

# The BLOOMINGDALE Gazette

Volume XXII, Number 12

The Official Publication of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association

www.bloomingtongazette.com

December 2001



## SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

Photo courtesy North Pole

Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 13th annual visit to Bloomingdale on Saturday, Dec. 8, at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Sun Trust Bank Plaza. For details see page 19.



## Rajun Bulls Take High Honors

Photo courtesy Bloomingdale Band Boosters

Bloomingdale High Rajun' Bull band members are all smiles; they earned a superior rating at the marching band festival held at the school last month. See story on page 12.



## In This Issue:

- New Gazette Web Site, 2
- Welcome To Bloomingdale, 7
- Property Manager's Report, 8
- Car Seat Checks, 9
- Substation Notes, 10
- Restaurant Review, 11
- Community Council Update, 13
- Yard Of The Month, 14
- Your Inside Connections, 15
- Students Fly The Flag, 16

## Featured Story:

**Free Home Improvement Classes.**

See page 5

**New Gazette Publisher, Home Delivery.** See page 2.



## Bloomington Gazette Gets New Publisher, Home Delivery

By Laura Frazier, Editor

The Bloomington Homeowners Association and the Gazette staff are pleased to announce that as of December 2001, The Bloomington Gazette, the official newspaper of the BHA since 1980, will be published by Sunbelt Newspapers. Sunbelt publishes The Brandon News, South Tampa News, South Shore News, Temple Terrace

News, Carrollwood News, The Sun and The Plant City Shopper.

Our new partnership with Sunbelt and parent company Media General will enable us to increase the efficiency and consistency of Gazette home delivery. Beginning in December, the Gazette will be delivered on the first Saturday of each month to every Bloomington home. Tribune subscribers will receive a

copy of the Gazette packaged with their regular paper. Non-subscribers will receive the Gazette and a complimentary copy of The Tampa Tribune.

Some things have not changed. The Bloomington Gazette, our official community newspaper for over 20 years, will be delivered monthly to nearly 5,000 Bloomington area homes and businesses. The Gazette

staff will remain the same, with the same commitment to providing our residents with news, information and an official voice.

If you would like to submit comments about the new Gazette format or delivery system, please contact us at (813) 681-2051 or by e-mail at [letters@bloomingtongazette.com](mailto:letters@bloomingtongazette.com).

For ad inquiries, contact Susie Howell at (813) 689-7764.

## Fire Station No. 27 Ready To Respond

By Mack Austin

The tragic events of Sept. 11 showed us what it means to be fully dedicated to serving and protecting others. Such is the life of a fireman, emergency medical technician or paramedic. They certainly don't go through rigorous training and pressure for the great work hours or the pay. Most say it's for something you have to feel inside, not put in your pocket.

We are very fortunate to have one such group of dedicated professionals in the Bloomington area. They're the Bloomington Valrico Volunteer Fire Department.

Each fireman, EMT and paramedic has to go through the same intensive, demanding training and preparation that those in the big cities do. Saving lives is the same everywhere. It takes the same teamwork and professional skills, and the same dedication to duty and concern for others.

At the station's open house held this fall, members of our community had the opportunity to meet and see first hand how our local firemen, EMTs and paramedics train and prepare for emergencies.

Station 27's board of directors president Francis Michael and Fire Chief Jeffrey Hazzard were very pleased with the open house turnout. Hazzard said, "It's



Mack Austin/Photo

Bloomington Volunteer Fire Department Station 27 opens its doors to the community and to potential volunteer firefighters. From the left, Courtney Jackson, Will Awres and Alex Stock attended the station's open house this fall.

really great for the kids. They get to see firemen up close, climb on the engines and have a good time. We enjoy having families visit our station and get to know us."

Hillsborough County furnishes the fire station, fire fighting equipment and maintenance on the building and equipment. The BVFD has to furnish the chief's truck and the most important part of the department — the volunteers.

Michael said, "We currently have 21 volunteers. We need at least 35 to maintain the best operational capability. We need volunteers."

Volunteers can be male or

female and must be in good physical condition, with no criminal record.

"Flexibility with schedules is a must since we are manned 24/7/365," Michael said. "This type of work is a great first step for a young man or woman looking to become a fireman, EMT or paramedic. Volunteers who complete their training are reimbursed."

And then there's the personal satisfaction that comes with protecting and saving other lives, something you just can't put a price on. If you want to pursue a really rewarding career, give Hazzard a call at (813) 744-5906.

## BHA Web Site Has New Address, Features

By Rodney Biddle  
BloomingtonGazette.com  
Webmaster

The Bloomington Homeowners Association and The Bloomington Gazette are proud to announce the release of our new community web site, [BloomingtonGazette.com](http://BloomingtonGazette.com).

The association's web site has been redesigned by CyberRails.com, with a cleaner look and new features including classifieds ads, area business listings, and real estate listings.

The new site continues to provide Bloomington area news, events and announcements. Continuing exclusive features include current and archived articles from our print edition, homeowners association community polls, deed restrictions listed by neighborhood, and a comprehensive list of helpful links to Bloomington area and Hillsborough County sites.

We hope you'll visit our redesigned community site and let us know what you think.

If you have any questions or comments, or wish to submit events, announcements or letters for publication, please call (813) 661-8860 or e-mail [letters@BloomingtonGazette.com](mailto:letters@BloomingtonGazette.com).

## Expressing Our Gratitude To Those Who Protect, Serve

By Mack Austin

The Bloomington community is home to hundreds of active duty, reserve and national guard military personnel, plus law enforcement officers, fire/rescue and emergency medical technicians, doctors, nurses, hospital support staff, county workers, federal employees including postal workers — all with families.

This holiday season will most definitely be different for all of these folks and their families.

Many military families will be separated by thousands of miles due to overseas deployments and active duty tours.

Many will work very long hours throughout the holidays because of security assignments and shortages due to their coworkers also serving in the military.

Those who provide our emergency services will also



Mack Austin/Photo

At the Station 27 open house last month, Bloomington volunteer firefighter Ron Campbell showed Grant Brus how to crawl properly to escape a burning building.

be pulling extended shifts to insure we are provided the care we need.

Their families will have to adjust, as many of them have before.

It is particularly difficult during the holidays, especially for the young children looking forward to Christmas, and for the grandparents hoping for that special

visit.

Those who work in these professions do so because they chose to serve and protect.

As you come in contact with them, take the time to say "Thanks!" and shake their hands.

For those deployed, if you can, get their address and drop them a note of gratitude.

When you can, provide assistance to their families and make sure they're safe and cared for.

We are a nation at war, but we can, should, and must celebrate and enjoy this holiday season! It is one of the many freedoms we as Americans are privileged to have.

We cannot and must not let any terrorist take it away from us. We have highly skilled, well-trained and dedicated professionals providing us with security and care. We must show them our gratitude for their service and dedication.

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# County Plans Intersection Improvements

By Mack Austin

County officials recently completed a series of public workshops that gave residents an opportunity to help identify and prioritize needed intersection improvements.

Members of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council worked with Scott Cottrell, manager of Public Works' Design and Engineering support section. Cottrell was very receptive to the council's inputs. County officials provided the following information about some of the Bloomingdale area's most heavily traveled intersections.

Improvements to the intersection of Bloomingdale Avenue at Bell Shoals Road were initially on the fiscal year 2001 plan, but were removed due to roadway widening and improvements in progress. Lithia Pinecrest Road at Bloomingdale Avenue is also part of the current road-widening project, and will not be considered for further improvements at this time.

Lithia Pinecrest Road at



Mack Austin/Photo

The intersection of Lithia Pinecrest Road and Erindale Avenue is one of many Bloomingdale area intersections being reviewed for inclusion in the County's Intersection Master Plan.

Erindale Drive is currently being evaluated and will be prioritized in the master plan.

Previously planned improvements to the crossroads of Bloomingdale Avenue and

Springvale Avenue are in progress, and no others are planned at this time.

Four other Bloomingdale area intersections not currently in the program will be considered in future updates

of the master plan, including Bell Shoals Road at Garne Drive, Bell Shoals Road At Glenhaven, Lithia Pinecrest Road at Guiles Road and Bloomingdale Avenue at Hurley Road.

## Free Web Site Offers Real Estate Listings, More

A Gazette Report

MyBloomingdale.com, a new web site featuring local events, news, classified ads and business and real estate listings, debuted online in October.

Bloomingdale resident and Realtor Michael Davis sponsors the site, but said its scope goes far beyond real estate ads.

"The best thing about MyBloomingdale is that it's full of useful community resources and it's all free," Davis said.

The real estate section of the site allows homebuyers to search listings for Bloomingdale East and West homes for sale.

Homeowners are invited to submit free photos and information about their "For Sale By Owner" properties.

"Naturally we're in business and if the site generates an interest in Michael Davis Realty, that would be wonderful," Davis said. "But our goal with MyBloomingdale is to offer a comprehensive community resource.

"We'd especially like to help our Bloomingdale neighbors share information about their businesses, schools, clubs and churches"

For information, contact Michael Davis at (813) 662-2600 or visit [www.MyBloomingdale.com](http://www.MyBloomingdale.com).



Mack Austin/Photo

### Little League Park, Players Lookin' Good

The newly refurbished fields at Bloomingdale Little League Park make playing softball a lot safer and a lot more fun for these players. A lot of time, money and work have made the entire park look great.

# Free Home Depot Workshop Set For Dec. 18

By Laura Frazier

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association and East Brandon's Home Depot store will bring the second in a series of free home improvement workshops to Bloomingdale West Park on Tuesday, Dec. 18 at 7:00 p.m.

Kellie Fisher, a resident of the Bristol Green subdivision in Bloomingdale East, is coordinating the program in cooperation with the BHA and Home Depot.

Fisher is an experienced do-it-yourselfer and a regular Home Depot customer.

Fisher said advice from the customer service staff at Home Depot helped her check off a long list of home improvement projects, with great success and substantial savings.

She's installed faucets, landscape lighting, crown molding and ceramic tile, and even built her own free-standing wood-burning fire-



Laura Frazier/Photo

Homeowner Kellie Fisher and Home Depot manager Vinny Maddalena will present the second in a series of free home improvement clinics in Bloomingdale this month.

place.

"With the right tools and expert guidance, I think a lot of people would be surprised at how easy it is to do repairs and improvements by yourself. I really enjoy it, and

we've saved a lot of money in the process," she said.

Vinny Maddalena, East Brandon Home Depot's assistant manager, will run the monthly clinics at the Culbertson Rec Center on

Canoga Park Drive in Bloomingdale West.

The free workshops will be held on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

This month's workshop on Dec. 18 will address outdoor home maintenance projects including pressure washing, cleaning gutters, cleaning and staining decks and window cleaning and caulking.

Maddalena said, "We're open to doing presentations on just about any maintenance or improvement project there's interest in."

The clinics are free and open to the public.

The homeowners association will provide refreshments and Home Depot will award door prizes.

For more information, call Fisher at (813) 684-0516.

If you would like to suggest a topic for a future clinic, please call the BHA at (813) 681-2051 or e-mail [feed-back@BloomingdaleGazette.com](mailto:feed-back@BloomingdaleGazette.com).



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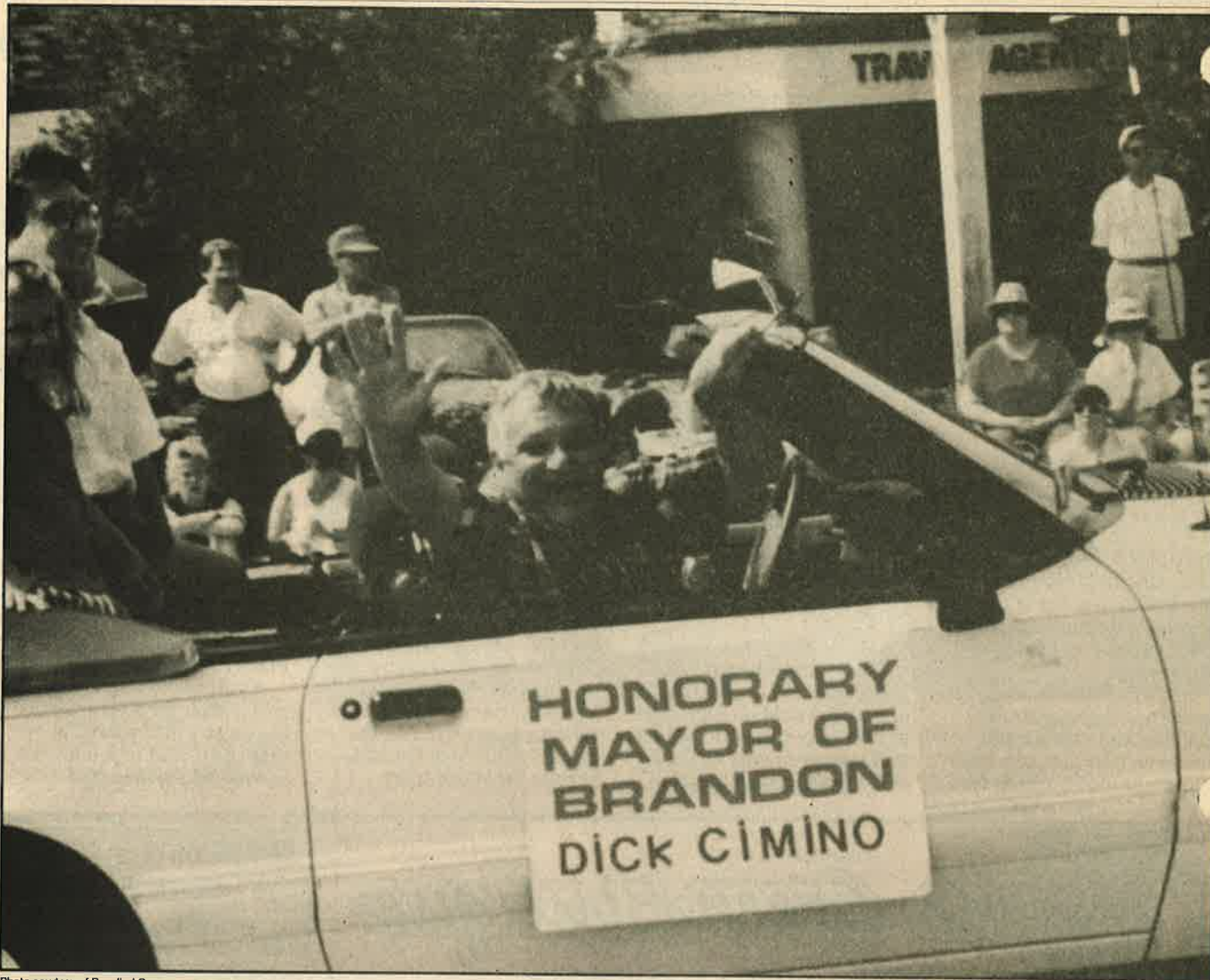


Photo courtesy of Rosalind Creager

Dick Cimino served as an honorary Mayor of Brandon. The Brandon President's Roundtable coordinates the annual election. Candidates hold fundraising events to benefit local charities and service clubs, and the candidate who raises the most money is named to the office.

## School Board OKs Cimino Elementary Boundaries

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County School Board at a Nov. 6 meeting approved boundaries for the new Cimino Elementary School under construction in Bloomingdale East.

As a result of the new boundaries, some Alafia and Lithia Springs Elementary students have been reassigned; please refer to the map below.

For questions about the new boundaries, contact the school district's pupil assignment director, Bill Person, at (813) 272-4091.

The school was named in



honor of the late Richard P. Cimino, 1930-2000.

Dick Cimino was a Tampa native and lifelong Bay area

resident.

He was a financial planner, captain in the Army Artillery, past president of the

Greater Brandon Kiwanis Club, past president of the American Cancer Society, past president of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce, former honorary Mayor of Brandon, recipient of the Brandon Key Citizen award and the Alice B. Thompkins Award for community service.

He received various commendations from Hillsborough County for community service, served on the Board of Directors at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, and was a member of the Jesuit High School Dad's Club and Nativity Catholic Church.



Photo courtesy MOMS Club

Children of MOMS Club of Bloomingdale members socialized near Sadie Park's sandbox camel recently while their moms visited and planned upcoming club activities.

## Calling all MOMS

A Gazette Report

The MOMS (Moms Offering Moms Support) Club of Bloomingdale is an activity and support group for stay-at-home mothers who want to fill their days with a variety of fun and enriching activities.

MOMS Club is a national nonprofit organization

specifically designed for at-home mothers everywhere.

Local chapters have monthly meetings plus park days, holiday parties, field trips, play groups, arts and crafts, scrapbooking nights, moms night out and more.

Most activities take place during the day. For more information, call Cheryl at (813) 685-5145.

## Household Chemical Disposal

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County Solid Waste Management Department will accept household chemicals for disposal on Saturday, Dec. 8 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the South County collection location, 13000 Highway 41 S. in Gibsonton.

To get to the new collection site from the Bloomingdale area, take Bell Shoals Road south to Boyette Road, cross over highway 301, and drive over I-75 to highway 41 South, to the South County Transfer Station.

Materials accepted include paints and solvents, automotive products, household cleaners, pool chemicals, lawn and garden supplies. Materials not accepted include explosives, flares bio-

Materials accepted include paints and solvents, automotive products, household cleaners, pool chemicals, lawn and garden supplies. Materials not accepted include explosives, flares bio-medical material.

medical material. Absolutely no commercial waste will be accepted.

For information or to report illegal dumping, call 272-5680.

## Welcome To Bloomingdale

*Bloomingdale area birth announcements courtesy of Brandon Regional Hospital*

- Riley John Martin, Sept. 17, 2001  
Parents Stephanie and Christopher Martin
- Alexis Nicole Plaskon, Sept. 19, 2001  
Parents Lara and Ted Plaskon
- Jordan Lynne Chastain, Sept. 20, 2001  
Parents Karen and Alan Chastain
- Anthony Marcus Campodonico, Sept. 24, 2001  
Parents Pamela and Julio Campodonico
- Phillip Steven Fleetwood, Oct. 3, 2001  
Parents Phyllis and Karl Fleetwood
- Hayden Kenneth Peeples, Oct. 3, 2001  
Parents Eileen and Cade Peeples
- Tristan Blaze Nichols, Oct. 5, 2001  
Parents Jennifer Kelly and Gary Nichols
- Jacob Aaron Farnsworth, Oct. 10, 2001  
Parents Danielle and Michael

- Farnsworth
- Carter James Cole, Oct. 10, 2001  
Parents Courtney and Braton Cole
- Evelyn Hi'ilani Hussey, Oct. 2001  
Parents Cathy and Sonny Hussey
- Lacey Nicole Harris, Oct. 12, 2001  
Parents Gracie and Joenathan Harris III
- Donavon DeSean Driggers, Oct. 12, 2001  
Parents April and Sean Driggers
- Hunter Evan Hill, Oct. 17, 2001  
Parents Shelley and Joel Hill
- Conner Paul Kernohan, Oct. 27, 2001  
Parents Jenifer and Michael Kernohan
- Blake Ryan Porter, Oct. 28, 2001  
Parents Amy and Stuart Porter
- Elizabeth Caroline Prophet, Oct. 29, 2001  
Parents MaryEllen and Chuck Prophet
- Jenna Grace Helsing, Oct. 31, 2001  
Parents Cheryl and Erik Helsing
- Brayden Allen Beddow, Nov. 2, 2001  
Parents Tonya and Scott Beddow



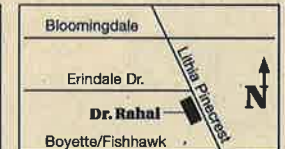
Ed. Rahal, DMD

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*Dr. Rahal has practiced in Valrico for 12 years. He performs all phases of dentistry, including cosmetic procedures and tooth whitening.*

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# Property Manager's Report For October 2001

By Al Devney, President  
DPMI Property  
Management, Inc.

**Irrigation maintenance**  
Brandon Irrigation repaired broken main lines on the Rosemead and Gotham systems and repaired electrical problems on the Callista and Natures Way systems.

Thunder Irrigation rewired the pump connector and repaired an electrical problem with zone 1 on the Bell Grande system, and replaced the pump control relay switch on the Gotham system.

The following items were repaired or replaced during the monthly maintenance inspection: 28 spray heads and 5 rotors, 3 risers, 32 lights and 2 light receptacles.

**Landscaping maintenance**  
Greenturf trimmed the creeping fig and fluffed the beds.

Carraras Landscaping re-



Laura Frazier/Photo

Property Manager Al Devney, aka "the guy in the little green truck."

moved the coleus, raked the beds, cleaned up the landscaping and added St. Augustine grass sod at the Hickory Ridge, Highlander, Culbreath and Natures Way entrances. DPMI installed 55 pieces of St. Augustine grass

sod on Garnet and Natures Way. Hillsborough County removed the large fallen pine tree on Bell Shoals Rd.

**Repairs, improvements**  
Chris Wurzel repaired the wall on Garnet that was damaged by a tree. Signs by Mineo repaired, repainted and installed the Bloomingdale sign at Garnet that was vandalized.

Russell Electric repaired the lights at Cambridge Cove and repaired an electrical problem in the breaker box for the Gotham system. DPMI sealed and painted the walls on Garnet and Springvale.

Mr. Devney prepared an alternate plan for the enhancement of the major entrances and met several contractors to develop some basic costs.

**Accident damage**  
In October there were two accidents, car vs. wall and some kind of Ford vs. tree. The vehicles lost and the taxing district broke even.

The Ford vs. tree was a hit and run, and the taxing district must absorb the cost of

replacing the oak tree.

ZK construction repaired the wall on Springvale, and an insurance company will pay the costs.

**Eat, drink and pitch it out the window**

Mr. Devney picked up 27 bags of litter, a t-square, 4 pairs of socks, 3 towels, a stapler, 15 Bud Lights, an 8.8 pound weight, a gold bracelet, 31 cents, and a partridge in a pear tree (happy holidays All).

The beverages of choice were Pepsi for soft drinks, Bud Light for beer and Jack Daniels for distilled spirits.

**Flag Stolen, Reward Offered**

DPMI Property Management is offering a \$50 reward for information leading to the arrest of the person(s) who stole the 4-by-6 foot American flag that was installed on two steel fence posts at the corner of Springvale and Bloomingdale avenues.

For more information, contact Al Devney at (813) 684-6617.

## Mothers & More Offers Fun For Kids, Moms

Mothers & More meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, 3315 Bryan Road in Valrico.

The group offers topical discussions, guest speaker playgroups, "Mom's Night Out" and other activities.

For information, call (813) 316-0401, Ext. 3788.



Hillsborough County Deputies, from left, Hal Kee, Patti Morris, Jesse Villareal and Renato Martinez assist Maria Gonzalez with tiny Soph Sanchez's car seat.

## Officers, Deputies Provide Car Seat Checks

By Mack Austin

Most parents make sure their babies and younger kids have good child seats to provide for their protection. But the next important step is being sure that the seats are properly installed.

According to Mary Ann Hunsberger, a Tampa police officer, Bloomingdale resident and mom, "Almost all of the seats we check are not installed properly."

Hunsberger should know. She's in charge of the special program that brings Tampa police officers and Hillsborough sheriff's deputies together as a team to check child seats for proper installation.

"It's not a simple task," Hunsberger said of installing the seats. "There is a four-day course required to become certified in checking seats. There are just so many styles of cars and types of seats that matching them up can be very technical. And then comes the instructions for the seats!"

Tampa police and Hillsborough deputies met in several locations last month to perform child seat checks.

The first child seat check took place at Bloomingdale Fire Station 27's open house in October. Deputies checked several seats for proper installation and provided instruction to parents. One

*"There is a four-day course required to become certified in checking seats. There are just so many styles of cars and types of seats that matching them up can be very technical."*

**MARY ANN HUNSBERGER**  
Tampa Police Department

deputy noted, "Parents need to keep the seats installed properly. Many remove them for various reasons and must know how to put them back properly."

Several parents brought their kids and child seats to be checked to a school festival held at Alafia Elementary last month, where fun and music was provided by Radio Disney. One mom who had her child seat checked said, "I feel much better knowing my son's child seat is installed right so it can provide the protection he needs."

Special thanks to all the TPD officers and Hillsborough County deputies that bring this critical service to our community and provide this protection for our children.



Mack Austin/Photos

TPD Officer Mary Ann Hunsberger, Project Officer for the Child Seat Checks, insures another child seat is installed properly to protect this precious passenger.

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## Community Substation Notes For December 2001

By Deputy Pete Maurer and  
CSO Sandy Capitano

We in law enforcement work with many checklists every day.

They help keep us organized and also help us remember important details.

Following are some personal checklists we encourage you and your family to use to make your holiday season a safe and secure one.

Take the time to use them. Don't become a crime statistic during this holiday season.

A few important minutes can save you and your family hours of frustration and disappointment.

### Home security during vacation:

- Close and lock all doors and windows
- Close and lock garage doors
- Complete "Request for Security Check" for at-



Deputy Pete Maurer

### Community station

- Arrange for lawn service
- Stop mail and newspaper delivery
- Ask neighbors to observe your home in your absence
- Leave emergency numbers with neighbors

### Personal security

- Secure valuables while

### shopping

- Secure packages in car trunk while shopping
- Monitor and secure credit cards
- Be alert while shopping, especially in parking lots
- Lock your vehicle
- Let someone know where you will be
- Carefully examine suspicious mail and packages

### Travel safety

- Inspect your vehicle before traveling
- Insure everyone in your vehicle uses seat belts
- Insure all child seats are properly installed
- Stock emergency supplies in your vehicle for extended travel

- Do not drink and drive
- Do not ride with anyone who has been drinking
- Obey all traffic rules and regulations
- Watch out for children on new bikes and scooters after Christmas
- Check for weather alerts

- Stock emergency supplies in your vehicle for extended travel

### before traveling

- Allow ample travel time; no speeding
- Be cautious and alert if you are flying

### Child safety

- Inspect all new toys for potential dangers
- Require all children to wear bike helmets and pads
- Keep children away from electrical hazards
- Secure swimming pools and be mindful of visiting children

- Secure all weapons and use trigger locks
- Keep children close by while shopping

"Have a safe and secure holiday season!"

The Bloomingdale Community Substation is located at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenhaven Drive, in the Village Center Plaza. Station hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Deputy Maurer can be reached at (813) 635-8040.

## Children Need Suitcases, Sports Bags

A Gazette Report

For children from problem homes, the holidays won't be as cheerful as they would like them to be.

The Bloomingdale Community Substation, in cooperation with the Tampa Police Department, is collecting suitcases and sports bags for use by children being removed from difficult situations, who often have nothing to put their few belongings in.

Bags can be dropped off weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the community station, corner of Bell Shoals and Glenhaven, in the Village Center Plaza.

For more information, contact Officer Sandy Capitano at (813) 635-8040.

All donations will be very much appreciated.

## Coast Guard Seeks Volunteers

By Laura Frazier

U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 75 out of Ruskin has issued a call for volunteers to help maintain Tampa Bay's port security.

"Since Sept. 11, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has been patrolling Tampa Bay on a 24-hour basis," said Kay Lori, the auxiliary's public affairs officer. "We need more volunteers for crews and vessels."

Ownership of a vessel is not a requirement to join,



Lori said, and several positions available do not require volunteers to be on the water. "We do offer on the water training for crewpersons, who go out on patrols, search and rescue missions, and crowd control at events like the St Pete boat races. But volunteers can also train to

See GUARD, Page 19

## Restaurant Review

By Elton Dumont  
*Exclusive To The Bloomingdale Gazette*

**Della's After Dark, An American Bistro**  
608 Oakfield Drive,  
Brandon  
(813) 684-3354

Almost magically, Della's Delectables is transformed by night into an authentic, first class bistro serving wonderfully pleasing dinners. Della's after dark is very different from their daytime counterpart. Upon entering on a Friday night, we heard live entertainment that offered soft, traditional music to dine by. The lighting was also soft, giving the restaurant a warm ambience.

After Beverly (the owner) seated us, we received water served in hand painted bottles and poured into long stem brandy goblets with lemon. Our server, Mark, was very attentive and knowledgeable. I normally pass on

a drink, but the beer and wine menu was intriguing. Imported beer from England, Scotland and Germany was featured. I ordered a McEwan's India Pale Ale from Scotland. It was medium dark, robust and thoroughly thirst quenching. The wine list scans three continents and is reasonably priced.

We started with Bruschetta, our favorite appetizer. Thankfully, it was not "soppy," which allowed us to enjoy the taste even more. Two types of lettuce, special seasonings, diced tomatoes and a caramelized balsamic vinegar gave it a unique flavor; not spicy, yet tangy.

Other appetizers included Thai Curry Prawns, Crab and Shrimp Cakes, Fried Calamari, Southwest Egg Rolls, and Asian Wings, to name a few. They range from \$4 to \$8.

I ordered the broiled Ginger and Plantain Crusted Grouper (\$15). The plantain

topping was delicious. It was served with Wasabi mashed potatoes and seared Japanese sea scallops. The accompanying vegetables included broccoli, zucchini, squash, carrots, red pepper and onion. My wife had the Tenderloin of Pork (\$14), encrusted in cumin and brown sugar, then roasted and served with a mango salsa reminiscent of a terrific corn salad and risotto (Italian style rice).

The pork was tender enough to cut with a fork and totally enjoyable. Other entrees included Rack of Lamb, Marinated Tuna Steak, Sirloin of Beef, and Mojo French Cut of Chicken. The entrees go from \$10 for Della's Meatloaf up to \$19.

I must take a moment to say something about presentation. If you read the Brandon News article in November, you know that Alex Dellagrotta, Beverly's son, has worked as a chef in locations as far away as New Zealand. Alex has the ability to make you want to take a picture of your plate before you dig into it.

His ability to make it look soooo good and attractive is a talent.

We passed on dessert, but offerings included Bananas Foster, Chocolate Torte, or an Orange Rum Cake with Papaya Ice Cream. Our check for two including beer and an appetizer was just under \$50 with tax and gratuity.

Della's After Dark is currently serving dinner only 3 nights per week, Thursday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. They do accept reservations and, as the word spreads, it will be recommended that you call first.

Based on 5 stars:  
Food — ★★ ★ 1/2  
Ambience — ★★ ★  
Service — ★★ ★ ★  
Presentation — ★★ ★ ★ ★  
Overall — ★★ ★ ★

*Until we eat again, your humble gastronomical consultant,*

*Elton Dumont*

## Businesses Can Survive Disasters With Proper Planning

By Mack Austin

A major part of the growth in the Bloomingdale area includes new businesses, both large and small. Many are first-time businesses and others are franchises. All represent a significant investment of time and money for everyone involved. A lot of the businesses employ Bloomingdale residents, especially teens.

Protecting their business is obviously a very high priority for all owners and employees. For most, it is their primary source of income. Many business owners have taken special steps to protect their businesses in the event of disasters, both minor and major. Others have not.

The statistics are very alarming. More than 40% of businesses that experience a disaster never reopen, and over 25% of the rest close within two years. These facts alone should cause all owners to develop disaster plans, but



Mack Austin/Photo

Hillsborough County Emergency Management provides this "Small Business Disaster Survival Kit" CD and other critical information on business continuity planning. Call Holley Wade at (813) 272-6900. This program is devoted to helping local businesses prepare for disruptions by natural, accidental or man-made disasters. Information on the program is available in many forms.

the fact is many don't. For many it is one of those "I'll get to it later!" projects. The daily struggle to meet demands and turn a profit occupies the majority of their time.

But then the disaster hits — a fire, a hurricane, a flood, and in this day and time, even the unimaginable. None of the business owners in New York City could have

ever imagined the events of Sept. 11 in planning the futures of their businesses. The fact is that many of them disappeared in a matter of minutes. Thousands were left without businesses or jobs.

This is an extreme example. So was Hurricane Andrew. Even after personally seeing the results of this unbelievable natural disaster first-hand, it is very difficult to fully describe the affects it had in simple words. Many businesses were literally removed from the face of the earth.

Most owners think of a disaster as a hurricane or fire. But the fact is that surveys show that 68% of business-impacting disasters are caused by human error, 25% are caused by technology failure, 5% are caused by natural disasters, and 2% are caused by intentional factors. The number one interruption is the loss of power. The loss of criti-

See PROTECT, Page 19



Photo courtesy of Ellen Gates

### Marching For A Good Cause

The Bloomingdale High School band drum line marched in the "Too Good For Drugs" walk in downtown Tampa this fall. Over 4,500 clubs and groups participated in the event, designed to promote drug abuse awareness and prevention.





Laura Frazier/Photos  
The Rajun' Bulls enter the field for their halftime show rendition of composer Chuck Mangione's 1970's hits, "Children of Sanchez," "Bellavia," and "Land of Make Believe."

## Rajun' Bulls Take High Honors At Band Festival

A Gazette Report

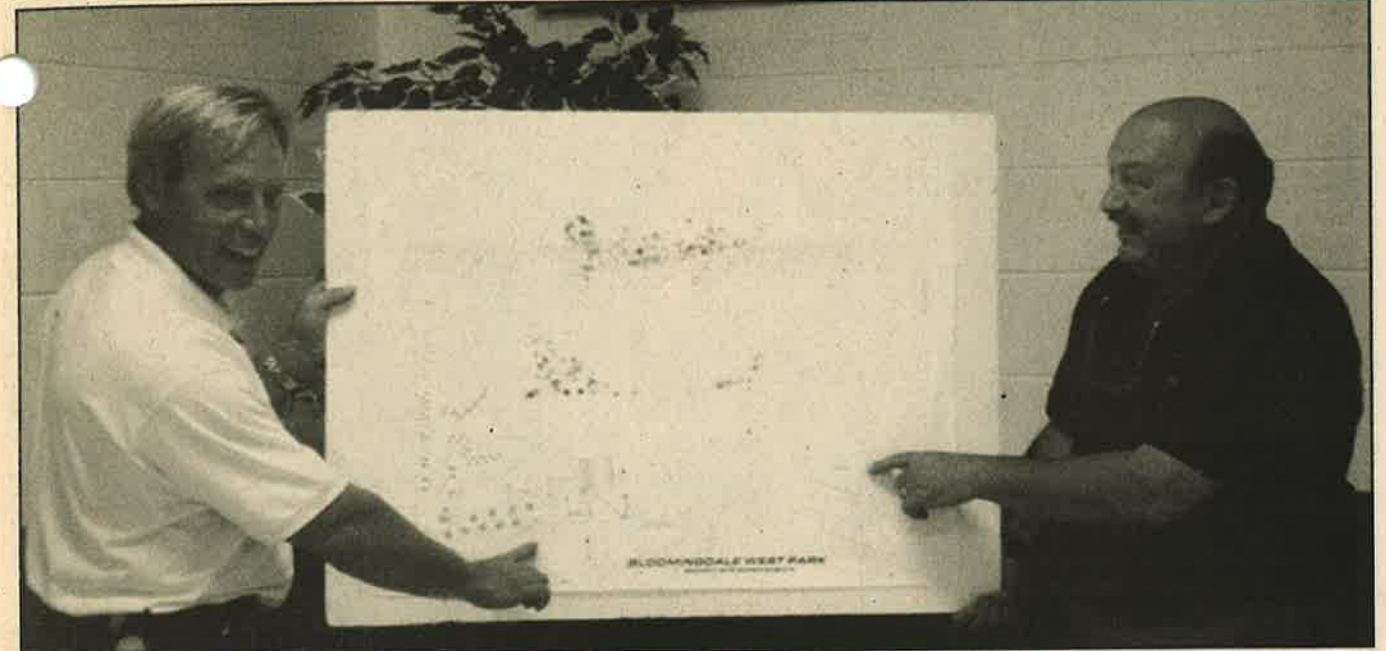
Bloomington High School's Rajun' Bulls Band took high honors with a superior rating at the Florida Bandmasters Association Festival held at the school last month.

More than 5,000 students and spectators attended the event that culminated with a patriotic tribute to America in which 2,300 students from 20 high school bands performed in unison.

More than 200 parent volunteers, 100 student volunteers and several local businesses participated to make the event a big success.



The band and the Crimson Dolls auxiliary were in top form for the band festival.



Mack Austin/Photos  
County Parks maintenance supervisor Jeff Mauch and BACC member Joe Ligouri assisted in the landscaping planning for the area around Deputy Corley's Bloomingdale West park residence.

## Bloomington Community Council Update

By Mack Austin

The Bloomington Area Community Council is composed of volunteers from Bloomington area subdivisions who work with local law enforcement and county officials to research community concerns. The BACC meets monthly to discuss current issues that have been brought to the attention of council members, our Community Resource Deputy, Pete Maurer and Community Service Officer, Sandy Capitano.

The council met on Nov. 15 at the Bloomington Community Station, 4342 Bell Shoals Road in Valrico. Topics of discussion were as follows.

Deputy Pete Maurer noted that several calls about suspicious mail had been received after the recent anthrax incidents. He advised residents to call the Hillsborough County Sheriff's dispatch center at (813) 247-8200 to report any suspicious mail or packages.

Residents are asked to not bring mail or packages to the community station. By Federal law, any one who attempts to scare, threaten or terrorize others using items simulating



Hillsborough Parks maintenance unit II allows Alafia parents to park inside their property during special events. Parents are asked to not park on the grass outside their area, since it destroys the grass.

anthrax or any other biological weapon will be charged with attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction, carrying a penalty of up to fifteen years imprisonment.

Landscaping has been installed around Deputy Corley's residence at Bloomingdale West Park. More landscaping is planned. Thanks to all residents who worked with Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance Unit II in planning this project.

Officer Capitano noted that both child seat checks and fingerprinting are available by appointment at the community station. The station's hours are weekdays 8

a.m. to 5 p.m.

Follow-up action in the form of a letter from the BACC to the Hillsborough County Library Board has been completed on the formal recommendation to support a request to name the new library that will be next to Bloomingdale High School. The name requested is Jesse McLean, the grandfather of the owners. The owners donated an extra acre for the library site. The McLean family has lived and farmed this site for over one hundred years. Support is also requested from other groups and associations in the Bloomington community. Forms with infor-

mation on the naming process are available at the Community Station.

Security issues were discussed covering Neighborhood Watch Programs, Mobile Watch and the vacation security program. Residents planning to use the vacation program need to give at least three days notice.

Len Jaszczak, vice president of the BHA, discussed the upcoming home and yard maintenance classes that will take place at the Culbertson Recreation Center - free information, refreshments and prizes. Watch the Gazette and BloomingdaleGazette.com for updates.

Jaszczak also noted serious speeding problems on Natures Way, especially near the school bus stops by the River Crossing subdivision. Deputy Maurer said special units will patrol the area and the radar monitor will be used.

Citations will be very expensive, and no warnings will be issued.

The next council meeting will be held in January 2002. Any resident with concerns should contact the community station at (813) 635-8040 so their questions can be added to the agenda.





Laura Frazier/Photo

Terry and Vicki Rogers enjoy the lush landscape they've created at their Bloomingdale West home over the past 13 years.

## Yard Of The Month Goes To ... Vicki And Terry Rogers

By Rosie Trellis

The flourishing landscape at Vicki and Terry Rogers' Windtree Ct. home has come a long way. When the Rogers moved into their Bloomingdale West home in 1988, with the exception of a few hopeful saplings, the yard was a

barren sight.

Over the next 13 years, as the saplings grew into towering oak trees, the Rogers added a forest of shade and fruit trees and a host of palms and philodendrons.

With Terry providing the manpower and Vicki lending design advice, the couple

gradually transformed their yard into an inviting suburban jungle.

A mulched path leads from the front to the back yard, taking visitors past the fruits of Terry's labors, including bananas, grapefruit and key lime trees. At the home's front entrance, the couple

created a brick courtyard bordered by colorful bromeliads, impatiens, begonias and daisies.

Terry said he usually spends one full day a week mowing, pruning and tidying up the yard. Frankly, he said, "I've created a monster, and I'm a slave to it!"

### Bloomingdale Yard Of The Month

Nominate your friends and neighbors (or yourself!) for the Bloomingdale Yard of the Month award.

Winners will receive an Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale gift certificate courtesy of the Blooming-

dale Homeowners Association.

Submit entries by mail to Yard, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594, by fax to (813) 651-1129 or by E-mail to [Letters@BloomingtondaleGazette.com](mailto:Letters@BloomingtondaleGazette.com).

Your name and phone # ...

Nominee's name, address, phone # ...

Outstanding yard features ...

### Bloomingdale High Pie Sale

A Gazette Report

Bloomingdale Senior High School music department's annual pie sale fundraiser runs through Dec. 15.

Gift certificates purchased may be redeemed for Village Inn pies at the Brandon

restaurant anytime through Dec. 22, 2002.

Sales will benefit the school's band, orchestra, chorus and Crimson Dolls students. To purchase a certificate, see any music student or call Steve Dutch at (813) 689-1164.

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## Your Inside Connections

**The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.**  
3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. (813) 681-2051.  
Fax: (813) 651-1129  
E-mail: [BHA@Cyber-Rails.com](mailto:BHA@Cyber-Rails.com)  
Web Site: [www.BloomingtondaleGazette.com](http://www.BloomingtondaleGazette.com)

BHA meetings are at the community office on the 1st Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

**President** — Ted Grable  
**Vice President** — Len Jaszczak  
**Treasurer** — Pam Liguori  
**Director** — Patricia Radel  
**Director** — Rodney Biddle  
**Director** — Tony Diolosa  
**Director** — Joe Hickle  
**Director** — Taya Newberry

**Bloomingdale Special Taxing District**  
3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594  
(813) 684-6667

BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm.

**President** — Thom Snelling, 681-9186  
**Treasurer** — Don

Cassels, 681-8855  
**Corresponding Secretary** — R. Dickey, 689-2177  
**Recording Secretary** — Alice Burleson, 685-1076  
**Trustee** — Dale Kahn, 571-0784  
**Trustee** — Myron Magedanz, 685-5966  
**Property Manager** — Al Devney, 684-6617

### Bloomingdale Mobile Watch

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

**Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District**  
P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132.  
(813) 685-2817

BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

**President** — Bill Grace  
**Treasurer** — Fred Englehart

### THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The official publication of the BHA since 1980  
3509 Bell Shoals Rd.  
Valrico, FL 33594  
(813) 681-2051  
Fax: (813) 651-1129  
E-Mail: [News@BloomingtondaleGazette.com](mailto:News@BloomingtondaleGazette.com)

**Executive Director** — Joe Liguori  
**Editor** — Laura Frazier  
**Photojournalist** — Mack Austin  
**Restaurant Critic** — Elton Dumont  
**Yard of the Month** — Rosie Trellis

**Published by Sunbelt Newspapers** — 1401 Oakfield Drive, Brandon, FL 33511. (813) 689-7764

The Gazette is delivered free to Bloomingdale residents along with The Tampa Tribune on the 1st Saturday of each month.

**Publisher** — Carla Rockwell  
**Advertising Manager** — Susie Howell

### Taxing District Seat Open

A Gazette Report

One seat remains open on the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Board of Trustees.

If you'd like to inquire about the volunteer position, or if you'd like to learn more about how the taxing district will spend over \$300,000 in 2002 to maintain and improve our community, please plan to attend the next taxing district board meeting on Monday, Dec. 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Citgo Plaza.

For information, call (813) 684-6667.



Thom Snelling is the president of the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Board of Trustees.

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## Bloomingtondale Students Proud To Fly The Flag

A Gazette Report

Bloomingtondale area schools held numerous patriotic events, ceremonies and fundraisers this fall.

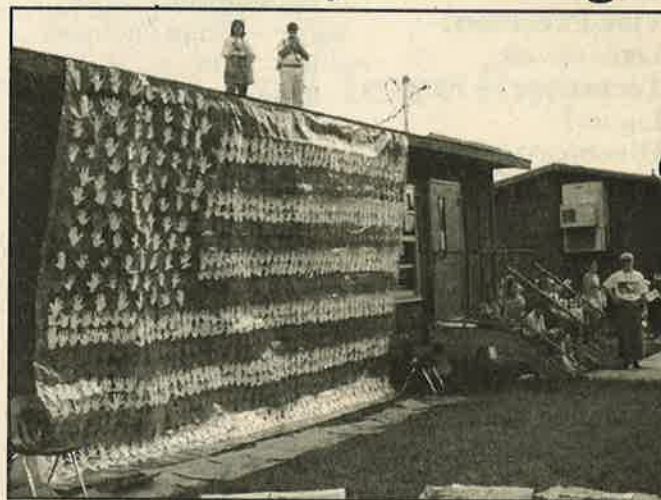
School district officials estimate that Alafia, Lithia, Burns and Bloomingtondale raised a combined total of

\$7,000 for the New York City firefighters fund, the American Red Cross and the Afghan Children's Fund.

We salute our schools and students, and thank them for their efforts to raise flags, funds and spirits in Bloomingtondale.

Photos by Laura Frazier

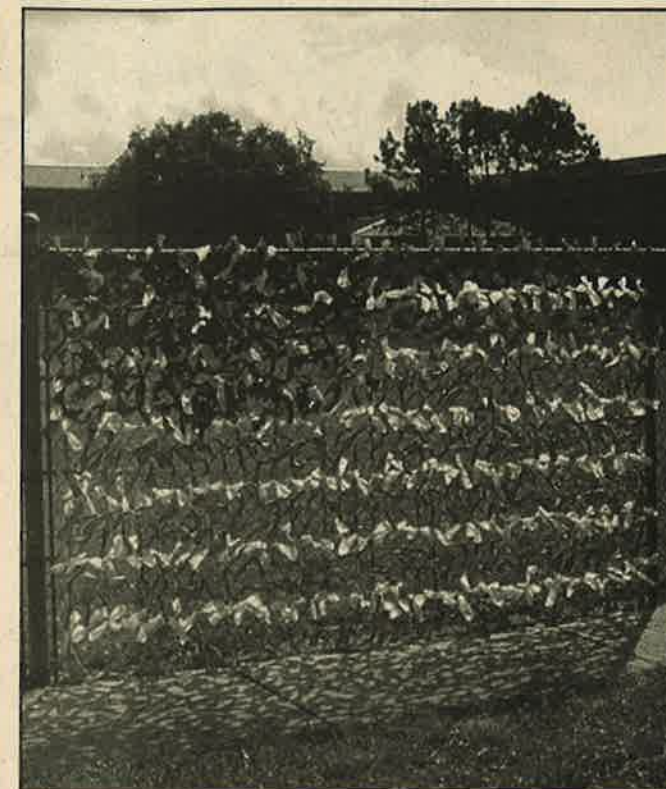
Alafia teacher Betty Schino attended the school's patriotic ceremony with her students decked out in red, white and blue regalia.






Above, Alafia students used red, white and blue imprints of their hands to create a larger than life American flag. The flag was sent to the Pentagon in honor of former Bloomingtondale resident Vince Tolbert, who was killed there in the Sept. 11 attack. Tolbert's daughter Amanda is a former Alafia student. Below, Bloomingtondale High's Jr. ROTC unit donated a portion of the proceeds from their American flag sale fundraiser to the American Red Cross.



Alafia students chanted, "USA, USA..." to show support for Operation Enduring Freedom.



Burns Middle School invited students to buy and tie red, white and blue ribbons. Students knotted the ribbons they purchased into a flag pattern on the school's fence. Funds raised by the sale of the ribbons were donated to the American Red Cross.












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Laura Frazier/Photos

This house in the River Crossing subdivision in Bloomingdale East was awarded "Most Elegant" two years in a row... will the Leslie's pull off a hat trick in 2001?



The Starke's display in Bloomingdale East's Erin Arbor was voted the "Most Charming" in 1999.

## Best Bloomingdale Holiday Decorations Contest – Get Going

A Gazette Report

Dazzling icicles, grapevine reindeer, rooftop Santas... Bloomingdale residents have been known to deck the halls in grand style.

For the third consecutive year, The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association is sponsoring a Best Bloomingdale Holiday Decorations contest, open to all residents within the BHA area.

The elf patrol will scour our community this month

in search of the most impressive holiday displays.

Gift certificate prizes will be awarded in three categories: Most Elegant, Most Charming and the esteemed Most Delightfully Excessive!

If you would like to call our attention to your home or one that has caught your eye, please call the BHA at (813) 681-2051 or E-mail [letters@bloomingdalegazette.com](mailto:letters@bloomingdalegazette.com). Get out those extension cords and let the lighting begin!



Evelyn Camacho and daughter Kaylyn show off the handiwork at their Somerset home that earned the "Most Delightfully Excessive" award last year.

## Santa Set To Arrive In Bloomingdale On Dec. 8

A Gazette Report

Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 13th annual appearance in Bloomingdale on Saturday, Dec. 8 at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Sun Trust Bank Plaza.

The Kringles and their elves will greet children and pose for pictures from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The visit and photos are free of charge with the donation of any non-perishable food item for local charities.

For directions or information, call the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association at (813) 681-2051.



Laura Frazier/Photo

Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in Bloomingdale on Dec. 8

### PROTECT

From page 11

cal data, the death of an essential employee or even a computer virus can be fatal to a small business.

A better way to approach this critical planning process is to focus on continuity planning. It opens a broader point-of-view to the issue. The major purpose of the continuity plan is to keep the business open no matter what unforeseen circumstances or events occur. This critical preparation can mean the difference between a business staying open or never opening again.

To assist local businesses in their planning process, Hillsborough County Emergency Management has developed a Business Continuity Program. This program is devoted to helping local businesses prepare for disruptions by natural, accidental or man-made disasters. Information on the program is available in many forms. One is an outstanding introductory CD.

The CD and other detailed information on this program can be obtained by contacting Holley Wade, Hillsborough County Emergency Management at (813) 272-6900.

Now is the time to prepare your plans. Timing is everything!

### GUARD

From page 10

serve in a variety of land-based positions. A watchtower, for instance, monitors a land-based radio that the patrol boats report in to on a regular basis. That way we always know where our boats are in regard to time

needed for responding to a Mayday if necessary."

Membership is open to U.S. citizens age 17 or older. For information, contact Operations Officer Joe Lori at (813) 677-2822.

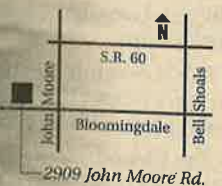
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# Bark If You'd Like A Bloomingdale Dog Park

By Laura Frazier

Bloomingdale residents Martha and Jim Marshall take their two dogs, Reno and Boomer, to dog-friendly Al Lopez Park on a weekly basis. The Marshalls say the City of Tampa's first official dog park provides a price-less opportunity for pets and their owners to socialize and have fun.

The drive from Valrico to Al Lopez can take up to 40 minutes each way, so when the county recently built a dog park in Seffner, the Marshalls delighted at the closer-to-home facility.

Even better, they said, would be a park they could walk to. The Marshalls and several other Bloomingdale residents have their eyes on one possible site in particular.

Valrico resident Mary Cummings said a dog park would be the perfect usage for surplus county-owned land adjacent to the parks maintenance facility on Natures Way in Bloomingdale East.

Cummings said, "If you are a dog owner and you haven't been to a doggie park, you really should check one out. There are shady spots with picnic tables and large grassy areas for the critters to take a frolic. The dog owners get to know each other, the doggies get to know each other, and generally a good time is had by all."

*"If you are a dog owner and you haven't been to a doggie park, you really should check one out. There are shady spots with picnic tables and large grassy areas for the critters to take a frolic. The dog owners get to know each other, the doggies get to know each other, and generally a good time is had by all."*

**MARY CUMMINGS**  
Valrico resident

Phil Evans of the parks department said the Natures Way facility has not yet been evaluated for use a park. Before any more dog parks are planned, he said he'd like to give the county, the public, and the pets some time to assess the Seffner facility and another park that recently opened in west Tampa.

"We'll monitor the usage in 2002 and see if the parks meet the needs of the dog owners and the approval of the general public," said Evans.

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association welcomes resident's comments and questions about dog parks or the Natures Way facility. Please call (813) 681-2051 or e-mail feedback@BloomingdaleGazette.com.



Laura Frazier/photo  
Martha and Jim Marshall said a new dog park in Seffner is convenient, but a Bloomingdale park would be even better.

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Fire Station's Open House Is Way Of Saying Thanks

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By NITCE M-KENZIE  
nitcekratie@worldnet.att.net

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Lithia 16739 FishHawk Blvd. 654-1991	Riverview Goolsby Point 11697 Boyette Rd. 672-1832	Brandon Lake Brandon Village 11393 Causeway Blvd. 643-6944	Seffner North Grove Plaza 1515 S. Parsons 684-5897	Valrico Valrico Square 1985 E. Brandon Blvd. 654-2324
				North Brandon Kingsway Plaza 1213 Kingsway Ave. 653-4535

Program organizer Michelle Colesanti said the up at their place of business," Colesanti said. For information, call Colesanti at (813) 681-8889.

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# Meals On Wheels Needs Prepared Food Donations

By Laura Frazier

Brandon Area Meals on Wheels delivers hot, balanced meals each day to about 150 local residents who are temporarily or indefinitely unable to drive, shop or cook for themselves.

A small army of volunteers from 15 Brandon area churches keeps the program rolling.

A group from St. Mark United Church of Christ in Valrico prepares and delivers about 25 meals every Wednesday.

Volunteers rotate chores including shopping, cooking, cleaning up and delivering the hot lunches.

Menu suggestions are provided by Meals on Wheels, including nutritional guidelines calling for an entrée, starch, vegetable, bread, salad and a dessert.

The group would welcome donations of a prepared veg-



St. Mark's Meals on Wheels coordinator Amy Fleming, left, works with volunteers Art Tickner and Kelli Kerns to dish out the meals.

etable, salad or dessert to serve 25 people.

To offer assistance, call the

church office at (813) 685-0998. For information on how to start a new Meals on

Wheels group, or to apply to receive meals, call Minna Tickner at (813) 685-7241.

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of the parks department said the Natures Way facility has not yet been evaluated for use a park. Before any more dog parks are planned, he said he'd like to give the county, the public, and the pets some time to assess the Seffner facility and another park that recently opened in west Tampa.

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Laura Frazier/photo  
 Martha and Jim Marshall said a new dog park in Seffner is convenient, but a Bloomingdale park would be even better.

## We Support Our Advertisers

For information about advertising your business in The Bloomingdale Gazette, contact Advertising Manager Susie Howell at (813) 689-7764.

To submit news about your Bloomingdale area business, contact Laura Frazier, Editor, at (813) 654-6281 or e-mail News@BloomingdaleGazette.com.

## Log On To BloomingdaleGazette.com

Visit our community web site at www.BloomingdaleGazette.com for the latest Bloomingdale area news

and events, community polls, classified ads, deed restriction listings and more.



Photo courtesy Michelle Colesanti  
 Boy Scout Troop 61 Scoutmasters and members, standing from left, Dale Patton, Philip Colesanti, T. J. Foster and Terry Foster, and sitting from left, Patrick Patton and Gregory Vasquez, hope Bloomingdale Wal-Mart shoppers will remember to bring their used computer ink cartridges to the store's layaway department.

## Recycle Those Inkjet Cartridges At Wal-Mart

A Gazette Report

Valrico Boy Scout Troop 61 is collecting empty computer ink cartridges as a fundraising project.

A collection box for the cartridges is available in the layaway department of Bloomingdale Square Wal-Mart.

The Cartridge Recycling Center in PA will support the troop's efforts with up to \$3 for each cartridge collected.

Program organizer Michelle Colesanti said the

troop would be grateful for the support of Bloomingdale area businesses and home computer users who buy cartridges made by Compaq, Cannon, Lexmark and Hewlett-Packard. Epson cartridges are not eligible for the program.

"If there are any local businesses who routinely throw their cartridges away, we'd be happy to pick them up at their place of business," Colesanti said.

For information, call Colesanti at (813) 681-8889.

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