

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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Kaitlyn Little hands out with one of the Royal Guard.

LYNNE LITTLE

## London calling

A bloomin' good time had by Bulls marching band during their London visit.  
See story, page 4.



Members of the Bloomingdale Senior High School marching band hang out with Garfield before the parade.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The greatest loss in life is not death, but a life without purpose!"

*Unknown*

# Rhino finds a Bloomingdale home

A staff report

A kitten found in a rhinoceros pen almost two months ago was released from Care Animal Hospital on Dec. 23, but not before avoiding another close call.

Maura Middleton, an elephant and rhinoceros trainer of the zoo, was helping in the rhinoceros exhibit and noticed a kitten in the straw. After its retrieval, the kitten was named "Rhino" and taken to the zoo vet and on to Florida Veterinary Specialists. For ongoing care, the Middleton family chose to take Rhino to Care Animal Hospital, since their other pets are cared for there.

Cheri Kane of Care Animal Hospital said that Rhino was in horrible shape.

"It might have been the sickest kitten I've ever seen. He had pneumonia, an upper respiratory infection and was severely malnourished."

As Rhino was being cared for, Maura felt a bond with the kitten and adopted it. "I wanted to give him the best shot possible"

On Dec. 23, Rhino's health took a turn for the worse when it had trouble breathing. Maura Middleton immediately performed CPR on her newly adopted kitten, and brought it again to Care Animal Hospital. Dr. Kane made sure everything was clear with its lungs but said, "The kitten is down to seven lives now."

Since then, Rhino has more than doubled his



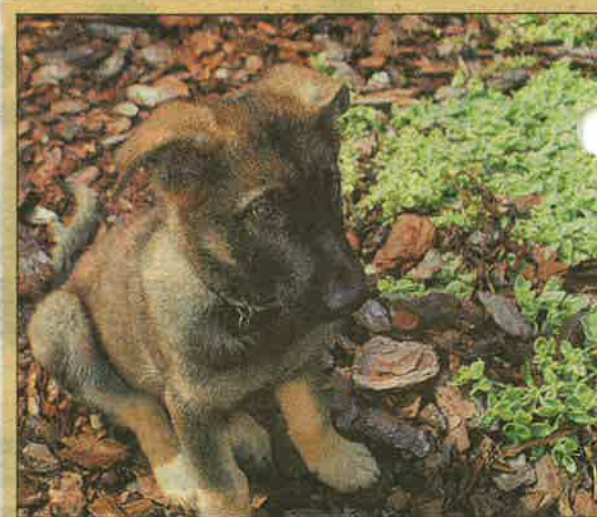
Rhino has more than doubled in size since his adoption.

weight. Rhino loves his new home and enjoys his new friends, Willow the cat and Cooper, a pit-mix dog. The Middleton family is very happy to have this new furry member as part of their family.

Care Animal Hospital was founded by award-winning veterinarian Dr. Richard Kane and is Hillsborough County's largest, full-service, mixed animal, veterinary facility. Treatment extends from small

to large animals as well as exotics and equine patients. Visit [www.careanimalhospital.org](http://www.careanimalhospital.org), or call (813) 684-7387. Care Animal Hospital is located at 511 E. Bloomingdale Ave.

The Lowry Park Zoo is a natural outdoor exhibit for more than 1,700 animals. Open 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. daily it is located at 1101 W. Sligh Ave. Tampa. Visit [www.lowryparkzoo.com](http://www.lowryparkzoo.com) or call (813) 935-8552.



## February Pet Corner

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Is your pet a star? E-mail a picture to [chadderton-group@kw.com](mailto:chadderton-group@kw.com), along with their name and some information. If chosen, your pet will be featured in the Bloomingdale Gazette and will win a \$20 gift card to PetSmart!

Meet Moose! He is a 9-week-old German Shepherd pup, full of curiosity, energy and most of all love! This little guy was born to please. The Sigmon Family looks forward to many years of fun and adventure with him.

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## BLOOMINGDALE BUZZ



**Benjamin-Carter**

By **SUSAN GREEN**

The new year saw local Bloomingdale gyms off to a bustling start with people full of plans to get healthy or stay fit. We asked patrons of the Campo Family YMCA to describe their fitness goals and offer their tips for staying on track.

**Charnell Benjamin-Carter**

Brandon

**Goal:** "To lose 100 pounds."



**Rogers**

**Advice:** "I try to add more variety in my workouts so I don't get bored."

**Lowell Rogers**

Colorado, visiting a relative in Valrico

**Goal:** "To get in shape so I can work this summer. I spray trees and plants [with herbicide]. ... You have to be in good shape to carry a 30-pound spray pack on your back."

**Advice:** "Just get in a routine and be



**Letizio**

determined."

**Joy Letizio**

Valrico

**Goal:** "For this year, lose 20 pounds. No more yo-yo diets."

**Advice:** "I do full blast for 15 minutes at different stations, first the bike. I wrap it up with 15 minutes of swimming, full blast. ... My partner is the Lord, and I'm doing this as a covenant, not as a silly New Year's resolution."

## BHA scholarship applications available

Annual award will benefit a Bloomingdale student

Parents/students, do you need help with college funds? How does a scholarship sound? If so, continue reading.

Established in 2006, the BHA scholarship is awarded annually to one high school senior living in Bloomingdale.

Beginning in February, the Scholarship Guidelines and Application Form and are available on the community website by going to [www.BloomingdaleGazette.com](http://www.BloomingdaleGazette.com). Look for the button that reads, "Bloomingdale Community Scholarship Application" in the

upper left part of page. From there, just print out the documents and get to work!

The deadline for the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association to receive the completed application is April 1, 2011 so make sure you don't let that date go by. In May, the winner will be invited to attend the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Board meeting and his/her name will be announced and the award given.

The Bloomingdale Homeowner's Association looks forward to helping another Bloomingdale student start their college future by awarding them this year's scholarship. We hope it's you!



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# Bloomin' good time for high school music students

BY SUSAN GREEN

It was anything but frosty relations last month when the Red Hoodies of Bloomingdale High School marched on the Red Coats across the sea and received a bloomin' warm reception.

Students, teachers and chaperones who traveled to London to participate in that city's New Year's Day parade said British citizens greeted them and called out their school name whenever they wore their red Bloomingdale Music hooded sweatshirts around town.

"The parade was a blast," said Emily Dees, 17, a senior who sings in the chorus and plays clarinet in the band.

"They were talking about our band as we walked by."

Bev Sutherland, Bloomingdale choral director, said spectators held up signs that read, "We love Americans."

"The citizens of London could not have been friendlier," said Lynne Little of Bloomingdale East, a chaperone who walked with the band in the parade. "I have never encountered such nice folks."

About 260 students and 60 chaperones went on the New Year's trip, along with the two music teachers and the band's color guard coaches, Coleen Petree and Billy Sullivan. The trip was organized by the London International Choral Festival.

Jon Sever, Bloomingdale's band director, said the school was recommended for the honor by a committee of university music departments and encouraged to submit an



Members of the Bloomingdale High School marching band during a recent trip to London to participate in a New Year's Day parade.

application and video. Bloomingdale was among 25 American high school music departments represented in the parade.

British schools do not have a tradition of marching bands, so parade organizers recruit from the U.S., Sever said. The band director built this school year's musical program around a "British Invasion" theme, with music by The Beatles, Queen and Coldplay. For the parade, students marched to Coldplay's "Viva La Vida."

Band, chorus and orchestra students annually travel together on spring trips, Sutherland said. However, the London trip, which included concert performances at prestigious venues, was the first excursion abroad for the entire music department, said Sever and Bev Sutherland, the school's choral director.

Sutherland has taken smaller choirs to London in past years, and the orchestra went to Beijing, China,

to perform in the 2008 Summer Olympics, the teachers recalled.

This year's travelers spent a full week in London, taking in the sights of the city. Mallory Dotson, 16, a Bloomingdale junior in the chorus, said she enjoyed just stepping out of the hotel to see historic landmarks down the street.

Another chorus member, Holly Price, 16, said she enjoyed touring Oxford University. Rachel Lassiter, a 15-year-old sophomore, recalled the thrill of holding the parade's large Garfield balloon.

All of the students said they were happy to bring home a British milk chocolate confection called Flake.

"When you bite into it, it flakes, literally," Price said. Sever listed his favorite memory: "For me, it was the parade. All of the touristy stuff, as good as it is - everyone who can afford to go there will see that."

"Not everyone can march down a street in a



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Members of the high school band marching through the streets of London. Band members said Londoners made them feel very welcome.

parade that ends at Big Ben [clock tower]. Not everyone can hear the bells chime at Westminster Abbey on New Year's Day."

Students spent months selling program ads, cheesecake and ham to raise money for the trip, which cost almost \$3,000 per person. Little and her husband, Scott, made the journey with their triplets, Kaitlyn, Megan and Sean, all 15-year-old sophomore band students.

"It was a lot of money, but it was worth it," Lynne Little said. Kaitlyn plays the clarinet; Megan, flute; and Sean, alto saxophone.

She and Sutherland credited the Bloomingdale High faculty and staff with making the trip possible. Lassiter said the London excursion built camaraderie.

"It was like a family experience," she said. "It brought the whole music department together."



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## The Men's Cave is new pamper spot for guys

BY SUSAN GREEN

When women want to be pampered, they go to a salon for a facial, hair styling, manicure and maybe a fancy drink or two.

Matt McArty knows that because his wife, Hannah, has operated Aquali Salon and Spa at 3652 Erindale Drive for more than two years.

"There's nothing really like that for guys," McArty said.

So when he decided to open a new business, McArty thought about how men would want to be pampered. His recipe for relaxation includes beer on tap, a projection screen filled with sports, a wall full of cigars and, of course, plush recliners, all available while men wait for a hair cut or take time to unwind afterward.

McArty and his partner, Clarence Motlow, opened The Men's Cave at 3432 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, behind Chili's Restaurant, in early January.

"People tend to think of a men's cave as a place to hang out - beer and buddies," McArty said.

McArty, originally from Springfield, Ill., has lived in Valrico since 2003. A long-time connoisseur of cigars, he has stocked the shelves of The Men's Cave with locally rolled stogies starting at \$4, as well as high-end brands that cost as much as \$30 apiece.

Customers can smoke them in a room with four ventilation fans and a projection screen that's 9-by-5 feet.

The Men's Cave is a licensed salon that colors hair as well as offers cuts and styles, McArty said. He



SUSAN GREEN

**Matt McArty**

also plans to hire a barber to do razor cuts.

For \$20, a customer can get a shampoo, facial steam towel, scalp relaxer, hair cut and style. Kids' cuts cost \$15. Business hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday. The salon takes appointments as well as walk-ins.

For information, call (813) 685-7600.

## Salon gets new look, old name

BY SUSAN GREEN

It dates to the early days of modern Bloomingdale, when the community was just beginning to blossom with the neighborhoods of Bloomingdale East.

Generations of women have primped for proms, weddings and holiday parties at the salon across busy Bell Shoals Road from Wal-Mart at Bloomingdale Square.

Last spring, the salon itself got a much-needed makeover.

"We went from 1980s to the New Millennium," said Heather Michael, a stylist at the beauty spot for more than 10 years. Earth-tone colored tile floors complement the soft, olive-green walls.

Over the years, the establishment at 3507 Bell Shoals Road changed ownership a few times.

Now it has reverted to one of its former incarnations with a name change to Salon Jennifer & Co., Michael said.

The name is similar to one bestowed on it about five years ago, when Jennifer Taylor owned the establishment, Michael said. More recently, with the addition of a partner, the salon was known as Addiction Hair Studio. But the partner left the business, and Taylor changed the name back.

The atmosphere, with many longtime stylists and customers, will not change, Michael predicted.

"We're a very down-to-earth neighborhood salon," she said. "We like to joke around. We're kind of like the 'Steel Magnolias' (movie), the local gossip station. ... It's a very comfortable place to be."



SUSAN GREEN

**Stylist Debbie Lowe of Valrico finishes a new look for longtime customer Karen Kingsley of Brandon.**

The salon has six stylists and is looking to add two more, Michael said. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are encouraged. Hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, but stylists often accommodate requests for special hours by appointment, Michael said.

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## Cimino heads to the aquarium

A pretend waterfall at the Florida Aquarium made all the students look up and wonder!



KIM WALLACE

**Andrew Wallace, Erin Hogue Riley Golden enjoy surfing at Floridat Aquarium**



# All County music students descend on Bloomingdale

By SUSAN GREEN

Those long hours of practice paid off for hundreds of music students who descended on Bloomingdale High School last month to participate in the annual All-County Honor Music Festival.

Students from chorus, band and orchestra programs at 47 middle schools and 27 high schools across Hillsborough County auditioned for approximately 900 spots in the honors concert program in late fall. Those selected also committed to intense rehearsals with clinicians assigned to create harmony from the diverse performance styles of individual school

music programs.

Three separate concerts — one for chorus, orchestra and band — were staged in the Bloomingdale High auditorium. It had been about 10 years since Bloomingdale hosted the Hillsborough school district's crème de la crème of student musicians for All County performances, said the school's longtime choral director, Bev Sutherland.

Chorus students rehearsed for two days at East Bay High School in Gibsonton. Nearly 300 students participated, in All County middle and high school choruses this year, said Brian NeSmith, East Bay's choral director.

His wife, Theresa, choral director at Eisenhower Middle School, was the clinician and conductor for the middle school mixed chorus.

"Your job is to move the audience emotionally," she told the group of young people at the beginning of rehearsals Jan. 20.

She also encouraged them to forget their school loyalties and ways of doing things in order to blend their voices in song.

"It's not Eisenhower. It's not Giunta. It's not Burns," she said. "It's All-County Chorus."

All-County Chorus was a new experience for Burns Middle School seventh-graders David Hniz-

dil, Stephanie Schwartz and Kendra Schofield and eighth-graders Nicole Pinner and Kelsey Fagan. On their first day of rehearsal at East Bay, they said they were eager to hear how the music they had practiced individually would sound as a blend of dozens of voices.

Some students said they also welcomed the opportunity to socialize with singers from other schools.

"I like coming to new places and meeting new people," Kendra said.

David was impressed with the discipline required.

"All I know is, if I miss one rehearsal, I'm done," he said.



SUSAN GREEN

Mary Elizabeth Gibbs, choral director at Florida Southern College, conducts the All County Senior High Honors Mixed Chorus at Bloomingdale High School.



Students at Burns and Randall middle schools were among those chosen to rehearse with clinician Theresa NeSmith at East Bay High School in preparation for the All County Honor Music Festival.

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Bloomington High students competed and placed in the County level of the Reflections PTA arts program. Pictured: Robin Satterwhite, Bloomington Reflections Chair, Natasha Miller, participant; Kalia Johnson, 2nd place, Literature; Christina Parker, participant; Hiram Rose, 1st place, Musical Composition and Tonya Parker, Bloomington Reflections Chair. Not pictured Jordan Kruger, Honorable Mention; Kelsey King, Judges Choice and Alexis Vasquez, 2nd place, Film Production.

## Bloomington students advance to PTA Reflections program state finals

Bloomington High School students were recently recognized for their entries in Reflections, the National PTA's annual arts program.

Inspired by this year's theme, "Together We Can..." 12 Bloomington students created visual arts, photography, literature, music, film/video and dance choreography projects. Three students were recognized as county level winners: Hiram Rios, 12<sup>th</sup> grade, was awarded

first place in Music Composition; Alexis Vasquez, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, received second place for Film Production and Kalia Johnson, 12<sup>th</sup> grade, received second place in Literature. These students will go on to compete with other Florida county winners at the state level.

Bloomington seniors Jordan Kruger received an Honorable Mention in Photography and Kelsey King was the Judges Choice in Visual Art. Their

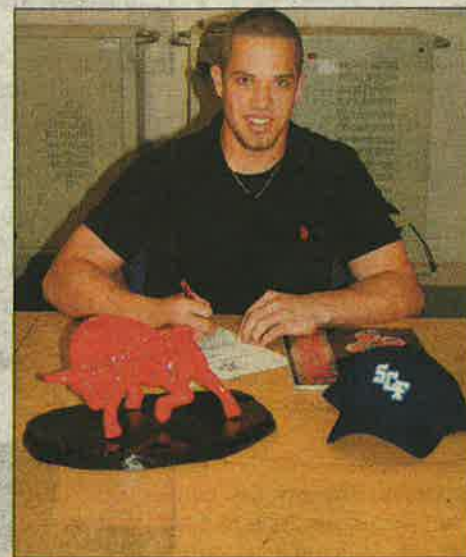
art was displayed at the Hillsborough County Reflections Awards Ceremony in January and will be at the Literacy Luncheon in February and PTA/PTSA Awards Ceremony in May.

The Florida Reflections winners will be announced in the Spring. From there, winners will go on to compete at the national level. For additional information, contact Catrina Miller at 210-6910.

## Bloomington pitcher signs baseball scholarship

On Jan. 21, Bloomington High School pitcher Robby Kaluf signed a baseball scholarship with State College of Florida in Manatee-Sarasota, FL. Robby started playing baseball when he was 4 years old with Bloomington Little League. His dad knew then that he would go far with his baseball career. With the support of his dad and brothers he is getting that chance to further his career.

Robby is a right hand pitcher and for his senior year will also serve as a designated hitter on the days he doesn't pitch. He said that if it had not been for his coaches and dad, he would not be where he is today, and he greatly appreciates all that they have taught him over the years. Coach Wilken stated the biggest change he has seen in Robby is his dedication to becoming a team player and his strong work ethic. Coach Wilken is excited to see him move on to the next step in his life. He knows he will do well with his commitment of playing baseball.



KIM WALLACE

On Jan. 21, Robby Kaluf signs with State College of Florida in Manatee-Sarasota.

## YMCA reaches out to cancer survivors

By SUSAN GREEN

The Campo Family YMCA is getting ready to launch a new program aimed at bolstering the health and spirits of cancer survivors.

In cooperation with the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, the YMCA will offer a free three-month membership and tailor-made exercise opportunities to people who are undergoing treatment for or have survived any type of cancer, said Mindy Anderson, who is coordi-

nating the effort for the Campo branch.

The program will be patterned after one pioneered at the New Tampa YMCA, she said. At Campo, the program will be open initially to 20 people. If more sign up, they will go on a waiting list. The Campo staff wants to continue the program after the first three-month round, Anderson said.

"Almost everybody has been affected by cancer," she noted. "We realized we could help with that."

Family members of can-

cer patients also enjoy membership privileges free for three months while their loved one is involved, she said.

The program will include one-on-one sessions with a personal trainer, as well as small group exercise and social hour opportunities, Anderson said.

"We will tailor our program to the individual," she said. "If they have limitations because of medication or fatigue, we will definitely alter the program to meet their needs."

A portion of proceeds from the upcoming YMCA Youth Triathlon at Park Square in FishHawk Ranch will benefit the cancer survivor program, Anderson said. That event, featuring swimming, bicycling and running for youths of various ages, will be held starting at 7 a.m. May 28. Registration opens March 15.

For more information, call the Y at (813).684-1371.

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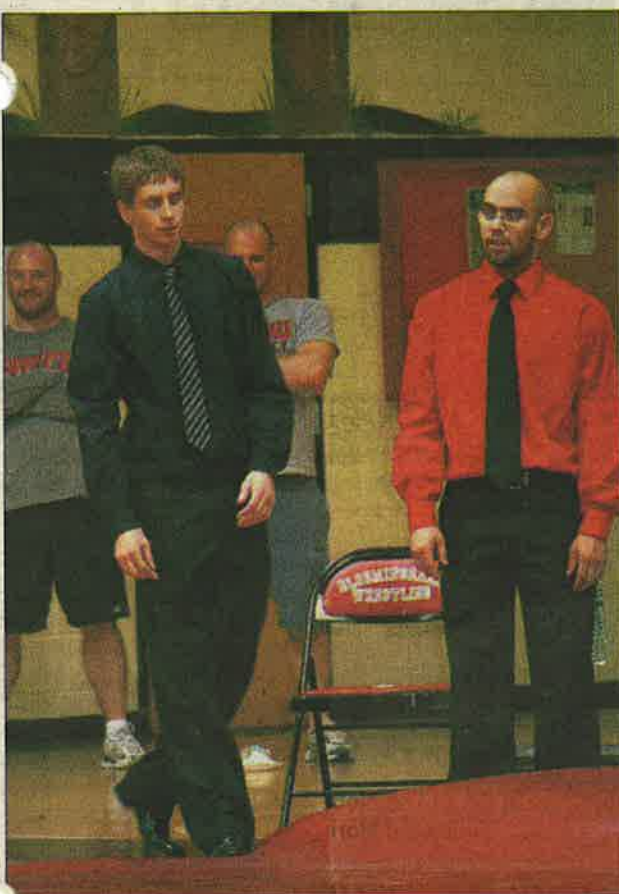
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## Bull wrestlers takes a bow

Coach Bryce Lawson and head coach Sergio Matos watch as their Bull over take the Dragons 52-18 in the last match at home of the season.



Bulls Senior Wrestlers, were introduced during Senior night to recognize their accomplishments during their school career. L to R - Sean Defontaine, Kenny Rach, Lane Ory, Skip Reagor, Young Kim, Chris Robertson.

KIM WALLACE

## On real estate Salvaging credit and equity



Ray Chadderton

The issue of pricing strategies was recently addressed here, particularly for facing moving deadlines or selling a home that's languishing on the market. But what

if you are experiencing financial hardships or losing valuable equity in your home?

If you're facing foreclosure, you're probably looking at a short sale, an agreement to sell your home for less than what you still owe. This is challenging, because you have to list high enough to satisfy the lender, but low enough to attract buyers.

First, complete an application from your lender and get a quote for how much they're willing to accept. Work with a reliable

real estate agent to find the sweet spot between what the lender wants and what will excite buyers, and you may be lucky enough to receive multiple offers.

If you're not defaulting, but your home has lost significant value, you're still in a tough situation. While painful, the best pricing strategy in this case is to ask your agent for a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) and price your home at fair market value or below. Again, if your price is right, you may encourage multiple offers, resulting in a higher sale price.

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# Not an average camping trip

BY KIM WALLACE

On Sunday Jan. 16, five Bloomingdale teenagers ventured out for a week-end of camping on Gillian Island, an island located about 2 miles off Anna Marie Island. Daniel Baxter, who has a lot of experience boating and camping, took his friends, Wriley and Austin White, T.J. Conwell and Troy Ritzel along with him for some fishing and relaxing time since there was no school.

On Monday, Daniel got a call from his father saying there was a storm coming in and they need to pack up and leave. So Daniel and his friends started packing. Since they only had a 14-foot john boat, it required them to make a couple of trips

back to the main island to bring everything in. Austin White and T.J. Conwell were the first to come back to get the trailer ready for the boat and start packing up supplies while Daniel went back to pick up Wriley and Troy. Once Daniel got back to the island it started to rain, so they hurriedly got in the boat and started back to Anna Marie Island. Daniel said as they were heading back in, the rain quickly turned into a storm. The waves starting getting rough and before they knew it, the boat had capsized, leaving the boys in the water. They knew then they were in trouble when they quickly lost sight of the boat. As the weather worsened, they started swimming

back toward Anne Marie. The boys were thankful that Daniel's mom had purchased new life jackets for their trip. As they continued to try to make their way to Anna Marie Island, they noticed they no longer could see Troy and they made the decision to turn back to find him. When found, Troy told them he didn't think he could make it in as he could not feel his legs and they had already started turning blue (the water was between 45 and 50 degrees). Daniel and Wriley both told him he could and he would make it, they were going to make sure of it.

Meanwhile on shore, T.J. and Austin started feel-

ing something was wrong. T.J. said he could see the island from where they were, but when the storm came, they lost sight of it. They tried calling their friends on their cell phones to no avail. There was also no sight of them. They called Daniel's father to let him know they needed help.

Daniel and Wriley, pulling Troy in, swam for an hour and half before finally reaching a sandbar to rest. A lady in a boat spotted the boys and notified shore she had them and got them the waiting rescue team. Troy was transported to a local hospital with hypothermia. Daniel and Wriley were also treated, and released. After



KIM WALLACE

**Austin White, Daniel Baxter, Troy Ritzel, Wriley White and T.J. Conwell of Bloomingdale returned safe from camping disaster.**

Troy was admitted to the hospital, they transported him over to All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg for treatment. Troy was treated and released on Wednesday evening. Troy said he is starting to feel better and that he is very grateful to have such good

friends that were determined to keep him safe.

While Daniel Baxter and Wriley White are heroes for making sure their friend stayed safe and made it to shore, each person in this story is a hero in that they played a part of the survival of each other.

# Cheerleaders earn Western Conference victory

BY KIM WALLACE

This year Bloomingdale cheerleaders have had four competitions leading

up to the one that really counts, the District of Hillsborough County Schools. Bloomingdale was one of 27 district

schools in the top 10 in the semi-final round, along with Strawberry Crest, Chamberlain, Lennard, Riverview, Durant, Sickles, Freedom, Robinson and Steinbrenner. The best of the best was Bloomingdale, took first place. Durant came in second and Freedom came in third. All the teams performed to the best of their ability. Bloomingdale performed a very difficult routine with great energy, pose and great sportsmanship. Coach Candice Teague said she is one thankful, blessed, proud coach of all they have accomplished.

The team then went on to compete at Plant City High School for regional competitions Jan. 22, along with 70 teams other Florida squads. There were 21 teams in Bloomingdale's division, with four teams making the final round of four with the Bulls once again taking first place. Freedom came

in second, Steinbrenner third and Durant fourth. Competition between the final four teams had Bloomingdale in first again, then Durant, Freedom and Steinbrenner. All these teams performed well. Now it's on to the state competition in Kissimmee at the Silver Spurs Arena Feb. 5. Good Luck to the Bloomingdale cheerleaders!



**Taryn Keyser and Bethany Wallace cheer as they here their team being announced in 1st place along with team.**



KIM WALLACE

**Bloomingdale cheerleader's in their ending pose of routine.**



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## Bloomingtondale Community Station Notes

# Over 13 years of service to the Bloomingtondale community

As of this month it has been 13 years since the Sheriff's Bloomingtondale Community Station opened in 1998. For the Bloomingtondale Community Station, they changed for the better. The move to the new location on Erindale Drive was a good change. The new office provided deputies and detectives the space needed to provide better service.

James Howell, the area detective, is grateful for the office in his assigned area, making him more efficient.

Sgt. Susan Bradford said, "We can also more effectively utilize the Intelligence Led Policing procedures not in place and track criminals in District IV, the largest district in Hillsborough County."

The success of the Sheriff's Office operations in our area is greatly due to the outstanding cooperation and support given by area residents. In these times it takes team work to make our community safer and more secure. Groups like the Sheriff's Bloomingtondale Area Community Council (BACC) have continued to work directly with us in identifying critical concerns and working with us to find solutions. Sgt. Bradford noted that, "The council needs more members from more homeowners' associations so we can have more residents working with us to help improve the safety and security of our district and the Bloomingtondale community." Residents interested in information on the council

can call the Community Station at (813) 635-8040, come by the station at 3622 Erindale Drive (at the intersection of Erindale Drive and Lithia-Pinecrest Road) or attend the next meeting on Thursday, Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Community Station.

Hillsborough County's Sheriff, David Gee, his staff and the many professional teams that make up the Sheriff's Office have continued to provide dedicated service even while the county continues to face tough financial times. Programs such as the Volunteer Citizen Patrol program have provided outstanding assistance to those of us in law enforcement and improved our ability to provide Bloomingtondale's residents with the secure home and work

environments you want and deserve.

One significant factor that we have noticed is that the first line of defense against crime in our community is you, the homeowner. Remember, there aren't enough deputies to patrol our community and ensure that your homes and vehicles are secure. So the fact remains that there have been too many burglaries where a home or vehicle have been left unsecured. You must take the time to protect your own homes and cars. Criminals look for open homes and vehicles and it only takes them a couple of minutes to walk away with televisions, money, jewelry, GPS systems and even guns.

As homeowners, verify with the business manage-

ment that anyone who is entering your home to perform a service, (such as housecleaning, carpet cleaning and painting) has completed a background check. If you have been doing business with a company for many years, revisit this topic when employee changes occur. A recent incident in the District IV area involved the arrest of a brand new employee for a cleaning service the owner had been using for more than six years.

One of the greatest motivations or reasons for many criminals is to get money for drugs. Law enforcement is concerned with the growing number of "pain management clinics" in the area. Many of these clinics are being closed but more open to



Curtis Warren

replace them. Prescription drugs are known to be a driving force behind a lot of property crimes.

Remember to protect your prescriptions by insuring they are locked up.

Foreclosures continue to be a serious problem in our community. County Code Enforcement officers, such as Jonathan Williams are working directly with the Sheriff's Office and other agencies to prevent foreclosed homes from becoming illegally occupied or used for other illegal purposes. If you have a foreclosed home in your area, keep your eyes on the homes and report any suspicious activity to the Sheriff's Office at (813) 247-8200 or Code Enforcement at (813) 274-6639.



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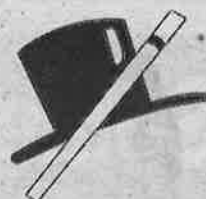
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