



# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

VOL. XLIV



ISSUE 5



MAY 2024



WWW.BLOOMINGDALE.LIFE

THIS MONTH

## IT'S FOOD TRUCK TIME!



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PLEASE RECYCLE

WINNER

2013, 2014, 2016,  
2018 & 2019

Hillsborough County  
Neighborhood  
Recognition Award

Best Communications  
Newsletter Category

“May is the month of expectation, the month of wishes, the month of hope.” *Emily Brontë*





# YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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**Elise Cruz Aragon**  
**Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette**  
P.O. Box 6313, Brandon, FL 33508 - (813) 681-2051

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



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**Tampa Bay  
Times**

## BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC.

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

Email: [Bl.Neighbor1@gmail.com](mailto:Bl.Neighbor1@gmail.com) Website: [www.Bloomingdale.Life](http://www.Bloomingdale.Life)

Follow on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Bl.Neighbor1](http://www.facebook.com/Bl.Neighbor1)

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

**President:**  
Suzy Watts

**Vice President:**  
Sean Donahue

**Treasurer:**  
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**Directors at Large:**  
Laney Balis

Kalyn Dukes

Bobbi Ferraro

Kiersten Sutton



Jessica Robertson  
BNA Office Manager

# BNA BRIEFS

## BNA CALENDAR

May 5 / Inaugural Food Truck Rally at Campo Family YMCA

May 28 / BNA Monthly Meeting / 7 p.m. / Bloomingdale Regional Library

August 6 / Music Bingo at Bullfrog Creek Brewery to Support Seeds of Hope

September 7 / Community Garage Sale

December 8 / Santa Visit

## JOIN THE BNA!

\$42 annually helps keep our community programs going. Please send your membership in today and be part of making Bloomingdale a great place to live! **Membership can be paid through PayPal!**

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



## A Note from the Editor

Summer is my favorite season of all. I love fall and spring with their temperate conditions, but nothing quite compares to a lazy summer afternoon. After all, it's the season for moms, grads, and dads – and as summer breezes blow in, take a moment to reflect on this year and a moment for yourself.

No matter what life has in store for you in this time of year, no matter where you are in your journey, let the warm sun and summer season give you a reason to pause for a moment and appreciate the things around you. Take that afternoon off with your kids and go to the pool; grill the extra hot dogs and don't skimp on the French fries. Life is too short to not take a minute and enjoy the things around you.

**Elise Cruz Aragon**

Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette

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### WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

As part of BNA's new initiative, welcome baskets will be distributed to new neighbors every quarter. Baskets come with coupons to local businesses and a rack card from BNA. If you would like to donate anything for our new and future neighbors, contact Kiersten Sutton with BNA. We're so excited to have you here!

### SLOW DOWN AND STAY SAFE

With summer coming into full swing, please be mindful of your speed in the neighborhoods and on Bell Shoals. Neighbors will be out and about in full swing – so do the neighborly thing and take it a little slow as you drive our roads.



Hillsborough  
County Florida

# TOWN HALL MEETING

Hosted by

**Commissioner  
Michael Owen  
District 4**



**Thursday, May 30, 2024  
6:00 P.M.**

**Hillsborough County  
Fair Grounds**

215 Sydney Washer Rd., Dover, FL 33527

**HCFL.gov**



## BNA Scholarship Winner is Announced

By Elise Cruz Aragon

Senior Sam Harrison is the recipient of the BNA Scholarship for the 2023-2024 school year. Harrison's accomplishments are incredible: he graduates with a GPA of 7.29, as a leader on Bloomingdale's drumline, a volunteer for ECHO food pantry, and so much more - Harrison is an excellent candidate for this award. Harrison has plans to attend the Political Science and Pre-Law program at the Florida State University, with aspirations to attend Harvard Law upon graduation. Harrison's motivation stems from his "desire to help those in need." In his own words, lawyers "are a gateway to helping people." As part of his program, he'll be living in the Life and Learning Community for Public Policy and Global Affairs, taking on a new perspective as he navigates through this journey. Congratulations, Sam, and best of luck to you in all your future endeavors!





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# Keeping Safe Around Water this Summer Season

By Elise Cruz Aragon

With the fast approach of summer, the smell of chlorine and saltwater beckons us to jump in to escape the Florida heat. But every day, regardless of the weather, there's 11 fatal drownings in the United States – and according to the CDC, it's the number one cause of childhood mortality for those aged 1-4 years.

Luckily, water safety is simple if you know what to look for. For starters, knowing how to swim prevents most accidents. For friends who live close by, the Campo Family YMCA offers swim lessons to swimmers of all ages and abilities at reasonable cost. For those who don't know how to swim or aren't strong swimmers, life jackets are a necessity – on the boat, at the beach, and in the pool. Those cute floaties you picked up for your precocious swimmer at Walmart aren't enough!



Of course, never forget that swimming with a lifeguard on duty is on more layer of protection. These trained professionals offer an additional layer of security for swimmers. For parents watching their little ones, it's equally important for adults to supervise their swimmers. Simply sitting by without actively watching can – and often does – lead to more accidents, as drowning is typically quick and quiet.

Fences should be checked to make sure young swimmers can't access water without an adult

present. Adults that cannot swim well should refrain from the use of drugs and alcohol, as these can impair the ability to balance, coordinate, or make good decisions. Make sure that when swimming, there's at least one other person present – having a buddy can make all the difference.

Lastly, CPR is highly recommended. While not everyone needs to be certified to swim, having someone on site who can perform CPR in the event of an accident is crucial, as those moments without oxygen can leave lasting effects. The 8000 nonfatal drowning accidents in the U.S. – 22 a day – leave lasting impacts such as permanent brain damage.

Drowning doesn't look anything like the movies. Here's some things to keep an eye out for to prevent drowning incidents:

- Typically quiet or noiseless – drowning victims are unable to call for help, as speech is secondary to breathing.
- Limited splash or flailing – drowning victims bob up, down, or with the waves, moving to the surface to try and get a breath, and usually only use their arms to pull themselves to the surface
- Mouths can be at the surface or slightly above – drowning victims inhale and exhale quickly as they rise to the surface, trying to get a whole breath in

It's important practice water safety no matter what body of water you're near. Staying safe this summer is the easiest way to ensure you keep having fun.

## MAY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

May is *Asian American Pacific Islander Month* and *National Wildflower Month*. Maybe you can plant local flora to be the next Yard of the Month?

**May 1:** Lei Day and May Day

**May 5:** Holocaust Remembrance Day, Cinco de Mayo, and our Inaugural Food Truck Rally

**May 7:** National Teacher Day

**May 12:** Mother's Day



**May 15:** National Chocolate Chip Day

**May 18:** Armed Forces Day

**May 24:** Last Day of School

**May 27:** Memorial Day

**May 28:** National Burger Day

**May 29:** Bloomingdale Graduation



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



# YARD OF THE MONTH

**ROSALINA COUGHLIN & EMMETT SPENCER**  
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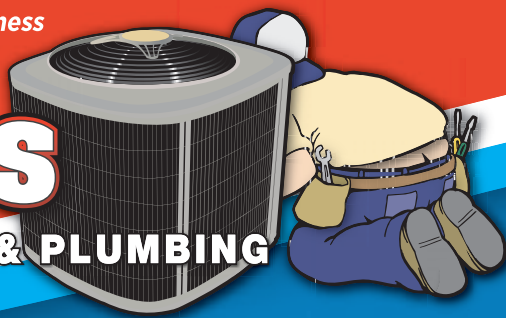
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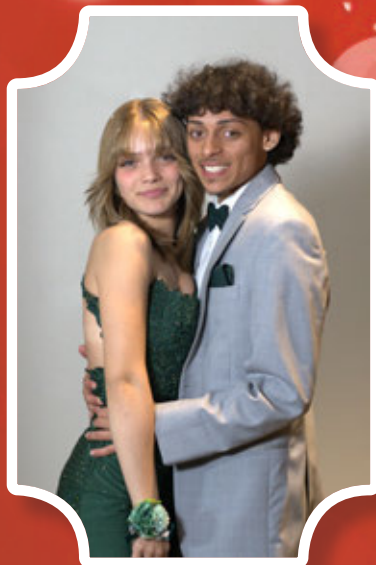
# The Illuminated Affair

By Elise Cruz Aragon

As is tradition, seniors and their guests danced the night away and crowned new kings and queens of prom. On April 20th at the Westin Tampa, students gathered together to celebrate their senior year and let off steam. Courtney Nguyen and Ryan Fidler were crowned Queen and King, and the music carried them off into the night.



## PROM 2024





## UPTOWN MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL

Saturday, May 25- Sunday, May 26  
Curtis Hixon Riverfront Park  
600 N. Ashley Drive, Tampa, FL 33602

One of Tampa Bay's premier cultural events featuring works of art and world-class performances from featuring chart-topping contemporary jazz and R&B musicians and renown visual artists.

Curtis Hixon Riverfront Park, 600 N. Ashley Drive, Tampa, FL. 33602

### SATURDAY LINEUP:

Rob Zinn and Andrew Neu, Kayla Waters, Jose Valentino and Charlton Singleton, DW3

### SUNDAY LINEUP:

Paula Atherton, Adam Hawley, Alex Harris, Eric Darius  
Saturday & Sunday Hours: Gates open at 2:30 pm Festival Hours: 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm

**Price: \$90.00 - \$500.00**

In addition to the music, an important element of the UPTOWN Music & Arts Festival is the Art Pavillion under the direction of Junior Polo, Vero Polo, LLC. If you are interested in displaying and selling your original artwork at the festival, contact Junior Polo, Vero Polo, LLC at veropolo@veropolo.com. RAIN OR SHINE - NO REFUNDS UEG Productions, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. **SPONSORS: Smoothjazz.com ~ VisitTampaBay ~ IMI Inc.**

## 13TH ANNUAL FORD INTERNATIONAL CUBAN SANDWICH FESTIVAL

Sunday, May 26 12-6pm  
Centennial Park  
1800 E.8th Ave, Tampa, FL 33605

13th Annual Ford International Cuban Sandwich Festival Sunday May 26th, 2024 12pm-6pm is where you can enjoy this FREE Family oriented cultural festival featuring Cultural, Business and Food vendors, LIVE CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT, VIP/ CELEBRITY JUDGES and the World's BEST Cuban Sandwiches in the WORLD! #connectford #Fordeventsteam

## MEMORIAL DAY COMMUNITY FEST

Monday, May 27 11-3pm  
New Tabernacle Church UPC  
6912 Williams Rd, Seffner, FL 33584

Are you ready for an epic Memorial Day? We'll see you Monday, May 27, from 12-3pm when we will share laughs, play games, a 3 on 3 basketball tournament and savor some downhome barbecue, Italian ice and so much more. Relax and enjoy the sounds of live music throughout the day. Bring the kids for bounce houses, pony rides and more. Connect with community members and forge new friendships. Find the details at yournlt.com/memorial-day.







# \$1 GOLF for Kids This Summer



# Let Your Voice Be Heard Proposed Energy Park Plans

By Elise Cruz Aragon

Are the kids driving you crazy and playing too many video games this summer? Want to have them do something healthy and learn a lifelong sport? Ace Golf is offering a \$1 summer golf practice program for kids age 4 to 15. Every day from June 1 through August 31, kids can sign up to receive a \$1 small bucket of range balls or a \$1 round of miniature golf each day for the whole summer. Kids hit the balls on the practice ranges and miniature golf courses at bay area Ace Golf locations. And, it's all just \$1 per activity!

"There are a lot of families out there that just can't afford to put kids in camps or they just want something productive to fill their summer", says Bill Place, owner of Ace Golf Ranges and Golf Courses. "We want to help, and hopefully in the process, we may find the next Tiger Woods!" How it works:

- Children may sign up for free at any of two Ace Golf locations in Riverview and Land O'Lakes.
- Each child receives a daily stamp card for a \$1 free small bucket or \$1 miniature golf each day.
- Each time the child redeems their free bucket, they will get a stamp on their card noting the redemption.
- Redeemable Monday-Thursday, open until 4pm. Not available Friday, Saturday or Sunday.
- No other purchase is necessary. Kids should bring a golf club with them or may rent one.
- A parent must accompany all children using the program at all times.

In addition to the Free Bucket or Mini-Golf program, kids may also play golf for \$1 when accompanied by a paying parent at Ace Golf's Plantation Palms Golf Club after noon every day starting June 1st through the end of October.

Ace Golf Range is located at 12910 Boyette Road in Riverview (phone: 813 672-7750). It is open daily until 10pm. The facility features a lighted Golf Practice Range, Miniature Golf, and Batting Cages. For more information, go to [ace-golf.com](http://ace-golf.com).

Ace Golf's Plantation Palms Golf Club is in Land O'Lakes (phone: 813 996-4653, website: [plantationpalms.net](http://plantationpalms.net)). It is open to the public and offers a public championship golf course, an 18-hole Miniature Golf, Mulligans Irish Pub, and a Banquet/Events center.

Ace Golf is locally, family-owned by Su Lee and Bill Place since 1993. In addition to the \$1 kids program, each location offers summer golf camps, clinics, and private and group golf lessons.



As the county continues to meet regarding the proposed changes to the planned Energy Park at the intersection of Turkey Creek, Durant, and Route 60, there are some important updates for you to keep in mind.

As of March 19th, the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners voted 6-1 to approve the consideration of HC/CPA 24-06, which allows for the potential future development of residential homes on that parcel of land.

According to Isabella Pike, legislative aide to Commissioner Donna Cameron Cepeda, the vote "does not approve the Energy Industrial Park development." Instead, it will "allow staff to do environmental and infrastructural research, plan more meetings, and gather additional community input."

The BNA believes that proceeding with the original plan for an Energy Park is the best and only viable option. Adding additional houses without taking infrastructure concerns into account is tantamount to hitting the snooze button on an alarm and hoping to wake up on time.

BNA President Suzy Watts states that the County needs to "honor existing plans," rather than attempt to add more residences in this area. "The area is rural and can't accommodate the traffic patterns. Without thinking about how to change traffic patterns, it doesn't make sense to add more homes, since it will only exacerbate existing problems."

Beyond the problem of traffic, there is a larger concern of contamination in the proposed site. According to a recent study, there is dioxin present in the ground water resulting from the phosphate mines in the area. To use this site for an Energy Industrial Park only would be acceptable, as there's not a risk to inhabitants in the area. It would be disingenuous to build homes on a site that will carry such a risk – and leaves open questions on future viability of said homes.

Make your voice heard at the next meeting. Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners will meet again at Mulrennan Middle School on May 21, 2024 at 6pm.



Hillsborough  
County Florida

SM



## Lawn Mowing App GreenPal to Expand to Bloomingdale

GreenPal, an app that connects homeowners with local, vetted lawn care professionals, is launching this week in Bloomingdale.

Nashville-based GreenPal allows homeowners to find local, pre-screened lawn care professionals. Homeowners can list their lawns with their service date and lawn care needs. Vetted lawn care pros can then bid on their properties based on Google Street and aerial images and any other lawn details the homeowner provides. Homeowners can then select who they want to work with based on the vendor's ratings, reviews, and price.

Once a vendor has completed the service, the lawn care pro will send a time-stamped photo of the completed work. Homeowners can then pay via the app and set up more appointments.

"After successfully launching in 250 other markets, we are excited to help homeowners in Bloomingdale find reliable, safe, and local lawn care," said co-founder Gene Caballero.

Nashville-based GreenPal currently operates in Chicago, Charleston, Houston, OKC, Los Angeles, San Jose, Orlando, Fresno, New Orleans, Sacramento, Miami, Louisville, Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, Tampa, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Denver, Baltimore, Detroit, and St. Louis. To visit GreenPal, go to [yourgreenpal.com](http://yourgreenpal.com) and search for Bloomingdale.

## UBER FOR LAWN CARE LAUNCHING THIS WEEK!



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**PEOPLE'S CHOICE BEST OF THE BEST** (2023, 2022, 2021, 2020) - Tampa Bay Times

# The Food Trucks Are Coming! The Food Trucks Are Coming!

By yElise Cruz Aragon

Mark your calendars and get ready to chow down! Bloomingdale's first-ever Food Truck Rally is coming to the Campo YMCA parking lot on May 5th. You can find delicious treats from these vendors between 11 and 2 pm:

- Bacon Egg & Cheese – NY style breakfast sandwiches
- Mz Judy's Soul-Full Kitchen - Soul Food
- 2 Rowdy Roosters  
Chicken in all types of ways... but especially chicken and waffles!
- Tervone's Kitchen  
Homestyle goodies like fried snapper, empanadas, and gumbo
- Phoenix23 – All-American diner food such as burgers and fries, under \$8
- Crunchie Cravings Brandon - Freeze-dried candy
- Frios Pops - Fruit popsicles
- Bruster's - Shaved ice



Director Laney Balis, the lead for the event, says that she's "...thrilled that this event is coming along with so many food trucks interested. We have a good mix of food and can't wait to hang out with fellow residents." As always, the BNA is ready to celebrate good times with the community – so make your way out to see us and spend some time with your neighbors. The BNA is so excited to see you there!



## Duck in to Support Second Annual National Make-A-Wish® Campaign

During the 8-week Campaign, Duck Donuts Guests Can Roundup Their Change or Purchase Special-Edition Wish Rubber Duck to Support Their Local Make-A-Wish Chapter

MECHANICSBURG, PA. (April 22, 2024) – Duck Donuts, known for serving Warm, Delicious and Made to Order® donuts, is delighted to announce the launch of its annual national Quack Gives Back partnership with Make-A-Wish, a global nonprofit organization whose mission is to grant life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

Now through June 16, Duck Donuts guests can help transform lives for children in their local communities by purchasing the special-edition Wish Rubber Duck. The blue and white rubber duck can be purchased for \$3 in-shop, while supplies last. For each duck adopted, \$1 will be donated to support Make-A-Wish. Guests can also donate to the cause when they place an online order or by rounding up their change in-shop.

"Duck Donuts is delighted and honored to be kicking off our annual campaign supporting our national Quack Gives Back partner, Make-A-Wish," said Betsy Hamm, CEO of Duck Donuts. "Last year, thanks to our system-wide efforts and support from the local communities we serve, Duck Donuts was able to help grant life-changing wishes for children living with critical illnesses. This year, we look forward to continuing to build on the support and give back to each shop's local Make-A-Wish Chapter, one duck at a time."

Each wish makes a powerful and lasting impact on every child, volunteer, supporter, and community that experiences it. Since its founding in 1980, Make-A-Wish has granted more than 375,000 wishes for children with critical illnesses in the U.S. and more than 585,000 wishes globally.

"We are delighted that Duck Donuts is supporting World Wish Month and beyond. As a partner and WishMaker, their contribution helps us to empower children to reclaim their childhood and believe in brighter days ahead," said Leslie Motter, president and CEO of Make-A-Wish America. "With their unwavering dedication to the Make-A-Wish mission, we are one step closer to our shared vision of granting the wish of every eligible child."

For more information about the partnership, visit <https://www.duckdonuts.com/about-us/wish/>.



# DUCK DONUTS®





# Knocking it Out of the Park

By Ava Cipriano



Bloomington's softball team crushes it this season with a 20-0 winning streak. The girls are really taking off this season. The takeoff of the season has just began, and this team's number of wins just keep increasing. Their dedication, and non-stop grind at practice is finally paying off.

When asked what the difference was between Bloomington's team and any other team, sophomore Marley Boucher said, "Bloomington has the drive and passion". Without both of those things, a team cannot succeed, but Bloomington has that under control. Following up she says that they have had, "a lot of comebacks in the seventh innings." Their hunger to win is in every game they play, in spite of all obstacles. They keep overcoming situations that originally were not in their favor, and still manage to come out on top.

Another thing this team has is family, and they are genuinely close. They work well together so they can get the outcome they are working for every day. Junior Natalie Cable says that "we have that winning mentality." They do, when seeing how they have run up their score in all their games played so far. Throughout these games in any situation, they still manage to grow. Every game they take what had happened and strive to be better the next time.

Softball is not just physical; it is also mental. This is a game of failure, and you cannot succeed without being involved one hundred percent. Based on what Bloomington's softball team has done this year, you can simply say that they are in it to win it. Recently, they entered the Bay Made Fast Pitch Tournament, and of course won! During this tournament they truly displayed their talents and abilities even though it was challenging. Keep the streak going, Lady Bulls, and good luck with the rest of the season!



## Do You Own a Rental Home or Investment Property? Are You Tired of Self-Managing and Ready to Enjoy Your LIFE?

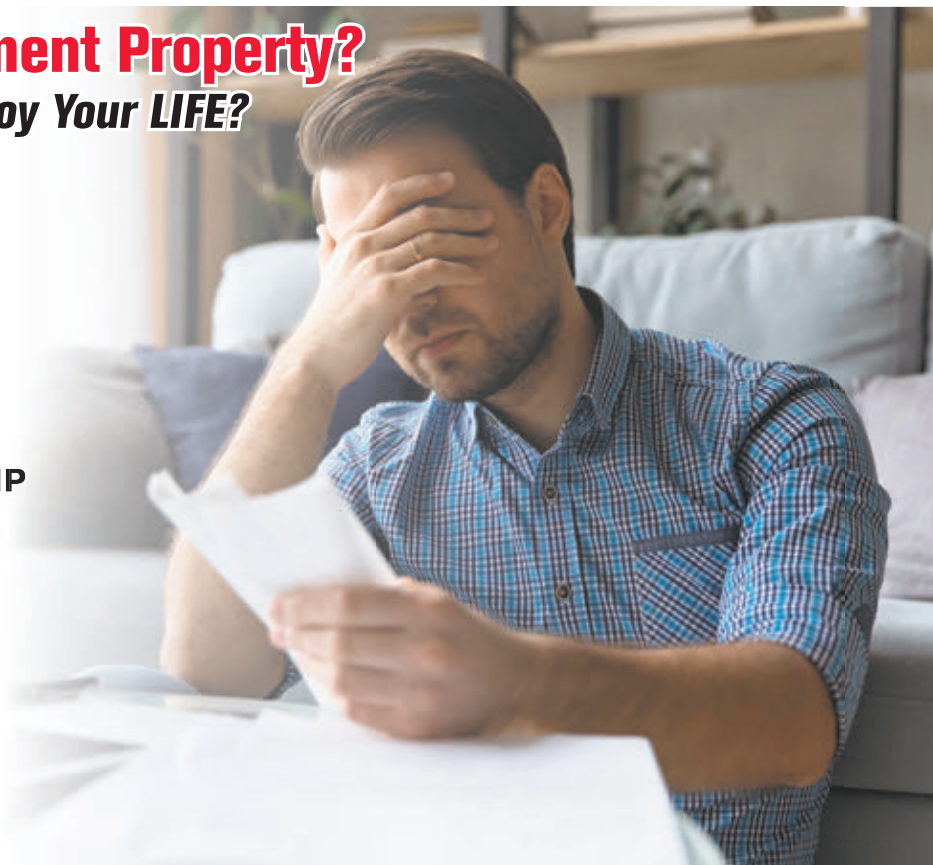
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# Congratulations to Our Signed Bloomingdale Athletes

By Elise Cruz Aragon

On April 18th, 17 Bloomingdale athletes gathered in the auditorium to celebrate their signing for college. These athletes hailed from all over the athletic spectrum, earning prestigious scholarships for their athleticism and contributions to their sports over the course of their high school career.

Bloomington's volleyball team saw three of their athletes sign with Florida colleges. Camila De Jesus and Alexia Goderich both signed with South Florida State College, Gianna Matthews with St Petersburg College, and Soraya Hall with SUNY Maritime College. These ladies took their team to States this year in a historic season for Bloomington, and we couldn't be prouder of their accomplishments.

Four athletes representing the as-yet undefeated Lady Bulls in softball also signed. Miranda Dilling and Camryn Nolte head to Florida Southern College, while Amy Kinnard and Camryn VanGalder will play for Lake Sumter State College and Santa Fe Community College, respectively.

Students heading out of state also signed on Thursday. Soccer captain Mackenzie Langlo signed with McDaniel College for soccer next year and will compete as part of the Green Terror family, and Aidric Provencher signed with Washington & Jefferson College for lacrosse in the fall. Flag Football was also represented, with Katie Dorries signing with Milligan University.

Lady Bulls basketball star Skyler Ferrante signed with Greenville University, and baseball's Luke Rossi signed with Greensboro College. Soccer players Jeffrey "Adler" Stone and Zayne Hydock signed with Warner University and Huntington University, respectively.

Bloomington's track team saw two of their athletes sign. Kaimen McDowell will race for Southeastern University, and Jonathan Schilling will throw in the javelin for North Greenville University.

Best of luck to these athletes as they move forward in their endeavors! We know you'll make the Bloomington community proud in everything you do.







# Hitting the Bulls Eye in the Buck Eye State

By Grace Miller

Bloomington Air Force JROTC marksmanship team won third place at the National Marksmanship competition in Ohio out of every Air Force team in the nation. On March 20th-24th the Bloomington AFJROTC marksmanship team attended the National shooting competition in Ohio. They got the opportunity to compete against every branch of JROTC for a chance to win a national title. The team members, Angelo Arena, Matthew Janes, Yarellie Martinez, Emily Soto, and Elizabeth

Feldbauer all shot for individual scores, and to help their team score. In the end, they came in 24th place out of all the branches in attendance, and third place of all the Air Force teams. This group went out and made Bloomington, and their unit proud.

Great job Bulls!



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