

Seniors Say Goodbye



At the "Bull Ring" at Bloomingdale High School are, from left, seniors Nathan Minter, Josh Bassett, Jessica Ellis, Priscila Hammett, Austin Cooley and Brett Reckart.

By LINDA CHION KENNEY
 Correspondent

Bloomingdale High School seniors donned caps and gowns last month, ending their high school careers and saying farewell to the halls they walked for the past four years.

Last month, the Hillsborough County school district graduated 9,345 seniors, including 652 Bloomingdale High School seniors.

Valedictorian Wendy Brown and salutatorian Ryan Stauffer led the 17th graduating class at graduation ceremonies May 25 at the Florida State Fairgrounds Expo Hall.

For some seniors, it was a bittersweet

moment.

"It's exciting and kind of scary at the same time," said senior Josh Bassett. "You're going to be on your own making decisions and stuff."

"February was when it set in and I was ready to leave, because I had already been accepted to college," said Bloomingdale's Nathan Minter.

"Now, it's kind of sad because you won't see all your friends anymore like you used to, but you get to go into the real world and experience things without your parents on your back all the time.

"No, it won't be easy," he added, "but I'm looking forward to the challenge."



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 Road Rezoning
 Approved**

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John Moore Road Rezoning Approved

By D'ANN WHITE
Editor

Hailing it as an example of how developers and residents can work together, county commissioners gave their approval last month to develop the pasture at the southwest corner of John Moore Road and Bloomingdale Avenue.

The years' long debate over the fate of the wooded 38.6-acre lot ended last week when commissioners agreed to allow the Barclay Group to build 32,500 square feet of commercial and office space on a 5.7-acre piece fronting Bloomingdale Avenue and permit Sunrise Homes to build 49 single-family homes on the remainder.

For years, the property had been under the scrutiny of a group of residents called UNDO (United Neighbors Dedicated Opposition). The

neighbors successfully fought previous rezonings for the property, arguing that the uses were too intense and incompatible with surrounding development.

This time, land use attorney Vin Marchetti consulted the residents before his clients filed the application to rezone the property. The result, he said, was a compromise that suited everyone.

"We have worked together to design a project which we believe the community will be proud of," he told commissioners.

Residents were able to give opinions on everything from the architecture of the buildings to the type of signage, he said.

"We certainly had disagreements along the way. However, we did compromise on those issues we disagreed with," Marchetti said.

"I would estimate that the

people on my side put in probably over a thousand hours of reviewing the various plans and proposals and conditions," said Ryan Christopher Rodems, a resident and attorney representing UNDO.

Commissioner Ronda Storms commended the residents on their efforts.

"You're just regular citizens, and I really appreciate the sacrifices you're making for your neighborhood and on behalf of your neighbors and people who don't even know," she said. "I hope your neighbors appreciate you. You guys are true warriors."

Among the residents' concerns was the traffic impact at Bloomingdale and John Moore.

The intersection has a failed rating on a scale from A to F. The developer will be required to make improvements that will bring the intersection up to a D rating.

As part of the negotiated agreement, there will be only one access on John Moore from the single-family development. The developers will turn the emergency traffic signal in front of the fire station on Bloomingdale Avenue into a full signal and build a 436-foot right-turn lane on Bloomingdale to provide additional capacity. In addition, the developers will modify the traffic light at John Moore and Bloomingdale and build dual left-turn lanes on John Moore. As requested by residents, the developers also will build a concrete median at the commercial driveway on John Moore to prevent left turns. Cars will be able to make right-in and right-out turns only.

In all, said Marchetti, the developers will spend more than \$300,000 to make road

See REZONING, Page 23



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3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. (813) 681-2051. Fax: (813) 651-1129

E-mail: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@Verizon.net

Web Site: www.BloomingdaleGazette.com

BHA meetings are at the community office on the 1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

President — Ted Grable
Vice President — Joe Hickle
Treasurer — Pam Liguori
Director — Tony Diolosa
Director — Steve Heckel
Director — Jane Lee
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(813) 684-6667

BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

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Correspondence Secretary — David West
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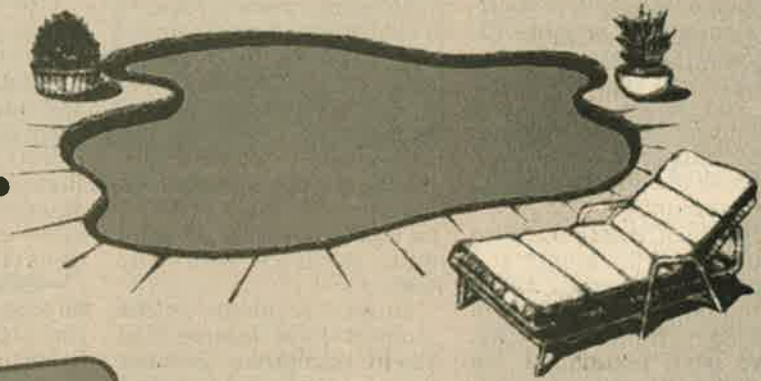
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Bloomingtondale Area Community Council Report

By MACK AUSTIN
Correspondent

The Bloomingtondale Area Community Council is made up of concerned residents from homeowners associations and neighborhoods in the community. They work directly with Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer, Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano and other government representatives to coordinate plans and actions on community issues and concerns that will improve the quality of life in the community.

The BACC meets the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Sheriff's Office Community Substation to discuss current issues that have been brought to the attention of council members, Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer or Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano.

The meetings are open to residents.

Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer began the May meeting by sharing a message from the Florida Highway Patrol warning motorists to be on the lookout for motorized scooters operating illegally on Florida's

highways, streets and sidewalks.

Maurer explained that these vehicles are basically a skateboard with a small gasoline or battery-powered engine and steering device. He noted that Florida Statue 322.01 considers these motorized scooters to be motor vehicles and, as such, requires a valid driver's license to operate. However, he's seeing more of them driven by youngsters through Bloomingtondale.

"Motorized scooters cannot be legally operated on public roadways nor can they be legally operated on sidewalks or bicycle paths," he said.

He said accidents on the scooters have injured and killed youngsters because they are small and fast, and the young drivers are unfamiliar with traffic laws. And, in most cases, the parents of the riders are held responsible. Parents should check the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Web site for additional information at www.hsmv.fl.us

Maurer then updated BACC members on a new law. The state Legislature recently tightened up the drunk driv-

ing laws. Ignition locks will now be mandatory starting with the second DUI conviction. DUI also becomes a felony with the third conviction within 10 years. These laws also apply to DUIs that occur on the water.

Additional topics discussed included:

- An update on the three-way stop at Natures Way and Culbreath Road. Maurer noted that he has not received any additional information from Commissioner Ronda Storms' aide, Audi Canney, since the BACC letter sent Storms a letter regarding this safety project and the concerns of residents.

- Hillsborough County traffic engineers have completed the installation of flashing lights at the crosswalk at the Bloomingtondale Little League and the Camp Family YMCA. Engineers are now coordinating the installation of additional access sidewalks in the crosswalk area. County parks maintenance is coordinating the construction of a bridge from the crosswalk across to the Little League park. In the meantime, residents are encouraged to use the crosswalk.

- Maurer updated members on the need for a traffic signal

at Bell Shoals Road and Glenhaven Drive.

The BACC and Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association have requested it be added to the county's capital improvements plan. In addition, plans are in the works for a HARTline bus stop behind the Bloomingtondale Sheriff's Substation. There are now two HARTline buses that transport MacDill Air Force personnel from Bloomingtondale to the base.

- Members reviewed several ongoing projects including upcoming improvements to Bloomingtondale Avenue and Bell Shoals Road, the need for a dog park in Bloomingtondale, improved lighting at the subdivision entrances, expanding the bike trail and impact fees. Members agreed that residents should let the Hillsborough County Planning Commission know their concerns.

- The BACC and homeowners association will host a meeting June 7 at 7 p.m. at Stephanie Ann Culbertson Recreation Center in Bloomingtondale West Park. Hillsborough County Chief Deputy David Gee will be the special guest.

For more information, call Maurer or Capitano at 635-8040.

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Bloomington Substation Notes

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
and SANDY CAPITANO

School's out — Do you know where your kids are?

No more homework, no more classes, just lots of "free" time, time hopefully that will be spent staying out of trouble. Now is the time for parents to take special precautions before things get too busy and crazy, to sit down with your kids and talk about the need to be careful, to be cautious and to think.

Some kids will have to spend some time at home alone. Parents, please emphasize to them the importance of keeping doors locked, not telling others they are home alone and being sure to lock up when they leave. Talk about how to stay safe. Bike safety, pool safety, fire safety and driving safety for all kids and especially teens, are important subjects that all families should discuss in detail.

With school out, many kids will have lots of free time, and for some — more time to get into trouble. Parents, you must know where your kids are at all times. Idle time is dangerous time. Set specific rules for your kids to follow. Don't let them end the summer with a criminal record or a serious injury.

June is "National Safety Month" with this year's theme being "Crash-Free June". The focus of "Crash-Free June" is to draw special attention to specific types of behaviors that cause vehicle accidents. The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, Florida Highway Patrol and those of us who are parents will be giving our full support to this project. We would ask that the parents in the Bloomington community do the same.

Please pay special attention to the following behaviors and discuss them with all the members of your family who drive:

Speeding — Speeding kills more than 12,000 people each year, some of whom were right here in our area. Speed-



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

We all know the busy intersections in the Bloomington area such as this one at Erindale Drive and Lithia-Pinecrest Road. Try making a left turn at peak traffic times.

ing increases the severity of a crash. Drivers stopped for speeding will be paying very expensive fines.

♦ **Aggressive driving** — Those who operate their vehicle in such a way as to endanger others — including improper passing, weaving in and out of traffic, or following too closely — are aggressive drivers. These drivers will be closely monitored by local special traffic units.

♦ **Distracted drivers** — Most auto crashes only take 1 to 2 seconds to occur. Distractions include more than just cell phones. Putting on makeup, adjusting the radio, talking to passengers, daydreaming and many more actions that take your mind off driving can be deadly for you and others.

♦ **Drinking** — Last year 17,401 people died in alcohol-related crashes, too many of them right here in our area. Alcohol contributed to 40 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities last year. Do not drink and drive. It's that simple to not be stupid.

♦ **Teenagers and driving** — Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for young adults between the ages of 16 and 24. More than 11,000 young adults in this age group were killed in crashes last year. Driving on our busy roads and highways is a dangerous place to learn how to drive. Drive like your life

depends on it, because it does.

Have a safe summer — drive safely and drive responsibly.

Home security check

June is a big month for

Bloomington families to take summer vacations. Don't forget to protect your home and autos while you're away. You can add to the security of your home by completing a "Home security check request" at the sheriff's Bloomington Community Station.

Forms are available and can be used for vacation only. There is a 30-day maximum on the time covered. It primarily provides additional surveillance. Other personal actions by homeowners are required to improve the security of your home and possessions.

These include securing all doors and windows, stopping newspapers or having a neighbor collect them and your mail, putting lights on timers, having someone mow your lawn, securing valuables inside and securing any vehicles left outside.

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BHA Seeks Names For Neighborhood

By D'ANN WHITE
Editor

Name that neighborhood. That's what the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association will be asking residents to do next month as part of its PRIDE program.

Currently, there are 10 neighborhoods within Bloomingdale that have no names. The BHA is asking residents to nominate names for their unnamed neighborhoods. The nominations will then be placed on a ballot to be printed in the Gazette and on the homeowners Web site for residents to vote on next month.

The new neighborhood names will be added to 2- by 3-foot wood signs that will be installed at the entryways to the neighborhoods. BHA director Steve Heckel said the BHA plans to order 55 to 60 signs at a cost of about \$20,000.

Residents can e-mail nominations to Bloomington.Homeowners@Verizon.net or can leave a message at 681-2051.

In the meantime, the BHA board expects to launch its new Web site this month. The new site will include copies of deed restrictions for Bloomingdale's various neighborhoods that do not have a mandatory homeowners association. The new updated Web site, designed by Rodney Biddle with help from BHA directors Joe Hickle and Steve



Cheryl Kehrmeier accepts a plaque of appreciation from Bloomingdale Homeowners Association President Ted Grable at last month's meeting. Kehrmeier recently resigned her position on the BHA to spend more time with her family.

Heckel, also will have archives of past Gazette articles, information about upcoming meetings, the Neighborhood Improvement Program and events and other items of interest to residents.

As of last count, 1,918 residents had sent in their \$20 payment to become members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

Among them was Scott Williams who thought it was

money well spent after taking part in the May 8 PRIDE cleanup, which enabled him to dispose of household construction debris for free.

He said he got estimates for hauling the debris away and discovered it would have cost him \$35 plus \$15 for each item.

Calling all riding lawn mower aficionados. To display its pride in its PRIDE program, the Bloomingdale

Homeowners Association is forming the Bloomingdale Synchronized Riding Lawnmower Team to perform in the Brandon Fourth of July Parade.

In addition to lawnmower riders, the BHA is seeking residents of all ages who would like to show their pride in their community during the upcoming Independence Day celebration.

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Storms Meets To Discuss Residents' Concerns

By LINDA CHION KENNEY
Correspondent

There was good news and bad news for residents during last month's Association of Valrico Communities meeting at the Campo Family YMCA.

The good news, guest speaker County Commissioner Ronda Storms told the group of 25 residents, is that a traffic signal will be installed at Erindale Drive and Lithia-Pinecrest Road, probably by the first of the year.

Bloomingtondale East residents have been requesting the signal due to increased traffic and development along Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

Steve Heckel, a director for the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association, said noted that there are no signals between Bloomingtondale Avenue and FishHawk Boulevard, giving drivers a chance to speed up to 55 mph or more along Lithia-Pinecrest and

"The fact of the matter is, I don't think I'm going to be able to pull together the votes. I don't believe it will add one truck to Sun City Center."

RONDA STORMS
County commissioner

making it difficult for Bloomingtondale East residents to turn out of Erindale.

Storms, however, had disappointing news for residents who have been lobbying to remove through truck traffic from Lithia-Pinecrest and Bloomingtondale Avenue.

The ban appeared to be in the works in January, but Sun City Center residents expressed concern that diverting traffic off Lithia-Pinecrest Road would send the trucks to their neck of the woods, on State Road 674. County commissioners responded with a call for more public meetings.

a deputy could not pull that truck over, Storms said.

Now Storms said she doesn't think the commission will pass the ban when it goes back to a public hearing, probably in the fall.

"The fact of the matter is, I don't think I'm going to be able to pull together the votes. I don't believe it will add one truck to Sun City Center," but she said perception is hard to shake.

Storms also told residents that she is targeting Bell Shoals Road for improvements.

The BHA would like a traffic light installed at the intersection of Bell Shoals and Glenhaven Drive and a turn lane added at Garnet Drive.

As for the widening of Boyette Road from Bell Shoals to U.S. 301, Storms said it will be done in stages, as planned, but there has been some delay because of eminent domain issues.

Upcoming Meetings

Residents Meeting Scheduled

The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association and the Sheriff's Office Bloomingtondale Community Council will host a Bloomingtondale area community meeting June 7 at 7 p.m. at the Stephanie Ann Culbertson Recreation Center, 3815 Canoga Park Drive.

The guest speaker will be Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy David Gee.

Call: 681-2051 or 635-8040.

Special district hearing

The Bloomingtondale Oaks Special Dependent District is conducting a public budget hearing to hear comments regarding its proposed 2004-05 budget and 2004 assessment rate. The trustees will vote on the budget and assessment rate at the hearing June 14 at 8 p.m. at 3419 Cade Lane.

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Meet Your Neighbors

George May

By D'ANN WHITE
Editor

He's admittedly not the type of guy who makes rash decisions.

So leaving his hometown of Mobile, Ala., in 1990, saying goodbye to family and lifelong friends didn't come easily to George T. May IV.

But May said he was ready for a change.

"I grew up in Mobile and was very involved there," said May.

May's father owns a well-known road construction company in Mobile and May majored in civil engineering at the University of South Alabama in anticipation of going into the family business.

"But I had the opportunity to come to Florida and I felt moving away would help me grow," he said of his decision to leave his hometown and pursue a new career. "I was at a crossroads in my life and I felt it was time for a change. So I allowed God to lead me where He wanted me to go."

That turned out to be Tampa where May began working as a financial planner for a company with an office near Tampa International Airport.

May said it was a career change that suited him.

"My dad is a perfectionist who taught me that if it's worth doing, it's worth doing



D'ANN WHITE/Photo

George May recently learned to play the piano. Learning to play the saxophone is next on his list.

right," he said. "And my mother is a neatnik. I inherited both qualities and they serve me well as a financial planner. I'm the kind of person who will take two hours to balance a checkbook so I can find an extra penny. My clients know they're good advice and good service."

Not long after relocating to Tampa, May found himself drawn to Brandon when he was invited to attend a function at Bell Shoals Baptist Church.

"My faith is very important to me, and I immediately felt at home at Bell Shoals. You could just feel the warmth

there," he said. "And I liked the Brandon area. It had the same small-town, friendly feeling that Mobile has."

He said moving to Brandon was one of the best decisions he ever made.

"I've been very happy here, and Brandon has been good to me," he said.

In addition to getting involved at Bell Shoals Baptist, including playing a Roman soldier in the Passion Play each year and teaching Sunday school, May promptly joined the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce, giving him the support and contacts he needed to open his own financial consulting firm in 1995, American Investment Advisors of Brandon, 343 E. Robertson St.

Then, seven years ago, he put down more roots in the community, building a home in Windsor Woods in Bloomingdale East.

"I feel like this is home," he said. "The church is my family. And the business relationships I've developed at the chamber have become friendships."

Lately May isn't spending much time at home.

Through his chamber activities, he became involved in the State Road 60 beautification effort, was a member of the 2002 Leadership Brandon class and is now active in the Leadership Brandon Alumni Association, served as co-director of the Brandon Com-

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Commentary

Saying Goodbye To A Local Sports Hero

By MACK AUSTIN

On May 8, the community said farewell to a very special friend and a very caring member of our community. Longtime owner of Red's Sporting Goods, Gary Redmon, died at the young age of 54.

Just a few months after opening Red's Sporting Goods in 1987, Gary, at the age of 37, was diagnosed with kidney failure. He was told he would probably live only another three years. But Gary was a very strong, determined man with goals and dreams. One of his biggest dreams was to see his son, Nathaniel, graduate from high school. Thanks to his strong faith and the love and support of his family and friends, Gary fulfilled that dream and many more.

Many of you reading didn't have the privilege of knowing Gary or doing business with him. But hundreds of residents, including my son, Scott, and I, sure did. If you had anything in the world to do with sports in this area, and most especially Little League baseball, you knew Gary. He owned the nearest and only sporting goods business in the area, first located near Publix in Bloomingdale and then at Bloomingdale and Kings avenues.

Any parent, especially those new to Little League like the t-ball parents, would ask the inevitable questions at the spring and winter ball registrations.

"Where's the best place to get Little League equipment for my son/daughter?" or "Where do we get the team shirts and equipment?" or "Where's the best place to get track shoes?" or "Where can I get my favorite pro baseball team's cap?" or "Where do Bloomingdale High athletes get their sports jackets?"

There was only one answer to all of these questions. "Go see Gary at Red's Sporting Goods. He'll take good care of you."

I can't imagine how many questions Gary was asked about uniforms and gloves and bats and balls and shoes and caps.

But, you know what, every time my son and I went to Red's and asked Gary for help, we always got the same friendly, caring service. Most folks had no idea how tough life for Gary really was. As a dedicated father and husband, he was working hard to take care of the most important thing in his life, his family.

Well, the ball players at Bloomingdale Little League and many of the surrounding

leagues were also a big part of Gary's family. He really cared for them and did all he could to make sure they had what they needed to enjoy their favorite sports. The number would be in the thousands if you added up the players who used sports equipment obtained through Gary and his staff at Red's Sporting Goods.

When my son, Scott, was recently home from duty in the Coast Guard, we were sorting through some of his things and found some old Little League shirts, a few old gloves, a couple of old bats, a pair of worn baseball shoes and his Bloomingdale High School sports jacket - all special items we had gotten over the years from Gary.

We still have those items, and we'll treasure them and

the memories that go with them. Scott and I, along with many hundreds of other parents and ball players, will also treasure the special care and service we received from the man and his family who helped us all get them, Gary Redmon.

With these simple words, we all want to say, "Thanks, Gary, you will be missed."

To thousands of residents, the doors of Red's Sporting Goods led to new adventures in the world of sports, all made easier and lots of fun by a wonderful man named Gary.

Gary Redmon is survived by his wife, Gwen; son, Nathaniel; daughter, Kara Mawdesley; parents, Grover and Colleen Redmon; brother, Glen; and grandson, Mekhi.

Births

Feb. 10
John William Benner, son of William and Kimberly Benner and brother of Rachael and Stephanie of Bloomingdale.

April 23
Emily Elizabeth Pouder, daughter of Deborah and

William Proudler of Preston Wood Drive

April 25

Jenelle Alexis and Annalise Jolie Eubanks, twin daughters of Jim A. and Carmen P. Villa Eubanks of Hidden Lake Drive.

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Taxing District Welcomes New Trustee

By D'ANN WHITE
Editor

It was quite a contrast to several years ago when David West was appointed trustee for the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District.

"We couldn't find anyone to run for trustee," West said, noting that all of the current trustees were appointed, rather than elected.

But last month the taxing district had three people vying for a chance to serve on the board. Residents Ken Pyse of Cambridge Cove, Joe Harless of Calista Avenue and Amy McGill of Bloomingdale Estates all tossed their hats into the ring to fill the vacancy resulting from trustee Alice Burleson's resignation in April.

"I'm just tickled to death to see more than one candidate. It's nice to see more people wanting to get involved in their community," said West. "I hated that we could only choose one."

Ultimately, the trustees voted to have Pyse fill Burleson's remaining term, which is up this fall. But the trustees encouraged Harless and McGill to file their petitions to run for the five trustee spots that will be up for election Aug. 31.

The positions now held by Rusty Jones, Dale Kahn, Myron Magedanz, West along with Pyse's position will be up for grabs.

Thom Snelling and Michael

Buday are the only trustees whose posts are not up for election.

Trustees serve four-year terms.

Kahn plans to resign his post next month. Jones, Magedanz and West plan to file for re-election.

Jones thought they'd have to beg someone to fill Burleson's vacancy and was surprised when three people came forward.

"It was a tough decision," he said. "I hate to turn anyone away who wants to serve."

The trustees, however, felt Pyse's expertise with budgets would serve the district well since the trustees are currently developing the budget for the next fiscal year.

A retired UPS manager with more than 30 years of experience in the budgeting process, Pyse has been a Cambridge Cove resident for seven years.

Harless and McGill said they plan to file petitions to run for one of the vacancies on the board Aug. 31.

Harless has been a Bloomingdale resident for 17 years while McGill is a newcomer to the area, having moved to Bloomingdale three years ago.

"I just felt this was a good way to learn more about my community and become more involved," she said. A Realtor, she currently serves as the PRIDE manager for Bloomingdale Estates.

Harless, who works in the construction industry and is a

longtime Boy Scout leader and Habitat for Humanity volunteer, said he also would like to get more involved in his community.

"I'd like to see the improvements continue and help keep up the quality of our common grounds," he said.

McGill had another reason for attending last month's taxing district meeting. She and neighbors in Bloomingdale Estates are concerned about the taxing district's plans to renovate all of Bloomingdale's main entrance signs so they all conform. Currently, the sign at John Moore Road and Bloomingfield Drive reads "Bloomingdale Estates."

The taxing district's proposal would mean the sign would be changed in 2006 to read "Bloomingdale."

"We just feel we'd lose our identity," said McGill.

Bloomingdale Homeowners Association representative Joe Liguori noted that Bloomingdale Estates is in a unique position because it's the only neighborhood that also serves as a major entryway to the community. Other neighborhoods, such as Windsor Woods, Cambridge Cove and Fox Run are internal to the community and, therefore, have their own neighborhood signs.

"The BHA is thinking you ought to make an exception in this case," he told the trustees.

Bloomingdale Estates resident Melody Feist agreed.

"The people who live here already know this is Bloomingdale," she said. "I don't know why this is even a discussion."

West, who originally proposed renovating the entryways, explained that the taxing district wanted to standardize the signs to make the community more cohesive.

"We had a variety of entry signs with different styles and lettering," he said. "We felt it'd be better to standardize them all. But I don't think any of us thought about Bloomingdale Estates."

The trustees suggested the residents wait until after the

elections and then approach the new board about making an exception.

In the meantime, residents will have a chance to voice their thoughts on the taxing district's fiscal year 2005 budget, which begins in October. A public hearing is scheduled for June 14 at 6:45 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Community Office off Bell Shoals Road behind the Citgo service station.

The proposed budget shows \$381,075 in expenditures, up from \$367,280 in 2004. The district has 28 new homes since last year, bringing an additional \$2,709 in tax assessments. Each home is assessed \$20 for the taxing district.

The biggest increase next year is for irrigation. Currently, property manager Al Devney maintains the irrigation in the common grounds, however, it is difficult for him to maintain the system alone. The trustees want to hire a company to handle the maintenance.

Also in next year's budget are plans to redo the entry at Culbreath Road and, if there is any money left over, to begin putting in an entryway at Springvale Drive.

The estimated cost is \$50,000.

The trustees also debated whether to spend a proposed \$4,000 on holiday lighting and bows. Currently, the district installs lighting and wreaths at each entryway and puts red bows on all the lampposts.

West felt the residents would rather spend the money on maintenance of the common grounds, including pressure washing walls, trimming trees and planting new sod.

"Yes, it adds to the holidays but there's a point where we have to decide whether to pay our electric or water bill or put up decorations," he said. "People need to see that we're continually working and upgrading."

Jones, however, suggested

See TRUSTEE, Page 20



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Property Manager's Report

Irrigation System Fixed After Main Break

By AL DEVNEY

Irrigation

Thunder Irrigation reset all the rotors in Zone 7 of the Erindale system and repaired a broken 2 1/2-inch main line in the Golf Manor system.

During the monthly maintenance inspection, 70 spray heads and nine rotors were replaced and 17 risers repaired. Additionally, there were 33 light bulbs replaced.

Landscaping

Lee's Lawn Service replaced the damaged sod at Natures Way and Culbreath,

removed 10 large bushes on Natures Way and Bell Grande and cut down and removed a dead wax myrtle tree.

Other

United Painting Service finished the painting contract for this year. The contract included the painting of 7,045 linear feet of walls on John Moore, Rosemead and Canoga Park at a cost of \$18,892.25.

Lee's Lawn Service installed two new trash baskets, one on Springvale and Orange Point and the other one near Culbreath and Allwood.

Rust Off Inc. provided a

proposal to remove rust stains on Springvale. The cost was \$245 per month or \$2,940 per year.

Signs by Mineo repainted the entrance sign at John Moore.

ZK Construction repaired the vandalized wall at Canoga Park and Feldstone.

The deed restriction sign at Springvale and Bloomingdale was destroyed by a hit and run vehicle.

JBD Construction is working on the Greenhollow entrance. The completion date was extended due to the inaccessibility of concrete.

There are 29 broken slats in

the wooden fence on Natures Way and Calista.

There was no additional damage during the month of April.

In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, there were 12 bags of litter, two hubcaps, a man's tie, a pair of work gloves, an oil filter, a shirt, two hats and 58 cents picked up. The beverages of choice were Pepsi for soft drinks, Bud Light for beer and McCormick Vodka for distilled spirits.

Al Devney is owner of Devney Property Management Inc.

Recycle Ink Cartridges At Community Office

A Gazette Report

Bloomingdale residents who wish to recycle their spent computer ink cartridges to benefit our neighborhood schools are invited to use the collection box in the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. The office is at the rear of the Sun-Trust Bank/Citgo gas station just south of Bloomingdale Avenue, and is open Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Tina Pietrzyk, a Bloomingdale resident and representative of A Smart Choice of Florida recycling company,

will collect the cartridges and issue checks to Bloomingdale area public schools including Alafia Elementary, Cimino Elementary, Burns Middle and Bloomingdale High, or the private school of your choice.

The most commonly used cartridges will yield from \$1 to \$7 each.

Residents can indicate the school they wish to contribute to by placing the cartridge in a baggie and marking it with the school name.

If you have questions about the recycling program, contact Pietrzyk at 625-9450.

LETTERS? COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?

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Alafia Media Specialist Voted Tops By Students

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

Media Specialist Nancy Waters got more than she bargained for watching a recent morning show at her school, Alafia Elementary. Two visitors from the Wal-Mart Supercenter in Valrico awarded her an oversized check and a blue vest with smiley faces in recognition of her advancement to the statewide Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year competition.

Waters advances because she got the most votes from Alafia students who participated in a drop-box ballot vote for their favorite educator.

"The students said such nice things," Waters said. "They said, 'She's so much fun!' 'She knows everybody's name.' And 'She knows every story.'"

In turn, Waters had her own nice things to say about Wal-Mart and its dedication to education and the community.

"They're incredible," she said. "Wal-Mart has been such an excellent benefactor to our school since opening last fall." At that time, she noted, store officials randomly selected several area schools to partner with, which for Alafia led to a \$1,000 donation for books for the media center.

Shortly after, the store manager donated an aquarium for the school's "Aquademics — Fish for Life" pro-



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Nancy Waters, the media specialist at Alafia Elementary School, was voted top educator by students and collected a personalized vest and a \$1,000 check for media center purchases from Wal-Mart. She advances to statewide competition.

gram. Also included were fish, food and supplies, and a store employee to set up the aquarium and talk to students about how to care for the fish.

Also through the business-school partnership, Wal-Mart invited students last February during part of the school day to "shadow" a department manager and learn about the tasks associated with that job. "They decorated cakes, sliced lunch meat, cut fabric and so many other things," Waters said. "It was so fabulous. The kids were so psyched."

As for Waters, she received a check for \$1,000 to be used for media center purchases. Wal-Mart also donated to Alafia a \$2,500 literacy grant to be spent on something that will benefit every Alafia student.

"I feel so undeserving," Waters said about her election that advances her to the statewide Wal-Mart competition. "I love what I do, but there are so many teachers out there who are really super teachers."

Of the students who nominated her, she said: "I love my kids and I want them to love reading, and I think they get that from me."

Waters is passionate about reading, and hopes that a program she and six other Hillsborough County media specialists started will stir in others a passion for reading as well. Through the program, known as For the Love of Reading (FLOR), new books are collected each year to give to underprivileged children. In its first year, the 35 schools with the highest number of children qualifying by income

for the reduced-price lunch program benefited from the endeavor, through which every kindergartner received a new book. About 1,000 books were distributed.

"These are kids who don't have books in their homes, and only infrequently do they receive something brand new," Walters said.

In its second year, FLOR teamed with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office with deputies distributing the books in low-income neighborhoods.

"It was a win-win situation for everybody," Waters said. "The deputies were seen as good guys and they got to do something wonderful for those kids."

In five years, Waters said, she believes the program has collected and distributed more than 60,000 books. Donation sites are set up at various times in Barnes & Noble Booksellers in Brandon and new books are selected from school book fairs throughout the year.

"That's something I really, really am proud of," Water said.



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FCAT High Scores Pay Off Bigtime

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

Seventeen Alafia Elementary School students got to super-size last month.

Not just their lunch but their ride as well.

High scores on the FCAT Writes landed 17 fourth-graders in the back of a Humvee limousine on their way to McDonald's for lunch. These high-scoring students were featured on the morning show and treated to lunch for their performance on their FCAT Writes.

"Each of these students scored between 5 and 6," said Assistant Principal Mike Dugan.

The students bounded out of the school, eager to load into the 23-seat white Hummer limousine, provided by Dynasty Limousines, then headed to McDonald's for a lunch to celebrate their special efforts during FCATs.

Students enjoying this luxury were: Amber Aversa, Zach Adams, Christian Cope, Carole Collier, Daniel MacGregor, Letisha Robinson, Luke Coker, Claudia Stantzyk-Guzyk, Jessica Cutin, Michele Vanderman, Evan White, Tyler Howard, Michael Ford, Alex Bryant, Joseph Kucera, Kyle Braxton and Megan Binkerd.



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Students enjoying a ride in a Hummer limousine were Amber Aversa, Zach Adams, Christian Cope, Carole Collier, Daniel MacGregor, Letisha Robinson, Luke Coker, Claudia Stantzyk-Guzyk, Jessica Cutin, Michele Vanderman, Evan White, Tyler Howard, Michael Ford, Alex Bryant, Joseph Kucera, Kyle Braxton and Megan Binkerd.

Guzyk, Jessica Cutin, Michele Vanderman, Evan White, Tyler Howard, Michael Ford, Alex Bryant, Joseph Kucera, Kyle Braxton and Megan Binkerd.

Cool cats



The following students in grades three to five were named Cool Cats for Character at Cimino Elementary School for March: bottom row, from left, Julie Lopes, Anisha Kesarwani, Nichole Mallozzi, Erica Fitchett, second row, Nicholas Rhoades, David Head, Lindsey Cash, Tessa Franklin, third row, Andy Steele, Timothy Stapleton, Jacquelyn Ferneau, Madalynn Dare, fourth row, George Merced, Scott Shaw, Aryssa Livica, Brittini Hegnauer, Christine Gerena, absent Marissa McGee and Jordan Mazen.



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Alafia Students Have A Blast

School Celebrates Space Day

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

How many kids have you heard say school is a "blast" and actually mean it?

Just ask any of the 755 students attending Alafia Elementary School's recent Space Day. The students spent the day watching a solid fuel-ignited rocket launch 500 feet into the air, bouncing around inside an inflatable space shuttle, controlling robots electronically and signing a banner that will travel into space as part of NASA's "Student Signatures in Space" program.

Fourth-grade teacher Lynn Reagin helped organize this schoolwide event to celebrate National Space Day and to commemorate Alafia being selected as one of the 500 schools chosen nationwide to participate in this space-bound program. NASA will



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

As part of NASA's "Student Signatures in Space" program, 755 Alafia Elementary School students signed a banner that will travel in space. From left are Sydney Pecorella, Allie Repetti, teacher Lynn Reagin and Megan Binkerd.

photograph the banners of participating schools, scan them to CD and carry them into space on the next shuttle

flight, projected to be in the spring of 2005.

"The date is tentative; totally dependent on NASA's pro-

gram," said Reagin, noting that the program has been grounded since the Columbia shuttle explosion last year. "We're also going to be entering NASA's photo contest for a brochure for 'Student Signatures in Space'."

All the students were invited to sign the banner, with kindergartners signing their thumbprint while teachers printed their names. Reagin's class helped her organize the event, writing speeches and planning activities that would help the student body learn more about space and science.

"They all worked really, really hard on this," Reagin said of her students. "This could not have been as good as it was without all the help we got from the PTA. And one of our parents, Ray Chadderton, sponsored the rocket launch, which was the hit of the day, and donated some personalized earth balls a giveaways."

Letters welcomed

The Bloomingdale Gazette welcomes the opinions of its readers on a wide range of topics. Letters to the editor should be made as legible as possible. Letters must be signed and a telephone number included for verification purposes. Letters will be edited to meet legal, grammatical and stylistic requirements.

Mail letters to:
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Cool cats



The following students in grades kindergarten to second grade were named Cool Cats for Character at Cimino Elementary School for March: bottom row, from left, Curtis Tumicki, Erik Edwards, Nicholas Sinisi, Nathaniel Green, Austin James, second row, Hope Webb, Kimberly Burdett, Darian Setiawan, Betty Carmer, Veronica Santiago, third row, Kylee Paholak, Meghan Cerjan, Charles Mowery, Christian Mowery, top row, McKinzie Campbell, Timothy Paciella, Jessica Higgins, Nicholas Gonzalez, Gabirelle Yontz, absent, Haley Davis, Sabastian Wardlaw and Shawnee Richards.

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Yard of the Month

A set of attractive flower beds filled with dwarf azaleas and annuals outlined by retaining stones led to Larry and Ginny Lebo's Orange Point Road yard being named the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association's Yard of the Month.

Larry Lebo said the new raised beds were actually intended to camouflage stumps from some old Chinese tallow trees that he cut down.

"The trees were looking kind of gnarly so I cut them down but then I was left with stumps," Lebo said. "So instead of cutting them out, I covered them with the raised beds."

Lebo has done all his own yard work since moving into his Bloomingdale East home more than 20 years ago. The oak saplings and tropical plants he planted when he first moved in are now mature, creating a shaded, welcoming environment.

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Yard of the Month sign will be displayed in the Lebos' yard and they will receive a \$25 gift certificate from Wal-Mart.

Nominations for Yard of the Month may be e-mailed to the BHA at Bloomington.Homeowners@Verizon.net or mailed to 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, 33594.



D'ANN WHITE/Photo

Larry Lebo recently added beds for azaleas and annuals at his home at 3805 Orange Point Road.

In Uniform

Ivey

Air Force Airman David A. Ivey has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.



Ivey

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization and military customs and courtesies; performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical training, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises and special training in human relations.

Ivey is the son of Thomas Ivey of River Overlook Drive.

He is a 2003 graduate of Bloomingdale High School.

Thatcher

Army Pvt. Brian W. Thatcher

er has arrived at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Aberdeen, Md., to complete the wheeled vehicle repairer advanced individual training course.

He will be trained to troubleshoot, repair, replace and adjust all related engine, fuel, air and cooling systems, electrical chassis, mechanical and hydraulic components, systems, and assemblies of wheeled vehicles and diesel power plants/packs. Additional instruction will include use of technical publications, tools and diagnostic equipment needed to repair wheeled vehicles.

Thatcher is the son of Shirley L. Hatcher of Springdell Circle.

He is a 2001 high school graduate of Seminole Community College, Sanford.

Martinez

Air Force Airman Julien J.

See UNIFORM, Page 18

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Bloomington Bids Farewell To Band Leader

By DEREK MAUL
Correspondent

During the interview, the walls literally vibrated, courtesy of the animated drumline practicing maybe three feet on the other side.

But Ted Hope, band director for the entire history of Bloomington High School, barely batted an eye.

"You get used to it," he said.

Hope's entire career has been lived within earshot of marching feet and loud instruments, so the proximity seemed entirely fitting.

The erstwhile band director, however, was only substituting. Hope has moved on, assuming a top county administrative job. Feb. 22, the Pied Piper of Bloomington accepted the position of supervisor of middle and secondary music education.

"I've always wanted to do that job," he said.

Seventeen years of bone-rattling, head-jarring band music; a journey in high-decibel two-four time; fight songs, Sousa marches, close to 300 high-spirited band members taking the field; an electronic megaphone to even hear himself think.

"That's the job," he laughed. "It's like this all day."

His new position may be a bit quieter but it won't be any less challenging.

"Basically, my new position wants me to handle anything that's associated with music. It's a huge job — the learning curve at the moment is out-

"Kids like discipline. They like structure. Parents like the structure. Some of the parents have made their best friends in the world in this program."

TED HOPE

Former Bloomington High School band director

geous — it's going to take a good year just to figure out what I'm doing."

He has one concern.

"The one aspect that I'm worried about," he said, "is losing the connection with the kids. I'm a kid person. I know that. So I am making deliberate plans to get my kid fix on a daily basis."

Hope has always wanted to be a band director.

"It's in my blood," he said, although his family followed the beat of a different drummer. "My father was a professional bowler; he'd put alleys back together in Podunk towns — get them up and running. We lived in a lot of strange places; never more than a few months."

The young Hope started blowing reed instruments as a sixth-grader in Kentucky, played with the band at King High School, then took a break before marching his last two years in Tallahassee.

"I lost a bet to a friend," he laughed. "I'd written a report: 'Why marching bands should be outlawed from the school system!' I had no intention of being a marching band director. I was always going to be a

middle school band director."

Somehow, the young graduate got into the groove. He taught at Hillsborough High School for three years, then helped Bloomington's program get off the ground 17 years ago.

In time, Bloomington developed one of the strongest music programs in the county.

"When we hired Bev Sutherland (chorus teacher who will head to Newsome High) and Scott Rudes (orchestra teacher who will become assistant principal), honestly, we worked so well together it just made it work."

This year marks the break-up of a kind of musical dynasty.

While the football team struggled, the school could always count on the band to win.

"We put anywhere from 260 to 290 kids on the field," he said. "Kids like discipline. They like structure. Parents like the structure. Parents like the structure. Some of the parents have made their best friends in the world in this program. I'm a kid person first but I think I'll miss the parents just as much. I like having them around."

Hope's philosophy is simple. "It's not rocket science.

You've got to be in it for everybody — not just yourself. You've got to be in it for kids; you've got to be in it for music."

The discipline intrinsic to music, Hope believes, can help a child reach his potential.

"There's a level of dedication and concentration," he said. "Kids who are sitting home watching TV and playing Nintendo don't get the same kind of structure. The drum line is here today, on a Friday. Why do they do it? I think because it's ingrained in them to do the best they can, because we teach that."

Hope is looking forward to encouraging teachers throughout the county, as they apply their own creativity and imagination, although he recognizes the built-in challenge.

"One of the hardest things in the world is to change people who are set in their ways; especially older teachers. I'm hoping to have the opportunity to help energize and invigorate, to know why we're really here."

He is looking forward to "getting in the schools to observe and watch and say, 'Listen, let's go out and talk,'" he said. "Hopefully, I have a few things I can help them with."

He admits to some misgivings about leaving Bloomington, however.

"Yes, I'm emotional; how can you not be? I've tried to keep a pretty good face so far, but when I finally turn in the keys and everything else, it's just not going to be fun."

UNIFORM

From page 17

Martinez has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization and military customs and courtesies; performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical train-

ing, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises and special training in human relations.

Martinez is the daughter of Delia Romero of Portobello Circle and the granddaughter of Beverly Lowe of Flushing, N.Y.

She is a 2002 graduate of John Adams High School, Ozone Park, N.Y.

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Boy's Sacrifice A Cut Above

By D'ANN WHITE
Editor

It wasn't the kind of request most parents get from their elementary school-age sons.

But when Alafia Elementary School student Tyler Howard approached his mom and dad, Tiffany and Doug Howard of Valrico, about donating his hair to the national Locks of Love program, Tiffany Howard said they could hardly refuse.

"How do you say 'no' to a request like that?" asked Tiffany.

The program provides human hair that is turned into wigs for children with medical conditions that result in hair loss. Ten-year-old Tyler said he heard about the program from a friend at church three years ago, when he was in second grade, and decided it was something he'd like to take part in.

"It was just something that I wanted to do," said Tyler.

His mom admits she didn't think her son would stick with it, especially when people started mistaking him for a girl.

"But he'd been really good natured about it," she said. "He's really been persistent."

"The teasing bothered me at first but I got used to it," said Tyler.

Nevertheless, as his hair grew, he constantly measured it to see if it'd reached the 10 inches required for the Locks of Love program.

"Near the end, we'd measure it every day," said Tiffany.

"I think he was anxious."

But when it came time to cut his hair, a simple trip to the barber wouldn't do. The Howards decided to turn the event into a party, inviting friends and relatives to witness the fourth-grader's first haircut in two years.

Tyler's great-grandfather was a barber so Tiffany used some of his antique barber tools to create a centerpiece for the table. The menu for the party included "Shearly Wonderful Chicken," "Barber's Best Baked Beans," "Closely Shaved Chips and Dip" and "Snip Snip Snickerdoodles."

"This is the most unusual party I've ever been to," said neighbor Kathryn Bryant. "But it's really inspiring for a child to do this. It's brought a lot of attention to the (Locks of Love) organization."

Tyler's grandparents, Kay and J.R. Owens, were also on hand for the momentous occasion.

"We're really proud of him," said Kay.

Family friend Susan Bush, a hairstylist at Love's Hair Salon in Brandon, said she'd never had such a big audience for a haircut. Friends cajoled and cheered Tyler on as Bush tied his hair into a 10-inch ponytail and then snipped it off.

"I want to be able to gel and spike it," said Tyler as Bush shaved the back of his head and then cropped off all of his hair on top to a quarter of an inch.

The local Locks of Love organization is based in Lake Worth. Call: 1-888-896-1588.



D'ANN WHITE/Staff photos

In a matter of minutes, Tyler Howard's long locks were gone, replaced with a short but stylish buzz cut. Tyler's friends were on hand to cheer him on.

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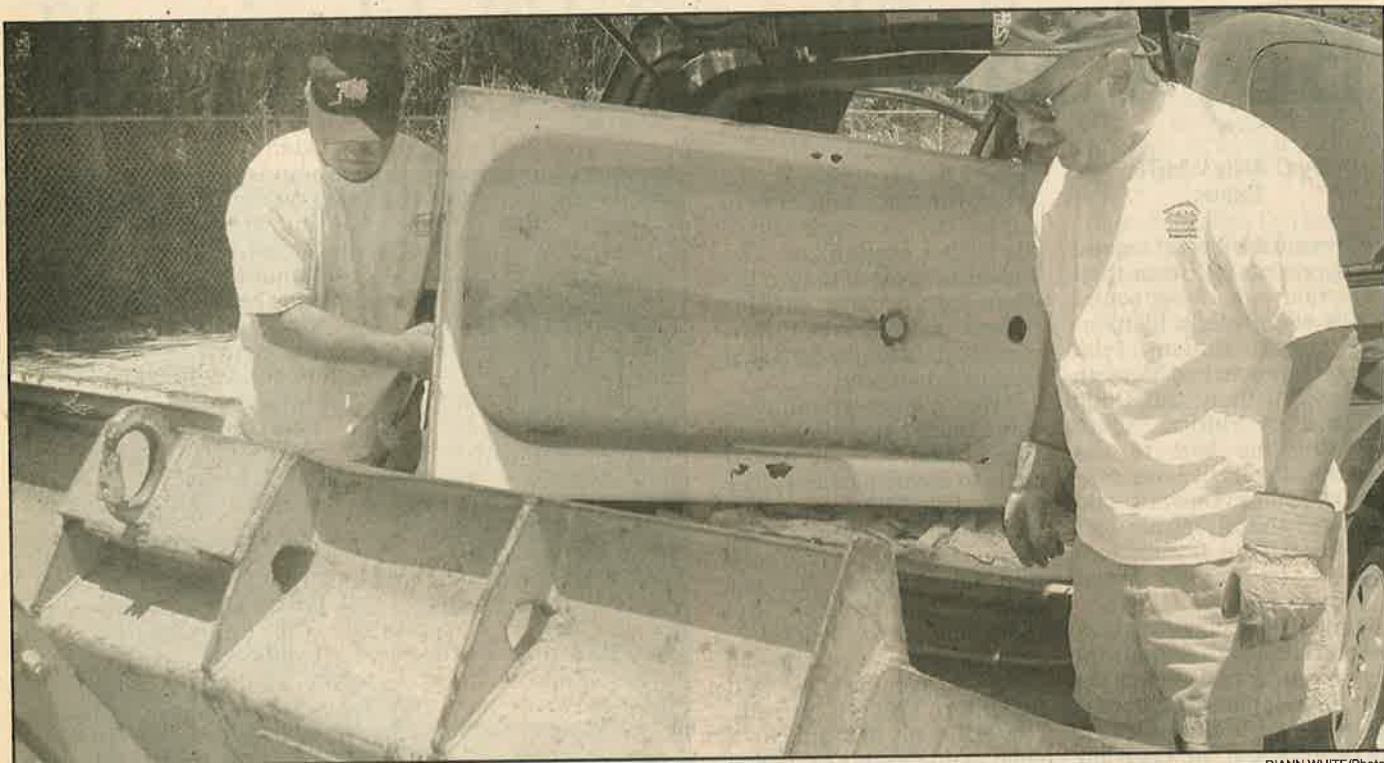
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Gazette



D'ANN WHITE/Photos

Volunteer Joe Liguori and BHA director Steve Heckel help residents load trash into the front loader during the May 8 PRIDE cleanup.

BHA Completes Another Successful Cleanup

By STEVE HECKEL
BHA director

On May 8, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association held another successful community PRIDE cleanup.

More than 80 (very compacted) cubic yards of trash were collected. Seven bicycles were rescued and donated for refurbishing for needy children.

The next communitywide cleanup will be held in Sep-

tember. Look for announcements in future Gazette articles. In the future, the BHA hopes to have a charitable organization on site to collect items that are still usable.

This month's Bloomingdale PRIDE committee meeting will be held June 21 at 7 p.m. in the Bloomingdale Community Office for residents in sections J, K, M, and FF (basically sections north and west in Bloomingdale East).



TRUSTEE

From page 12

a compromise. Cut out the bows on the lampposts but continue to put lights and wreaths at the main entryways.

"I don't think you get that much bang for your buck out of the bows," he said.

The bows cost \$45 a dozen. Devney believes lights and wreaths at the entryways would cost about \$1,500, a \$2,500 savings.

The board also saved \$7,000 on lawn maintenance next year due to lower bids.



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HISTORY

From page 16

first headed to Peru, the main settlement on the Alafia.

Frazier said the Alafia River attracted both retired steamboat captains as well as homesteaders who learned of the area from soldiers.

With a deed signed by President Grover Cleveland, the Hendrix family homesteaded 168 acres from the intersection of Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bloomingdale Avenue to the Bloomingdale Cemetery east of the intersection on Bloomingdale Avenue.

"The family thought nothing of walking three or four miles to go fishing either in the Alafia or Bell Creek," Frazier said.

In addition to building homes, the family built Hendrix Chapel, which also served as an early schoolhouse for the Hendrixes and neighboring children. Bloomingdale's first real school was built on an 80-acre property on Pearson Road in 1884. Ludwig W. Buchholz was the first teacher and went on to establish the first teacher training school in the state at the Bloomingdale School, according to county historians. Among those who attended the school were the Hendrixes, the Garners, the

Stearns, the McLeans, the Littles, the Quicks and the Mulrennans, all early Bloomingdale families.

What's believed to be the remains of the old wooden schoolhouse are still standing on Stearns Road.

Although there is little evidence of the original Hewitt homestead, the little white wooden house that Frazier's uncle, Dan Kelly, built in 1872, still sits on Bloomingdale Avenue.

The 5-acre cemetery, donated by another uncle, Pete Hendrix, contains a number of gravestones bearing the names of Frazier's relatives although Julia's grave has never been found. Frazier believes Julia's marker was probably wooden and eventually decayed.

Frazier's book also delves into the history of the Seminole Indians in Hillsborough County, including the trials and tribulations of Chief Billy Bowlegs who was apprehended by Fort Brooke Capt. Leroy G. Lesley.

Lesley and his son, Capt. John Lesley, also led the attack against the Indians who massacred the Hendrixes' neighbor, John Carney, on April 17, 1856.

Carney, who had a farm on the south side of Stearns

Road, reportedly served in the Second Seminole War under Lesley. Carney also operated the ferry crossing the Alafia River near McLaughlin Springs, (now Lithia Springs).

Based on interviews with the Lesley family, Tampa historian Spessard Stone believes Carney was plowing his cornfield when he was ambushed. Because the Indians had an 18-hour head start, Lesley was unable to locate Carney's killers.

Another version by historian Martha M. Parr said he was plowing his field when he was shot with an arrow. He ran a mile and a half to Little Road with the Indians pursuing him before dropping dead.

Frazier's version differs. She said the Indians thought Carney was stealing their hogs so they chased him into the forest and scalped him. Lesley then chased the Indians into Manatee County, killing all but three.

Carney was buried on his land on Stearns Road near Pearson Road with a tombstone describing his demise.

That headstone remained there until last month when vandals stole it, a crime that disturbed Frazier and other area historians.

Later on, Lesley took over Simmons' role as ferry captain on the Alafia and served as the Methodist minister, physician, dentist and sheriff and county tax assessor.

"This area is just so rich in history, it seems a shame that more people don't know about it," said Frazier, who has interviewed a number of pioneer family members. "We're losing so much of our history. I just felt like we need to record it."

But since history tends to be a bit dry, she decided to incorporate some fictional storytelling in "The Flaming Red Hill."

"I didn't know if I could write a romance," said Frazier, whose book was published Feb. 5. "But people tell me they can't put it down."

Frazier's book is available on Barnes&Noble.com, amazon.com and walmart.com for \$13.95.

NEIGHBOR

From page 10

munity Foundation pro-am golf tournament, a judge for the Brandon Fourth of July parade, chairman of last month's Brandon Business Expo and Taste of Brandon, and, next year, will assume the role of chairman of the Brandon chamber, one of the largest chambers in the state.

It's a role May doesn't take lightly.

"Not having its own government, I think people in Brandon look to the chamber for guidance and leadership," he said.

"We've got a lot of good people involved in the chamber who want to make a difference in the community. And I want to help do what I can to make this a better place

to live. Everyone should get more involved in their community. The more you get involved, the more you get out of it."

In his free time, May enjoys playing his grand piano, woodworking, photography, music, riding his bike through the neighborhood and golf.

He also enjoys getting together with his neighbors in Windsor Woods including former Bloomingdale Homeowners Association director Cheryl Kehrmeier, who lives across the street.

"We'll pile up in someone's driveway for a Margarita party or to watch fireworks," he said. "I like to make homemade ice cream for everyone. It's a great place to live."

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HISTORY

From page 21

history continued. She wrote articles for the Sunland Tribune, an annual publication of the Tampa Historical Society, and, in 1993, published "A Light in the Wilderness," a history of First Baptist Church of Riverview, for its centennial celebration.

Now retired, the 68-year-old writer has just published her first novel, "The Flaming Red Hill," based on the Hewitt family's journey from south Alabama to Bloomingdale Valley, and the lives they led here.

Frazier describes her novel as a historical romance, although it bares little resemblance to anything romance novelist Barbara Cartland might write.

That's because Frazier's novel is based on the lives of real people, although she used poetic license in creating conversations, events and dates. The principal character, Julia Hendrix, who married a circuit-riding preacher named Jake Simonds, was her great-aunt. Other characters are equally real. Billy Bowlegs was a Seminole Indian chief whose people lived on the shores of Lake Thlnotosassa, now Lake Thonotosassa. George Simmons operated the ferry that transported settlers across the river before the U.S. 301 bridge was constructed in 1900. Other real-life settlers mentioned in Frazier's book include the Moodys, the Jernigans, the McCulloughs, the Whiddens, the Dickinsons and the Buzbees, who operated a general store in Riverview.

Frazier said she scoured Tampa's historic archives, family documents and diaries to re-create her family's experiences in Bloomingdale Valley and lend authenticity to the novel.

"But a lot of it is based on tales handed down through the years and the rest is God's inspiration and my imagination," she said.

Frazier said the family was drawn to the area through letters from Hendrix relatives who were based at Fort Brooke during the Seminole Indian wars. Founded in 1824, the fort was located where the Tampa Convention Center stands today. After the Seminoles were forced out of the area, settlers like the Hendrixes were eager to move to the lush wilderness the soldiers wrote about in their letters home.

Upon arriving, the family first headed to Peru, the main settlement on the Alafia.

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SENIORS

From page 14

"Each class starts with a warm-up and some stretching. Then we use weight-resistance bands and exercise balls before doing an aerobic period. Then I like to have a quiet time for five minutes before we cool down and stretch again. It's a format that Humana (health care company) sets up."

YMCA staff member Kavita Marballi helps organize special activities for the seniors including a talent show in April.

"When (Campo YMCA director) Laura Vogel asked if I would like to take care of this group, it was like a blessing," said Marballi.

"My family is in India and my dad was 82 when he passed away recently. I was not able to take care of them so when I see them (SilverSneakers members) I see my parents. The whole group is like my family. It's like a dream come true."

Besides maintaining physical health, the social aspect of SilverSneakers keeps most members coming back week after week.

"I think it's very important for the senior group to have more positive relationships as they get older," said Marballi.

"I love interacting with the people. We have a lot of fun," Schramm said. "I like to dance and we get them up dancing to the music in their own way."

One enthusiastic SilverSneaker member is



ROBERT CONE/Staff photo

More than 60 active adults participate in a SilverSneakers exercise class at the Campo YMCA.

Schramm's mother, Irene Guadagno. Now 90 years old, Guadagno still drives herself to the twice-weekly classes and loves to bowl.

"I come for the activity, being with friends," Guadagno said. Otherwise I'd be staying at home doing nothing. This is very nice. You make a lot of new friends."

For information about joining the SilverSneakers fitness program, call the Campo YMCA at 684-1371.

REZONING

From page 3

improvements on John Moore and Bloomingdale.

As requested by the residents, the developers also will prohibit fast-food restaurants and convenience stores and restrict hours of operation with the exception of the proposed CVS pharmacy, which will operate 24 hours.

The developers also have agreed to incorporate archi-

tectural details, similar to the Lithia Crossing shopping center on Lithia-Pinecrest Road, and use only monument-style signs.

On the residential section, the developers will include a 15-foot buffer with a 6-foot wall along John Moore. Sunrise's homes will be built on 11,500-square-foot lots at a density of 1.49 units per acre.

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