



LAURA FRAZIER/photo

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

Santa and Mrs. Claus make their 14th annual appearance in Bloomingdale on Saturday, Dec. 14. See story on page 10.



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MACK AUSTIN/photo

A Season Of Goodwill

Hillsborough County Deputies Teresa Amin, Pete Maurer and Patti Morris show off several toys from among hundreds recently collected for Hillsborough County children in need. The project was spearheaded by a Goodwill Industries manager. See story on page 6.

Featured Story:

Newsome Boundaries On Hold

see page 2

Take PRIDE In Bloomingdale, see page 14



Hungry Howie's
Pizza & Subs

PIZZA • PASTA • SUBS
 WINGS • SALADS

SEE OUR SPECIALS ON PAGE 7

Newsome Boundary Decision On Hold

1,200+ PETITION: KEEP BLOOMINGDALE TOGETHER

By LAURA FRAZIER

Hillsborough County school officials' plans to finalize attendance boundaries for Newsome High School, currently under construction on Fish Hawk Boulevard in Lithia and set to open in 2003, have tentatively been put on hold until after the district's winter break. The break ends Jan. 6, 2003.

In November, at the close of what may turn out to be the final meeting of the Newsome boundary committee, Bill Person, Hillsborough County's director of pupil administrative services, said he would take four boundary proposals to School Superintendent Earl Lennard for review. Person said a community meeting to gather public input on the plans would be held in November, and that



Director of Pupil Administrative Services Bill Person displays the 1,200+ signature Bloomingdale Community Petition at the Newsome High School boundary committee meeting last month.

the district hoped to bring a single, final proposal to the school board on Dec. 10. But as the month of November

came to a close, Cynthia Reeves, administrative assistant to Persons, said no plans for a community meeting were slated.

Two of the proposals created by parents appointed to the boundary committee would split high school students in the Bloomingdale community between Newsome and Bloomingdale High. Two other proposals created by district staff would allow all students living in Bloomingdale to continue attending Bloomingdale High School.

At the November committee meeting, Person said school officials do not support any proposal that splits the Bloomingdale community.

"I want to make this perfectly clear," Person said, addressing over 100 residents in attendance at the meeting, "The district does not support any plan that would divide (the Bloomingdale community)."

Once Lennard has an opportunity to review the four proposals and a slew of public comment received, Person said, the district would present at least two proposals to the community for comment at a public meeting at Bloomingdale High.

After the community meeting, Person said, the superintendent is expected to submit one proposal to the school board for a final decision, possibly at the board's January meeting. At Lennard's discretion, the proposal sent to the school board could be identical to one already on the board or a combination of any of the four plans.

Last month, over 1,200 Bloomingdale residents signed a community petition asking school officials to allow all Bloomingdale students to continue attending a single high school, and to keep Bloomingdale students in the school choice zone that offers Bloomingdale High as an option. School choice, which allows students countywide to choose from among a selection of schools within an assigned region, takes effect in 2004.

The petition was submitted to Person, the boundary committee and school board at the November meeting at Bloomingdale High.

Debbly Duncan, Cimino Elementary School PTA president, helped organize the petition drive, sponsored by The Bloomingdale Home

See Boundary, Page 5

Marine Corps Reserve Makes Time For Tots

By MACK AUSTIN

It is truly humbling to see what some people will do in situations where many others would say, "I don't have time for that - I'm too busy!"

With our nation at war, you can only imagine the long list of tasks and projects the men and women of the United States Marine Corps Reserve have to keep them busy. But even in these tense times, these professionals find the "time for tots" and will work hard to make their "Toys For Tots" mission a major success.

Their mission is to collect new and unwrapped toys from October through December each year, and to distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community.

Through this mission, the Toys For Tots program will

reach its primary objective; "To help needy children throughout the United States experience the joy of Christmas, to play an active role in the development of our nation's most valuable natural resource - our children, to unite members of local communities in a common cause for three months each year and to contribute to better communities in the future."

The Reserve Training Center on Gandy Blvd in Tampa is the local unit responsible for organizing the toy drive in our area. Sgt. Tom Woo is the coordinator this year. He can be reached at 805-7028 or 805-7042. Contact him for detailed information about the program.

Sgt. Woo has coordinated the following locations as drop-off points for collecting

See Tots, Page 14



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

These toys will soon find themselves in the arms of a needy child thanks to the hard work and dedication of those involved in the United States Marine Corps Reserve Toys For Tots Program.

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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: BloomingdaleHomeowners@Verizon.net
 Web Site: www.BloomingdaleGazette.com
 BHA meetings are at the community office on the 1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

- President** — Ted Grable
- Vice President** — Joe Hickle
- Treasurer** — Pam Liguori
- Director** — Len Jasczak
- Director** — Patricia Radel
- Director** — Tony Diolosa
- Director** — Steve Heckel
- Director** — Cheryl Kehmeyer
- Director** — Michele Caballer
- Director** — Joseph Grem

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 p.m.

President — Thom Snelling

- Treasurer** — Don Cassels
- Recording Secretary** — Alice Burleson
- Trustee** — Russell Jones
- Trustee** — David West
- Trustee** — Dale Kahn
- Trustee** — Myron Magedanz
- Property Manager** — Al Devney

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

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Boundary

From page 2

owners Association, Inc.

Duncan said Bloomingdale residents are overwhelmingly in opposition to any plan that would divide the community's middle and high school students into different school zones.

In addition, Duncan said, "If our students are reassigned to Newsome, that would put them in a different school choice zone," a move she said would leave more than 700 students living in Bloomingdale without the option of attending Bloomingdale High in 2004.

Duncan noted a move to Newsome would affect all students living in the Cimino attendance area, regardless of their current grade level or the school they presently attend.

The Cimino attendance area includes all students living in Bloomingdale west of Bell Shoals Road, those students living east of Bell

"The district does not support any plan that would divide (the Bloomingdale community)."

BILL PERSON
 Hillsborough County's director of pupil administrative services

Shoals on the south end of the community (off Natures Way and Culbreath Road), and students living along Bell Shoals and John Moore roads (Waterford, Indian Hills, Southoak, Oakdale Reserve, Hickory Creek and Dogwood Hills).

Bloomingdale residents are encouraged to submit their comments by e-mail to Person at William.Person@sdhck12.fl.us and Earl.Lennard@sdhck12.fl.us.

Meetings and updates will be announced on www.BloomingdaleGazette.com and in The Brandon News.

Let The Lighting Begin!

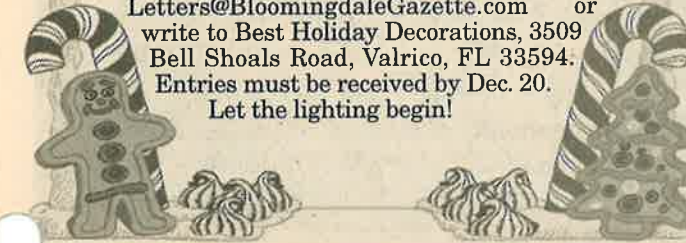
ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONTEST

A Gazette Report

Pull down the attic stairs and gather up all the extension cords... Bloomingdale's annual Best Holiday Decorations contest kicks off next week.

We'll be scouring the neighborhood for Bloomingdale's best, biggest and brightest holiday decoration displays. Two winners will receive a \$50 Wal-Mart gift certificate courtesy of The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. Winners will be announced next month.

To nominate a neighbor, or yourself, e-mail Letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com or write to Best Holiday Decorations, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. Entries must be received by Dec. 20. Let the lighting begin!



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9:40am Contemporary Praise

11:00am Traditional with Choir and Orchestra

First United Methodist Church of Brandon

(813) 689-4161
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 (1 block N. of Hwy. 60)
 Email: info@fumcbrandon.org
www.fumcbrandon.org

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A Season Of 'Goodwill' For Area Children

By MACK AUSTIN

In this season of good will, it is very encouraging to see businesses and their employees taking an active role to improve the quality of life for local residents. Appropriately, one such business in our community is the new Goodwill Industries store that recently opened on Brandon Blvd. Goodwill retail stores help generate the revenue required to support their numerous human services programs.

Sherry Shepard, retail manager of Goodwill's new Lakeland Super Store, was recently working on a humanity project and asked about including our community. Shepard was collecting toy stuffed animals that had been donated to Goodwill. She found toys in outstanding condition, almost new. With a plan in mind, she

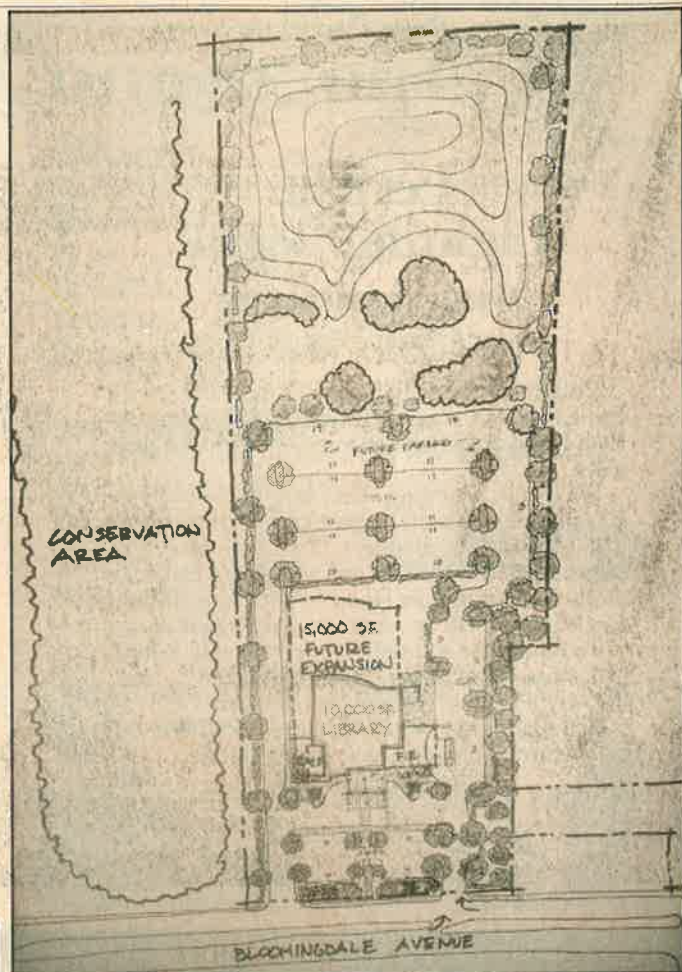
opened her heart and wallet to purchase bag after bag of these four legged, huggable creatures.

"I just love children and like to see them happy. I wanted to be a part of creating kiddy smiles all year, not only at Christmas. These soft and cuddly friends may help children in tough situations find comfort and calm," Shepard said.

After purchasing and sorting through the hundreds of toys and preparing them for distribution, Shepard recruited a friend in our area for assistance in finding loving homes for these "orphaned" plush animals.

Her friend contacted representatives of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Dept., Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, the Tampa Police Department and Florida

See Goodwill, Page 10



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

This architectural drawing shows the basic layout of the new South Brandon Library. Bloomingdale residents will be actively involved in the design of the library through the formation of a Friends of the Library group.

New Library Needs Friends, Volunteers

By MACK AUSTIN

A very unique opportunity is now available for Bloomingdale residents excited about the construction of the new South Brandon Library to be built next to Bloomingdale Senior High School. Hillsborough County staff met last month with a small group of residents to announce that county architects are seeking input from residents on what the library should look like, what features should be designed into it, and what type of landscaping should be incorporated in the design.

Israel Grajales, Senior Architect with Hillsborough County's Real Estate Department, and David Wullschleger, Operations Manager for the Tampa-Hillsborough Library Services, recommended that community residents form a "Friends of the Library" group. This group would represent the community and meet with county officials to present community input and keep residents informed about the library's construction status.

The \$1.2 million dollar

See Library, Page 10

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Small Greek or Chef Salad & Heroic Bread	\$4.55	Baked Pasta for one	\$4.95
Small 1-Topping Pizza & a Coke	\$4.55		

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MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Campbell's Will Be Back

The sign says it all. Bloomingdale residents Jan and Jill Paules and James and Leesa Lee, the owners of Campbell's Dairyland on Parsons Avenue, have vowed to be back in business as soon as possible. The restaurant - one of Brandon's landmark businesses - sustained extensive damage from a late-night fire last month. No one was injured in the blaze. The Bloomingdale community extends its prayers and support to the Paules and the Lees for a speedy recovery and a widely awaited grand re-opening.

Community Council Update

A Bloomingdale Area Community Council Report

Bloomingdale Area Community Council volunteers meet monthly with local law enforcement and county departments to research neighborhood issues and concerns. For information, call Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer or Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano at 635-8040.

At the BACC's November meeting, council members were privileged to welcome Paul Bolan, Legislative Assistant to Johnnie Byrd, the newly appointed State of Florida Speaker of the House.

The BACC and the Bloomingdale community extend their congratulations and best wishes to Johnnie Byrd, his family and his staff, as he assumes his new position as Speaker of the House.

The following items were addressed at the November meeting:

Holiday Security

Deputy Maurer noted that Request for Security Check forms are available for residents that will be leaving the area for the holidays. Drop by the Community Station to complete a form. They are good for thirty days.

Home Security

The Home Security Program offered by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office is available for homeowners. These free security survey and inspections help homeowners make their homes safer. Call the Sheriff's Office Community Relations Department at 247-8115.

Child Seat Checks

CSO Capitano noted that these special checks are available by appointment. Call 635-8040 to make an appointment.

New Library

Information on the construction schedule for the new library was given and

the establishment of a community Friends of the Library organization was also noted (see related story in this issue of the Gazette.)

Operation Childproof

Council members were informed about a special program that brings together families, parents and others interested in learning how to protect their children from the dangers of "cyber-space" and in their own home and school environments.

Information on this program can be found at www.operationchildproof.com

Vandalism

Parks Maintenance Unit II was vandalized in November. Additional security measures have been taken.

Special patrols and surveillance have been set up.

Any resident with information on this vandalism is asked to call 635-8040. Your identity will be protected.

Dog Park

Members are following plans to have an area behind the Parks Maintenance Unit considered for a "Dog Park".

Details such as access are being researched.

Bloomingdale/John Moore Construction

BACC member Gary Lohanboeke is active in following closely the status of the request for rezoning and construction in this area.

Member Joe Liguori noted the residents' main concern is high traffic volume generated by the proposed commercial and residential developments (see related story in this issue of the Gazette).

Truck Traffic

Members concerned about truck traffic on Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road are going to request directed patrols by Department of Transportation officers to insure weight restrictions are followed.

Shaw Realty Hosts Children's Golf Benefit

A Gazette Report

Century 21 Shaw Realty Group sponsored its sixth annual Multi-Benefit Golf Tournament in October. The 2002 recipients were Halston Kudla, a six year old afflicted with cerebral palsy, Alafia Elementary special programs, and the Century 21 Shaw Realty Scholarship Fund.

The tournament was played at Bloomingdale Golfers Club and raised over \$7,000 for the local charities. In addition to participating in the tournament, many local businesses donated gifts and prizes that were auctioned and raffled off.

Halston Kudla has never been able to walk, talk or even crawl. She has received treatment at a hospital in Pontiac, Michigan to try and approve her condition. Cen-

tury 21 Shaw Realty Group and associates have unanimously agreed to pay necessary bills for Kudla's medical treatment, hospital stay, and travel expenses.

Century 21 Shaw Realty Group is the official business partner for Alafia Elementary School. The company has held annual fundraisers for the school for the past several years. In addition, they sponsor the school's annual talent show. Last year's tournament bought new equipment for the school. The company is also a Platinum Sponsor for the Bloomingdale High School Band.

Company broker/owner Jeff Shaw said the Century 21 Shaw Realty Scholarship Fund is a commitment to our youth.

"We believe patriotism, citizenship and integrity are

See Benefit, Page 21



Photo courtesy Century 21 Shaw Realty

Representing Alafia Elementary are Ronda McCall, VP of Volunteers; Rosie Petrilli, PTA President; Jeff Shaw, Century 21 Shaw Realty; Sylvia McMillan, Principal; and Carol Shaw, Alafia Elementary teacher.

Happy Holidays

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SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE



Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 14th annual visit to Bloomingdale next weekend.

Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 14th annual visit to Bloomingdale on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Citgo/SunTrust Bank Plaza opposite Wal-Mart's garden center entrance.

The visit is free for all Brandon area children. A donation of non-perishable food items for local charities entitles each family to a free

instant photo with the Kringles. The visit, photos and refreshments are provided courtesy of The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

In addition, all Bloomingdale residents are encouraged to drop off non-perishable food donations through Dec. 20 at the office Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to noon.

For more information, call 681-2051.

SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE
THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Library

From page 6

library will cover 10,000 square foot and will be expandable to 25,000 square feet. The facility will contain a community room, children's library, reading room and parking for up to 250 cars. Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2003 and to be completed in December 2004.

After completion of the construction, the group could expand to meet all of the objectives and purposes of a Friends of the Library organization. These include:

To promote and to aid the establishment and enhancement of library facilities in Hillsborough County.

To foster closer relations between the public libraries and the citizens of the County.

To promote knowledge of the functions, resources, services, and needs of the libraries.

To lead in the development of programs for the extension and improvement of library services and resources.

To foster public support for the necessary development of these libraries to the end that they may serve adequately the needs of the citizens of Hillsborough County.

Hillsborough County.

To cooperate in the operation and function of such library facilities.

Having an active, effective Friends of the Library organization has in other communities proven to greatly enhance the services offered by and the use of the library, and to make the library an integral part of a growing community such as Bloomingdale.

We are very fortunate to have a new library being built in our community; especially one located so close to our homes and schools. Now is the time to take an active role in its future.

Ted Grable, Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. president, said he would present a proposal to the BHA board of directors that the board take an active role in establishing a local Friends group. Grable recommended south Brandon residents interested in forming this new group to contact the BHA by e-mail at Bloomin@verizon.net or phone 681-2051. Check www.BloominGazette.com for updates on the development of the library and the Friends group.

Goodwill

From page 6

National Air Guard's 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron at MacDill Air Force Base.

Sheriff's deputies and TPD officers will present toys to children, often victims of difficult domestic situations. Fire Rescue will give the toys to children in stressful situations as a result of accidents and home fires.

The Air Guard squadron will offer toys to the children of their members deployed around the world in the fight against terrorism.

Some of the children will be sending a stuffed animal to their parents to remind them of their love and accompany them until they return home safely.

This story shows how the concern and efforts of one

"I just love children and like to see them happy. I wanted to be a part of creating kiddy smiles all year, not only at Christmas.

SHERRY SHEPARD
retail manager, Goodwill
Lakeland Super Store

individual can make a positive difference.

Shepard's efforts will truly touch the lives of hundreds of others.

We should all do something positive this time of year to show good will to others.

Restaurant Review

Elton Likes Price, Quality, Service At Smokey Bones

By ELTON DUMONT
Exclusive to The
Bloomingdale Gazette

Mrs. Dumont and I had unexpected company from England recently. Luvy and Monte Queensbury were visiting, and we all decided to try the new Smokey Bones BBQ and Sports Bar on Brandon Town Center Drive. It was open less than a week when we tried it.

We were seated quickly with no wait (it was a week-day evening). Smokey Bones completely changed our idea of a sports bar. It was spacious, bright and definitely not smoke filled. There were multiple TVs around the main dining room and the bar, but each table had a channel changer and a volume control - a very nice touch. Make it a point to notice the mirror image

mural behind the bar and the kitchen as you are seated. It really adds to the decor.

The menu is your place-mat, so that makes it quite easy to order. They have a full bar including 10 different draft beers and 23 bottled beer selections. Luvy and Monte thought we might try the Spinach Artichoke Dip (\$5.49) with chips as an appetizer. It was served really quickly and was among the best we've ever had. But other appetizers certainly sounded attractive - BBQ Chicken Nachos (\$5.99), Beer Battered Onion Rings (\$5.59), Brunswick Stew (\$2.69), or Grilled Artichoke with red wine vinaigrette and honey mustard sauce (\$5.49) were among the choices.

Since it was dinnertime, we skipped the lunch specials and sandwiches and went right to the "Big Platters" sec-

tion of the menu. Take note here that the quantity of food served lived up to the "Big"! It was really quite ample.

My wife and Luvy ordered the Hand Pulled Pork Platter (\$8.69), and both commented that it was awesome and extremely lean. Luvy declared that this was the best BBQ she has had here in the Tampa area.

Monte selected the Smoked Beef Brisket Platter (\$9.29). It was a little dry but had a very good smokehouse flavor; a definite winner.

I ordered the Crisp Fried Freshwater Catfish (\$8.99). It was two large filets fried to perfection and tender, tender! Pay attention to the BBQ sauces on your table. The green top is their original sweet sauce, the yellow top is a mustard base with just a hint of sweetness. The "howling" is like the name implies,

very hot (but still not 5 alarm).

Your choice of two sides and grilled garlic bread are included with each order. The sides include Creamy Cole Slaw, BBQ Baked Beans, French Fries, Roasted Cinnamon Apples, Green Beans, Queso Cheese, Mashed and Gravy, Asparagus, Onion Rings and Corn on the Cob. Our foursome was all over the menu for side dishes, but the onion rings were particularly outstanding.

Other entrees include Sliced Smoked Turkey Breast Platter (\$8.69), Grilled Lime Chicken Breasts (\$9.29) and six combo platters from \$10.99 to \$15.99. Number 3 looked very good - hand pulled pork and a half rack of smoked St. Louis style ribs for \$12.99.

See Restaurant, Page 20

Study: Even One Drink Impairs Ability

THINK IF YOU DRINK

Report courtesy Narconon Arrowhead Treatment Facility

One of the oldest drugs known to man is alcohol. Throughout the years there have been prohibitions and many laws concerning consumption, as well as numerous studies done on various effects it has on a person's body.

Dutch researchers recently completed a study on the effects of moderate alcohol consumption. The study depicts the slowed processes of brain functions due to impaired ability by even smaller amounts of alcohol equal to one drink.

The volunteers experienced an error rate of about 4.8 percent on placebo, but after the first drink the errors soared to 19.8 percent.

Drinking alcohol also reduced processing speed. Changes in brain action were quickly detected, leading the researchers to conclude that even a small amount of alcohol was enough to erode the mind's ability to detect and correct errors.

Measures of brain waves showed that the small doses of alcohol quickly affected the anterior cingulate cortex, a part of the brain that influences thinking processes and the unconscious detection of error.

This evidence should not be surprising, however, since alcohol related accidents and crimes actually take more lives than all illegal drugs combined. This clearly shows that social drinking in even moderate amounts can be hazardous, especially when operating a vehicle.

More information: www.stopaddiction.com.



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Residents Slam County Rezoning Process, Land Use Laws

GROUP SAYS SYSTEM FAVORS DEVELOPERS

By LAURA FRAZIER

County planning and zoning department administrator Paula Harvey calls Hillsborough's land use rezoning process "the best in the state."

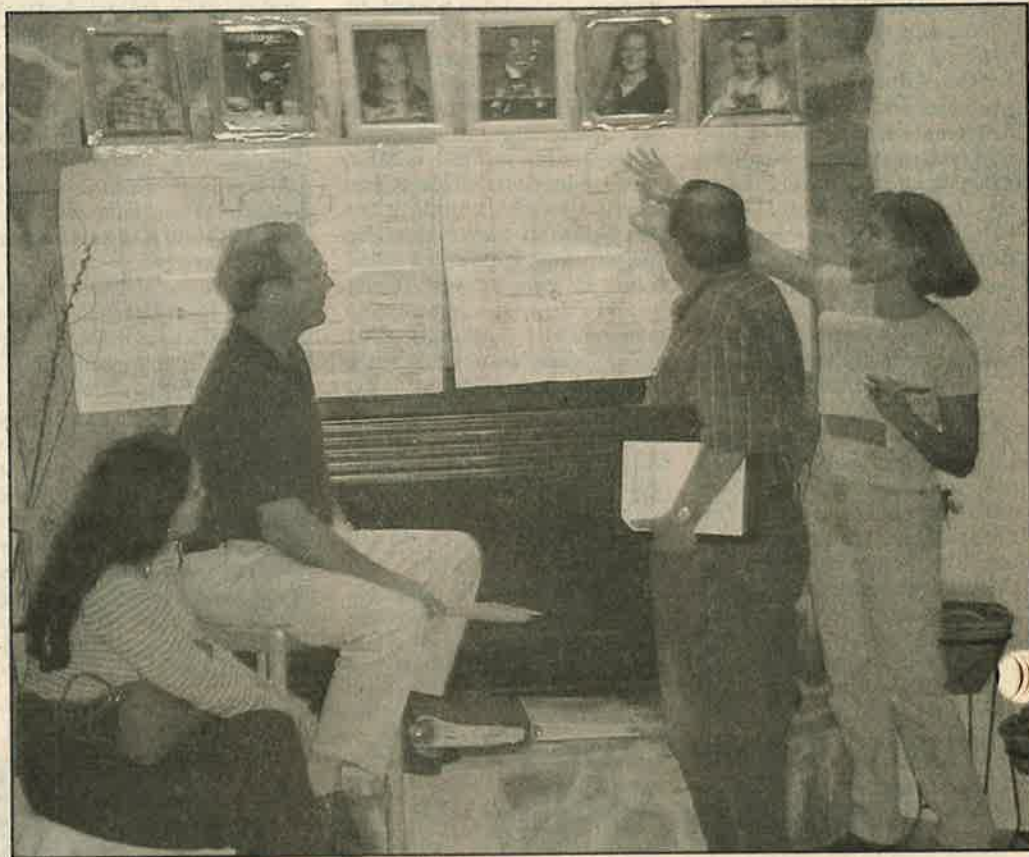
But at least one group of south Brandon residents offers an opposing view of the quasi-judicial process, a system they say is rife with favoritism, coercion and legal maneuvering.

Since July this year, about 30 core members of the United Neighbors, Dedicated Opposition, or UNDO, have worked together to head off what they say is inappropriate and incompatible development proposed for 48 acres on the southwest corner of John Moore Road and Bloomingdale Avenue.

UNDO is a grass roots alliance of south Brandon residents who banded together in 1998 to oppose another rezoning request for land at the south end of John Moore Road.

The group contends high-stakes developers and their well-connected attorneys are given great latitude throughout a rezoning process that forces proactive Hillsborough County citizens to jump through hoops. In addition, the residents say the county's development codes are full of holes and gray areas, making it easy for developer's lawyers to manipulate the system to their advantage.

Since July, the group circulated petitions, held neighborhood meetings and met with lawyers to address their concerns about how the new development could affect their neighborhood. The residents asked planning and zoning staff to limit the amount of commercial and resident development on the property. Their goal is to



LAURA FRAZIER/PHOTO

Spokesperson for United Neighbors, Dedicated Opposition, or UNDO, Jeanette Figari, right, reviews with concerned neighbors the latest site plan proposed for residential development on John Moore Road just south of Bloomingdale Avenue.

reduce potentially negative impacts to area traffic, safety, crime, density, school crowding, water usage, county services, tree preservation and the environment.

The group gathered reams of facts, figures, maps and photographs to show the types of development proposed would not meet a specific county land use rule - compatibility with surrounding development.

Jeannette Figari, UNDO spokesperson, said planning and zoning staff have a responsibility to ensure new development won't unduly infringe on the rights, safety and lifestyle of existing neighbors. County staff, not just residents, should insist upon specific construction details and strict usage limi-

tations before any case is brought before the county commission for final approval, Figari said.

"The taxpayers should not have to jump through hoops to do the job that our county officials are paid to do."

The group attended numerous rezoning hearings this year in downtown Tampa, and said they spent untold hours rallying neighbors, gathering site plans, consulting with planning commission staff and studying the county's land use development codes.

But five months, two hearings and three continuances later, the residents said their patience - and their faith in county officials to uphold their rights and the integrity of Hillsborough's land use

laws - is dwindling.

At a neighborhood meeting the group held this month, the residents agreed that confusing and redundant paperwork requirements, unreasonable filing deadlines and insufficient public hearing time limits make it difficult for average citizens busy with families and jobs to participate in the rezoning process.

"The entire system appears to favor the developers and leaves many citizens feeling overwhelmed and scammed," said UNDO member Matthew Carlson.

Harvey said she does not believe the process favors developers. In fact, the developers have as many com-

See Rezone, Page 13

Rezone

From page 12

plaints as the citizens do, she said.

"Developers comment that they don't have as much surety as they would like. It disturbs them that even though they may have a favorable recommendation by a zoning hearing master, they are still highly at risk that the Board of County Commissioners will overturn the decision."

"The process allows the citizens to have their word, but they do have to follow the legal procedures, just as the developers do," Harvey said.

But Carlson said Hillsborough's vague land use laws do little to address important development details, and make it possible for developers' attorneys to sway county staff decisions to their favor.

The neighbors questioned how - and why - the planning commission this month recommended approval of Centex Homes' plans to build 125 single-family homes at the intersection. The plan approved, said Figari, is the same plan the commission rejected twice this year due to a lack of details.

"No new details have been added to this plan. All they (the developer) did was juggle some numbers, move some lines around on the site plan and reword a few sentences on their request," Figari said.

Harvey declined comment on the plan in question, but said loosely defined codes actually work to the advantage of the residents.

"The developer in this case is asking for a planned development zoning. The fact of the matter is there aren't any specific restrictions tied to that type of development. It's loosely restricted so that we can be more restrictive if we need to be. If the developer came in just for a standard zoning, we couldn't impose more strict regulations (that the residents are asking for) like wider buffers and a reduction in the number of lots."

"The creation of a planned development is the result of a negotiated process, and that's exactly what we - county

staff, the developers, the concerned residents, and the board of commissioners - are doing," Harvey said.

Another point of contention, Figari said, is the insufficient time allotted for residents to speak at rezoning hearings - 15 minutes total for the entire group. And at one hearing this month, Figari said, the case was continued and adjourned before any of more than 80 residents in attendance were given an opportunity to speak.

"Why do they call it a public hearing if the public is not even allowed to speak?" she asked.

Harvey said it's legal - and not unusual - for a zoning hearing that starts off with a continuance request to be adjourned without hearing public comment.

The group also expressed frustration about not being permitted throughout the process to consult with county commissioners. Under Hillsborough's rezoning guidelines, commissioners are prohibited (prior to ruling on the request) from speaking or otherwise corresponding with anyone about rezoning issues.

Carlson commented, "The fact that Hillsborough County citizens cannot address their elected officials on issues concerning the residents is ludicrous."

Harvey defended the rule prohibiting commissioners from hearing off-the-record testimony, calling it absolutely appropriate.

"The Board of County Commissioners expects us to do it that way, and they are very protective of the process," Harvey said, adding, "I can assure you that when the matter comes before the board, the commissioners will go out of their way to hear from the residents' spokespersons."

Harvey went on to defend the county's rezoning process.

"Our rezoning decision-making process, as complicated as it may appear on the surface, is a very dependable process," she said, noting that

very few Hillsborough rezoning cases are ever challenged in court.

"That may be true," Figari said of the minute number of cases challenged in court, "but it's not necessarily because everyone's happy with the outcome of rezoning decisions."

"We suspect it may be because once a decision is made, the average citizen, who has to work and take care of their family and their home, does not have the time, the patience or the money to pursue further legal action."

The Centex residential rezoning request, approved by the planning commission last month, was brought before the zoning department Nov. 19. The zoning hearing master is expected to make his recommendation this month. The case may be sent to county commissioners for a final decision Dec. 10.

The commercial request to construct more than 20,000

square feet of retail and business buildings at the corner, which may include a 24-hour CVS pharmacy and one or more fast-food restaurants, was recommended for approval by the planning commission and a zoning hearing master last month.

The request goes to the Board of County Commissioners for a final decision Dec. 10.

All meetings are open to the public. But the final blow to concerned citizens, Figari said, is the county policy that allows only those residents who participated at the zoning hearings to speak before county commissioners when they make their final decision.

For more information, or for upcoming hearing dates and times, contact the Hillsborough County Zoning Dept. at 272-5920.

For information about UNDO, call Figari at 684-2260.

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- Riverview 11697 Boyette Rd, 672-1832
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- Valrico 1985 E. Brandon Blvd, 654-2324
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Homeowners Take PRIDE in Bloomingdale

NEW PROGRAM UNDERWAY

By CHERYL KEHRMEYER
BHA Director

Our Bloomingdale community is something we should all take great pride in. Many of us moved here because it's such a nice community to raise a family in - good schools, friendly folks, and close to shopping and amenities. Bloomingdale is truly a great place to call home. The great majority of neighborhoods within our community have continued to grow and mature with grace. But some of our neighborhood sections are starting to lose their sparkle and appeal. That's why the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. is proud to introduce a new community improvement program called the Bloomingdale Neighborhood PRIDE Program.

The purpose of PRIDE - People of Bloomingdale Revitalizing, Improving, Developing and Enjoying our great community - is to renew the sense of pride in community and home ownership by cleaning up and improving our homes, yards, and streets. It's a program about being a consider-



ate neighbor - one who develops neighborly relationships - and a conscientious homeowner. It's a program about protecting our investments in our homes and in our community.

In the coming months, the BHA will sponsor clean up days and provide the Bloomingdale community with the support to make our neighborhoods shine. But in the meantime, here's what you can do to be a Bloomingdale PRIDE Good Neighbor.

Bloomingdale PRIDE Good Neighbor tips:

Keep your home and yard well maintained and free of debris. Keep sidewalks clear, and pick up after your dog.

Be aware of your deed restrictions. Don't have a copy? Many deed restrictions documents are available to download from www.BloomingdaleGazette.com, or call the BHA for infor-

mation, 681-2051.

Make it a point to get to know your neighbors and their children. Look out for one another.

Welcome new neighbors with open arms. Tell them about garbage day, watering restrictions, and the BHA.

And last, but certainly not least, support the BHA by with a \$20 annual membership. The 2002 dues drive is still going on, so it's not too late to show your community support. These contributions fund the many BHA programs and services that make Bloomingdale the pleasant, safe and respected community that it continues to be.

Are you interested in being a part of this rewarding program?

The PRIDE program is looking for residents representing each of the different neighborhoods within Bloomingdale to help out.

It will only take a



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

BHA Director Cheryl Kehrmeier

few hours each month, but the rewards will last a lifetime! Call the BHA office at 681-2051 and tell them you want to be part of Team PRIDE.

Or send e-mails to Bloomingdale.Homeowners@Verizon.net, Attn: PRIDE Coordinator.

We look forward to meeting you!

Tots

From page 3

toy donations: MacDill Federal Credit Union, Eckerd's Drug stores, Publix Grocery stores, Subways, Hess Service stations, Dunkin Donuts, Optimart and Walden books. Collections are taken until

Dec. 22 with distribution on Dec. 23 and 24.

The ultimate success of the program depends on support from the local community.

So, when you're shopping during these last few weeks

of the holiday season, pick out a nice toy, wrap it and drop it off at one of these locations.

Make Christmas special for the needy children in our community.

And when you see a Marine, thank them for all they do and have done in not only defending our country, but also in caring for the needy children in our communities.

Letters

Send letters to Letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594. All letters are subject to editing.

Buses Should Slow Down

Someone needs to be monitoring the speeding school buses in our neighborhood, especially at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Bloomingdale Avenue. Please don't wait until there is a catastrophic accident.

M. Court

To report school bus speeding, please note the bus number, date, time, location and approximate speed and call the school district's transportation department at 982-5500.

If the speeding proves to be an ongoing problem, you may wish to contact Deputy Pete Maurer at the Bloomingdale substation.

The substation is on Bell Shoals Road in the Beef O'Brady's plaza.

The station is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Phone: 635-8040.



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Speeding by school bus drivers requires immediate attention. If you notice a school bus speeding, call the district's transportation department at 982-5500.

\$20 Annual Dues Support Homeowners' Association

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. annual membership notices were mailed in October to every Bloomingdale resident.

The voluntary annual dues of \$20 are the BHA's only financial support.

All residents are urged to contribute the nominal amount to help ensure the BHA will continue to serve the community effectively.

Each year, the BHA continues its work to improve Bloomingdale.

The association produces The Bloomingdale Gazette, maintains our community web site, www.BloomingdaleGazette.com, operates the Neighborhood Involvement Program to protect property values by helping the county enforce county codes, conducts the Deed Restriction Enforcement program to mediate and/or provide funding to help homeowners defray the cost of litigation, and funds the Bloomingdale Mobile Watch program.

In addition, the BHA works with Hillsborough

County government for improved services including sidewalks, street lighting and road signs, supports our local PTA's, provides a community office, funds special events like the annual holiday visit of Santa and Mrs. Claus and works in cooperation with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Dept. to operate the Bloomingdale Area Community Council.

The BHA speaks proactively for the Bloomingdale community on neighborhood issues of concern including rezoning requests and school boundary debates.

The BHA is an IRC 501(c) not-for-profit corporation run strictly by non-salaried volunteers who live in Bloomingdale.

All money collected from dues goes back into the community.

Please send in your dues so our work can continue.

If you are a Bloomingdale resident and did not receive a dues notice, or if you have any questions, please call 681-2051 or e-mail Bloomingdale.Homeowners@Verizon.net.

Look for your neighborhood news in
The Bloomingdale Gazette

Investing: Smart & Simple

Buy? Hold? Sell?

What You Should Do Before 2003!

Have the events of the past year left you wondering whether you should buy, hold or sell your investments? Please join us as our panel of experts offer their insight on what to do between now and the end of the year.

This 30-minute program is free, but seating is limited. To reserve your seat or for more information, please call or stop by today. If you are unable to attend, please contact our office for other viewing options.

We'll also discuss:

- Our thoughts on the economy and markets
- How to create a stable stream of investment income
- Developing a customized investment plan for you

Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2002
1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

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SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE



Lane Closed On Bloomingdale Avenue

One lane on Bloomingdale Avenue east of Lithia-Pinecrest Road will be closed for about one more week to accommodate construction of the new Publix shopping center being built southeast of the intersection. Construction is scheduled between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and is set for completion Dec. 13.

MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Trade Fear For Kindness, Says MDA National Goodwill Ambassador

By MATTIE STEPANKEK
National Goodwill
Ambassador for MDA

Mattie J.T. Stepanek, 12, has a rare disease related to muscular dystrophy called mitochondrial myopathy. To learn more about Mattie, visit www.mdausa.org/mattie.

This holiday season, do a random act of kindness. Think to yourself, "You know what? I feel like doing something nice for someone," and then just do it!

Maybe you could walk up and give somebody a hug. Or you could go somewhere you've been invited, even if you don't want to go. You could take time to notice the

little things that someone does and tell them how much you appreciate their effort.

You could give a dollar to a needy person or a good cause. You could bake cookies and take them to a lonely neighbor. You don't have to save the world, just commit one little act of kindness!

There's something wonderfully human that comes from giving and helping others. You've probably felt it — that



Photo courtesy MDA
12-year-old Mattie Stepanek is MDA's national goodwill ambassador.

full feeling that swells your heart and makes you feel warm and strong and peaceful.

And you know what? That full-heart feeling doesn't go away. It lasts a long time. It's solid and real.

Americans are some of the most generous, giving people in the world. I've seen this for myself, traveling across the country in the past year. I feel proud to be a citizen of a country that cares so much for others.

But I've also seen something else — that fear can make people shut down and back away from giving.

Things like corporate scandals and terrorism and talk of war and the economy make people afraid, and then they

pull back to protect themselves.

Many charities are hurting now because people aren't giving as much as they used to.

People who need help aren't getting it, and that's a terrible thing in a country as blessed as ours.

It's patriotic to help others. America is the country of goodwill, tolerance and peace.

Let's truly live up to that image, so we all can have a better future.

This time of year, don't let fear mess up your holidays. Reach out and give to others in many acts of kindness. That full-heart feeling will be one of the best presents you'll ever receive.

Say you saw it in
The Bloomingdale Gazette

Property Manager's Report

By AL DEVNEY

Al Devney, Bloomingdale Property Manager and president of Devney Property Management, Inc., can be reached at 684-6667. Excerpts of the Property Manager's report for the month of October 2002 are as follows.

\$500 Reward Offered

A \$500 reward is offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual(s) who displayed their artwork on a section of wall on Greenhollow on two separate occasions. DPMI covered the graffiti and repainted the wall.

Irrigation

Thunder Irrigation added two rotors to zone one in the Garnet system and five spray heads to zone ten in the Rosemead system. These additions corrected problems caused by new sidewalk installation; DPMI replaced eight rotors, 28 spray heads, 23 flood and spot lights, and repaired four risers and one valve.

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District FAQ's

A Gazette Report

Many residents phone the Bloomingdale community office with questions about the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, or BSTD. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions. For additional information, call 684-6667 or visit www.BloomingdaleGazette.com.

What is a special taxing district?

Special taxing districts are groups of county taxpayers with a common interest that requires special funding. Through the formation of a special taxing district, homeowners share common expenses equitably.

A special tax assessment is added to the property tax bill of each district member. The BSTD is a non-ad valorem district; every property owner pays the same

Landscaping

Planscape, Inc. removed 27 crepe myrtle trees and is storing them at their nursery to be reinstalled on Canoga Park when the sidewalk project is completed. They also moved three palm trees on Canoga Park.

Miscellaneous

DPMI painted a 40-foot section of wall and the doors to the lift station on Natures Way; Hillsborough County contractors completed the sidewalk on Bell Shoals and on Canoga Park from Rosemead to Shady Nook. The bridge that connects the sidewalk on Bell Shoals will be completed at some unspecified time in the future; DPMI met with several contractors this month, including ICD, Inc. to design the irrigation system to complete Springvale, Camarra's Landscaping for landscaping of the medians at the six major entrances and Garnet, and Boss of Gloss to water the new landscaping mentioned above and the 1,800 petunias installed in mid-November.

assessment, regardless of the value of their residence.

Why does Bloomingdale have a special taxing district?

The purpose of the BSTD is to maintain a reserve of funds to pay for community repairs and improvements.

How long have we had a special taxing district?

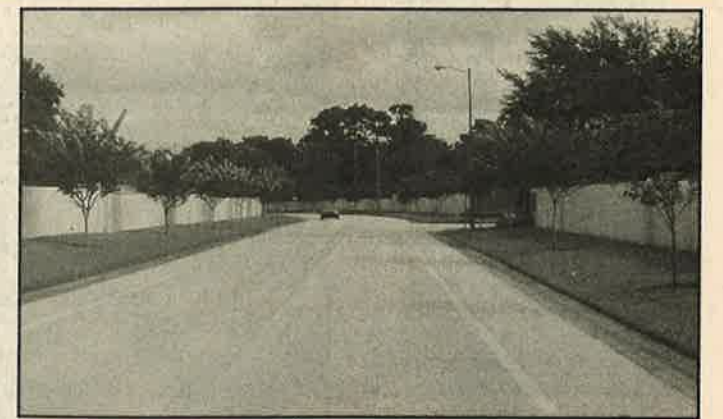
A group of Bloomingdale residents petitioned the county in the mid 1980's to create a special taxing district for the Bloomingdale area.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the petition and the BSTD was formed.

What area does the BSTD encompass?

The BSTD area includes every

See Tax, Page 20



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District board of trustees and Bloomingdale property manager Al Devney arranged to have crepe myrtle trees lining Canoga Park Drive removed and stored for replanting after new sidewalk installation is complete.

Eat, Drink and Pitch Out The Window

In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, Mr. Devney picked up 18 bags of litter, a pair of blue and white pedal pushers, an undershirt, a red and black scooter, a dog leash, a yellow rubber ball, a

shirt, four socks, a hat, a towel, 25 cents, and a partridge in a pear tree (Happy Holidays, Al!).

The beverages of choice were Gatorade orange for soft drinks, Smirnoff Ice for beer and Smirnoff vodka for distilled spirits.



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First-Grader Leads School For Day

A Gazette Report

This was one day Corey Cannon didn't mind being sent to the principal's office.

He got to eat lunch at his favorite restaurant, McDonald's, sit at his principal's desk and play games on her computer and then declare a night of no homework for his entire school, a declaration that made him very popular with his classmates.

All in all, said Corey Cannon, a first-grader at St. Stephen Catholic School, it was a pretty good day.

Cannon, the son of Keith and Denise Cannon of Valrico, recently received a chance to be Principal for a Day at his school after his parents made a winning bid of \$500 for the honor at the third annual Angels Among Us Dinner-Auction.

The event held in September raised \$60,000 for the year-old school on Boyette Road in Riverview. Principal for a Day was one of the items up for bid this year during the live auction portion of the program.

"I had a lot of fun," said Cannon of his daylong role. In fact, he's considering becoming a school administrator when he grows up.

"It was a good day for him,"



Photo courtesy St. Stephen Catholic School
Six-year-old Corey Cannon served his brief but rewarding tenure as Principal for a Day at St. Stephen Catholic School.

agreed Principal Mary Liddy who had no problem relinquishing her responsibilities for the day. "He worked the car line and got to wear a lanyard with his picture on it like all the staff. Then he led the Morning Prayer and started the rosary."

He was a bit nervous at the

start of the day but, by lunchtime, he loosened his tie and began relishing his new, albeit temporary, role.

He gave out certificates and honor roll ribbons, and then thrilled the student body by declaring there would be no homework that night.

"Even though he's younger than a lot of the students, the kids were very respectful," said Liddy. "They stood up when he came in the room and said, 'Good morning, Mr. Cannon.'"

"I was even on Channel 10 News," said Cannon. "I like being principal."



Photo courtesy St. Stephen Catholic School

School Celebrates All Saints Day

Saints were alive and well at St. Stephen Catholic School Nov. 1. Students dressed as their favorite saints to observe All Saint's Day and celebrated with a fall feast and the planting of a butterfly garden behind the school on Boyette Road in Riverview. Second-grader Tory Mannix pokes some seeds into the freshly turned dirt of the butterfly garden as fellow students Elaine Owens, T. Pollock and Andrew Payne look on.

What's Happening?

Send announcements by the 20th of this month for community events taking place next month to News@BloomingtonGazette.com or Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594.

December 1 - 23

Gym Collecting Food Donations

Kaprice For Women fitness and weight loss center, 159 E. Bloomingdale Avenue in the Winn-Dixie Marketplace plaza, is collecting non-perishable food donations for distribution to Brandon area charitable organizations, and new, unwrapped toys to be donated to St. Joseph's Children's Hospital. In addition, a special promotion through the end of December allows new members to receive a 50% enrollment fee discount if they donate a turkey for charity at the time of enrollment. Information: 662-3885.

December 7

Lunch With Santa At Center Place

Center Place will host the annual Lunch With Santa at Center Place, located within the Brandon Regional Library at 619 Vonderburg Drive, at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7. For tickets and information, call 685-8888.

Ybor Santa Fest

Santa Fest, the City of Tampa's annual community celebration that rings in the holiday season, finds a new home this year at Ybor City's Centro Ybor Entertainment Complex on Saturday, Dec. 7 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Travelers will be transported to the North Pole with tons of snow and an ice skating rink in Centennial Park.

Share your holiday wish list with Santa in the North Plaza of Centro Ybor, or write him a letter at the U.S. Postal Service booth - they'll make sure he gets it before Christmas!

Kids and adults alike will enjoy the interactive holiday entertainment presented on five stages throughout the complex, including puppet shows, jugglers, mimes, costumed characters and magicians. From snowflakes and hot cocoa to decorative lights and festive music, Santa Fest celebrates the spirit of the season. Information: 961-8388.

December 9

Taxing District Meeting

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District board of trustees will meet at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, on Monday, Dec. 9 at 7:00 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Information: 684-6667 or BSTD@BloomingtonGazette.com.

December 10

AAUW Meeting

Members of the Brandon Branch, American Association of University Women will hold their holiday dinner 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 10 at Stacey's Homestyle Buffet, 790 W. Martin Luther King Drive in Seffner. Members are asked to bring an item for the silent auction to benefit the Association's Legal Advocacy Fund, which provides funds for women suing for gender bias in colleges and universities. Members will also be collecting peanut butter for ECHO. Information: 671-3078.

See Happening, Page 22



Photo courtesy Hillsborough County School Board

School Board Members Sworn In

Hillsborough County School Board Members Carolyn Brickleymer, Jennifer Faliero and Candy Olson took the oath of office Nov. 19 during the School Board's reorganization meeting at the Raymond O. Shelton School Administrative Center. Pictured left to right, Brickleymer (District 6) was first elected in 1994, and has been re-elected subsequently; Candy Olson (District 2) was first elected in 1994, and was re-elected without opposition this year; and Jennifer Faliero (District 4) was elected to her first term in the Nov. 5 general election from an original field of four candidates. Faliero, a school PTA volunteer with two children enrolled in District 4 schools, received more than 62% of the votes, with strong support from Bloomingdale residents.



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Let Us Color Your World!

Bulls Volleyball 2002 MVP Scores HCC Scholarship

By SHANNAN D. POWELL

For Bloomingdale senior Alina Pasciuta the future - at least the near future - is clear. And best of all, there is volleyball in it.

Pasciuta, the Bulls' 5-foot-6-inch setter, signed with Hillsborough Community College on Nov. 1, receiving a full scholarship to play with the Hawks.

"I'm excited about being able to play at the college level. It's more intense and more competitive," said Pasciuta, 17, who received the 2002 Most Valuable Player award, Coach's Award and Gatorade Will to Win Award at Bloomingdale.

Though the Bulls fell short of a winning record this year, with disadvantages in height and experience, Pasciuta stood out among her peers,

attracting the attention of HCC head coach Lisa Sorrel.

Pasciuta recently spent the day with Sorrel and her soon-to-be Hawks teammates to get a taste of the college volleyball environment.

"It was fun. I had lunch with Coach Sorrel and met the team. They were really nice, friendly people. I met with a guidance counselor, who showed me what classes I can take," said Pasciuta, who hopes to find a career in art or sports management.

In her third year on the varsity team, Pasciuta garnered compliments on her play from Bulls coach Bonnie Hess, game referees and even opposing coaches.

"She has done an excellent job scoring for us," said Hess.

See Volleyball, Page 23



Bloomingdale senior Alina Pasciuta, Bulls Volleyball 2002 MVP, recently scored a full scholarship to Hillsborough Community College.

Tax

From page 17

home in Bloomingdale East and West, with the exception of River Crossing Estates in Bloomingdale East.

How much does the BSTD cost residents?

The taxing district assessment is \$100 per year beginning in 2003. Prior to the \$20 increase approved by Bloomingdale voters this year, the assessment remained at \$80 for nearly 20 years since the district was created.

Who decides how to spend the money?

A volunteer board of trustees manages the expenditure of BSTD funds. The trustees, all Bloomingdale homeowners living within the district, hold open meetings once a month to plan maintenance and improvement projects. There are currently seven members serving on the BSTD board.

Each May, the board invites all Bloomingdale residents to attend the district's annual budget meeting. The meeting is advertised in local newspapers including the Gazette and on www.BloomingdaleGazette.com. Resident input is taken into consideration in deciding which projects are to be included in the upcoming budget.

Once the budget is approved by the Board of County Commissioners, it is put in line for capital expenditures approval, a process that can carry over into the next fiscal year.

Who oversees maintenance and improvement projects?

Bloomingdale's property manager, Al Devney of DPMI Property Management, Inc., serves as project coordinator for maintenance and improvement projects approved by the board of trustees. Devney also provides regular inspections and routine maintenance of Bloomingdale's common areas, entryways and irrigation systems.

What are the responsibilities of the BSTD?

The taxing district is responsible for the maintenance of and improvements to the community's common areas including landscaping along our feeder roads (Natures Way, Culbreath, Bloomingfield, etc.), perimeter walls, all major and most minor entryways, landscaping, irrigation, etc. The taxing district is not responsible for county-owned property such as roads, parks, sidewalks, street signs, etc., or equipment owned

by Tampa Electric Company such as streetlights.

To request maintenance of county-owned property call Hillsborough's Roadway Maintenance unit at 272-5912. To report streetlights that are out or malfunctioning, call Tampa Electric Co. at 223-0800, or fill out the form on www.tampaelectric.com.

Is the taxing district a division of the homeowners association?

The BSTD and Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc., or BHA, operate independently of each other.

For more information about the homeowners association, call 681-2051 or visit www.BloomingdaleGazette.com.

How can I report a maintenance or improvement need to the BSTD?

Residents can call the BSTD at 684-6667 or send e-mail to BSTD@BloomingdaleGazette.com. In addition, Bloomingdale residents are invited to attend special taxing district meetings on the second Monday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at the Bloomingdale community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

Restaurant

From page 11

For the hungry appetites, Number 6, the 50/50 rib combo might be your choice. It is a half rack each of baby back and St. Louis style ribs for \$15.99. And don't forget the Texas toast and the two sides.

We even had dessert, and the good news is that the desserts range from \$1.99 to \$3.99. The portions are petite enough that if you ordered one, you could actually eat it. The Queensburys chose the Chocolate Peanut Butter Pie (\$3.79), while Mrs. D. selected the Key Lime Pie (\$3.49). We gave both desserts high marks.

Our check for four including dessert, soft drinks, coffee and beer was only \$72 including the tip. They are open for lunch and offer lunch specials and sandwiches from \$4.99. There is also a children's menu with selections from about \$4.

Rating - Based on 5 Stars
 Food ★★★★★
 Service ★★★★★
 Ambiance ★★★
 Overall ★★

Until We Eat Again,
 Elton Dumont

Yard of the Month



Bloomingdale Yard Of The Month

Andy and Chris Kerler
 3733 Hollow Wood Dr.

Congratulations!

Send nominations to: Letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com or Yard, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. Winners receive a \$25 Bloomingdale Walmart gift certificate, courtesy of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

Thanks, Yard of the Month Volunteers

A Gazette Report

Thanks are in order for all of you who volunteered to help with the BHA's Bloomingdale Yard of the Month program. We were unable to reach some of you in November, but please know that your offer of assistance is greatly appreciated!

At this time, Karen Pearson of Windsor Woods has graciously offered to coordinate the program. We have taken the liberty of keeping your names and numbers on file and will be sure to give

you a heads up if we need additional help in the future.

If you'd like get involved as a community volunteer right now, we'd love to see you at the next Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board of directors meeting, on Monday, Jan. 6, at 7 p.m. in the community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. There are so many areas in which you can become involved to help keep Bloomingdale beautiful and vital.

For more information, call 681-2051 or e-mail Bloomingdale.Homeowners@verizon.net.

Benefit

From page 9

important factors in development, just as is academic achievement," Shaw said.

"We ask area schools to select scholarship recipients based on that criteria.

The current goal is to give away a \$500 scholarship each month."

Of the 2002 tournament, Shaw said, "This was the best tournament in our company's

history. But just so you know, we are already planning the one for 2003, and it will be even bigger and better. My wife, who is a Hillsborough County schoolteacher, has already committed over 20 years to educating children.

To us, it's a family commitment."

Information: 689-2121.

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Bloomingtondale Substation Notes

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER AND OFFICER SANDY CAPITANO

The Bloomingtondale Community Substation, at 4342 Bell Shoals Road, near Beef O'Brady's restaurant in the Village Center Plaza, is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Information: 635-8040.

For immediate assistance, call the Sheriff's Dept. at 247-8200 or 911 for emergencies.

Caution Drives Holiday Safety Success

December is one of the most traveled months of the year. With personal concerns about the safety of flying,

many of our residents will chose to drive to their destinations. This means thousands of more cars on the highways.

Many of the drivers of these cars will be teenagers, some with only limited experience. Now is the time for each family to sit down and take the time to discuss the dangers of holiday driving, how they can protect themselves and not let a tragedy ruin their holidays.

Of the thousands of drivers traveling on the roads for the holidays, there are four types to watch out for and also not be one of. These include:

See Substation, Page 23



Don't take a ride this holiday season in the MEDIVAC helicopter like this driver did. Buckle up, drive safely, and avoid bad drivers.

MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Happening

From page 19

BOCC Hearing

The Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners will meet 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 10 at County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd. in Tampa.

A rezoning request to allow construction of more than 20,000 square feet of commercial buildings at the corner of John Moore Road and Bloomingtondale Avenue is scheduled to go before the commission for a final decision (see story in this issue of the Gazette).

All meetings are open to the public.

Information: 272-5660.

December 11

Church Bingo Night

St. Stephen Catholic Church on Bell Shoals Road in Valrico will host bingo Dec.

11 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the multipurpose room at the church. The cost is \$15 for 20 games. Concessions will be available. Proceeds will benefit St. Stephen Catholic School. Information: 689-4900

La Leche League PM Meeting

The evening meeting of LaLeche League of Brandon, a mother's group discussion of parenting and breastfeed-

ing, will be held 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. on December 11 at Morris Chiropractic Center, 207 Kingsway Road, between Parsons and Valrico Road, just north of Hwy. 60. Healthy babies are welcomed. Information: 932-3664.

December 12

Bulls Ornament Sale

The 2002 Bloomingtondale High School ornament will be available to purchase on Dec. 12 in the school cafeteria. The ornaments cost \$5 and are also available at The Green Boutique on Bloomingtondale Avenue and Greg's Hallmark store in Bloomingtondale Square.

December 14

Santa Visits Bloomingtondale

Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 14th annual appearance in Bloomingtondale at the Bloomingtondale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Visitors are asked to bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to local charities.

The visit and photos are free, courtesy of the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association. Information: 681-2051 or Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net.

December 18

LaLeche League AM Meeting

The morning meeting of LaLeche League of Brandon, a mother's group discussion of parenting and breastfeeding, will be held 10:00 a.m. to noon on December 18 at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, corner of Bloomingtondale Avenue and Bryan Road. Healthy babies are welcomed. Information: 932-3664.

January 6

Homeowners Meeting

The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association, Inc. board of directors will meet at the Bloomingtondale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, on Monday, Jan. 6 at 7:00 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Information: 681-2051 or Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net.

Volleyball

From page 20

She's doing really well pulling things out of the net, and even back over the net. She can come up with a blocked hit from an overpass, when everyone else is trying to figure out what just happened. She's technically sound."

Hess credits Pasciuta's abilities to her quickness, both mentally and physically, and to her knowledge of the game - pretty impressive kudos considering that Pasciuta had never touched a volleyball until her freshman year.

"When we showed up at Bloomingtondale, I asked her what she'd like to be involved in," said Tammy Law, the Bulls' team mother as well as Pasciuta's own. "She said not dancing or cheerleading, because she was a little more on the shy side. She saw tryouts posted in the school

newsletter and thought she'd go."

At those first tryouts, Pasciuta, a former basketball player, earned a starting spot on the junior varsity squad and moved up to varsity the following year.

Since then she has dedicated herself to the sport, spending extra training time at the YMCA, playing club ball with the Tampa Sand Spurs, and attending camps during the summer.

"I have to attribute Alina's success both to Coach Hess and to playing club," Law said. "They've helped her keep that commitment."

And Pasciuta's own advice for younger girls interested in playing volleyball at the collegiate level?

"Play club if you want to play in college and you want to get better. And be dedicated."

Substation

From page 22

Sleepy Drivers

According to the National Sleep Foundation, over half of the nation's driver admit to driving drowsy, pushing themselves too far. Among those 18 to 29 years old, nearly one-quarter reported that they actually fell asleep at the wheel. Most of these drivers also admitted to being impatient, driving faster and feeling more stressed. Plan your trip and allow time for rest stops. Watch out for sleepy drivers. They usually speed up, then slow down or weave back and forth.

Distracted Drivers

Driving while distracted has become such a serious problem that law enforcement officers now note "driver distracted" on accident reports. This can seriously affect your auto insurance rates. The types of distractions noticed nowadays could fill a book and include cell

phones, PDAs, eating, putting on makeup, talking to passengers, reading, shaving and even watching videos or working on a laptop computer. The mind can concentrate on only one thing at a time. Make yours concentrate on your driving.

Drunk Drivers

These are some of the most dangerous drivers. Nearly 40% of all traffic fatalities are alcohol related. These drivers are unpredictable, can be very aggressive and usually aren't the ones that get injured seriously.

Watch for the signs of this type of driver - driving with their lights on, weaving back and forth, driving very slowly or following the emergency lane line. Avoid these drivers. Alert law enforcement if you see them. And don't be one of them.

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Luke, 2:11