

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXIV  
Number 7

JULY 2007 • THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

## DUES DRIVES KICK OFF

Membership notices are in the mail.

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## TAXING DISTRICT HEARING

A public hearing is set for July 9.

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# Higginbotham Hosts "Kids In The County" Tours



Photo from Al Higginbotham

Hillsborough County Commissioner Al Higginbotham launched a new program in June to offer monthly behind-the-scene county tours to school and youth groups. The program kicked off in June with a visit from Boy Scout Troop 110 from Brandon. Pictured, Higginbotham presents Boy Scout Mark Mayo and Scoutmaster Steve Saunders with a key to the county. See story, page xx.

**A Gazette Report**

Hillsborough County Commissioner Al Higginbotham launched a new program in June to offer behind-the-scene tours once a month to school and youth groups.

The tour includes a mock election in the Supervisor of Election's office, a

visit to Traffic Services to see how traffic at major intersections in the county is monitored, and a visit to the county's television station, HTV22, among other departments. The tour will end with a brown bag lunch in Chillura Square, where children can talk to the commissioner about being an elected official and

other services the government provides. "The success of any government is dependant upon the input of its citizens. It's important that we teach our kids how to be involved and contribute to their county," Higginbotham said.

The tours kicked off in June with a

See SCOUTS, Page 15

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# Required Tax Notice Riles Residents

By LAURA FRAZIER

A notice mailed in June to Bloomingdale property owners announced an upcoming public hearing, but was misinterpreted by many to be a tax bill or non-payment notice.

Derry Wilson, office manager for the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, fielded more than 100 phone calls and e-mail messages last month from concerned residents who received the notice.

"Many people were upset because they didn't understand that it was a notice for a public hearing, not a bill," Wilson said.

Some thought the letter

announced a new tax increase, Wilson said.

"Voters already approved a \$30 annual increase by special referendum on the 2006 Primary Election ballot," she said.

The taxing district board adopted the increase at a public hearing earlier this year. The purpose of the July 9 hearing is to notify residents that the increase will be assessed and collected this year by county tax offices.

The increase, approved by voters in 2006, will raise the annual fee from \$100 to \$130 a year. The special tax is included on property tax bills issued in November by the

Hillsborough County Tax Collector. There is no separate bill for the Bloomingdale tax, Wilson said.

Some homeowners contacted the taxing district office and Bloomingdale Gazette staff to say they were offended by "the threatening nature" of the notice.

Wilson empathized, but said her office used a letter template required by the county to announce such hearings.

"The notice had to conform with Hillsborough County regulations and is a copy of the sample they provide," Wilson said. "Obviously,

See NOTICE, Page 4

## Public Hearing Set For July 9 MAILED NOTICE HAD ADDRESS TYPO

A public hearing to announce a 2006 voter-approved \$30 annual increase for property owners in the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District area will be held at 6:45 p.m. on Monday, July 9 at the Bloomingdale Community Office.

A typo on notices mailed to residents in June transposed two numbers in the address. The correct address is 3509 Bell Shoals Road. The office is in the plaza behind SunTrust Bank and Citgo gas station, just south of Bloomingdale Avenue.

The public hearing will be held 6:45 p.m. on Monday, July 9 at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, south of Bloomingdale Avenue, behind SunTrust Bank and Citgo gas station. For more information call (813) 684-6667 or e-mail [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net).

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# Taxing District Responsible For Maintenance

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District board holds open meetings at 7 p.m. on the second Monday each month at the community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Following are frequently asked questions about the organization. For more information call (813) 684-6667, e-mail [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net) or visit [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com).

## WHAT DOES BSTD STAND FOR?

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District.

## WHAT IS A SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT?

Special taxing districts are groups of county taxpayers with a common interest that requires special funding. Special taxing districts allow members in any given district to share common expenses equitably by adding a special tax assessment to the property tax bill of each district member.

## WHY DO WE HAVE A SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT?

The purpose of the BSTD is to maintain a reserve of funds to pay for community repairs and improvements. A group of Bloomingdale residents petitioned the county in the mid 1980s to create a special taxing district for the Bloomingdale area. The Board of County Commission-

ers approved the petition and the BSTD was formed.

## WHAT AREA DOES THE BSTD ENCOMPASS?

The BSTD area includes every home in Bloomingdale East and West, with the exception of River Crossing Estates in Bloomingdale East, which was built on a parcel of land not identified on the original Bloomingdale plats used to determine the district.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST RESIDENTS?

The taxing district assessment for fiscal year 2007 is \$100 per residence. In November 2006, a majority of homeowners in the district approved a \$30 per year increase. A \$130 per year assessment per residence will go into effect in Fiscal Year 2008. The assessment is added to each homeowner's annual property tax bill. The new assessment, at \$130 per lot or condominium, will generate \$663,520 total revenue for the district's fiscal year 2008.

## WHO DECIDES HOW TO SPEND THE MONEY?

A volunteer board of trustees manages the expenditure of BSTD funds. The trustees, all Bloomingdale homeowners

living within the district, hold open meetings once a month to plan maintenance and improvement projects. There are currently seven members serving on the BSTD board: president Thom Snelling, vice-president Russell Jones, treasurer David West and trustees David Steck, Joe Harless, Joe Liguori, and Jim Laughlin.

Each May, the board invites all Bloomingdale residents to attend the taxing district's annual budget meeting. The meeting is advertised in local newspapers including the Gazette and on [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com). Resident input is taken into consideration in deciding which projects are to be included in the upcoming budget. Once the budget is approved by the Board of County Commissioners, it is put in line for capital expenditures approval, a process that can carry over into the next fiscal year.

## WHO OVERSEES MAINTENANCE PROJECTS?

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

## WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BSTD?

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

## IS THE TAXING DISTRICT A DIVISION OF THE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION?

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District and Bloomingdale Homeowners Association operate independently of each other. For more information about the homeowners association, call (813) 681-2051, e-mail [bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net), or visit [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com).

## HOW CAN I REPORT A MAINTENANCE NEED TO THE BSTD?

Residents may report repair or improvement needs to property manager Al Devney, (813) 6667 or e-mail [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net).

# Property Manager's Report

**Bloomingdale's Property Manager, Al Devney of DPMI Property Management, Inc., serves as a project coordinator for maintenance and improvement projects approved by the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District board of trustees. He also provides regular inspections of Bloomingdale's common areas, entryways and irrigation systems. To report a community maintenance need, call Devney at (813) 684-6667 or e-mail [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net).**

## JUNE 2007 PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Danielle Fence replaced a 6-foot section of vandalized aluminum fence on Erindale.

Morningstar Electric replaced two vandalized lights at the Heritage Park entrance and re-connected the electric cables to the new TECO light pole

at the corner of Glenhaven and Bell Shoals Road.

Hartline is in the process of painting the section of wall behind the new bus stop on Glenhaven at Bell Shoals Road. The wall was splattered with concrete during construction and could not be cleaned off with a pressure washer.

The pre-bid meeting for the tree trimming contract was held May 22. Four contractors attended the meeting and were taken on a tour of the area and were shown the trees that need to be trimmed. Each tree was clearly marked with an orange dot.

There was a car-versus-wall on Nature's Way and Hickory Ridge. There is an accident report on file and there appears to be insurance coverage. This is the fourth accident this year.

Planscape Inc installed four Oak trees

on Nature's Way, 300 ornamental peanut plants in the second median of Greenhollow and 14 "Knock Out" red roses at the intersection of Culbreath and Erindale.

Specialty Pressure Washing has been watering the flower beds and oak trees for the last month. Verizon has been called concerning the dead grass and bushes in the common areas. The contractor who installed the fiber optic lines for Verizon has contacted this office with a solution to the problem.

In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, DPMI picked up 24 bags of trash, five dresser drawers, a telephone, an aluminum post and eight cents. Additionally, there were 32 snipe signs removed and 18 light bulbs replaced. The beverages of the month were Mountain Dew for soft drinks, Miller High Life for beer and Absolut Vodka for distilled spirits.

## NOTICE

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in the future I think it would be a good idea for any districts that mail these notices to include a friendly letter of their own that more clearly explains the intent."

Bloomingdale's special tax assessment pays for common area maintenance, repair and improvements throughout the community. The 2007 assessment, at \$130 per lot or condominium, will generate \$663,520 total revenue for the district's fiscal year 2008.

The public hearing will be held 6:45 p.m. on Monday, July 9 at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, south of Bloomingdale Avenue, behind SunTrust Bank and Citgo gas station. Regular office hours are 8 a.m. to noon Monday through Thursday. For more information contact Wilson at (813) 684-6667 or [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net).

# Your Inside Connections

## BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION INC.

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594

Phone: (813) 681-2051

Fax: (813) 684-2358

E-mail: bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net

Office hours: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to noon

Meetings: first Monday each month, 7 p.m.

Web site: www.bloomingdalegazette.com

President: Ted Grable

Vice president: Joe Hickley; Treasurer: Pam Liguori

Directors: Lydia Harrod; Steve Heckel; George May;

Myron Magedanz; Stanley Lee; Dale Kahn; and

Shelia Harris

## BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594

Phone: (813) 684-6667

Fax: (813) 684-2358

E-mail: bloomingdale.district@verizon.net

Office hours: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to noon

Meetings: second Monday each month, 7 p.m.

President: Thom Snelling

Vice president: Russell Jones

Treasurer: David West

Trustees: Joe Harless; Joe Liguori; David Steck

Property manager: Al Devney



# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594

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Gary Distler, 662-1610



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# Homeowners Association Represents All Residents

## □ Membership notices mailed in June

**A Gazette Report**

Dues notices for the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association's 2007 Membership Drive were mailed in June to about 5,000 property owners. The association uses county tax rolls from the previous year to compile its mailing address list. Residents who recently purchased homes in the community and those who rent but do not own property may not be on the current mailing list. Dues payments may be mailed or delivered to the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. The office is open 7 a.m. to noon Monday through Thursday.

Following are frequently asked questions about the BHA. For more information call (813)

681-2051, e-mail [bloomingle.com](mailto:bloomingle.com), or visit [www.bloomingle.com](http://www.bloomingle.com).

### WHEN WAS THE BHA FORMED?

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association was organized in August 1980 during the early development of the Bloomingdale community.

### WHAT IS THE MEMBERSHIP AREA?

The membership area includes all homes in Bloomingdale East, Bloomingdale West and Bloomingdale Oaks, plus select neighboring areas whose residents actively support BHA programs and activi-

ties, including Dogwood Hills, Hickory Ridge, Hickory Creek and Butler Road. The BHA is the only homeowners association representing the entire Bloomingdale community, an area roughly encompassing Hillsborough County sections 11, 12, 13 and 14 / township 30 / range 20 and section 7 / township 30 / range 21.

### DOES THE BHA COVER SECTIONS THAT HAVE THEIR OWN MANDATORY ASSOCIATION?

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association is a unifying, umbrella organization which serves homeowners in all 40 sections of the community. It is the only organization that represents and serves the entire community. A few neighborhood sections within Bloomingdale are also represented by

smaller, individual homeowner associations, such as Fox Run, Bloomingdale Cove and Cambridge Cove.

### HOW MANY MEMBERS ARE THERE?

Over the course of more than 25 years, the association's membership area has grown from a few hundred homes to more than 5,000 residences.

### HOW MUCH ARE DUES?

Voluntary annual membership dues are \$25 per home. The BHA is a non-profit, all-volunteer 501(c)(4) organization.

### WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE BHA?

To promote a spirit of neighborly relations and cooperation among the community's residents and property owners.

To promote, coordinate and obtain improved utilities, governmental services and other beneficial improvements for the community.

To maintain high standards in the community and vigorously oppose any encroachment or conduct of any kind which may tend to lower the standards of the community.

To promote physical improvements to the community for the common good of its property owners and residents, and to oppose any act which may tend to depreciate the property values in the community.

### WHAT ARE DUES MONIES USED FOR?

Membership dues are the BHA's sole source of funding. The dues allow the organiza-

See BHA, Page 7



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### BHA Thanks Dues Drive Assembly Line

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association would like to thank the many neighborhood volunteers, high school students and board members who helped assemble and prepare more than 5,000 dues notices for mailing in June. Students who helped and would like to receive community service hours from their school may bring their service form to the office for validation Monday - Thursday from 7 a.m. to noon, or call (813) 681-2051. To receive notices about future volunteer opportunities, call the office or register to receive BHA News Alerts on [www.bloomingle.com](http://www.bloomingle.com).

**BHA**

From page 6

tion's volunteers to run programs and activities that benefit the community as a whole, including:

**NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

BHA volunteers continually strive to promote and enforce compliance with each section's deed restrictions and Hillsborough County codes and ordinances. Residents can report potential violations on the community Web site or by calling the community office to request a complaint form.

**THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE**

The official newspaper of the BHA since 1980, the Gazette provides vital local information to residents. It is delivered to all homes in the BHA membership area on the first Saturday each month, along with The Tampa Tribune.

**BLOOMINGDALE WEB SITE**

Initially launched in January 2000, [www.bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingtondalegazette.com) provides timely news, information and event listings. Residents can join the community's free, confidential e-mail list to receive "BHA News Alerts" about breaking news and

time-sensitive matters.

**BLOOMINGDALE HIGH SCHOOL**

The BHA supports the education and extracurricular activities of our community's high school students with an annual endowment.

**B. J. STELTER BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP**

Established in 2006, the scholarship is awarded annually to one or more Bloomingdale High School seniors. Scholarship applications are available year-round at the school and on the community Web site.

**BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY OFFICE**

The BHA shares the Bloomingdale community office and staff with the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District. Hours are 7 a.m. to noon Monday through Thursday.

**NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE PROGRAM**

Introduced in 2002 to promote a sense of pride in ownership and community by encouraging neighbors to clean up and improve their homes, yards, and streets. The BHA supports the efforts of Neighborhood PRIDE teams in each section.

**NEIGHBORHOOD NAME AND SIGN PROGRAM**

Ten of Bloomingdale's 40 neighborhood sections were not officially named by the original developer. The BHA introduced this program to allow homeowners in those sections to choose a name and have entryway signs installed. Currently, nine of those ten sections are officially named; six received new entryway signs.

**COMMUNITY CLEANUP DAYS**

The BHA, with a grant from Hillsborough County and the assistance of the Parks & Recreation Dept., conducts annual

See BHA, Page 19

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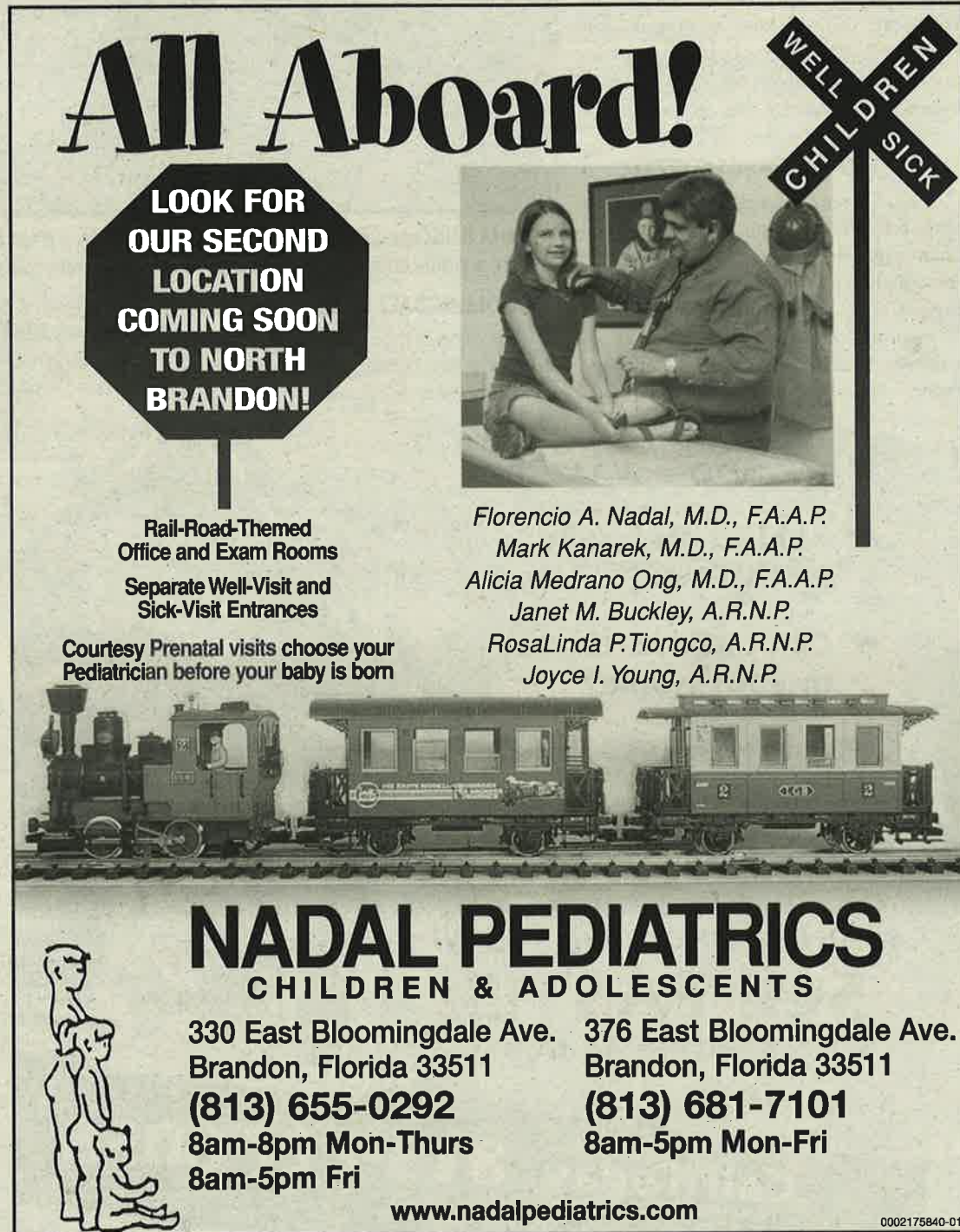
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# BHA Invites Neighbors To Help With Projects, Programs

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. board of directors uses a committee-based approach to help its volunteers focus on 18 unique areas of interest and services.

Association president Ted Grable and vice president Joe Hickle oversee four committee groups: Association Services, Community Services, Neighborhood Improvement and Government Services.

More neighbors are needed to help accomplish the goals set forth by each committee. Those who wish to participate in committee projects or programs are not required to hold a seat on the BHA board.

For more information about the following projects and programs, call (813) 681-2051, e-mail [bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net) or visit [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com).

## THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The Gazette committee is charged with providing a quality monthly publication to present pertinent and timely information to the residents of Bloomingdale and surrounding communities. The committee enlists the services of an editor and various reporters and photographers to gather publication content.



The BHA holds annual cleanup days funded in part by a grant from Hillsborough County's Office of Neighborhood Relations. Cleanups are announced in the Gazette and on [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com).

## BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE WEB SITE

The committee is responsible for operating the official BHA web site, at [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com). The

site provides useful information about Bloomingdale and the BHA. It also provides information on the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, local and state

government services, schools and community contacts. A confidential e-mail

See PROJECTS, Page 10

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**\$299,900**



**SUPER DEAL!**

This 4 bedroom, 2 bath, 2 car garage home is located in one of the best communities in the area. This home features tile, wood flooring, new carpet, fresh paint, beautiful ceiling fan, tray ceiling in the master, spacious bedrooms, fenced yard, conservation view, many upgrades, seller is motivated and says "Bring Offer!"  
**\$209,900**



**VALRICO FOR UNDER \$170K!**

3 bedrooms/2 bath fenced home on corner is awaiting a new owner. Large kitchen with separate dining area, large living/family room accommodates a large TV nicely. All bedrooms are good sizes; the master suite has a large walk-in closet. Outside you will find beautiful mature tropical landscaping with 2 sheds for storage. The home is equipped with a doggie door in the laundry room. All appliances are included!  
**\$169,900**



**VALRICO POOL HOME, OH MY!**

Fabulous 4 bedroom/3 bath pool home with office. Gorgeous wood floors cover the entire first floors. Paved pool with spectacular view of golf course in prestigious gated community. Super sized bedrooms! Fantastic Valrico location near interstates, shopping, and Tampa.  
**\$339,000**



**GORGEOUS TOWN HOME**

Quiet Brandon community, 2 BR/1.5BA home w/spacious living & dining rooms. This kitchen is very open w/lots of cabinet & counter space. Upstairs bedrooms w/plenty of closet space. Home also features 2 private patios w/garden space & outside storage. Assigned covered parking. Best value in Brandon!  
**\$134,000**



**STUNNING BRANDON TOWNHOME**

Close to shopping, interstates, and Tampa. Spacious 2BR/2BA home w/ loads of closet and storage space. Large family room, separate dining room, beautiful kitchen w/wood cabinets overlooking the great room. Master bedroom is very spacious w/his & hers closets, a private balcony, sunroom and owners' bath. Home features upstairs laundry, screen lanai, private back yard, assigned parking, community pool. Within walking distance to shopping! **\$139,900**



**VALRICO JEWEL!**

4 bedroom/2 bath home in gorgeous gated community. Golf course frontage, 3-way split plan, Corian counters, black appliances, maple cabinetry, very spacious and open floor plan, community pool, fitness, playground!  
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**SPECTACULAR POOL HOME!**

Gorgeous 4 bedroom/3 bath, 3 CG, pool home with office. Over 2700sf in this oversized sunrise home with new 18" tile, new carpet, new roof, wood floors and wood burning fireplace. Gorgeous pool and lanai, fenced yard.



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## PROJECTS

From page 8

registry on the site allows residents to sign up for "BHA News Alerts." The committee enlists the services of a Web site provider, administrator and content editor.

### BHA MEMBERSHIP

The committee is responsible for the BHA's annual membership drive. It updates notice letters and mailing lists, and prints, assembles and mails notices to residents. The committee records and deposits membership dues payments and provides the BHA board with timely financial reports.

### VOLUNTEER REGISTRY

The committee solicits, coordinates and corresponds with volunteers needed to assist with BHA projects, programs and events.

### FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

The committee represents the Bloomingdale community in the annual Greater Brandon Fourth of July Parade. It enters a caravan or float decorated in national colors and invites resi-

dents to ride in the parade.

### SANTA AND MRS. CLAUS

Santa and Mrs. Claus visit Bloomingdale one Saturday each December to give Bloomingdale residents of all ages an opportunity to talk with Santa, have their picture taken and receive a small gift courtesy of the BHA. In exchange for the free visit, Santa and Mrs. Claus request a donation of non-perishable food items to be delivered to local charities prior to the holidays.

### YARD OF THE MONTH

The committee selects and photographs a Yard of the Month, to be announced in the Gazette.

### COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

Created to honor the outstanding career of BJ Stelter, principal of Bloomingdale Senior High School from 1991- 2005, this committee supports the efforts that result in the award of an annual college scholarship to one or more Bloomingdale High students. It organizes and administrates all aspects of the scholarship process from applications and overseeing the selection committee to awarding the



The BHA holds an annual community appreciation dinner to recognize neighborhood volunteers and community leaders. Pictured at the 2007 dinner are BHA board member George May, former Bloomingdale High School principal B. J. Stelter and Mary and Ted Grable, BHA president.

winning student(s) and disbursing the funds.

### SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISERS

The committee was created to provide grants for further education to Bloomingdale students at Bloomingdale Senior High School. It is comprised of BHA board members and Blooming-

dale residents. The committee acquires funds to award scholarships to graduating seniors, through a variety of fundraising activities.

### RESTRICTIONS & COUNTY CODES

The committee consists of

three or more board members who review the inspection findings of properties reported to be in non-compliance with Bloomingdale deed restrictions and/or Hillsborough County codes. If necessary, the committee determines the next level of action the BHA will take to obtain compliance by the offending property owners.

### COMMUNITY CLEANUP DAYS

The committee organizes semi-annual cleanup days at the Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance facility on Nature's Way in Bloomingdale East. At these events (generally held in April and October each year), residents are invited to bring all items of trash and waste not normally accepted during weekly trash service. It also provides personal pick-up of refuse by appointment for the elderly and disabled.

### NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

The network serves as a clearing-house and referral organization for Bloomingdale residents who may not be able to care for their home or property due to reasons beyond their control. Qualifying causes may be age, illness, death of a spouse, and temporary unemployment. The committee accepts referrals

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**PROJECTS**

From page 10

from the BHA Enforcement Committee and residents who become aware of neighbors with special needs. It offers referrals to local charitable and governmental agencies that can provide appropriate assistance, including the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations, Dept. of Community Health and Social Services, Aging Services and Housing and Community Code Enforcement Dept.

**NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE**

The committee corresponds with and assists residents interested forming Neighborhood PRIDE teams. When a team is formed, the committee acts as the liaison between the team and the BHA board. It also coordinates the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Naming and Signage Program.

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

The committee monitors the appearance of and improvements to Bloomingdale Parks East and West, including the Stephanie Culbertson Recreation Center. It works closely with the county parks and rec department on items such as park landscaping and signage, reporting of problems that may arise (vandalism, loitering), pond cleanup and proper use of the park facilities. It also works with the director of the recreation center regarding programs and activities for the community.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

The committee assists the BHA and Bloomingdale residents by communicating with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue Department to promote improvements to neighborhood safety and security. It works closely



With the assistance of Hillsborough County's Parks Department, BHA volunteers monitor activity and address maintenance and improvement needs at two county facilities, Bloomingdale East Park on Natures Way, and Bloomingdale West Park on Canoga Park Drive.

with Bloomingdale's Community Resource Deputy and the Bloomingdale Area Community Council. It may also establish undesirable or potentially illegal community volunteers to patrol neighborhoods to monitor for activities.

See PROJECTS, Page 12

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# BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

## PROJECTS

From page 11

### PUBLIC WORKS

The committee acts as a liaison between the BHA and the Hillsborough County Public Works Dept. and county planning agencies. It communicates with county staff in an effort to improve and maintain roadways and utilities in and around Bloomingdale. It also monitors the current conditions and future needs of the community.

### SCHOOLS

The committee represents the BHA on issues of education and schools in the School District of Hillsborough County. It fosters regular com-

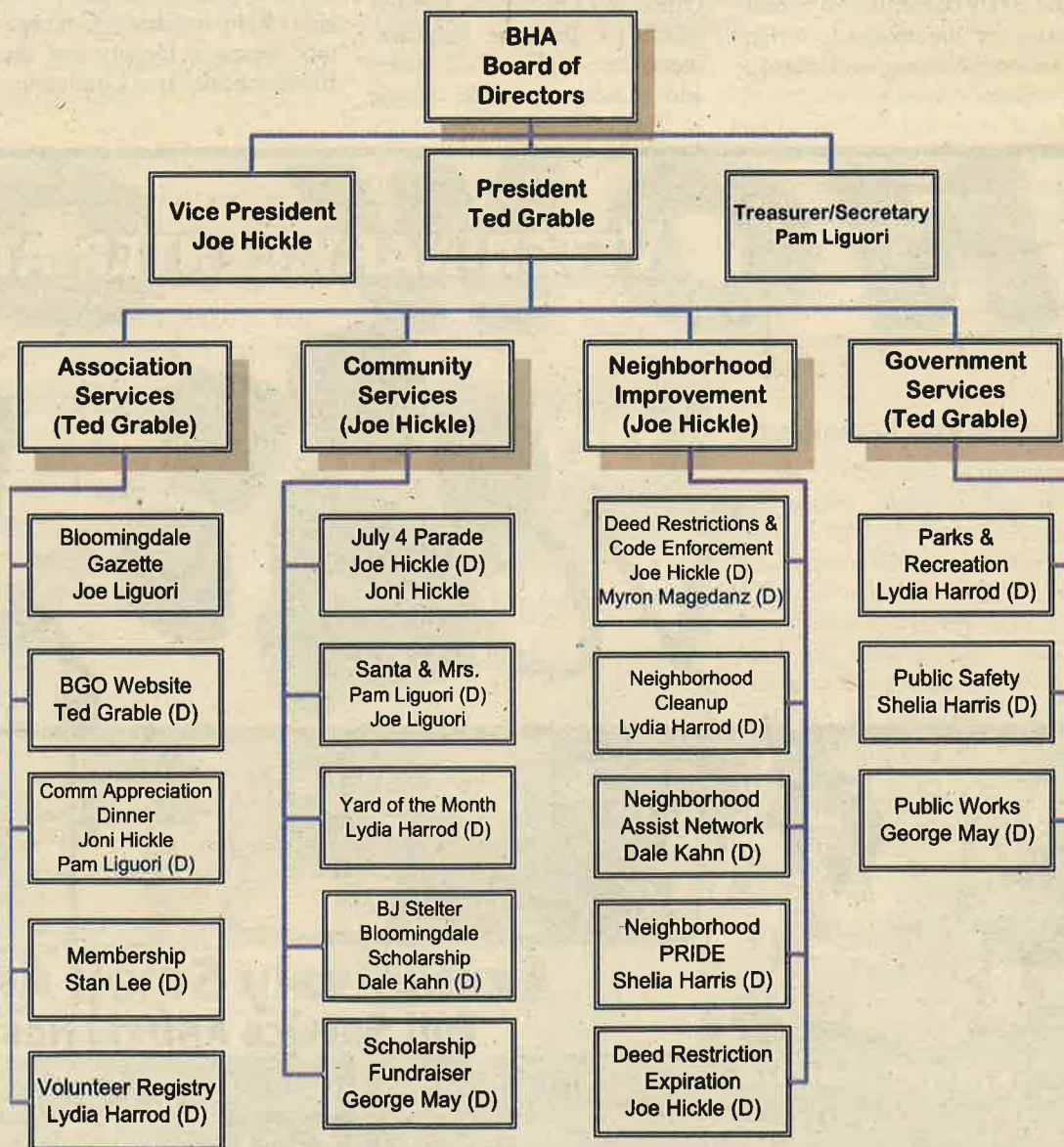
munication with principals and PTA presidents at Bloomingdale High, Burns Middle, Alafia Elementary and Cimino Elementary schools. It monitors issues related to the general quality of public schools including funding, school boundaries, facilities, staffing and programs.

### APPRECIATION DINNER

The committee organizes the annual BHA Community Appreciation Dinner to recognize individuals who actively support the homeowners association's mission to ensure the community remains a great place in which to live. Invitees include volunteers serving the BHA, Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District, along with local elected officials and county staff who work closely with the BHA and taxing district.

## Bloomingdale Homeowner's Association, Inc.

Committee Organization



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Having difficulty getting **appointments**?  
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(D) = BHA Director

July 1, 2007

# BHA, County Help Neighbors Address Restrictions, Violations

A Gazette Report

A primary objective of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. is to maintain high standards in the community, and to vigorously oppose any encroachment or conduct that may tend to lower the standards of the community.

BHA volunteers will assist neighbors who wish to resolve common deed restriction complaints such as trash cans stored in view of the street, cars parked on grass, boats parked in driveways and insufficient yard maintenance. Residents can submit complaints online at [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com), or e-mail [bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net), or call (813) 681-2051.

Houses in serious states of disrepair and those with potential health and safety hazards should be reported to Hillsborough County's Code Enforcement department for investigation. Examples include decaying or dilapidated structures including roofs, broken windows, overgrown or dead trees, swimming pools without screen or fence enclosures, and an accumulation of trash or yard waste. Residents can submit complaints online at [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/hcce](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/hcce) or call (813) 641-6946. Residents who register complaints with the county are also encouraged to advise the homeowners association of their concerns.

For common property maintenance needs, such as broken sprinkler heads, graffiti on community property, damaged entryway signs and landscaping issues, residents can contact Al Devney, property manager for the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, at (813) 684-6667 or e-mail [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net).



Photo from Bloomingdale Homeowners Association

In response to inquiries from neighbors, BHA volunteers contacted County Code Enforcement officials to inquire about an abandoned, fire-damaged home in Chadd's Ford, pictured. Volunteers reported in June that certified letters sent to the homeowner by the county were returned unclaimed. In addition, notices are posted at the residence. If the property owners do not respond this month, the county will begin the process to assess fines and take further action. The BHA will continue to monitor the situation.

## Is your House Prepared for the Next Rainstorm?

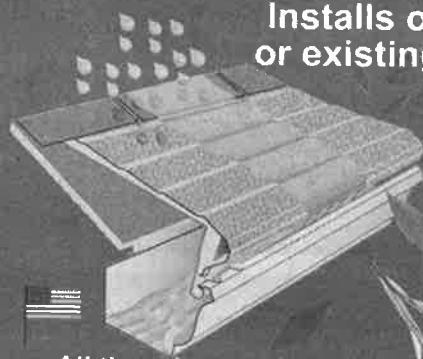
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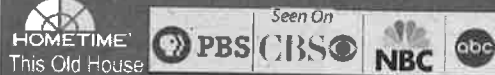
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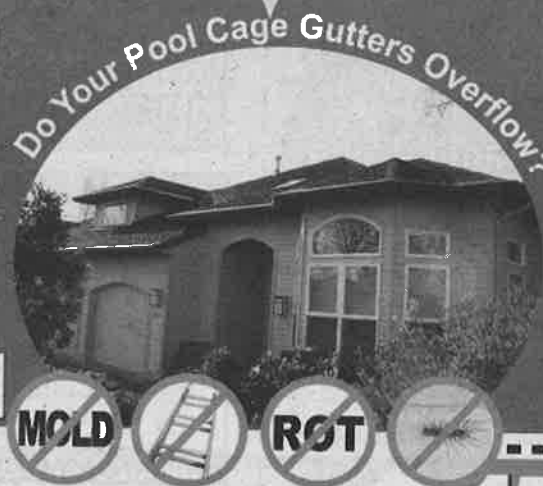


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GAZETTE  
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# County Launches New Mosquito Prevention Initiative

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control in June introduced new services to inform and educate residents about mosquito prevention and safety. The county also rolled out a new informational web site and a Scouting badge program on mosquito prevention.

The new web site includes frequently asked questions about mosquito control and

prevention; alerts on what parts of the county are seeing high mosquito counts and where they will be spraying; and information on the many ways that the section surveys and treats areas to prevent mosquito breakouts.

The site also includes details about the section's many vehicles, including a fixed-wing plane, and how mosquito control has changed radically over the years. To visit the website,

visit [hillsboroughcounty.org](http://hillsboroughcounty.org), click on the A-Z Index link, then select "Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control."

Mosquito Control is introducing the first Scouting badge program focusing on mosquito control in the state. The section has worked with the Girls Scouts of Suncoast Council in developing the Scouting badge, and will host their first Girl Scout troop this month to take

part in the badge program.

The badge activities include building a dipper and learning how to inspect for mosquito larvae at home; learning about aerial operations and the exploring the section's helicopter; visiting the section's sentinel chickens and mosquito traps, and discovering their role in detecting mosquito-induced diseases; and learning more about biological controls, such as Gambusia fish

(mosquito fish).

Residents in neighborhoods experiencing mosquito problems can call the section to request treatment, (813) 554-5025. During the rainy season, the section is often flooded with requests for service. It uses a combination of citizen requests, employee observations and trap counts to determine the areas of highest infestation and need for service.

# County Invites Public To Discuss Brandon Community Plan

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough County invites the public to attend an introductory open house on the Brandon Community Plan. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the creation of a community plan for the Brandon area.

Community-based plans are designed to address and offer solutions to critical planning issues and concerns, and to protect the characteristics that define what is unique about the community.

A community-wide consensus will be established on a plan for guiding growth,

regulating development, and delivering public services according to residents' priorities.

County staff and other agencies will attend the meeting to discuss the plan and answer any questions residents may have.

The meeting will be held 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 10 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 402 E. Lumsden Road in Brandon. For more information call (813) 272-5275 or visit [www.hillsboroughcounty.org](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org).

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# Bloomingtondale High Students Registered, Ready To Vote

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections Office in June congratulated Bloomingtondale High School for accumulating the second highest number of voter registrations during the High School Senior Voter Registration/Education program.

The elections office announced, "An extraordinary 132 Bloomingtondale students

registered to vote during the drive. Gaither High came in first with 140 registrations and Newsome High came in third with 128 registrations."

The High School Senior Voter Registration/Education Program is a partnership between the Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections Office and the School District of Hillsborough County. Members of the Supervisor of Elections

staff visit every public high school in the county to educate students on the voting process and offer an opportunity for them to register to vote.

Since the inception of the program in March of 2006, the elections office has received more than 7,000 new registrations from Hillsborough County high school students.

Supervisor of Elections Buddy Johnson

said, "With the 18- to 24-year-old demographic having the lowest turnout of any age group, my office is committed to not only registering our youth, but to educating the future leaders of this great county on the importance of civic engagement."

As a result of the program, Johnson said, this year more than 1,600 Hillsborough County high school students have registered to vote so far.

## Church To Host Vacation Bible School

A Gazette Report

First United Methodist Church will hold Vacation Bible School 9 a.m. to noon from July 9 through 13 at the church, 120 North Kings Ave. in Brandon. "Avalanche Ranch" is designed for children ages 3 through 11. Activities and lessons aim "to help kids discover that God is real, He is with

us, He is strong, He is awesome and He is in charge." The weeklong session ends with a family celebration of food, music and an outdoor movie on Friday night. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information or to register call (813) 689-4161, e-mail info@fumcbrandon.org or visit www.fumcbrandon.org.

## SCOUTS

From page 1

visit from Boy Scout Troop 110. The troop was recognized with a proclamation by the Board of County Commissioners as official goodwill ambassadors for their visit to England, celebrating the 100th anniversary of Boy Scouting in America.

The tour is open to any group of students, including public, private, and charter schools, scout groups, church groups, and home schoolers.

Commissioner Higginbotham was elected to serve Hillsborough County District 4, which includes Bloomingtondale and all of eastern Hillsborough.

For more information, call (813) 272-5740 or e-mail franklind@hillsboroughcounty.org.

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## LETTERS

### Speed Limit Too High For Oakcrest

I am writing because we are seeing more and more speeding in our subdivision. We live on Kenwick Drive and have been living in our current home since 1999. Over the years we have seen an increase in speeding cars.

There are many children that play in and around the street and we think that there should be more posted speeds in the neighborhood, and a decrease in

the maximum speed allowed. There is a 25 mph sign posted at the Windell entrance, which is much too [fast] to safely navigate the streets in this subdivision. We would recommend a speed no higher than 15 mph, and enforcement not only by law enforcement officers, but as a cohesive neighborhood, with the ability to report offenders to some sort of governing body that will

do something about it.

This is not necessarily pointed at the younger generation, as I have seen just as many older drivers, as well as lawn service companies and even the garbage collectors speeding or driving unsafely.

Think about it, if Culbreath Road is 30 mph, how can Kenwick, Millcreek, Needham, etc. be 25 mph?

I find myself frequently yelling

toward vehicles that are obviously going much too fast. Before I get into an unfortunate and ugly match with a driver, I would like this to be addressed. Let's do something before a child gets hurt or killed.

**John Pritchard**

Send letters to [info@bloomingdalegazette.com](mailto:info@bloomingdalegazette.com) or Gazette Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594.

All letters are subject to editing and will be published on a space-available basis.



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# Chabad of Brandon Joins World's Largest Jewish Education Network

A Gazette Report

This November, the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, the largest institute of Jewish learning in the world, will launch a new chapter in Brandon, bringing the total count of JLI affiliates worldwide to more than 250.

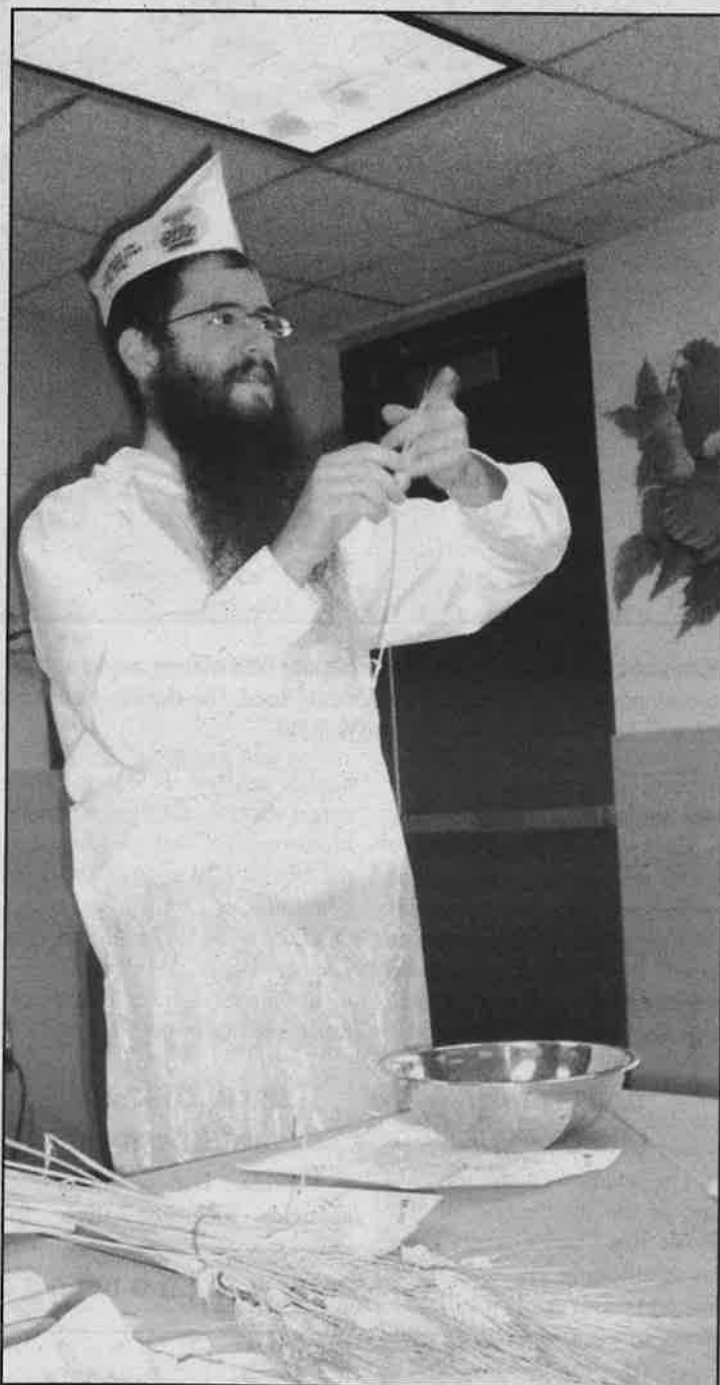
The Chabad will join a community of Jewish learners that spans the globe, with centers in more than 30 states and 15 countries, including Uruguay, South Africa, Sweden, and Australia. The Jewish learning institute expects to enroll a total of more than 30,000 students worldwide during the coming academic year.

In preparation for the new academic year, the Rohr Institute held its ninth annual conference in June in Newark, N.J. The two-day symposium was attended by more than 300 directors and instructors from around the world, including Rabbi Mendel Rubashkin of Chabad of Brandon.

"It proved an opportunity for Institute partners to explore new courses being offered, hone their skills with master educators and experts, and to further develop the collegial network that is the Institute's abiding strength," Rubashkin said.

The conference gave instructors an opportunity to become familiar with the content of the upcoming curriculum and to collaborate in honing effective teaching strategies for this year's featured courses. The focus of this year's conference was the upcoming fall course; *The Land and the Spirit*, an examination of the Jews' connection to the land of Israel. Preparatory sessions were presented in a variety of formats, including panel discussions led by authors, small group discussion of texts, lectures by master presenters, and roundtable forums.

Rubashkin said the annual conference ensures that every Jewish Learning Institute site will provide the same high stan-



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Rabbi Mendel Rubashkin of Chabad of Brandon leads classes and workshops throughout the Brandon area for Jewish children, teens, adults and families.

dard of quality and professionalism that has marked the JLI since its inception. It also serves, he said, to build an excitement for the course content participants bring home and share with past and prospective students.

The public is invited to join all three of this year's course offerings to explore what makes the Jewish Learning Institute a world-class source of Jewish

inspiration and knowledge.

"This will be a unique opportunity for the local Jewish community to learn about Judaism, with the focus on student participation and comprehension," said Rubashkin.

For more information call Rabbi Rubashkin at (813) 657-9393, e-mail [rabbi@chabad-brandon.org](mailto:rabbi@chabad-brandon.org) or visit [www.chabadbrandon.org](http://www.chabadbrandon.org).

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# Have Fun, Stay Safe This Summer

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER  
Bloomingdale Community  
Resource Deputy

## DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

High gas prices aren't keeping millions of families from heading out on the highways to enjoy time together. Millions of visitors and Florida residents are on the roads and this makes for more traffic than you can keep up with. To help ensure you and your family enjoy your leisure time together, please drive safely, obey all traffic laws, use your seat belts and don't drink and drive. Summer time can hold great memories. We want you to live to enjoy them.

## GUARD AGAINST STORMS, INTRUDERS

We all keep hearing about preparing our homes for this storm season. It's good advice, especially if you're going to be away on vacation. We have already had two tropical storms this year with one tracking right along our coastline.

You work hard all year to pay for and keep the home safe and secure. So, before you finally take that much needed vacation and so you can really enjoy this time away, take the time to secure your home while you're gone, both from storms and criminals.

Make special arrangements to have your yard cared for, your mail held or picked up, and ask your neighbors to keep watch on your home while you're gone. Help

take care of each other. You can also complete a "Security Watch" form at the Bloomingdale Community Station.

## PARTY ON, CAUTIOUSLY

Summer parties can be very cool, but when they end up in confrontations and folks get arrested, the fun disappears. Parents, it is your responsibility to ensure no one under age is drinking or using drugs. Do not purchase or furnish teens with any type of alcohol. One parent recently in the news will serve two years in jail for not following these rules.

One of the latest teen trends is to experiment with prescription medications. Ensure all medications are properly secured. Learn the specific guidelines that must be followed concerning noise. Have fun, but respect your neighbors too. Don't let a great party have a bad ending with someone getting cited for DUI, being involved in an accident or being killed. Alcohol and drinking do not mix.

## KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE

There have been too many articles in the news about kids becoming victims of sexual predators. Now more than ever, with all of the recent tragic events involving young children, this is a critical issue.

With school out our kids are everywhere -- at parks, playgrounds, the mall and up and down



Gazette file photo

Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer works at the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bloomingdale Substation, 4342 Bell Shoals Road. The station is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information call (813) 635-8040.

neighborhood streets. Some are even home alone. Make the time to teach your children how to be careful and cautious and to look out for one another. It only takes a few minutes for a tragic event to occur. Take whatever time it takes to educate them and prepare them to protect themselves.

## GARNETT TURN LANE COMPLETE

The addition of the left-turn lane at the intersection of Bell Shoals Road and Garnett Drive has significantly improved traffic flow and driver safety for Bloom-

ingdale residents. It took the persistent efforts of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association and the Sheriff's Bloomingdale Area Community Council in coordination with the Hillsborough County Public Works Department for over eighteen months to finally see this project completed.

## SPECIAL CONCERNS UNDER WATCH

Florida law enforcement agencies including those in

Hillsborough County will utilize checkpoints and saturation points throughout the summer to catch drivers who voluntarily put others at risk by driving recklessly, drinking and driving or breaking other traffic laws. Law enforcement officers are also tracking down businesses and individuals that sell alcohol to minors or purchase alcohol for them. Don't be in one of these groups. The fines are high and the penalties are tough.

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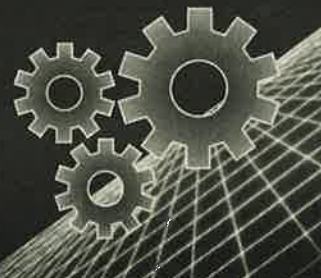
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# Etiquette Classes For Youth, Teens At Kumon

A Gazette Report

Sense of Decorum, Inc., a business that offers etiquette programs for students and adults, will hold two etiquette classes in July for youth ages 8 to 14. The two-day classes will be held at Kumon Learning Center, 173 East Bloomingdale Avenue in Brandon, on July 10 -11 and

July 17 - 8, from 9 a.m. to noon for ages 8 - 11 and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for ages 12 - 14.

Topics include telephone manners, public speaking, polite conversation, cell phone etiquette, movie theater etiquette, social courtesies, party planning and social dance.

The two-day session costs \$35 for pre-registered students and \$40 at the door if space is available.

For more information call Stephanie Smart, (813) 767-2151, e-mail shar-ris@senseofdecorum.com or visit www.senseofdecorum.com.

## BHA

From page 7

Community Cleanup Days to allow residents to dispose of household junk for free at a convenient Natures Way location (see story in this issue). Cleanup days are announced in the Gazette and on www.bloom-ingdalegazette.com.

### NEIGHBORHOOD ASSIST NETWORK

Serves as a clearing-house and referral organization for Bloomingdale residents who may not be able to care for their home or property due to reasons beyond their control. Qualifying causes may be age, illness, death of a spouse, and temporary unemployment. The committee will accept referrals from the BHA Enforcement Committee and residents that become aware of neighbors with special needs. The Committee's role is not to offer direct assis-

tance to residents, but to provide needy residents with referrals to local charitable and governmental agencies that can provide appropriate assistance. The committee will work closely with local religious and non-profit service organizations and with county government - especially the Office of Neighborhood Relations, the Department of Community Health and Social Services, the Aging Services Department, and the Housing and Community Code Enforcement Department.

### BLOOMINGDALE AREA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The BHA supports the efforts of the all-volunteer council and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to help keep Bloomingdale safe. The council meets 7 p.m. on the third Thursday each month at the Bloomingdale substation on Bell Shoals Road. Residents with questions or concerns

about law enforcement issues are encouraged to attend (see story in this issue). For information call Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer, (813) 635-8040.

### BLOOMINGDALE REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

The BHA actively petitioned for a new library planned for south Brandon to be located on Bloomingdale Avenue. The BHA became the first corporate level sponsor of the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library.

### TRAFFIC/ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The BHA works with Hillsborough County officials and staff to implement traffic and roadway improvements in and around the Bloomingdale community. BHA volunteers joined the community council's drive for a new traffic signal recently installed on Bell Shoals Rd. at

Glenhaven Dr.; a northbound left turn lane installed on Bell Shoals Rd. at Garnet; and a traffic light at the corner of Lithia-Pinecrest Rd. and Erin-dale Drive.

### SANTA & MRS. CLAUS

The BHA sponsors an annual visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus and a canned food drive to benefit charitable organizations, held at the community office each December.

### FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

The BHA invites all Bloomingdale residents to participate in Brandon's Fourth of July parade in the association's golf cart caravan.

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ROUNDTABLE CHARITIES

The BHA is a supporting member of the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce and Brandon Roundtable Charities.



## Patrice Valore

### Doing it Right the First Time

It's sad but true-cutting corners by deciding not to work with a professional interior decorator can often cost you more time and money in the long run. Today, more and more homeowners are enlisting the service of interior decorators and designers. Because custom designs are so popular, professional decorators know how to work with your budget, your lifestyle and your design vision in mind. If you are considering using a decorator, there are some basic guidelines you should follow before your project actually begins:

- Take a tour of your home with the decorator so you both can determine the size of the project.
  - Discuss your family's lifestyle with your decorator. How do you want your house to feel? How do you entertain? Do you have kids and pets in your household?
  - It's wise to set a realistic timetable for completion, especially with a large project.
  - Establish your decorating priorities. Which rooms are the most important for you to complete?
  - Determining a budget and sharing it with your decorator is essential. If you have never decorated before, or have not done so in many years, they can easily give you guidelines to help you determine a budget. This will enable your decorator to find the custom products that best suit your needs.
  - Finally, let the decorator know at the beginning of your projects if you have certain items that you want to keep and work around or have any other special requests.
- Considering these basic guidelines will allow your decorator to work with you to design a project with your wishes, your lifestyle and your budget in mind, saving you from costly errors and resulting in a room you and your family will enjoy for years to come.



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