

Welcome to the new Bloomingdale Gazette!

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From all of us on the Board of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, we are pleased to offer you our all NEW Bloomingdale Gazette.

Over the last months we have heard your suggestions, listened to your criticisms, and, yes, even took notice of your complaints concerning our resident-owned Bloomingdale Gazette.

The new look is not only in the more stylistic masthead and the new, more convenient size, but, also in the material covered. Some of the things you will notice as the months go by is that we plan to include more direct news and information specifically about Bloomingdale. We plan to continue with our local general interest, church, sports and education news. We also hope to keep you better informed about local and county government activities so you can be among the best informed residents in Hillsborough County. We are listening to you.

One of the more difficult decisions we faced was how to distribute our new Gazette. For over ten years, our local young residents did a

Continued on page 12



Lamar Patrick (11 years old) and Greg Cotton (15 years old) take a break from playing basketball at the Bloomingdale East Park to say hello to Bloomingdale.

Your inside connections

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

3240 Lithia Pinecrest Road
Suite 103
Valrico, FL 33594
#681-2051

Randy Wolfe, President 229-3321

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Rick Borling 684-2022

Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District PO Box 3132 Brandon, FL 33509-3132

Bill Grace, President 685-2817
Fred Englehart, Treasurer 685-3638

Meetings

All meetings take place at the Bloomingdale Community Office. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District
Second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

BHA Board of Directors
Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District
First Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Mobile Watch & Neighborhood Watch
meetings are held when special concerns arise

the Bloomingdale gazette
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Share your news with the community! Write to Kitzi Taylor, Editor at 220 W. Brandon Blvd., Brandon, FL 33511 or Fax to (813) 654-4745.

The Best Lawns and Gardens

by Melanie Taylor

It is a new goal of the *Bloomingdale Gazette* to showcase several of the neighborhood's many beautiful lawns and gardens. Residents spend many hours a week of their time out in their yards working on beautifying their homesteads, and, in doing so, help to produce an entire well-groomed, aesthetically enriched community environment.

July's focus is on Cheryl and Brian Cohen's wonderfully landscaped yard. Their location on the corner of a street allowed for the implementation of special beautification strategies. With the aid of their professional landscaper, Richard White, the Cohens constructed off of the side of their house a trellis reminiscent of the old, romantic South. The beautiful display of thatch-work and entwined greenery is fully visible to all passers-by. But, this trellis is just a creative addition to an already perfect lawn, lush with St. Augustine grass and accented by well-manicured shrubs and trees. The yard is professionally maintained by Shamrock Lawn & Garden Service, Inc., but Cheryl often helps by pulling weeds.

The Cohens have two sons, Garrett, three years old, and Zachary, three months old, who will surely love growing up in such pretty environs. Cheryl and her family have lived in Fairway Manors



Cheryl and her two darling sons, Garrett and Zachary, stand in their gorgeous yard on the side of their house in the Fairway Manors subdivision.

for a little over one and a half years now, and will continue to beautify their neighborhood for many years to come.

Richard White can be reached at 882-5864.



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We're looking for the Best Lawns & Gardens!

Take a picture of your lawn or your neighbor's and send it in to the *Bloomingdale Gazette*! You and your neighbors make Bloomingdale beautiful and you deserve some recognition for all of the hard work. We appreciate all submissions. Please, tell us about your lawn, your family and anything else you would like your community to know about you. Address your photo and information to Kitzi Taylor, Editor, *Bloomingdale Gazette* "The Best Lawns & Gardens," 220 W. Brandon Blvd., Suite 102, Brandon, FL 33511.

Community Concerns:

A letter to all parents

Like most parents, I spend my time between being proud of my children, worrying about their futures and working hard so they will have one.

My youngest child, Susana, graduated from Bloomingdale High last June. This, I thought, would be one of the proudest times! What a sense of accomplishment to see your child on her way to becoming a responsible adult (finally!), a fully productive member of society... a piece of the future of our country!

But, something happened that has brought a dark cloud to this occasion.

Susana went to a graduation party at a friend's house on May 30th. There were close to 60 kids in attendance—all wonderful, healthy teenagers having fun and enjoying the rewards of a long and hard journey. Many brought their yearbooks in which to have their friends write their thoughts to treasure forever. She did the same. Many of her

friends had already signed her book and she was proud and very happy about their comment. Everything seemed perfect!

But, like, something happened. During the party, her book was stolen. Someone, obviously another kid, took her book. Her book, already signed by her friends and her teachers and colored with memories, was taken.

She is devastated, of course. I told her to focus on the important thing: the significance of the book is still with her and will remain a part of her no matter what happens.

Unfortunately, this has left me troubled and worried for my child's future: What kind of children are we raising? What kind of young adults are we sending into society? Somewhere, in some home, on that Friday night so long ago now, a teenager came home with a yearbook that obviously did not belong to him. As parents, what are we doing about this? Do we even know that this happened? How close do we monitor our children's actions? If we do not take responsibility for their actions and/or we don't even know what they are doing, what kind of example are we giving them for future emulation? How can we expect them to care and to be involved in what is important?

I am offering a reward of \$100 for the return of the book and no questions will be asked. It can be returned to the school anonymously.

Even if this message finally reaches the right teenager or family, my qualms will not cease to exist. What are we doing about things like this happening every day around us? How much do we care? If we don't care enough, may the Good Lord help us and above all, help our children for they will be forced to live in a cold, cruel world, one in which theft is seen as a common, acceptable occurrence.

Let me know if you know where my daughter's book is, please. Any information? Call me at 684-0383.

If you have concerns you would like to share with the Bloomingdale community, send a letter to Kitzi Taylor, Editor, Bloomingdale Gazette, 220 W. Brandon Blvd., Suite 102, Brandon, FL 33511, or call 654-1919. If it matters to you, then it matters to all of us.

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Church Happenings: Celebrant Singers Come To St. Steven's

Jon Stemkoski's Celebrant Singers, an internationally-known Christian music ministry, will present a community-wide concert on August 4th at St. Stephen Catholic Church. The concert is free of charge, and a free-will offering will be taken.

Attendees will be treated to contemporary Christian music, praise and worship, personal testimony and ministry. Featuring ten singers and a twelve-piece orchestra, Celebrants will inspire and bless as they share the Gospel through a musical celebration.

"Celebrants is not 'just another music group.' Our objective is to share the love of Christ," said founder Jon Stemkoski. "It's a powerful ministry, and it will touch your heart. Bring your family and friends—it's an experience you won't soon forget!"

In their 20-year history, Celebrants have ministered in all 50 states, all across Canada, and in more than 70 nations around the world. They have sung to more than 5 million people in live concerts and countless others via broadcast media. During 1997 seven teams of Celebrant Singers will present over 1,400 concerts in some 19 nations, six Canadian provinces and all 50 states.

Jon Stemkoski's Celebrant Singers recently held their first extended ministry tour in the Middle East, including services in Egypt, Jordan, Cyprus, Israel, Armenia and the United Arab Emirates. Additionally, Celebrants were the first to hold public religious meetings in communist-run Cuba in more than 30 years. They were also one of the first Christian teams of their kind to conduct outreaches in the previously-closed nations of Bulgaria and Albania.

Celebrants are ecumenical in nature. Teams are comprised of dedicated and talented young adults representing 38 states, six Canadian provinces and several additional nations. "While similar groups traditionally have had an exclusively Protestant audience, Celebrants is the first full-time contemporary Christian singing group to have a widespread ministry among



Get ready for the Celebrant Singers! The Christian music group is performing at St. Stephen's on August 4th. Everyone is welcome.

America's 60 million Roman Catholics," Stemkoski added. "Since 1977, we've sung in more than 3,000 parishes throughout North America."

In 1984, Celebrants ministered in St. Peter's Square before an Easter-week crowd of over 120,000 people. Mr. Stemkoski and Celebrants were also honored by a private audience with Pope John Paul II. More recently, they were invited to participate in Denver's World Youth Day.

Founder/Director Jon Stemkoski is the driving force behind this vital ministry. Mr. Stemkoski has more than 25 years of experience in music ministry and is a highly respected minister of the Gospel.

In addition to live appearances, Celebrant Singers have released nine recordings to date, including their first all-Spanish recording.

Celebrant Singers is an outreach of Stone Ministries, Inc., a non-profit Christian corporation ministering to the needs of people through music and the Arts, Jon F. Stemkoski, President. For more information on this event, its precise time, and to find out how you can host one of the members of Celebrant singers, contact St. Stephen's at 689-4900.

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Bloomington Homeowners Association

Minutes - Meeting of the Board of Directors

May 13, 1997 7:30 p.m.

Directors in Attendance: Randy Wolfe, LaWayne Wyatt, Ann Underwood, Pat Radel, Walter Glenn, Ted Grable and Tim Golden.

Guests in Attendance: Joe Harless, Joe Liguori, Donna Clouse, Lois Kessler, Pete Maurer, Rick Pitrowski, Rosa Arias.

Meeting called to order at 7:36 p.m. by President Wolfe

1. **Reading of the minutes** from April meeting was deferred
2. **Treasurers Report** for June was deferred
3. **Discussion of Park Lighting.** Guests and representatives of the Hillsborough County Parks Department discussed various options for lighting tennis and basketball courts at both Park East and West. Joe Harless spoke against lighting the back courts at Park East. Rick Pitrowski spoke against lighting parks. Joe Liguori spoke in favor of lighting the parking lot in Park East for security reasons. Lois Kessler spoke to types of lighting and funding issues. Advised Parks will look into additional security lighting for both parks. Other guests and Board members spoke to the issue.
4. **Guest Comments:** Guests spoke to issues relating to the Bloomington Gazette, junk cars in yards, deed restrictions, code enforcement, sidewalks and safety issues. It was suggested that the Parks Department and Sheriff's Office sponsor a Crime Prevention Workshop in the Community Center.
5. **Committee Reports:**
Mobile Watch. Mr. Wyatt updated the Board on Mobile Watch activities
NIP Report. No report this month.
Membership Report: No report this month.
6. **Board Member Issues:**
Tim Golden suggested community bulletin boards at the three entrances to West to evaluate their effectiveness.
7. **Meeting adjourned.** Motion by Pat Radel, second by LaWayne Wyatt.

June 10, 1997 7:30 p.m.

Directors in Attendance: LaWayne Wyatt, Ann Underwood, Walter Glenn, Ted Grable and Michael Davis.

Guests in Attendance: Joe Liguori, Buch and Sheila Harris, James Dougherty, Madelaine Konowicz, Marsha Bollenberg.

Meeting called to order at 7:36 p.m. by Director Ted Grable.

1. **Reading of the minutes** from the June meeting was deferred
2. **Treasurers Report** for June was deferred
3. **Discussion of In-Line Skating/Hockey at Park East.** Several guests spoke in favor of request to the Hillsborough County Parks Department to convert one tennis court at Park East to a Skating Hockey court. Representatives presented an approval from the Director of Parks. BHA approval is required to make changes to the County parks in the community. Board members and guests discussed the various options and issues related to this issue.
On a motion by Michael Davis, seconded by Ann Underwood, the Board approved a 60-day trial of this program. The Board requested that the Parks Department post signs explaining the changes and listing rules for use. The Board will accept comments at its July and August meeting before making the program final.
4. **Committee Reports:**
Mobile Watch. Mr. Wyatt updated the Board on Mobile Watch activities. There was a discussion of gang activity in the community. Park West has three new security lights similarly. Park West crosswalk will be moved 100 feet south for safety reasons. Park East will receive two security lights. Mr. Wyatt also advised the Board that Columbia Bank has made a \$1000 donation for the support of the Mobile Watch.
NIP Report. No report this month.
Membership Report: No report this month.
5. The Board unanimously accepted the resignation of Board Member Tim Golden.
6. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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Bloomingtondale's Own Outstanding Siblings

Joann & Elizabeth Mantovani: Twins on the rise

From now on the *Bloomingtondale Gazette* will be shining the spotlight on the brothers and sisters of the community. The super siblings for July are identical twins Joann and Elizabeth Mantovani, residents of Fox Run.

The two sisters were born eight minutes apart on July 20th (Wish them a happy birthday if you see them around!) eighteen years ago, and can still be found almost eight minutes apart at any time. Both graduated with honors from Bloomingtondale High School last June and both are attending the University of South Florida, from which their elder sister, Amy, received her degree last year. The Mantovani twins plan to major in international business while in the USF Honors Program.

If you are a frequent shopper at Brandon Town Center Mall, then you've probably noticed Joann and Liz working in Sears together: they make quite a memorable pair. Their paths have slightly diverged at



Elizabeth and Joann Mantovani are this month's outstanding siblings.

Sears, however, for they work in separate departments within the store. While sharing their jointly-owned car, both sisters enjoy hanging out with each other and their friends at the movie theater, the laser tag arena, Lifestyle Fitness Centers, the bowling alley and at the Bloomingtondale East Park tennis courts. You can also often times spot Liz jogging around Nature's Way in the morning.

In August the two will be dual Maids-of-Honor at their sister's wedding at Nativity. By the fall, they will be situated in an apartment in Temple Terrace near the USF campus.

When asked what the best part about being a twin is, Joann promptly responded "We really feel like each other's built-in best friend."

Share your family's achievements, plans and ambitions with your community. Send in a picture and anything else you would like to tell your neighbors about your loved ones. Remember: "It takes a village to raise a child." We are proud of all of our community children. Write Kitzi Taylor, Editor, *Bloomingtondale Gazette*, "Bloomingtondale's own outstanding siblings," 220 W. Brandon Blvd., Suite 102, Brandon, FL 33511.

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An Area Young Man Will Become an Eagle Scout

John Edward Henson, Jr. has finally reached the highlight of his scouting career: he will be made an Eagle Scout at 3:00pm on July 13th at the First Presbyterian Church on Bloomingtondale Avenue.



John Edward Henson, Jr. will rise to Eagle Scout this month.

Henson has been working toward the admirable goal since 1992, when, at age seven, he joined the Boy Scouts of America. He is now going into the 11th grade and attends Durant Senior High School. He manages to maintain placement on the Principal's

Honor Roll and a job with L. & A Water Systems. In order to earn the Eagle Award, Henson performed many acts of selfless service for his community and for his church. His Eagle project involved many hours of arduous labor that ranged from repairing church grounds to cleaning up refuse and debris on Bloomingtondale Avenue. He has earned twenty-one merit badges and is an integral member of his troop, Troop 61, led by Al Neubaum.

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The new Bloomingdale Gazette

Continued from page 1

terrific job getting the paper to your door with a "Rent-a-Kid" distribution network. While we could have continued this, some of the advertisers, as well as a few of our neighbors were looking for a change. So, we made the tough decision to use the U.S. Mail service as our distribution method of choice. We would, however, like to thank all of the children who have participated in the "Rent-a-Kid" program over the years.

Size was another important decision. You told us that you were more apt to keep the smaller size handy for the month and conveniently refer to it more often. Once again, we took your suggestion and we hope you like what you see.

Putting all of this together was a bigger challenge than we thought and, for that reason, we had to miss the June issue. But with this July issue, we feel we will once again be the finest monthly publication in the Brandon-Valrico area.

And, finally, a word to our loyal advertisers: We are acutely aware of how many media people are seeking you out to spend your advertising dollars with them. Over the years, you have shown considerable loyalty to the Bloomingdale Gazette. We hope this new and improved assemblage and presentation will easily earn us your continued trust and support.

If there are any questions regarding the Gazette, please relay them to the friendly editorial staff at 654-1919. For your BHA concerns, contact the office at the old number, 681-2051.

We welcome your comments about our new look. You can drop us a line at: Bloomingdale Gazette, 3240 Lithia Pinecrest Rd., Suite 103, Valrico, FL 33594.

Sincerely,
The Directors of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

Mathilda, the kangaroo, fascinates community children

Recently, the Columbia Bank located at the corner of Lithia Pinecrest and Bloomingdale Avenue collaborated with fundraising company Aussie Productions, Inc. to present a fun and educational hands-on experience for area children. Operations Manager of Columbia Bank, Nancy Blattner, explained that the bank invited kids to come in to receive free \$5 savings bonds with the opening of a junior banking account, but this was not merely a banking affair: this one involved a cute and cuddly baby kangaroo.

Aussie Productions' Michael and Amy Cain helped to create a fun, zoo-like atmosphere right inside the lobby of the bank. The Cains informed the community members of their unique school fundraising ideas with written materials and Mathilda, their fundraising mascot, a bottle-fed baby kangaroo. Children were allowed to hold and pet Mathilda, while they were at the same time learning all about the marsupial and her native Australian habitat. Such literature was put on display and was distributed as The Roo News, a newsletter, and informative pamphlets covering the basis of the Cains' "Walk a'bout" fundraising technique.

The event featured orange soda donated by McDonald's and truly "Australian cookies" taking the shapes of kangaroos, koalas and teddy bears. Most of the over 400 child participants were happy to receive Polaroids of themselves with their new friend, Mathilda. This was definitely a successful, memorable integration of all segments of society, from children to businessmen. Reach Michael and Amy Cain at 651-9864.



Mathilda is a great success with Bloomingdale area children at her debut at Columbia Bank.

Photography
by L.B. Blanchard
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