

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXIV
Number 1

JANUARY 2009 • THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

BHA Donates To Local Charity

The board hoped that Santa's visit would help others, and it did.

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Churches Join Forces To Help Needy

Differences are put aside to help needy.

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Alafia students got into the season.

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Whispered Wishes



JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette Photo

Santa listens closely as Grace Reny, 5, shares her Christmas wish list. Grace and her family are Fairway Manor residents. Santa and Mrs. Claus visited Bloomingdale Dec. 13 at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Remove the rock from your shoe, rather than learning to limp comfortably"

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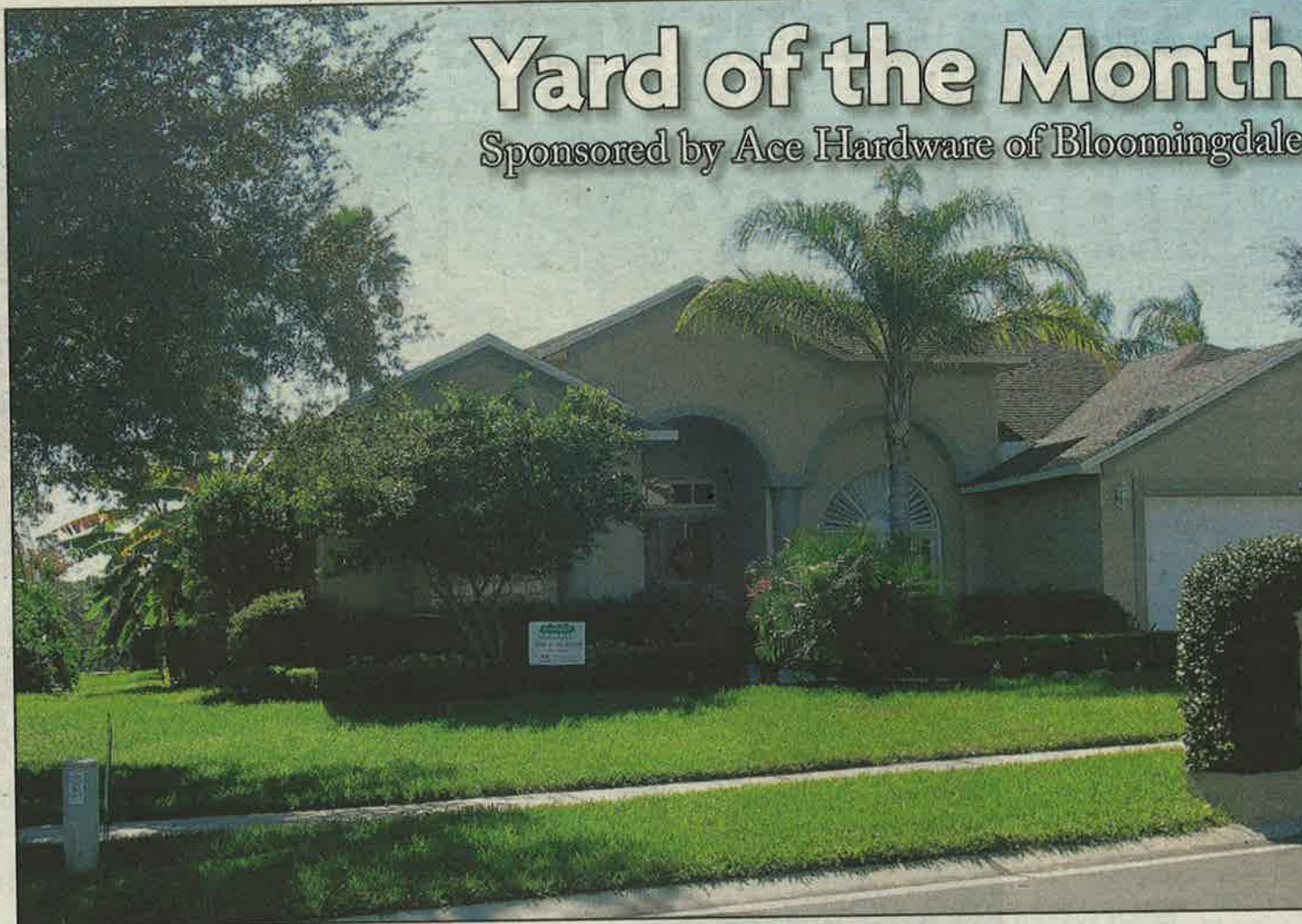
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Photo by Jane Lee



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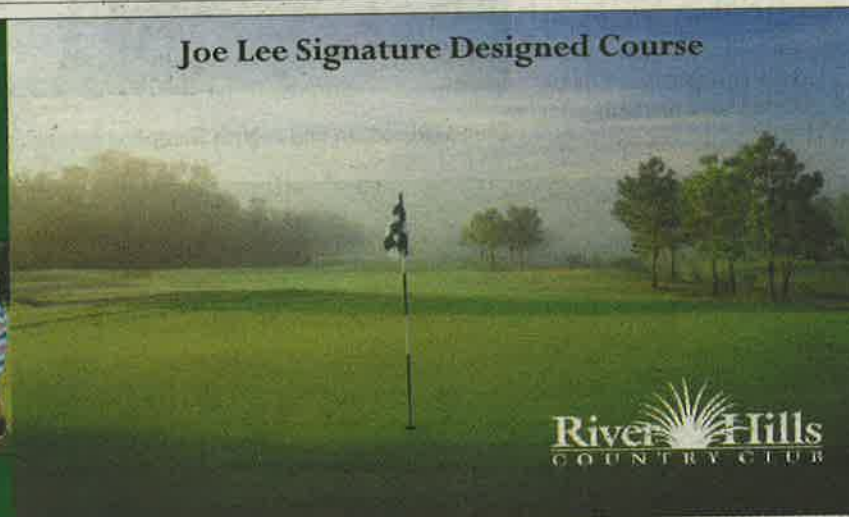
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Santa Claus Visits Bloomingdale

By JOY BOISSELLE

Not many communities can boast a special visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Thanks to the efforts of the BHA Board of Directors, the Bloomingdale community can.

Marking their 21st annual visit, Santa and Mrs. Claus called on the community on Saturday, Dec. 13 at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club. They delighted more than 50 children and even a few Santa fans of the four-legged variety. Visitors received one-on-one time with the jolly one and his wife as well as a photo keepsake of their visit and a toy of their choosing - all in exchange for a canned good donation.

As Santa and Mrs. Claus, Joe and Pam Liguori relish their roles in the ongoing tradition. "For 21 years, we have had a hand in making children smile and we love it," they said of the occasion.

Also helping to make the day special were several "elf" volunteers. "Elf" volunteer, Olivia Harris, age 12, said, "I have volunteered as an elf before and I like helping all the little kids see Santa and Mrs. Claus." Elves escorted the children to see Santa and provided toys to them after their visit.



Even Madison, an Old English Sheepdog belonging to Joe Colbert, had to give Santa her list.

JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette Photos



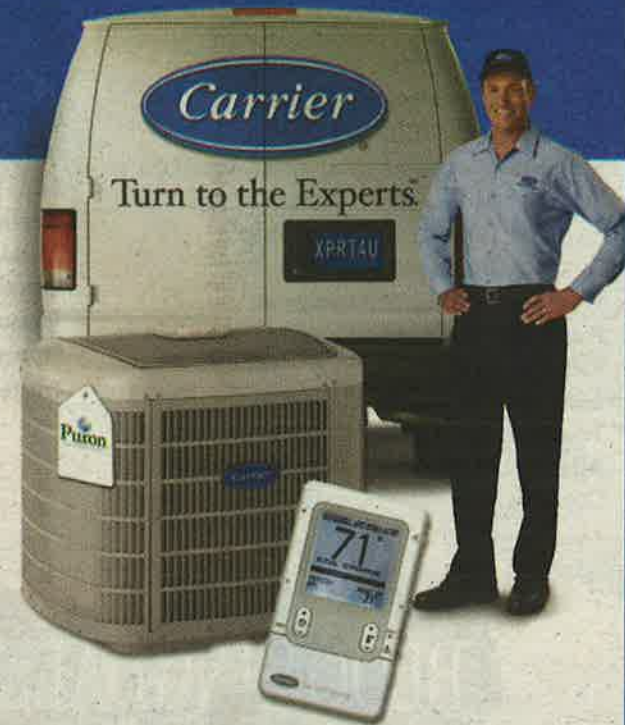
Santa receives a whole lot of love from Fox Run residents, Erin, 5, and Alanna, 7, Brophy.



Taylor Purtell, 11, and Olivia Harris, 12, take a break from their "elf" duties during Santa's visit to Bloomingdale.

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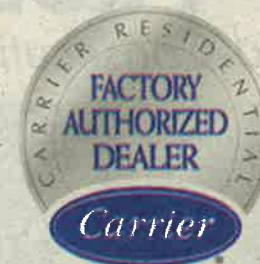
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Your Inside Connections

BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION INC.

PO Box 7221, Brandon, FL 33508
Phone: (813) 681-2051
E-mail: bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net
Meetings: first Tuesday each month, 7 p.m.
 January meeting will be held the second Tuesday
Web site: bloomingdalegazette.com
President: Stanley Lee
Vice president: Jim Harris
Secretary: Jane Lee
Treasurer: Dennis Osborn
Directors: Shelia Harris, Myron Magedanz and George May

BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
Phone: (813) 684-6667
E-mail: bloomingdale.district@verizon.net
Office hours: Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Meetings: second Monday each month, 7 p.m.
President: Thom Snelling
Vice president: Russell Jones
Treasurer: David West
Property manager: Al Devney
Trustees: Joe Harless; Joe Liguori and James Laughlin



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Commercial Listings

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- Suzuki Super Center** ... (9205 Adamo Dr) – Showroom, Paint Booth, Body Shop (complete auto-repair)
- Bryan Road, Brandon** .1.4 acres, corner lot, commercial zoning
- Bloomingdale Ave**2+ acres, corner lot, commercial zoning

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LOAN	0%	5%	6%	7%	8%
10K	167	189	194	198	203
15K	250	283	290	297	305
20K	333	378	387	396	406
25K	417	472	484	495	507
30K	500	566	580	594	609

*Based on 60 month financing.

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BHA Donates To Local Charity; Helps Needy Families

By JOY BOISSELLE

While Santa's visit brought smiles to his many young fans, the BHA board hoped his visit would bring smiles to a few local area families as well. In exchange for a photo with Santa, residents donated canned food items for charity.

Following Santa's visit, board members donated the collected food items to Bob Smith, a representative of Emergency Care Help Organization, ECHO, a Brandon-based nonprofit organization. The Brandon Ministerial Association founded ECHO in 1987 to help provide short-term assistance, food, and clothing to those in need.

"Brandon is an affluent community and I always thought we didn't have needy people...how wrong I was," Smith stated.

"We are so appreciative of this donation. Lately, we have been inundated with requests for assistance."

Assistance requests cover job loss, to fire loss, homelessness, to prison release. "Our organization seeks to provide help through whatever the emergency and hopefully, promote self-reliance and independence. Basically, we give them a boost." Volunteers and donations are always welcome.

Of the more than 60 volunteers, Smith has been with the organization for 15 years. His motivation comes from the heart. "I know I am helping and to see the smiles on the faces of those we help; I just love it."

Interested in contributing your time or donating to ECHO? Contact the organization at (813) 685-0935.

JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette Photo

Bob Smith, center, receives a food donation in support Emergency Care Help Organization from the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association. Food donations were collected during the Bloomingdale community visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. Board members flanking Smith are Jane Lee, Shelia Harris, George May, and Stan Lee. Kneeling is elf volunteer, Olivia Harris, 12.



More Photos Of Santa

Roman Lewandowski, 6, carefully tells Santa what he wants most for Christmas. Santa visited Bloomingdale Dec. 13 at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club.

JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette Photo



Photo by Jane Lee

After a busy holiday season, Santa was catching up on some needed rest.



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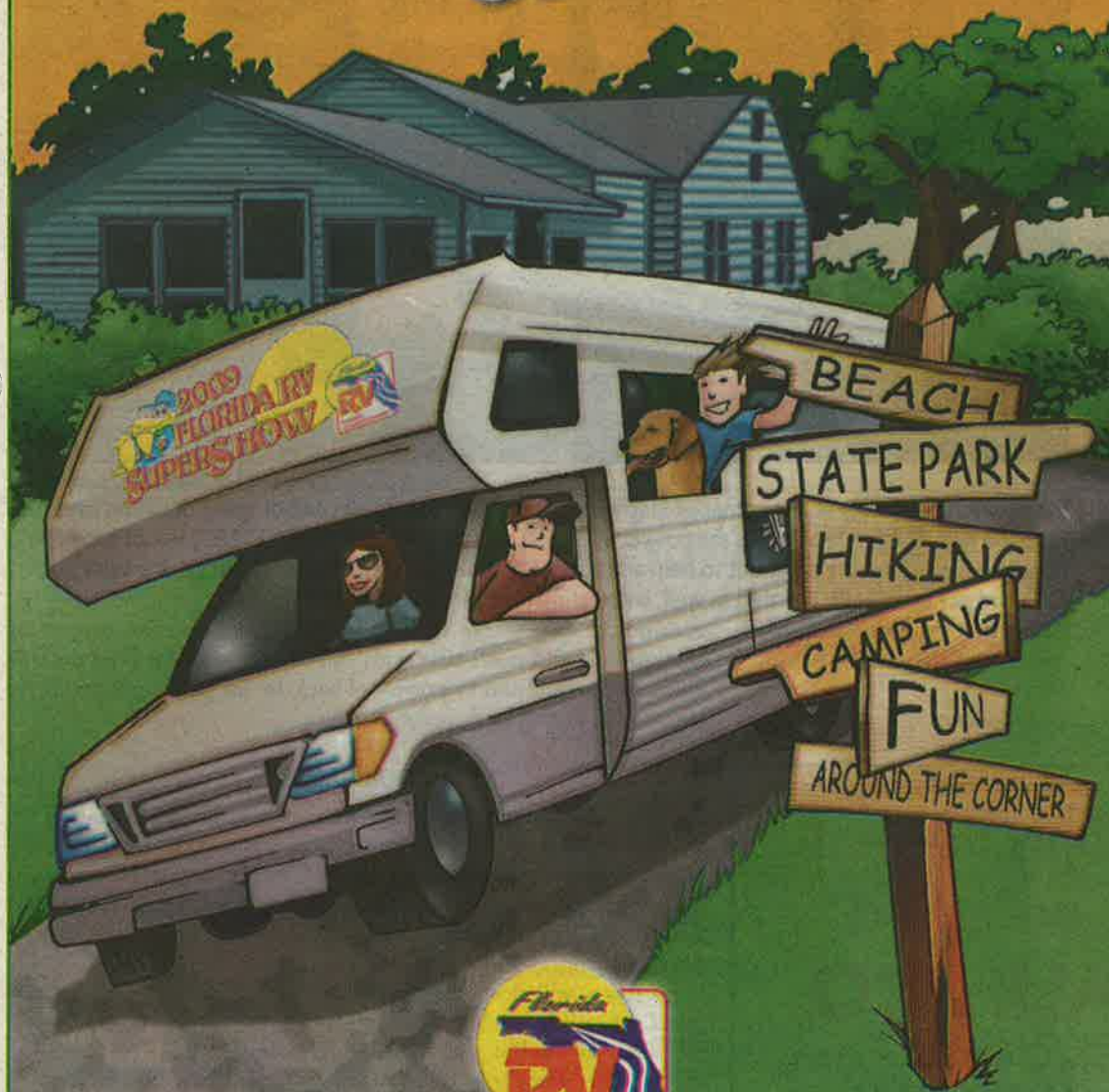


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Churches Join Forces To Help Local Needy Over The Holidays

By LESLIE WHITE

With these economically challenging times leading the news every day, 19 local churches decided to join forces, unifying their efforts to stock local food banks and help care for those in need.

Bay Life Church of Brandon started Feed the Bay in 2007 to help feed the hungry of Tampa. But this year, they would not have to do it alone.

In May, Bell Shoals Baptist Church lost their pastor, Forrest Pollock and his 13 year old son, Preston, in a plane crash, only to suffer the loss of music minister, Simeon Nix, three months later to a heart attack. Area churches came together to help Bell Shoals during this process, providing volunteers to man guest books, help in the parking lot and nursery during the funeral services as well as the receptions afterwards. Across denominations, they ministered to a hurting church. It was that tragic time that spurred the ministers to once again realize that coming together produced powerful results, and they decided to join Bay Life to help Feed the Bay.

During worship services Sunday, Nov. 23, congregations in East Hillsborough County were released early and given a shopping list, which they were encouraged to take, along with their family, to area Sweetbay and Publix supermarkets. The goal was to collect and deliver 250,000 pounds of food to area food banks before the holidays.

It is estimated that every day 40,000 families in the Tampa Bay and surrounding communities do not have enough food to feed their families, and this year, more than in recent years, the need is great. Shoppers crowded the aisles at local stores, list in hand, and loaded carts with pantry staples like flour, sugar, canned meats, dry milk, pasta, sauce and breakfast foods.

Trucks were positioned in the parking lots to collect the donations, and when loaded, pulled out to deliver the food to America's Second Harvest of Tampa Bay, Beth-El Farm Worker Ministry, Bread of Life, Cynthia Pinckney Ministries, Daystar Faith Center, ECHO, Everyday Blessings, Good Samaritan Mission, Inc., Life Center of Brandon, Manna on Wheels



LESLIE WHITE/Gazette Photo

Sweetbay Supermarket at the corner of Bloomingdale and Bell Shoals was one of many donation sites for Feed the Bay. Though final tallies are not yet available, estimates are that about 269,650 lbs. of food was donated, 756 volunteers came out to help and about \$18,000 was spent at each participating Sweetbay. Cash and gift cards were donated as well, with estimates at around \$5,000.

Ministries, Metropolitan Ministries and Women's Resource Center.

Volunteers will return to these

charities in two weeks to help sort and distribute all that was collected. In addition to providing trucks, Sweetbay Supermarket also donated five percent of purchases made for Feed the Bay back to the participating charities.

BOOKMARKS


The following programs are offered at Brandon area libraries:

BLOOMINGDALE: Bloomingdale Regional Library, 1906 Bloomingdale Ave., offers the following free programs. Hours are 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 12:30-5 p.m. Sunday. Call (813) 273-3652, ext. 2, or visit www.hcplc.org.

- Library will close at 6 p.m. today.
- Library will be closed all day Thursday.
- Bedtime Stories is at 7 p.m. on Mondays.
- Toddler Time is at 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Story Time is at 11 a.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Baby Time is at 10:30 a.m. Thursdays.
- Free adult computer classes are at 10 a.m. Mondays and 7 p.m. Thursdays. Registration in person is required no earlier than one hour before the program. Call (813) 272-3652, ext. 2, or visit www.hcplc.org.
- Knit Teen Club is at 7 p.m. Tuesday.
- Catch the Wave is at 2 p.m. Jan. 17.
- Library closed all day Jan. 19 for Martin Luther King Day.

BRANDON: Brandon Regional Library, 619 Vonderburg Drive, will offer the following programs. Hours are 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday

See **BOOKMARKS**, Page 18



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BHA Adds Cheer To Holiday Calendar

By JOY BOISSELLE

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) has been busy this holiday season. In November, the BHA organized the highly successful and first annual Family Fun Fest. The fest brought nearly 500 residents and 40-plus businesses together for a day of community friendship. For most homeowner associations, running an affair of this size would have been enough...not so for the BHA. This event was just the first of several holiday activities sponsored by the BHA Board of Directors and community volunteers.

December events included a Santa visit and canned food drive at the Bloomingdale Golfers Club, a luminarias sale, and finally, a Santa and Mrs. Claus tour of the Bloomingdale community.

Stan Lee, newly-elected BHA President, said, "Promoting the work of the BHA through events like these is one of our goals. More importantly, we want to give back to our community, make it better, and continue to help make it the special place to live that we [board members] all believe that it is."

The board spends some time with Santa and Mrs. Claus.



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Alafia Holiday Craft Night

By CINDY VODOPICH

Alafia's Holiday Craft Night was held Friday, Dec. 12 in the Alafia cafeteria. It was a free event for all Alafia students. The children moved from station to station making a different holiday craft or item at each, including ornaments, reindeer food, holiday necklaces, bracelets, crowns, and even writing letters to Santa. There was a visit from the big guy himself with candy canes for everyone. Santa's elves provided a feast of cookies and red and green punch too.



Julia Harbord makes reindeer food.



Kimberly Herrin shows off her Christmas "bling."

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Chandler Rumbaugh, Madeline Pena, Kimberly Herrin, Paige Vodopich and Christopher Hackbardt.

Christopher Hackbardt sends his letter off to Santa.

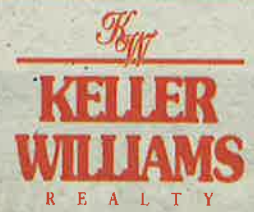
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Sheriff's Office Resolutions

By Dep. PETE MAURER

Each year brings memories of the old year and a chance for new beginnings and challenges. 2009 promises to be a year of changes and challenges. Our nation will have a new president, our county new commissioners and our schools new teachers and principals. Each of these will bring new policies and ideas that will in some way affect our lives and those of our families. The critical state of our economy will have its serious affects too.

As we begin this very challenging New Year, those of us in the Sheriff's Office want to wish each and every resident of Bloomingdale and the surrounding communities a very safe and secure New Year. We all want to especially thank each and every one of you who provided support and help to us during this past year.

The Sheriff's Office continues to make progress in providing Bloomingdale and

the surrounding areas of Hillsborough County with a safer and more secure place to live, work, run a business and raise a family. The safety and security of the residents and their homes and businesses in our community and our county as a whole is our very reason for being here. Our continued work with concerned residents from our community has helped make this possible. The continued expansion of the sheriff's "Volunteer Citizens Patrol Program" and active participation on the Sheriff's Community councils will help us make even more improvements towards making Bloomingdale safer and more secure.

Since Bloomingdale's residents work throughout Hillsborough County, we all know how continued growth in our area affects us in terms of increased traffic and yes, increases in crime such as gang activity and property theft. Significant improvements

have been made and will continue to be made in the 2009. The sheriff's special gang unit continues to decrease gang activity in our area. We will finally see the widening of Bell Shoals Road, the continued widening of Boyette Road and plans being coordinated to improve other main traffic areas such as Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

One very important observation we in law enforcement have noticed is that there is a major key to improving traffic flow and congestion that comes not from not just widening more roads but from you the drivers. When you slow down and obey the traffic laws, you prevent accidents that cause deaths and serious injuries, tie up traffic and you also save a lot of money on expensive citations and increases in auto insurance. "We want to challenge all of you to make it a personal resolution in 2009 to slow down, drive safer and obey all of the traffic laws." We will all benefit. Our deputies can then spend more time

solving other law enforcement issues and providing the security you want and need.

The holidays are now over and residents are enjoying the nice gifts they received, everything from new bikes to new cars. Each of you should take the time to insure these new gifts are kept safe and secure and not let criminals take them. Make sure your garage doors are locked, outside vehicles are locked and all valuables removed from them and other valuable items like bikes are secured inside. Otherwise they will "walk away".

When you do leave your home, insure it is secured. If you will be away for any length of time, make arrangements with a friend or neighbor to get your mail and paper or have them stopped until you return. Arrange for a Sheriff's deputy to check on your property by arranging for a Security Check at the Community Station.

I know we all hear these same safety and security steps over and over every year. "The



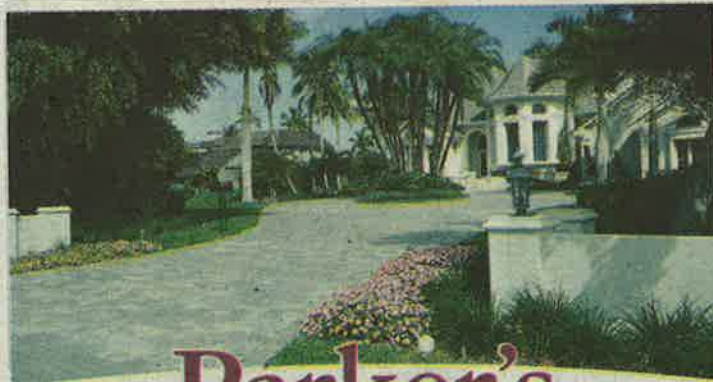
Deputy Pete Maurer

simple fact is that they don't work until you take action and do them!"

Let's make 2009 a safe and secure year. Take personal responsibility for your property, your home and your vehicles. No one will miss them more than you. Also, be a good neighbor and watch out for your neighbors.

Drive safe, obey the traffic laws and please buckle up!

Have a great 2009!



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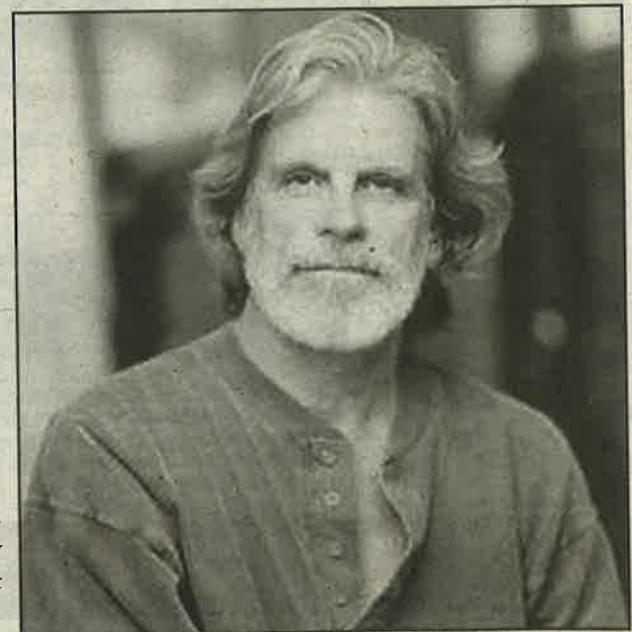
Williams Brings Folk Music To Brandon Regional Library

The Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative will host acoustic folk musician Jack Williams on Thursday, Jan. 8 at 7 p.m. at the Brandon Regional Library, 619 Vonderburg Drive.

Enjoy an evening listening to the renditions of folk guitarist Jack Williams, a nationally acclaimed musician and songwriter who will leave listeners spellbound with his unique sound. Sing Out Magazine describes him as "one of the strongest guitarists in contemporary folk."

This program is cosponsored by the Friends of the Brandon Library— Brandon Regional Library.

For more information about this and other free programs at your library, library patrons should call (813) 273-3652, or visit hcplc.org.



The Flu Shot, By A Nose

Story and photo by LESLIE WHITE

The Walgreens Pharmacy at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Bloomingdale Avenue offers flu shots on a walk-in basis anytime during their regular pharmacy hours. The general recommendation is that anyone who wants to reduce his or her chances of getting the flu should be vaccinated, but you must be over the age of 18. Walgreens offers two types of influenza vaccines - the injectable influenza vaccine, commonly known as the "flu shot" and the nasal influenza vaccine, FluMist. The cost is \$24.99. For more information, visit the online Walgreens Health Library at http://www.walgreens.com/library/centers/flu/flu_fa.html. Walgreens is located at 1011 Bloomingdale Ave., with hours from 7 a.m. to 12 a.m. every day. To speak with the pharmacy staff call 543-5335.

Flu Shots Available Here!



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0002623363-01

A Bunch Of Bunko Raises Money For Leukemia Society

By PAUL CATALA
pcatala@mediageneral.com

Around the busy hall, the women congregated and when they sat at tables, rolled the bones.

It was a night of socializing, eating and gaming, as about 130 members of the MOMS Club of Lithia gathered in the 2008, fourth-annual "Roll for a Cure" benefit night for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

For the past four years, The Palmetto Club at FishHawk Ranch has become a sort of mini-casino resort, as the members of the Moms Offering Moms Support (MOMS) Club, a national support group for stay-at-home moms, get together to raise money to help fight blood cancers.

As part of the fundraising night, the mothers and some grandmothers pay \$20 each to play in games of Bunko. Bunko is a parlor game played in teams of four with three dice. With a time limit, players take turns rolling the dice to get as many twos, threes, fours, fives and sixes until a bell is sounded. A winning throw in Bunco is to throw three

of a kind of a specified number and each team tallies their points to determine the winner.

"I got one two, that's me. It's a good start," said Carolyn Aguiar, as she played against moms Tracy Hennemann and Karin Ciulla. "Do I go again?"

Although some of the women were having their first go at Bunko and were just learning the rules, the enthusiasm for the game was high. About 80 of the women were from the MOMS Club of Lithia chapter and about 35 were members of the Brandon chapter. The rest of the women were moms, mothers or friends.

Roll for a Cure 2008 raised almost \$3,000 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, which goes towards leukemia research, said Caitlin Wray, special events campaign coordinator for the society's Suncoast Chapter.

Wray said last year, \$8,500 was raised and support from groups like the MOMS Club of Lithia has helped the survival rate of those with leukemia — a blood or bone marrow cancer — go from 3 percent in 1960, to about 90 percent today.



Tracy Hennemann, left, watches as Karin Ciulla rolls the dice as the women play a game of Bunko. The two women played the game as part of the fourth-annual Roll for a Cure night, which featured a buffet, music and a silent auction. Proceeds from the event went to The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

"This is an incredible turnout; one of the best I've seen," said Wray. "I think this shows the great involvement in their community and whatever they raise, goes back to our mission of fighting leukemia."

The event, sponsored by the Brandon News and individual sponsors, began at 7 p.m. with a buffet dinner and silent auction. As she helped coordinate activities, Roll for a Cure chairwoman Danielle Triplett said the Roll for a Cure events are dedicated to Jeanie Camm, a MOMS Club member who

died of Hodgkin's lymphoma Sept. 8, 2004.

Triplett said it was a night of fun, fellowship and frivolity for a serious cause.

"I think it's a fun night out for the women," said Triplett, who lives in FishHawk with her husband, Steve and daughters, Avery, 4 and Emma, eight months. "This supports not only the FishHawk neighborhoods, but those in the greater Brandon area."

While a disc jockey played popular tunes from the 1980s and 1990s, the Bunko continued

and MOMS Club past-president Mags Oldman reminded players to switch tables every two minutes, giving them a chance to meet other members.

As she took a break, MOMS member Meredith Johnson of FishHawk said it was "great" to have an evening that was both entertaining and worthwhile.

"We all have fun and give back at the same time," said Johnson, mother of Braxton, 4 and Sydney, 1. "You meet different mothers in the community. You sit, you play, then move and get to meet someone new."

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Dinner @ 6

6 ingredients, 6 servings or 6 hours in the crock pot
These recipes will help your family have dinner @ 6!

Resolutions schmezolutions!! Every year I make the list, at least mentally, and every year for the majority of my post-baby years the same three rear their ugly heads "lose weight," "eat healthier," "get in shape." Pffff! Forget the top 10 list of resolutions – I just have to do seven because the first three are now unspoken standards. So, figuring that other people out there have the same mindset as I do about this time of year, I decided I'd share one of my family's favorite healthy meals – Pan-Seared Whitefish with roasted vegetables and couscous. It's lean, heart-healthy, quick and delicious! You can't beat that combination!

Roasted Vegetables

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2 yellow squash, sliced
1 medium zucchini squash, sliced
1 medium red pepper, sliced
(You can also use cherry tomatoes, fresh mushrooms, quartered onions, broccoli and other colors of peppers)
Salt, pepper, Italian seasonings
Drizzle of olive oil

Place cut vegetables in roasting pan and drizzle with olive oil, then salt, pepper and season with Italian seasonings or Herbes de Provence. Hand toss to coat and flatten out to one layer. Roast in oven for 25 minutes, stirring halfway through to cook evenly.

As soon as this is in the oven, follow the directions on the box to make couscous, using chicken stock instead of water. I chose to go with the whole grain variety, but it's up to you. The couscous literally takes 7 minutes from start to finish. Now it's time to prepare the fish for pan-searing.

Pan-Seared Whitefish

1 ½ lbs. whitefish fillets (I prefer Tilapia because its mild)
Salt, pepper, flour (I use whole wheat to make it healthier)
½ c. chopped almonds
Drizzle of olive oil
1 Tablespoon of butter

Heat olive oil in large skillet over medium high heat. While pan is getting hot, salt and pepper one side of each fillet, then dust each fillet with flour. When pan is hot and oil is moving and thinning, place each fillet seasoned side down in the skillet, being careful not to move it once you do. When all fillets are in skillet, repeat the salt, pepper and flour process. Let fillets cook 3-4 minutes on each side. Once that's done, move them to one side of a serving platter and add another drizzle of olive oil and the butter to the same skillet. When butter has melted, add chopped almonds and toast them in the pan. This will only take a couple of minutes. Once they're toasted, place them on top of the fillets.

Plate the couscous aside the fish fillets and top with the roasted vegetables for a really attractive entrée and side dish!
Simple. Satisfying. Savory ~ and slimming! That's this month's dinner @ 6! Until next month

Leslie White can be reached by emailing: lwhite_bloominglegazette@yahoo.com. For more recipes visit Dinner @ 6 online at www.dinnerat6-lesliewhite.blogspot.com. Readers are invited to share their quick & easy meal solutions, comments and ideas.



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Scholarship Fund Needs Your Help

By SHELIA HARRIS

The 2009 BJ Stelter Bloomingdale Community Scholarship Fund, sponsored by the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association needs your help.

Each year, an outstanding Bloomingdale High School Senior is awarded a scholarship, to help defray some of the costs, to the college of their choice.

The HOA sponsors the Holiday Luminaries fundraiser to help fund the scholarship. To maintain our generous scholarship award, we are seeking your help.

How can you help?

- We would like to encourage everyone to pay their \$25 annual membership dues.

- You can become a donor; any amount is accepted.

The objective of the scholarship is to reward and encourage Bloomingdale High School seniors who are residents of the Bloomingdale community to pursue a college education and to honor the exemplary efforts and outstanding dedication of BJ Stelter, the Principal of Bloomingdale High School from 1991 – 2005.

Bloomingdale High School Seniors and parents of seniors, the scholarship application will be available for download at bloomingdalehomeownersassociation.com on Feb. 1, 2009.

Please look for more information in the February issue.

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Cambridge Cookie Exchange



LESLIE WHITE/Gazette Photo

Cambridge Cove resident Marlene Eskine opens her home each Christmas season for a cookie exchange between friends. The catch is that everyone brings their dough and the group spends the morning baking goodies, catching up and sharing recipes. At the end of the exchange, everybody goes home with a delectable sample platter of treats. In the picture are Kelly Dorsett, Michele Chambers, Mindy Wellman and Marlene Eskine.

BOOKMARKS

From page 10

through Thursday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 12:30-5 p.m. Sunday. Call (813) 744-5630.

- Free computer skills programs are offered at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Registration in person is required no earlier than one hour before the program. Call (813) 273-3652, ext. 2, or visit www.hcplc.org.

- Library will close at 6 p.m. today.

- Library will be closed all day Thursday.

- Story Time is at 10 a.m. Tuesdays.

- Baby Time is at 10:45 a.m. Tuesdays for ages 12-24 months.

- Baby Time is at 10:45 a.m. Mondays for ages 0-12 months.

- Toddler Time is at 10 a.m.

Mondays.

- Free contemporary acoustic folk music will be performed by Jack Williams at 7 p.m. Jan. 8.

- Friends of the Brandon Library meet at 1 p.m. Jan. 13.

- Book Discussion: The Double Bind by Chris Bohjalian at 2:30 p.m. Jan. 13.

- Teens Dream Interpretations at 3:30 p.m. Jan. 14.

- Library closed all day Jan. 19 for Martin Luther King Day.

- Bedtime Stories is at 7 p.m. Jan. 28.

RIVERVIEW: Riverview Branch Library, 10509 Riverview Drive, offers the following programs. Hours are 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday and Tuesday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Call (813) 273-3652.

- Library will close at 6 p.m. today.

- Library will be closed all day Thursday.

- Toddler Time is at 10 a.m. Wednesdays.

- Story Time is at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays.

- Baby Time is at 10:30 a.m. Thursdays.

- Word 2003: Resume Wizard will be at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 9.

- Teens Cook: Treats and Sweets will be at 4 p.m. Jan. 13.

- Master Gardener: Florida Palms will be at 7 p.m. Jan. 13.

- Book Discussion: Memory Keeper's Daughter by Kim Edwards will be at 2 p.m. Jan. 14.

- The Library will be closed all day Jan. 19 for Martin Luther King Day.

- The Library will be closed all day Jan. 19 for Martin Luther King Day.

SEFFNER/MANGO: Seffner/Mango Branch Library, 410 Kingsway Road, Seffner offers the following programs. Hours are 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday and Tuesday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

See BOOKMARKS, Page 22

New Head Pro Brings Changes To Bloomingdale Golfer's Club

By LESLIE WHITE

Bloomingdale Golfer's Club has a new Head Golf Professional and his name is Mario Battistini. Since May, Battistini has worked to help "get Bloomingdale back to par."

One of the most recent changes has been linking up with the Florida Golf Trail, a pairing that offers 13 golf club memberships for the price of one. With Bloomingdale now a part of the Florida Golf Trail, members can play at golf courses designed by some of golf's best known players and designers including Tom Fazio, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player and Gary Koch.

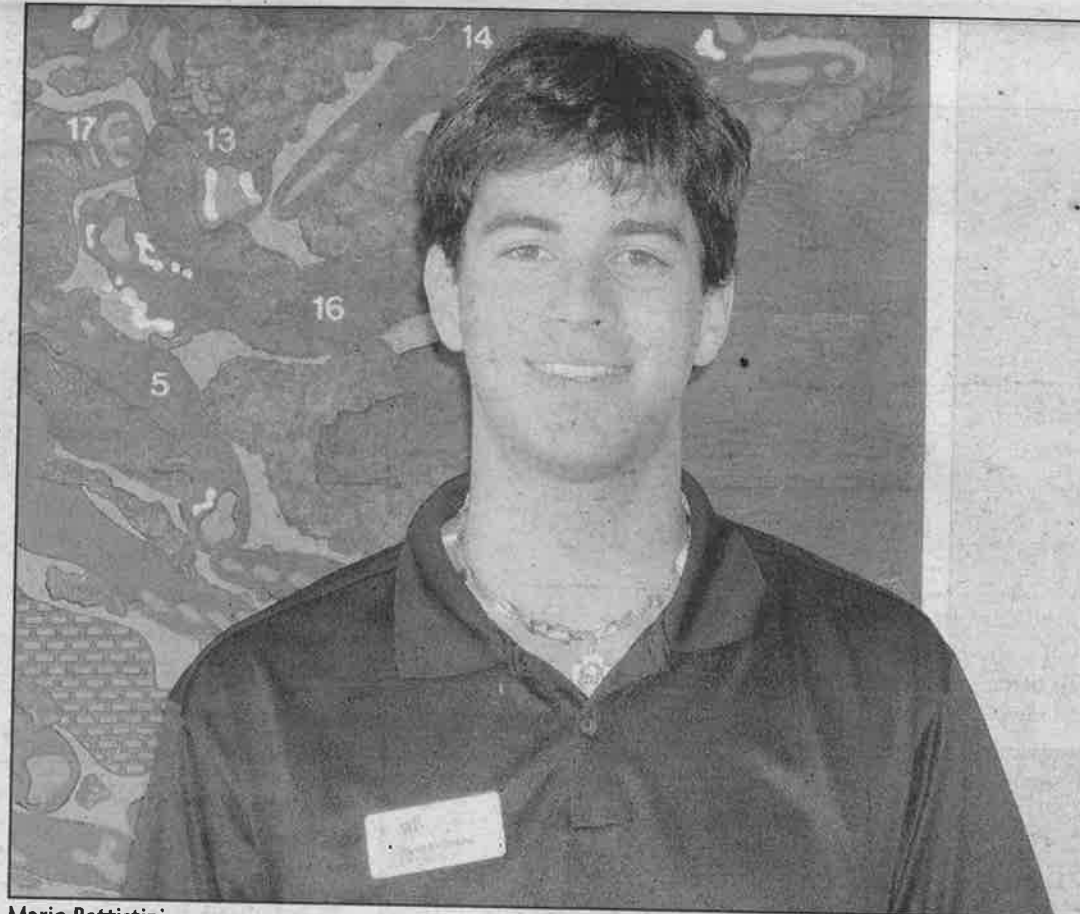
Making the golf club more accessible and providing more opportunities to play are key, said

Battistini. Bloomingdale now offers Insider's Club, through which members receive monthly coupons, special events and the "inside scoop" on Bloomingdale Golfer's Club.

"Every Tuesday is 'Incredible Tuesday' and we offer contests, and give out awards for a reasonable price. We're just trying to offer golfers the most outings," he said.

But what Battistini enjoys the most is helping community members raise funds through the sport of golf.

"I want to help members organizing a very profitable event for a local charity they care about and help everyone have a great time and at the same time benefit their pur-



Mario Battistini

pose," said Battistini, who says that golf events are a great way to raise funds while allowing

everyone involved to have a good time doing it.

For more information about

Battistini or the Club, visit www.bloomingdalegolf.com or call 685-4105.

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By JOY BOISSELLE



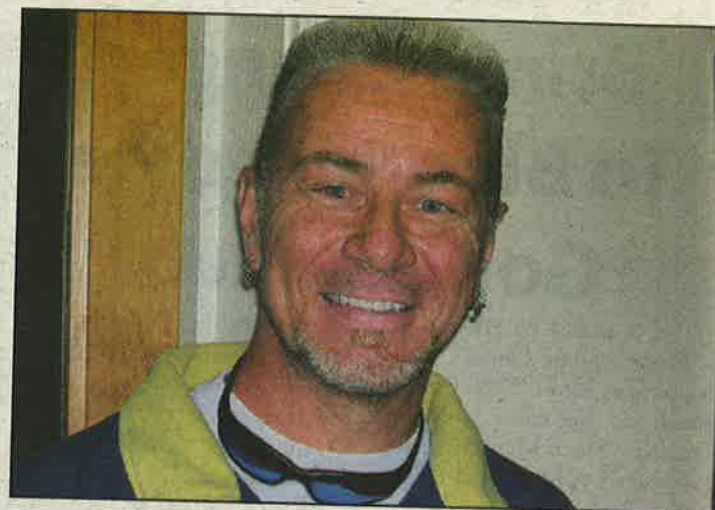
Kelly Bordelon, Copper Ridge resident

"I really haven't thought a lot about it, but I hope the economy gets better and everyone is able to have a more prosperous New Year and save their homes."



Stan Lee, Chadd's Ford resident and newly elected Bloomingdale Homeowner Association President

"I would like to have more time. That would enable me to do more for my community and to be with my family and friends."



Mike Lewandowski, former Bloomingdale resident

"I hope the economy improves, the recession breaks, and our new president can fulfill the promises he made. Personally, I want to get fit and spend more time with my kids."



Joan Walsh, Fox Run resident

"I hope every body gives our new president a fair chance, the economy turns around and that everyone stays healthy."

"Talk around Town" is a section of your hometown newspaper that seeks to reach out to the community. Every month, residents and those who work in our community will be asked a question, sometimes light-hearted, sometimes serious, and asked to respond. Do you have a question you would like to have asked? Email your suggestions to InBloomingdaleNews@tampabay.rr.com.

This month's question, while light-hearted, drew serious responses aimed at today's economic downturn:

"What is your hope, wish, or resolution for the new year?"

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Challenging Yoga

By PAUL CATALA
pcatala@mediageneral.com

For some people, the thought of yoga brings up visions of sitting in a lotus position and eating bean sprouts, while listening to a meditational CD of waves crashing on the shoreline.

But a local yoga center and its owner-instructor want to help change those stereotypes and show students the long-term benefits of the practice, in a more challenging way.

Traditionally, yoga refers to traditional physical and mental disciplines originating in India; to the goal achieved by those disciplines; and to one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy.

Over generations, it still incorporates those principals, but some of its forms have changed to impact modern, daily lives.

To help to make lasting lifestyle changes, Sherry Smith, owner of Serenity Stream Yoga & Wellness Spa, Riverview, has developed a special fitness program – “The Extreme Get Fit, Stay Fit Challenge,” a \$400, eight-week program which begins Jan. 19.

Besides getting the benefits of traditional yoga and wellness classes, Smith said her goal is to get the community to “take control of their health and change their lifestyle.”

During a recent yoga session at her studio, Smith prepared for her first evening class. Since opening last June in Boyette Executive Park, 11954 Boyette Road, she has held classes there seven days a week, for about 400 yoga devotees from FishHawk Ranch, Riverview and Apollo Beach.

Smith, who got into yoga about 10 years ago while working as a corporate travel manager in Rhode Island, said the Stay Fit Challenge is designed to teach and maintain healthy eating habits, cooking techniques, weight training, yoga postures and cardiovascular exercise techniques. She said what makes the program unique is that it's programmed to help students carry what they learn into their daily

lives, rather than just attending classes and leaving what they gained at the studio door.

“My mission is not only to be just a place that offers yoga classes. It's to build community and educate about making healthy lifestyle changes,” she said.

To do that, Smith is offering the Stay Fit Challenge, which includes weekly classes on healthy living (nutrition, cardiovascular, weight training, stress management, cooking, and self-acceptance); a two-month, private gym membership; private yoga, Pilates and personal training sessions, mentoring throughout the program and unlimited classes at Serenity Stream.

Smith also said it includes Zumba, a Latin dance-based fitness program, and will be run by Serenity Stream instructor and certified personal trainer Abby Eastman, who twice led a similar program in Virginia.

Eastman, who holds masters degree in exercise physiology, said the Stay Fit Challenge program is a “makeover” for a healthy life.

“It is for people who are ready to get real and stop making excuses and start working and seeing the results,” she said. “The program is a lifestyle makeover, teaching you the tools to be healthy for life.”

Smith participants in last year's program are still seeing results. She said the 125 Stay Fit Challenge participants last year lost almost 900 pounds – over 3 million calories.

It's those results that Smith hopes will draw at least 40 people to the Challenge, like yoga devotee Tracey McPherson of Brandon. A yoga student for two years, the sales marketing manager for the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center said she may enroll in the Challenge.

“I found this place and it's great for stress relief at the end of my day; I've enjoyed all the classes and the instruction has been great,” she said.

For information, call (813) 368-6546 or see www.serenitystream.com.



Above, Sherry Smith, Serenity Stream Yoga & Wellness Spa owner, and yoga devotee Tracey McPherson go through stretching exercises before beginning more intricate yoga positions. McPherson said she began yoga about two years ago while living in Washington, D.C.



At right, Smith and McPherson go through some positions in the Serenity Stream studio.

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Florida's Arbor Day Is Jan. 16

By JOY BOISSELLE

Attention all Bloomingdale tree lovers, it's time to celebrate Florida's Arbor Day! Many states, like Florida, celebrate Arbor Day earlier than National Arbor Day which is held in April. The January date allows for residents to take advantage of the state's mild winters and best tree planting weather. This year's celebration is on Jan. 16.

Whether observed in January or April, Arbor Day is a day to celebrate the beauty and value of trees by planting and caring for them. Created in Nebraska in 1872, the mission is simple; plant trees. To get the most out of this year's Arbor Day, Steven Kale, a Bloomingdale resident and certified arborist (that's tree expert to us simple folk) offered his advice for tree selection and planting.

Kale is the vice president and general manager of Gulf Coast Tree Care and has been with the company for nine years. "Arbor Day benefits are many,"

he explained, "Trees help control soil erosion, they clean our air, and they provide shade and lower electric bills. They also harbor our wildlife, and they add beautification and value to our homes, neighborhoods, and cities."

To the greatest extent possible, Kale recommends planting native trees, and a variety of them. "Diversity in our tree population is key; if you only plant one species, you potentially open the door for a disease that could wipe out the whole population," he said.

"Many Bloomingdale home lots are small and do not lend themselves to having a tree with a large footprint like our many oak species," he explained. Magnolia, red maple, sycamore, and pine are a few native tree species Kale suggested for Bloomingdale planters. "These trees can be planted close to homes, they grow fast, and they are beautiful."

"Also, I like and can recom-



STEVE KALE/courtesy photo

Arbor Day is Jan. 16. Plant a tree to celebrate. Maybe one day your tree will become as majestic as this 100-year-old "Grand Status" Live Oak in Centerbrooke subdivision off Bell Shoals Road. The tree has been maintained by Gulf Coast Tree Care for the past 25 years.

mend some of the really pretty "ornamental" trees for small footprint properties: crape myrtle, bottlebrush, Chinese elm, flowering dogwood, mimosa, holly, Hong Kong orchid. All of these do very well in our area," he added.

His number one tree planting tip: plant the right tree in

the right place. There are many information sources to help with tree selection and planting location including web sites, landscape architects, and local plant nurseries.

As for the arborist's role, he offered, "We are "the tree doctors. We primarily care for and maintain trees that are estab-

lished." For issues concerning tree health, removals, and general maintenance, contact Gulf Coast Tree Care at (813) 681-8016.

What are you waiting for... Grab your shovel and start digging. Do your part to keep the Bloomingdale community beautiful. Happy Arbor Day, neighbors.

BOOKMARKS

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Wednesday through Saturday. Call (813) 273-3652.

- The Library will be closed all day Thursday.
- Research Rally will be at 3 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

- Crafternoon will be at 4 p.m. Monday and Jan. 26.
- Introduction to the library will be at 6 p.m. Tuesday and Jan. 13.
- Story Time will be at 10:15 a.m. and 3 p.m. Wednesdays.
- Free adult computer classes are at 10:15 a.m. Thursdays. Registration in person is required no

earlier than one hour before the program. Call (813) 273-3652, ext. 2, or visit www.hcplc.org.

- Doug Capen Magic Show at 1 and 3 p.m. Jan. 10.
- Movie Monday at 4 p.m. Jan. 12.
- SMASH, Board games and activities is at 4 p.m. Jan. 13 and 27.

Slammin' Science Experiments is at 4 p.m. Jan. 15 and 29.

- Digital Photo Scavenger Hunt is at 11:30 a.m. Jan. 17.
- Library is closed all day Jan. 19 for Martin Luther King Day.
- Game Zone will be at 4 p.m. Jan. 20.
- Cyberkids will be at 4 p.m. Jan. 22.
- The Tortoise and the Hare Musical will be at 10:30 a.m. on Jan. 27.

78TH STREET: 78th Street Community Library, 7625 Palm River Road, offers the following programs. Hours are 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday; noon to 8 p.m. Tuesday; 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Call (813) 273-3652.

- Library will close at 6 p.m. today.
- Library will be closed all day Thursday.
- Getting Control of Your Finances will be at 6 p.m. Tuesday.

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Millie's Owner Took A Chance On Her Dream

By LAURA CONE
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Dina Williams, the owner of Millie's Gifts, Candles & Vintage Home Décor store took a chance on starting her own business in the FishHawk area in October 2007.

Less than one year later, she suffered a brain aneurism.

When she thinks back on her health crisis, she gets emotional.

Her customers became her closest friends, supporting her through the difficult time.

"I was glad I took this chance," she said. "Life is very fragile. I did not know if I would recover. I am glad I got to live my dream."

Williams, a former teacher, is the daughter of Paulette and the Rev. Donald Williams, pastor of The First Church of the Nazarene in Brandon.

Originally from Falls Church, Va., she moved to Florida with her family when she was 11 years old.

She specializes in gift items.

Her cozy 1,200-square-foot shop is filled with candles, tea cups, jams, preserves, salt and pepper shakers and decorations.

Many of her customers provided her with a support system, becoming an extended family in the past year. For many people, her store, with the warm scent of cinnamon, feels more like a home.

"We have home décor with a vintage feel," Williams said. "It's an old-time shop. I love antiques

and I love that there is a history to an item."

She said customers like the old-fashioned feel of the shop that allows them to hark back to a more simple time.

Robin Rosenzweig, who lives in the FishHawk area, said she loves the black and white polka dot umbrella from Millie's she received for her birthday last year.

She also shopped at Millie's for a neighbor's birthday gifts.

"It's just adorable stuff you can't find anywhere else," Rosenzweig said. "It's not handmade, but it's the closest to it. It has that little bit of country and primitive flair."

Rosenzweig said she also likes the variety.

As a Halloween collector, she likes the decorations she can find at the shop. But beyond the merchandise, Rosenzweig simply likes to stop by to visit with Williams.

"She is perfect for a store like that," Rosenzweig said. "She is friendly. People go in there just to say hello and see her even when they aren't going to get anything. I stop in just because I enjoy her. When people come to your store just to say hi, it tells you the kind of person she is."

In response to the recession, Williams is marking down items to as low as 50 percent off for an after-Christmas sale.

"I try to find things more reasonably priced with the economy



Staff photo by LAURA CONE

Dina Williams arranges decorations in her Millie's gift shop in the Subway plaza at 13210 Boyette Road in Riverview.

the way it is," said Williams, who has noticed people are looking for bargains.

For Valentine's Day in February, she is stocking the store with gifts appropriate for couples as well as gifts for children and other loved ones.

"It's not just a romantic holiday," she said. "It's to remember the ones you love."

For more information on Millie's, 13210 Boyette Road, Riverview, call (813) 681-8822.



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