County's requirements to train someone to become a journeyman electrician," he continued.

Those attending the college, for the most part, will be full-time, degree-based students.

Classes at Southern Technical College are structured for students to complete one course per month by attending morning or evening sessions from Monday through Thursday for four weeks of class. This "focused learning" method allows students to concentrate on one subject at a time yet still carry a full course load of three courses per quarter. This means that students attending Southern Technical College are able to earn their associate degree in as little as 18 months, said Wilfong.

Wilfong said the college offers a combined hands-on approach and traditional classroom settings. Students will receive in-

tensive training in their selected major core areas along with traditional general educational classes designed to enhance their communication, interpersonal and professional skills.

In addition, to offering required degree courses, the college offers general education and liberal arts courses including English composition, communications, introduction to humanities, philosophy, music and biology, college mathematics and algebra, introduction to psychology and sociology, principles of economics and microeconomics.

The college is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools and licensed by the Commission for Independent Education, and is a member of the Florida Association of Postsecondary Colleges and Schools.

The Brandon campus has submitted the appropriate application to Tampa Workforce Alliance and is currently in the process of

gaining approval from that agency, and it has the acceptance of the State Approving Agency for Veterans Training.

"With the veterans agency approval, we expect to attract a number of veterans from the Bloomingdale area interested in starting new careers," said Wilfong.

Wilfong said 21 students had enrolled since June 7, and he expects to have 30 students by the time classes begin Aug. 2.

Wilfong is a former Brandon resident, having served as a professor of Florida Technical College in 1995, during which time his daughter graduated from Bloomingdale High School.

The main campus of Southern Technical College is located in Orange County at the Florida Mall in Orlando. Additional campus locations exist in Seminole, Lake and Polk counties.

For information, call (813) 654-8800 or visit www.southerntech.edu.

[BSHS cheerleaders off to camp at USF]



Photo by Kim Wallace

Front: Taylor Giese, Alexis Davidson, Katie Williamson, Rachel Davis, Kim Wilson, Kristin Hawkins, Meaghan Placke, Brooke Lott, Bria Bequette, Kirsten Vadelund Back: Asia Dennis, Chyenne Dougherty, Bethany Wallace, Taryn Keyser, Michelle Rogers, Marina Intos, Mellanie Gallop, Ciara McLaughlin, Brenna Keeler, Danielle Griffith, Marissa Williams, Tatiana Suzarte, Sydney Gage.

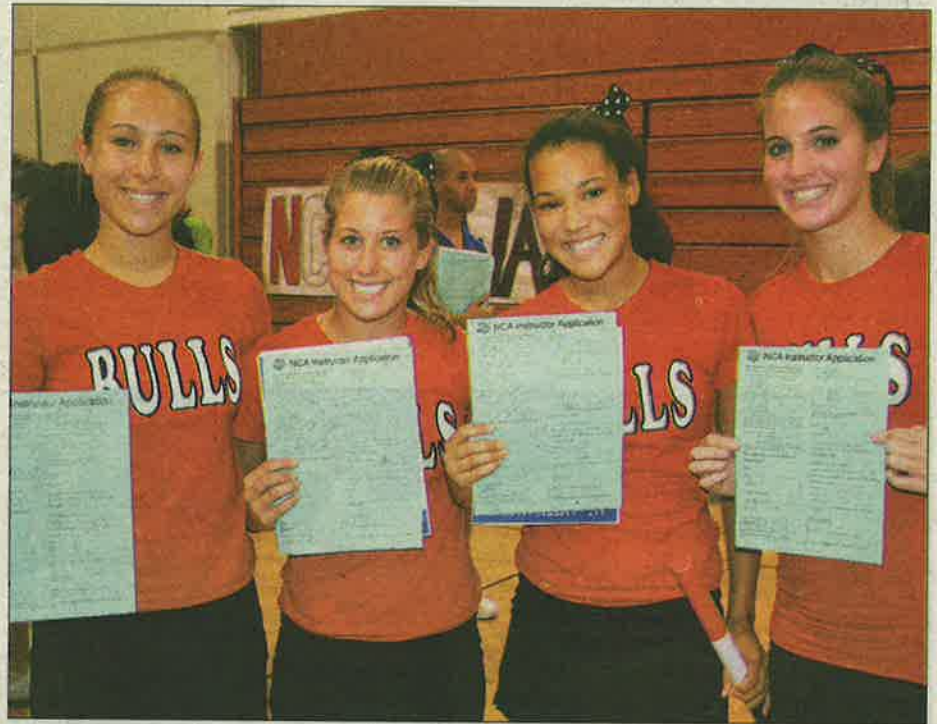


Photo by Kim Wallace

Taylor Giese, Kim Wilson, Alexis Davidson, Kirsten Vadelund applied to be National Cheerleading Association Instructors after graduation.

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Cartoonist inspires young artists

By D'Ann Lawrence White
Under the tutelage of Leah Lopez, two circles develop into a comical clam and a couple of humps quickly turns into

an animated banana. Lopez showed children at the Bloomingdale Regional Library July 14 that the simplest strokes of a marker can be used to

make creative characters using the easy-to-learn cartooning techniques she incorporates in Leah's Cartooning Parties, Inc. Lopez, a Town 'N Coun-



Parth Kulharni, 8, and Mehaz Chabra, 3, participate in the cartooning workshop.



Photos by D'Ann Lawrence White

Leah Lopez shows children how simple strokes of a marker can be used to create fun characters.

try resident, started her cartooning party business four years ago at the age of 16. She provides private cartooning parties as well as workshops at local libraries and recreation centers.

More than 50 children turned out for her recent

workshop at the Bloomingdale library, where she taught students how to draw several comic characters they could take home with them.

"It all began four years ago when a friend wanted to have a cartooning workshop at the West Gate li-

brary branch," said Lopez. "I did a workshop and, it went so well, I decided to turn it into a little business."

Lopez believes it helps fill a void since arts have been cut from the public schools curriculum.

See **CARTOON**, Page 7 »

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Photos by D'Ann Lawrence White

Tania Kazmierczak helps her daughter, Kayleigh, 2, draw her first cartoon.

CARTOON

Continued From Page 6

"I'm able to instruct children on how to really draw, and they love it," she said. "Anybody can do this. Parents even like to join in."

In addition to teaching cartooning, Lopez is an award-winning fine artist, specializing in colored-pencil drawings of animals and plants.

She also collaborated with Keep Hillsborough County Beautiful on the development of a coloring book featuring Pete the Pelican, Keep Hillsborough County Beautiful's mascot.

She's available for private cartooning parties and can be contacted at (813) 885-7941 or cartoonparty@hotmail.com. Her website is www.cartooningparties.com.



Morgan Sheriff, 3, was among more than 50 participants in Leah's cartooning workshop.

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Bloomingtondale High School varsity football 7-on-7 camp at USF

Photos by Kim Wallace



L-R David Dittfeld, TeShawn Mitchell, Donny Suchan and Quintez Bivens waiting for next 7 on 7 against Naples High



Bloomingtondale Varsity players warming up before tournament at USF.



Starting up the play, QB David Dittfeld gets ready to make a play with Adam Posateri and Charles Allen.



Wide Receivers, Kevin Click, Adam Posateri, Sean Minnifield, Donny Suchan and Charles Allen are all setting up for Quarterback David Dittfeld to be able to make touchdown

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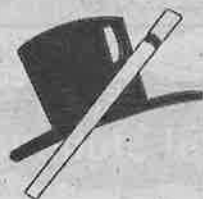
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Girls show grace under pressure

By **SHERRI LONON**
slonon@mediageneral.com

Paparazzi didn't plague the "catwalk" at a recent Girls of Grace meeting, but that didn't prevent the models from strutting their stuff during the Modest is Hottest fashion show.

The event featured members showing off what to wear and what not to wear to a Sunday Mass. Spectators, mostly middle school-aged girls, nodded their approval as models showed off their Sunday finest.

Howls of laughter tore through St. Stephen Catholic Church's ROC center as Camille Shirina, 17, and Katie Huettelman, 14, demonstrated what not to wear. Dressed as "gangstas," complete with boxer shorts showing, fake chains and faux tattoos, the two made it very clear

that street cred was out in the church fashion world.

Girls of Grace is a group designed for middle school girls by one of St. Stephen's parishioners, 19-year-old Allie Davis. While away at Auburn University this past school year, Davis said she missed home and started thinking about something she could do positive for her church and community when she returned to Florida for the summer.

"Middle school girls need someone to set an example," she said. "My middle school years were the worst years of my life. You're surrounded by all this peer pressure."

To help provide the support and positive role models Davis said young girls need, she and a team of high school volunteers put together the group. While it meets at St. Ste-

phen Catholic Church, 5049 Bell Shoals Road, Thursday nights at 6:30 p.m., the group is open to any girl in middle school regardless of their religious affiliation.

Girls of Grace meetings vary in their focus. From making cards for the families of slain Tampa Police Department officers Jeffrey Kocab and Dave Curtis to making homemade pizzas, the overall purpose is to provide girls a place to get together in a positive environment, Davis said.

"It's a good way to meet friends through God," said Chrystee Brinegar, 13. "I just moved here last year and I'm making new friends."

For Anna Marie DeCort, 13, the group is a welcomed change of pace. "The people are just so welcoming here," she said.

"I have a really good time."

High school core team members help lead meetings along with Davis' mother, Kim, who co-founded the group.

Shirina and Huettelman both say they are glad to be a part of the core team.

"I just love hanging out with these girls," said Shirina. "It's just good for girls to be able to ask questions of other girls."

"It's rewarding," added Huettelman.

Middle school youth minister Jeff Falanga is happy to have the new club in the church's lineup of outreach programs.

"This is amazing," he said. "To have this group is really a blessing. Obviously, there is a need here."

Kelly Goudreau, director of the office of religious education, is also pleased



Staff photo by SHERRI LONON

Camille Shirina, 17, and Katie Huettelman, 14, show how not to dress for Sunday mass during a recent Girls of Grace meeting.

See GRACE, Page 23 »

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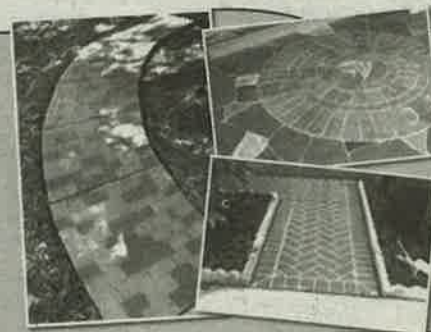
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Photo by Kim Wallace

Christ In Youth Convention at Lee University

Bloomington residents Natalie Schaedler, Ashley Parker, Whittney and Bethany Wallace attended a youth convention for senior students in Cleveland, Tenn., at Lee University. They are shown here with their church group from Horizon Christian along with seniors from other churches.

Think globally, act locally

STAFF REPORT

Volunteers are needed to spend a day at the beach on Sept. 25 for the 25th Annual International Coastal Cleanup in Hillsborough County.

The International Coastal Cleanup is the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to help protect the ocean and its wildlife. Each year nearly a half a million volunteers around the world spend a few hours removing trash and debris from beaches, lakes, rivers and other waterways.

Last year, more than 3,100 volunteers coordinated by Keep Hillsborough County Beautiful cleaned 110 miles and 435 acres of shoreline and collected almost 62,000 pounds of trash and 6,495 pounds of recyclables in Hillsborough County alone. Volunteers also found birds and fish en-

tangled in fishing line.

"Our ocean is sick, and our actions have made it so. We simply cannot continue to put our trash in the ocean. The evidence turns up every day in dead and injured marine life, littered beaches that discourage tourists, and choked ocean ecosystems," said Vikki Spruill, president and CEO of Ocean Conservancy.

According to the data accumulated by the Ocean Conservancy, trash in the ocean kills more than one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals and turtles each year through entanglement and ingestion. In 2008, the Ocean Conservancy reported that volunteers found 443 ocean animals entangled in fishing line, plastic bags, six-pack holders and rope.

The event will take place from 8 a.m. to noon

at locations throughout Hillsborough County. A list of these locations along with a registration form can be found at www.khcbonline.org closer to the event date. For more information on volunteering, becoming a site captain or sponsoring the event, contact KHCB at (813) 960-5121.

The event is sponsored locally by: AT&T, Covanta, Enrix Inc., Mosaic, Publix Super Markets, Inc., Tampa Bay Mariner's Club Inc., Tampa Bay Parrot Head Club, Tampa Hillsborough County Expressway Authority, TECO Energy, Inc., The USAA Foundation, Wheelabrator McKay Bay

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For more information about the
Emergency Center at Brandon Regional Hospital,
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New lawn watering schedule is twice as nice

Staff Report

Beginning July 1, Hillsborough County residents will have two days a week to water their lawns, instead of one.

It's the first time in more than three years that twice-weekly watering will be allowed. Southwest Florida Water Management District's governing board voted to ease the restrictions in response to significant improvements in the levels of the aquifer, rivers and public water storage supplies.

But take note - if you live in unincorporated Hillsborough County, erase all irrigation timer settings and throw away any reminders with the old two-day-a-week

schedule. The new schedule is completely different, and also departs from the general schedule listed on SWFWMD's Web site.

The new schedule for watering established lawns and landscaping is:

Addresses ending in 0, 1, 2 or 3

Mondays and Thursdays.

Addresses ending in 4, 5 or 6

Tuesdays and Fridays.

Addresses ending in 7, 8 or 9

As well as locations with no address, and locations with mixed addresses (such as office complexes and shopping centers),

Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The restrictions apply to all residents of unincorporated Hillsborough County - not just Water Resource Services customers - and most water sources. That includes private wells, and ponds or lakes that are used as alternate irrigation supplies. All watering must be done before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m.

Dividing the schedule over six days will reduce the heavy demand on the County's water treatment plants during peak times.

Residents may hand-water plants and shrubs, or use a drip irrigation system in landscaping beds, at any time. There

are also special rules for watering new sod and plantings. There are no restrictions on fountains, car washing and pressure washing.

Reclaimed water customers are exempt from the watering restrictions, although these customers are encouraged to use only what they need.

For complete information on the twice-weekly schedule, rules for watering new sod and plantings, and other restrictions, visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org/water, call (813) 275-7094 for a recorded message, or call the Water Conservation Team at (813) 272-5977, ext. 43991, during regular business hours.

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[on real estate]

Harder than it looks

With markets so rapidly changing, it's easy to imagine how property appraisers might sit in a darkened room, waving their hands over a crystal ball, and producing the mysterious and all-powerful document of a home's value. Let's dispel the notion of magical figures and look more carefully at the

process.

When comparing against similar properties, it's not just the final price that counts. Appraisers also factor in any "incentives" offered, such as sellers who pay closing costs or remodeling allowances.

Perhaps the most important factor that lenders review in an appraisal is

the closing dates of the "comparables" (other homes by which yours is measured). Unfortunately, with today's stricter lending requirements, most "comps" must have sold within the last 60 or even 45 days to carry weight. Markets change so quickly that any sale price over two months old may be

completely irrelevant.

Now a few words about how foreclosures in a neighborhood affect determination of value. Technically, appraisers shouldn't consider them because they don't fit the Appraisal Institute's definition of "a property reasonably exposed in a competitive market." However,

if several area homes have been abandoned, we know the negative effect that can have on a home's "perceived" value.

If you're planning to sell, express your concerns about the appraisal process to your representative, who will offer explanations and suggestions for improving your re-



Ray Chadderton

port's results.

Ray Chadderton of Keller-Williams Realty can be reached at (813) 601-0597.

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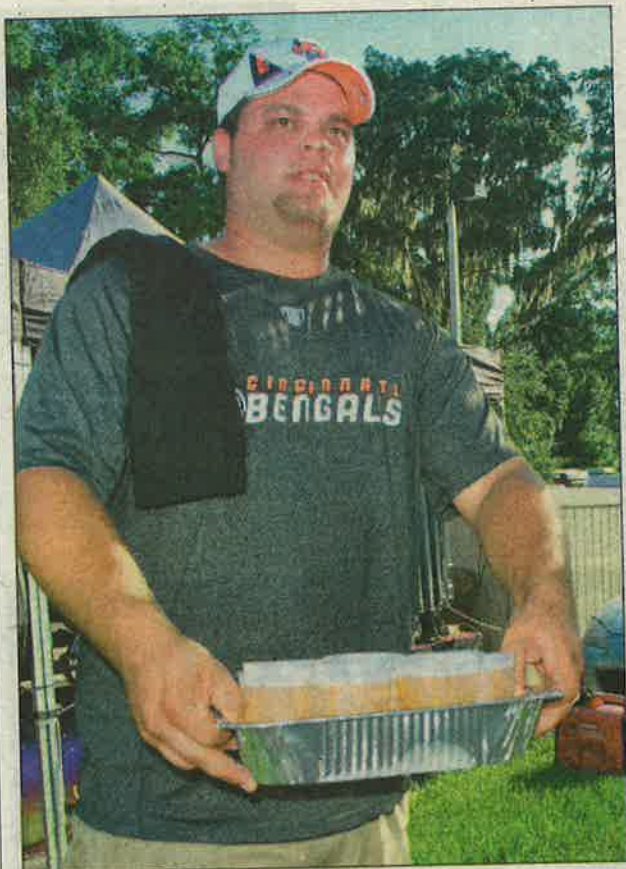
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Ricky Bobby delivers a tray full of beer, available for a donation.

Restaurant hosts fundraiser for fallen officers

By D'Ann Lawrence White

They didn't have to personally know Tampa police officers David Curtis and Jeffrey Kocab to call them brothers.

For the men and women in law enforcement, wearing the badge makes them family. And when a member of the family dies, they all feel the pain, said Chuck VanSickle, a Hillsborough County sheriff's motorcycle deputy and president of the Tampa Steel Swine Chapter of the national Renegade Pigs Motorcycle Club, a club composed of current and former law enforcement officers and firefighters.

So, when Curtis and Kocab were gunned down last month, leaving be-

See BENEFIT, Page 15 »



Photos by D'Ann Lawrence White

Photos of the fallen officers remind the crowd who the fundraiser benefits.



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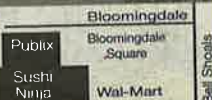
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BENEFIT

Continued From Page 14

hind grieving families, VanSickle said the motorcycle club members felt it was their duty to do what they could to help those families.

They approached Terry Haley, co-owner of Big Belly Burgers on Bloomingdale Avenue, about co-sponsoring a fundraiser for the fallen officers.

"The guys are regulars at the restaurant and came to me with the idea of hosting a fundraiser the Sunday before the event (held Saturday, July 10)," said Haley. "We were able to throw it together, with the community's help, in record time. I learned that there's a close fraternity among law enforcement and, once the word is out, it spreads quickly."

Haley said he was



Photos by D'Ann Lawrence White

An estimated 2,000 people came out for a fundraiser at Big Belly Burgers on Bloomingdale Avenue July 10 to benefit the fallen Tampa police officers' families.

proud to offer the venue the fallen officers. The the Renegade Pigs who and proceeds from the rest of the day's festivities were quickly assembled by members of

See BENEFIT, Page 16 »



Jennifer St. Hilaire helps her daughter, Jordynn Nevaeh-Blackburn, 1.5, sit on top of the family's bull mastiff, Diesel.

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Photos by DAnn Lawrence White

Sheriff's deputy Travis Wright counts out proceeds from the raffle.

BENEFIT

Continued From Page 15

where the public had a chance to dunk a law enforcement officer for a donation, win prizes in raffles, purchase memorial T-shirts, play games, enjoy performances by a juggler, the bands Soul Circus Cowboys and Double Barrel and sample beer, sno-cones, hot

dogs, Cuban sandwiches and Carvel ice cream for donations.

"The community has been great," said Haley. "I think we had a couple of thousand people come out."

"We were all affected by what happened one way or another," said VanSickle, who patrols the Brandon area with his partner, Travis Wright. "People think our families become rich



The event featured dozens of donated raffle prizes including an alligator hunt.



Eric King, secretary of the Renegade Pigs and a Hillsborough County sheriffs deputy, calls out raffle winners.

when we get killed in the line of duty. They don't. Our life insurance is usually our base salary. The bills don't go away when you get killed. These guys had wives and children." "It's incredible the way the community's turned out to help," said Wright, counting out dollar bills from one of the donation buckets. "We plan to do something for the officers every year," said Big Belly Burgers co-owner Scott Lindsey. "This isn't going to end today. We're going to keep raising money through the month and then we hope to have a bike ride or some other fundraiser every year."



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Department of health seeks help to stop the flow of West Nile Virus

By PAUL CATALA

pcatala@medlageneral.com

About five years ago, Darrell Copeland found one of his horses dead, a victim of the mosquito-borne West Nile Virus.

Although the Fort Lonesome rancher had recently had the horse vaccinated, apparently it was too late. He says he now adamantly stays on top inoculations for his livestock.

Although much of the immediate FishHawk Ranch area is somewhat urbanized, it is surrounded by woodlands, pastures, farms and wetlands — perfect homes for mosquitoes.

With the summer rainfall season in full effect, the Florida Department of Health is emphasizing the importance of protecting against mosquito-borne diseases. The de-

partment of health is working with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, mosquito control agencies and state universities to monitor for mosquito-carried diseases, including West Nile Virus.

Situated on 11.5 acres, Copeland said he started regularly inoculating his 10 horses about 10 years ago, starting with Eastern equine encephalitis. About five years ago, he started giving shots for West Nile Virus, which includes a vaccine for tetanus. He said the loss of one horse prompted him to stay vigilant.

"I think it's very important to have livestock vaccinated and keep it current, before it's too late," said Cope-

land, who lives with his wife, Stephanie and daughter, Paige.

The Department of Health is hoping more residents and landowners begin to take precautions earlier to help curb the outbreaks of the disease.

In a written statement, the Department of Health has offered prevention tips, called the "5 Ds":

Dusk and Dawn — avoid the outdoors when mosquitoes are biting.

Dress — wear clothing that covers most of the body.

DEET (diethylmetatoluamide) — use repellents with DEET repellent chemicals.

Drainage — check around the home and ranch and rid areas of standing water, where

mosquitoes lay eggs.

The department has also offered tips for properly using repellent, such as reading labels carefully before applying; using products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET; applying repellent to exposed skin or on clothing, but not under clothing; and keeping infants indoors when mosquitoes are present.

Mike Wally, co-owner of Fish Hawk Feed & Pet Supply in Lithia, said he store stocks West Nile Virus yearly vaccine injection kits for horses, which cost about \$38. He said he inoculated his five horses in July and reminded livestock owners to keep excess water out of buckets outdoors, keep high brush trimmed and to spray livestock with re-

pellent.

"Once per year and the shot should cover it," he said.

The Department of Health suggests homeowners also clean out eaves, troughs and gutters; turn over or remove empty pots; pump out bilges on boats; replace birdbath water and pet dishes once a week; change water in plant trays; and remove vegetation in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

Susan Smith, press secretary with the Florida Department of Health in Tallahassee, said precaution is the key to avoiding the illness. She said West Nile Virus is especially a problem in west central Florida because of low-lying areas and standing waters.

"We encourage the people to be proactive in protecting themselves against mosquito born disease," she said. "Wearing clothing that covers most of the skin and using bug spray are two simple measures that everyone can adhere to."

According to the state health department, most people who get sick from mosquitoes have mild symptoms like headache, fever, dizziness and fatigue and anyone with more severe symptoms should consult their primary care physicians.

For information, see www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/medicine/areboviral/index.html.

Reporter Paul Catala can be reached at (813) 731-1970.

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Map: Lithia Pinecrest Rd., S. Miller Rd., Bloomingdale Ave.

Horizon Christian Vacation Bible School



Photos by Kim Wallace

The Friday Night Closing Program at Horizon VBS was filled with parents and kids alike.



Bloomingtondale residents Zack, Sarah and Macy Martin singing along and enjoying the closing night festivities.

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Bloomington High teacher and resident Jim Masson looked like he was having as much fun as the kids during Vacation Bible School at Horizon Christian!

Photos by Kim Wallace



Horizon Christian, Super Hero Headquarters vacation bible school has a great turn out this year with 350 kids from the Bloomington, Valrico and Brandon area. From left to right are Steve Giese, Cooper the Dog, Amy Stanley and Jim Masson.



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It's time to play ball!

The Miss Tampa Bay Softball at FishHawk Fall Season will be starting in late August 2010. The league is open to all area girls between the ages of 4 and 16 and does not have any boundary restrictions. League games will be played at the FishHawk Youth Sports Complex on FishHawk Boulevard, across from Publix.

Online registration for the fall season begins July 16 and ends Aug. 25.

Evaluations begin August 28.

Teams will be selected and practices will begin Aug. 30.

League games begin Sept. 13 and end Nov. 19 and each team will play one or two games a week.

ONLINE REGISTRATION

Online registration opens July 16th and runs through Aug. 25.

If you are new to Miss

Tampa Bay Softball we will need a copy of your child's birth certificate and a signed, notarized, medical waiver form prior to playing.

Registration forms can be printed online and brought to one of our on-site enrollments, where we will have a notary available, or mailed to us already notarized. There will be an express line for people that pre-registered and are just dropping off forms.

IN-PERSON REGISTRATION DATES

Saturday July 24

8 a.m.-noon (FANG back-to-school event)

Wednesday, Aug. 18

6-9 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 20

6-9 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 21

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Registration will be at

the FishHawk Youth Sports Complex meeting rooms behind the Baseball/Softball Concession stand

For more information and to register online, please visit our website at www.misstampabay-softball.com.

Baseball Tryouts

The Bloomingdale Bandits 12U team is looking for one or two highly skilled players to fill out our fall 2010 roster.

Tryouts will be held on Saturday Aug. 14, at 1 p.m. at Bloomingdale Little League in Valrico. If you would like an opportunity to tryout or would like more information about our team, please contact banditsbaseball@tampabay.rr.com or Coach DJ. Peña at (813) 230-1874.

Grace Community United Methodist Church expands staff

A decade ago, the church met in a pastor's living room.

By **PAUL CATALA**
pcatala@mediageneral.com

When Grace Community United Methodist Church at FishHawk was formed a decade ago and met in the pastor's living room, its congregation numbered about 10.

In the last 10 years, the Grace Community, 5708 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, now has about 400 members and is growing. To meet the needs of the community and its growing congregation, four new staff members and service areas have been added.

The additional staff members is a good sign for the church and community, said J.C. Powell, Grace interim pastor.

"We're delighted to have these new persons on staff. They will bring a new freshness to our programs and impact the church in a very positive way," said Powell, who will be at Grace at least through August.

The new and expanded staff members and their areas of service are:

Loren Russell, associate worship leader (new). Russell, a graduate of the Evangelical Christian School, is a singer, composer, guitarist and keyboardist. He has been a worship leader at churches in Lakeland and Auburndale and started the Christian rock band "Terra Terra Terra."

Katie Kruger, nursery coordinator (new). Kruger graduated with honors from the University of South Ala-

See GRACE, Page 23 »

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State pushes to let drivers know about license changes

By SHERRI LONON
slonon@mediageneral.com

Anyone who walks into the Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office to renew a driver's license is likely to find the requirements have changed quite a bit since their last trip.

Courtesy of the state's effort to comply with the federal Real ID Act, a number of original documents are now required to prove identity. For some, the documentation is simple: a Social Security card, birth certificate and two proofs of residency. For others, however, the list can also include marriage licenses and divorce decrees.

Under the federal act, driver's license holders must prove their identity and provide a trail containing their birth name with their current legal name, explained David Westberry, communications director for the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

"What Floridians are seeing now is the final stage of the law that brings us into full compliance," Westberry said, adding that Florida was already taking steps to secure people's licenses long before the 2005 act passed. "Even before (Sept. 11, 2001), the state required you were here legally. Years ago when we introduced the new driver's license it actually embedded a lot of overt, covert and forensic security features that were the national standard to help minimize forgeries or fraud. We were well down the road to trying to deliver a document that was rare."

While the Congressional act is designed to bolster national security,

"This also benefits you as an individual. It is a tremendous deterrent to fraud and identity theft."

David Westberry

Communications director for the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

Westberry said Real ID also protects people.

"This also benefits you as an individual," he said. "It is a tremendous deterrent to fraud and identity theft. It is for all of our benefit that we're able to create this system and provide you with a document that really proves you are who you say you are."

To help ensure residents understand what they need to obtain a new license or renew an old one, the state has launched the Gather, Go Get campaign. This push includes a website that helps drivers identify the kinds of documentation that will be asked for when they go to a tax collector's office to get a license. The site is at gathergoget.com.

Since the new rules went into action Jan. 1, 2010, the Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office has fielded a lot of questions, said Nancy Millan, director of communications.

While the number of people being turned away from branch offices for not having the right documentation with them is going down, Millan said there's still a big need to make sure residents understand the rules.

"There's so many unique (cases) with the married and divorce situations," she said.

To help out, Millan recommends people visit the gathergoget.com website or stop by a tax collector's office before they need to

renew to see what forms they might need.

Westberry agrees. "Please don't make it a last-minute thing," he said, adding that state and county officials will work with people who are having a difficult time putting their hands on some documents. The Gather, Go Get website also offers information on how people can obtain the documentation they need from county and state agencies all over the county.

While Westberry acknowledges renewals might be difficult this time around, he said once a Real ID is obtained, the process is over.

"One time and you are good to go," he said.

To find out more about the new driver's license laws, visit gathergoget.com. More information on the license requirements is also available on the county's website at hillstax.org.

Hillsborough County is also looking for businesses and organizations to partner with to get the word out. Some groups, for example, have run campaigns to raise awareness among their members or employees. To find out more, contact Millan at millan@hillstax.org or call (813) 635-5200.

"I'm trying to get into anywhere we can get into," Millan said. "Especially where there's a large group of people."

Reporter Sherri Lonon can be reached at (813) 731-1976.

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[station notes]

There is a new location for the Community Station

It's been said that the only thing certain in life is change. Well, that has proven to be true. On a very short notice we have packed up and moved the Sheriff's Bloomingdale Community Station to a new location.

The station is now at 3622 Erindale Drive, at the intersection of Erindale drive and Lithia Pinecrest Road, next to the Car Wash on the Greens, in the office area facing Erindale Drive. The location is convenient to both District II and District IV areas with easy access to Lithia Pinecrest Road.

According to Community Service Officer (CSO) Sandy Capitano, "We are pretty much moved in but still have some technical and other small is-

ssues to work out - getting the station street signs moved and the front office sign installed. The office space is real nice with more room and enough room for the patrol deputies and detectives to have offices."

The old phone number, (813) 635-8040, is still good.

We will be having a formal opening ceremony some time the first of August.

We do want to thank everyone at the old location involved in making us feel at home over the last 12 years. It was a great experience there and lots of good team work and cooperation from the Bloomingdale residents made our

job much more successful.

We look forward to continuing to serve and protect from our new home. Drop by and say hi!

BACC - FIRST MEETING IN NEW LOCATION

Members of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) were able to have their first meeting in the new location. Special guests at the July meeting were State Representative Rich Glorioso, Det. James Howell and Dep. Cory Runnels.

Det. Howell briefed members on recent incidents in the Bloomingdale area. These included burglaries and

vandalism. The vandalism case involved a disgruntled employee from a local pool company who damaged company vehicles. The residential burglaries involved items stolen and then sold at the Bloomingdale East Park. This area is being given special attention. Any one noticing suspicious activity at the park is asked to call the Sheriff's Dispatch at (813) 247-8200.

Dep. Runnels patrols the Bloomingdale area from Lithia Pinecrest Road to FishHawk to U.S. 301 to Bloomingdale Avenue. He knows the area very well. Please don't be speeding or running red lights. You don't want

to meet him that way.

Both officers agreed that they need the cooperation and assistance from residents in the Bloomingdale to help reduce crime and keep our homes and families safe. Do your part by keeping your homes and vehicles locked up, especially garage doors and parked vehicles. Dep. Runnels emphasized, "If you see suspicious activity in your neighborhoods call the Sheriff's Dispatch at (813) 247-8200 as soon as you can."

Det. Howell added, "The quicker the call, the better chance of us getting the bad guys!" State Representative Glorioso noted the up-



Curtis Warren
Community Resource Deputy

coming special session for the State Legislature over the restriction of oil drilling off Florida's Coast. He emphasized that, "Getting the leak plugged and cleaning up the coastlines is the first priority!" He noted that immigration laws will also be discussed.

He asked that, "Anyone having trouble getting their driver's license renewed, especially senior citizens,

See NOTES, Page 23 »

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There are many opportunities this year to help you renew your efforts to save for retirement and stay focused on reaching your retirement goals. These opportunities include:

- Opening or fully contributing to a traditional or Roth IRA by April 15 to help maximize saving for retirement in a tax-advantaged manner
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Call today to schedule a review. We'll meet face to face to gain a better understanding of your current situation and discuss your opportunities to help move your retirement forward.

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Call Laura @ 813-892-0336 or Sandi @ 298-9632

NOTES

Continued From Page 22

can contact his Plant City office at (813) 757-9110 for assistance."

The BACC is always looking for new members. Send a member of your homeowner's association to the next meeting on Aug. 19 at 7 p.m. Get involved!

SCHOOL STARTS THIS MONTH - OBEY THE LAW

It is hard to believe but school starts back this month. Following are some very important rules that MUST be followed to keep all of our kids safe:

1. Drivers must stop both ways for school buses making stops for children on roads without median dividers. Example: Bloomingdale Avenue.

2. Drivers must not speed in school zones!

There are no excuses for speeding, especially in school zones. Speeding fines are doubled in school zones.

3. Notice: traffic fines have increased

For those drivers that don't slow down and obey the traffic laws, be warned - your actions will cost you!

Here are a few examples of what breaking traffic laws will now cost you:

- Running a red light = \$216

- Failure to stop for a school bus = \$191

- Speeding in a school zone = \$141 up to \$416/court

- Child restraint violations = \$151

- Not wearing your seat belt - \$101

Our economy is really bad, so save your hard-earned money - obey the traffic laws, respect the rights and safety of others and save lives?

Stay safe!

GRACE

Continued From Page 20

bama with a bachelor's degree in education. As a former activities planner at a retirement home, she planned activities that met the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of its residents.

Beckie Cossum, administrative assistant. Cossum is a long-time member of Grace Community and has been the director of the Children's Ministry at St. John's Church, Sarasota, and Grace Community. She has also been an administrative assistant, youth small group leader, youth leader and Sunday school teacher at Grace.

Georgiana Pinckney, children's ministry leader, preschool to fifth grade. Pinckney has a master's degree in Christian Education from the Union Theological Semi-

nary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Va. Most recently, she taught religion at Harrells Christian Academy in Harrells, N.C.

Cossum said she's not only excited about the growth within Grace, but also that the other positions have been filled.

A member of Grace since it began, Cossum said growth in the church showed commitment to making the community a better place to live.

"It's very exciting. We're in a great location with lots of young folks," said Cossum, who lives in FishHawk Ranch with her husband, Ken, and three children. "We're excited about all the opportunities to serve that Grace has now and in the future."

Bob Gibson of Valrico, lay leader with

Grace and a six-year member, said he hopes adding the new positions would better prepare the church and the surrounding communities for growth. He said the administration expects the church to grow to between 600 and 700 members within two years.

"You can't handle that growth with part-time people," said Gibson, who attends Grace with his wife, Debbie and four sons. "We're focused on growth. We're trying to be proactive with this staff and be prepared."

Grace has contemporary worship services at 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. every Sunday. For information, see www.gracecommunity-umc.org or call (813) 661-8858.

Reporter Paul Catala can be reached at (813) 731-1970.

GRACE

Continued From Page 10

with the formation of Girls of Grace.

"Allie is a true representation of what we want our girls to grow up to be."

For her part, Davis is happy to have a mother-and-daughter project that's meeting with such a warm reception. She's also pleased that high school core team members will be able to carry it on when she returns to Alabama for her sophomore year.

"I just want these girls to be able to stand strong," Davis said.

For more information about Girls of Grace, call the church religious education office at (813) 671-4434. The fall meeting schedule has yet to be determined.

Reporter Sherri Lonon can be reached at (813) 731-1976.



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