

## FEATURE STORY



Sandy Creek Manors is the latest previously-unnamed neighborhood section to benefit from the BHA's Neighborhood Name and Signage program. Will your section be next? See story, Page 3.

## BUSINESS

Apprentice PGA professional Andy Zaras chooses Bloomingdale to launch his management career.

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Bloomingdale student volunteers Angelica Trupiano, Jenna Simonson and Lauren West help staff close to 5,000 envelopes containing membership notices for the community's 2005 dues drive

# Volunteers Have The Right Stuff

## DUES NOTICES MAILED IN MAY

A Gazette Report

Neighborhood volunteers helped BHA board member Jane Lee and Bloomingdale office manager Joni Hickie stuff, seal and stamp close to

5,000 membership dues notices at the community office May 14.

A group of volunteers, including students Angelica Trupiano, Jenna Simonson, Lauren West, Layne Harrod, Brittney Solomon and Emily Gordon, along with homeowner Helen Johnson, turned out for the annual

The dues notices were mailed to all Bloomingdale residents the last week of May. The \$25 per residence membership dues are the homeowners association's only means of financial support. For more information about the dues drive or the BHA, visit [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com) or call 681-2051.


## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS ♦ PAGE 11

# Chamber Leads Charge To Widen Lithia-Pinecrest Road

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BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

# Cleanup Day, Part II: 'A Great Success'

## 160 CUBIC YARDS OF JUNK DISCARDED

By LAURA FRAZIER  
Editor

Bloomington residents disposed of 160 cubic yards of household junk and debris — for free — at the Bloomington Homeowners Association's May 14 Community Cleanup Day.

The event was held in cooperation with the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations and Parks Maintenance Department. BHA vice president Joe Hickle called the event "a great success."

After an overwhelming response to its April 9 Cleanup Day — which forced volunteers to close the site down early — the BHA board quickly organized the May 14 event. In April, dozens of residents who arrived after the site closed were directed to one of Hillsborough County's Community Collection Centers to dispose of their items.

This time around — to provide more space for extra containers and to improve the traffic flow — Dumpsters were placed in an open field behind the Parks Maintenance Unit on Natures Way.

BHA president Ted Grable said, "Everyone agreed that the new traffic flow and container location worked out by (BHA board member) Steve Heckel and the Parks and Recreation Department was a great success."

Grable gave credit for organizing and running the event to Heckel and fellow volunteer board members Lydia Harrod, Pam Liguori, Joe Liguori, Stan Lee, Dale Kahn and vice president Hickle. The team was assisted by several Bloomington residents and high school students who turned out to help, along with Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance employee Clayton Weaver.

Future Cleanup Days will be announced in the Gazette and on [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com).



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Parks Department employee Clayton Weaver helps homeowners association and neighborhood volunteers dispose of household junk and discards at one of two Community Cleanup Days the BHA held this spring.

## Neighborhood Section Gets New Identity

### WILL YOUR SECTION BE NEXT?

A Gazette Report

The latest neighborhood section to benefit from the Bloomington Homeowners Association's Neighborhood Naming and Signage program is Sandy Creek Manors, formerly known only as Section I.

Four entryway signs were installed in May on Canoga Park Drive at Garnet Drive and Tyndale Drive.



LAURA FRAZIER/Staff photo

The BHA is ready to proceed with the naming and signage of another unnamed neighborhood section. To find out which section your home is in, and what the legal boundaries are, visit [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com) or call 681-2051.

The neighborhood section whose residents demonstrate the most interest in naming their section and having signs installed will be selected next. Residents who wish to submit suggested names for their unnamed section may do so by e-mail to [neighborhoodstandard@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:neighborhoodstandard@tampabay.rr.com), or call 833-0759.

Residents of unnamed sections who wish to participate in the program are encouraged to speak with their neighbors and circulate petitions or ballots door-to-door to rally support. Petitions or ballots can be submitted by mail or in person to the Bloomington Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594 (office hours Monday through Thursday, 7 to 11 a.m.)

Neighborhood participation and future selections will be announced in the Gazette and on [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com). If you have any questions about the program, call 833-0759.

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LESLIE WHITE/Photo

From left, Conrado Skepple, 7, and Linda Leigh help remove the spike rush growing in their neighborhood's pond.

## Grants Fund Neighborhood Projects

### ALAFIA TEACHER HELPED RESTORE POND

By LESLIE WHITE  
Correspondent

During the 16 years she's lived in Belle Timbre off Bell Shoals Road, Nancy Waters has watched in dismay as the retention pond in her neighborhood had deteriorated.

So she decided to take action.

With the help of a minigrant from the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations, Waters will see the pond restored to its former glory.

"This pond used to have beautiful lily pads and aquatic plants, but through aggressive lawn care and weather, it hasn't been ideal for our

See POND, Page 19

### County Minigrant Orientation June 14

#### AT BRANDON REC CENTER

A Gazette Report

Residents who want to strengthen their neighborhoods — with more signage, starting a community event, or even creating a newsletter — can receive help from the Hillsborough County Commission through the Neighborhood Minigrant Program.

Applications from neighborhood asso-

See MINIGRANT, Page 19

## Residents Must Stow Yard Waste Out Of Sight Until Pickup Day

### COUNTY CODE, DEED RESTRICTION RULE

A Gazette Report

Bloomingtondale residents are busy cleaning up their yards, trimming trees and shrubs, replacing mulch and raking up the season's last batch of fallen leaves.

Many homeowners naturally do their yard work over the weekend, up to an entire week before pickup day on Friday. County codes and neighborhood deed restrictions require residents to store their yard trash out of sight from the street until 6 p.m. the evening before pickup.

Neat lawns and nicely maintained landscaping are a great asset to our community, but yard waste left at the curb for days on end is not.

Trash bags and debris piled along our streets, particularly

during the hot, wet summer months, create an unsightly mess and a perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes.

Moving the bags and piles twice — once when you do the yard work, and again on pickup day — is surely an inconvenience, but it's necessary. Some homeowners store their yard waste inside their garage or on their lanai until pick up day. An inexpensive bag-cart, available at hardware stores, makes it easier to roll the stuff out to the curb on Thursday evening.

Keeping trash of all kinds off the streets until the night before pickup day reflects nicely on our homes and our community.

If you have any questions about county codes and deed restriction requirements, please visit [www.bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingtondalegazette.com) or call Neighborhood Standards, 833-0759.

## Watering Restrictions Eased Up June 1

### OK TO WATER TWICE A WEEK

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County Water Department announced May 27 it would lift once-a-

week watering restrictions placed on the system's south-central water service area.

Effective June 1, Bloomingtondale residents can water their lawns twice a week. Watering days vary according to your

See WATER, Page 18

## Your Inside Connections

### The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594  
Phone: 681-2051 Fax: 684-2358  
E-mail: [Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net](mailto:Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net)  
Web Site: [www.bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingtondalegazette.com)  
BHA meetings are at the community office on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

**President:** Ted Grable **Vice President:** Joe Hickle  
**Treasurer:** Pam Liguori **Director:** Tony Diolosa  
**Director:** Lydia Harrod **Director:** Steve Heckel  
**Director:** Dale Kahn **Director:** Jane Lee  
**Director:** Stanley Lee **Director:** Ken Pyse

### Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594  
Phone: 684-6667  
BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

**President:** Thom Snelling  
**Vice President:** Russell Jones  
**Treasurer:** David West  
**Correspondence Secretary:** Paul Sims  
**Recording Secretary:** Michael Buday

**Trustee:** David Steck  
**Trustee:** Joe Harless  
**Property Manager:** Al Devney

### Bloomingtondale Mobile Watch

**Coordinator/Equipment Manager:** Tony Diolosa, 681-1146  
**Treasurer:** Paul Kelmer  
**Patrol Member:** Steven Heckel  
**Patrol Member:** Brad Scharp  
**Patrol Member:** Paul Warr



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### Bloomingtondale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132  
Phone: 685-2817  
BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.  
**President:** Bill Grace  
**Treasurer:** Fred Englehart

## THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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# Smiling Brightly

By Joseph Garland

Every dentist I ever went to talked about pulling teeth and braces and implants: no thanks. I inherited these bad teeth from my folks. After my baby teeth fell out, some of my adult teeth were actually smaller than normal. This resulted in extra space causing some of my other teeth to come in crooked. It didn't help that I played a little hockey in high school either. All in all, my smile looked pretty bad.

As a 55 year old insurance agent, I know that appearance is important, but I had never been ready to spend all the money and time to get my teeth fixed, especially with no guarantees.

Then a friend of mine had an Extreme Smile Makeover like you see on television. His smile turned out great! He didn't tell anyone he was having it done and I didn't see him for about three weeks. When I did see him he was smiling from ear to ear. I was shocked at the difference. He was like a new person! He never stopped smiling that whole day.

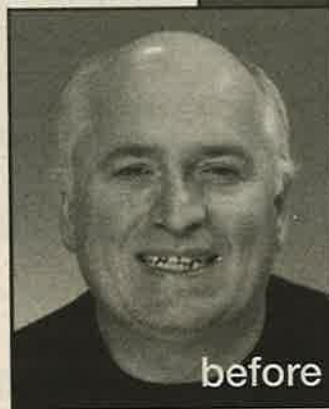
We went golfing and 3 or 4 people must have told him he had a great smile. That was almost two years ago and he looks just as good today. He went back to the dentist for a cleaning and a check-up last week and everything is fine. He said he's still very happy with the decision to have it done. He can eat anything he wants and says his teeth feel completely natural. There's no special care involved.

Of course I asked who he went to see. I figured it was some big shot in Tampa. It was Dr. Scott Arnold, right here in Bloomington. Apparently he has had some very extensive cosmetic training at one of the world's most prestigious institutes; the Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. I heard he has helped a lot of people in the area, so I went to see him; what a great guy.

He assured me that he could help. His team took some x-rays, made some impressions of my teeth and he showed me exactly what was wrong and how they could fix them. He gave me several options for treatment and I was able to choose which one I was most comfortable with. I took the best he had to offer. I figured I'm worth it.

Dr. Arnold was outstanding. I never felt any pain during or after the treatment and I absolutely love my new smile (check it out!); otherwise, I would never have put myself out here like this for the whole world to see how bad my teeth were in the beginning. Now I feel great and I think I look pretty great too.

According to the doctor my procedure was a little more complicated than most and therefore took about 6 weeks and 5 visits. Doctor Arnold is a perfectionist and made sure that everything looked and felt exactly right. I recommend him to everyone I know.



Since having my Smile Makeover, my sales have sky-rocketed and a couple other family members

have gone to Arnold Dentistry. I feel like a new person. I'm happier and proud of my smile. It has truly changed my life. I only wish I had done this sooner.

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## BACC REPORT



MACKAUSTIN/Photo

Traffic accidents along Bloomingdale Avenue are an all-too-common sight. This crash occurred in the east bound lane of Bloomingdale Avenue near Kings Avenue.

## Drivers Pay High Price For Speeding Near High School

TICKETS TOTAL \$5,000 IN ONE DAY

By MACK AUSTIN  
Correspondent

At the May 2005 meeting of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council, known as the BACC, Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Maurer updated members on several topics of interest and concern.

### Traffic Blitz Busts Speeders, Light Runners

Maurer briefed the council on the sheriff's office ongoing Traffic Blitz program. In one day,

See BACC, Page 19

## Substation Keeps Tabs On Sex Offenders

A Gazette Report

Deputy Pete Maurer and Officer Sandy Capitano maintain a list at the Bloomingdale substation with information about registered sex offenders and predators living in the Bloomingdale area.

The sheriff's office also has a sexual

See OFFENDERS, Page 7

## Classrooms, Vehicles Burglarized At Cimino

ONE THIEF CAUGHT,  
OTHERS SUSPECTED

By LESLIE WHITE  
Correspondent

Four portable classroom units at Cimino Elementary School were broken into sometime between 9 p.m. Tuesday, May 17 and 5 a.m. Wednesday, May 18.

According to Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer, electronic equipment and teaching materials valued at more than \$8,500 were stolen, including a laptop computer, a television and three VCR-DVD machines. Several cars and a utility truck parked on campus were also reportedly broken into.

Cimino teacher Jessica Sultenfuss discovered the scene 6:30 a.m. Wednesday morning. She alerted Principal Lou Cerreta, who immediately called the sheriff's department to report the incident.

A driver's license belonging to a juvenile was found at the scene, leading investigators to a young male who eventually confessed to the auto burglaries. The minor was taken to the Juvenile Assessment Center. Maurer said other sus-

*"What they're really doing is stealing from the children and thinking only of themselves. It's just sad."*

LOU CERRETA  
Principal, Cimino Elementary School

pects may have been involved.

Cerreta said some of the stolen items would have little value outside of the classroom.

"It's very disheartening as a principal to see this," he said.

"What they're really doing is stealing from the children and thinking only of themselves. It's just sad."

All of the stolen items will have to be replaced, including a very expensive laptop computer, which was part of a personal education plan for one student.

Cerreta was pleased with how quickly deputies responded to the scene and apprehended the perpetrator.

Deputy Maurer noted that Florida is getting tougher on juveniles who commit crimes.

Minors can be held in a juvenile detention facility for up to 21 days depending on

See CIMINO, Page 7



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SUBSTATION NOTES

# Parents Urged To Talk Summer Safety With Teens

## SET RULES, ASK QUESTIONS

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER  
Bloomington Community  
Resource Deputy

For kids, summer break means no school and no homework, just lots of fun and free time, hopefully spent staying out of trouble.

Parents, now is the time to be sure you know where your kids are at all times — especially teenagers.

Many teens spend a good deal of time at home alone while their parents are working. It is extremely important for parents to sit down with their kids and talk about the need to be careful, to be cautious and to think. Emphasize 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 stranger danger are very important subjects that all families should discuss in detail.

Summertime offers opportunities to have fun and relax, but it also leaves time open to get into trouble.



Maurer

In addition to keeping close tabs on your kids' whereabouts, you must know whom they are with. Peer pressure can sometimes lead to problems. We all hope that we know our kids and have instilled in them a sense of good judgment and personal responsibility, but even the best kids can make bad decisions. Set specific rules for them to follow.

Don't let them end the summer with a criminal record or a serious injury.



MACKAUSTIN/Photo

Heavy traffic in the Bloomington area frustrates many drivers, but there's no excuse for speeding, running red lights or committing acts of road rage. The sheriff's office is closely monitoring these violations.

## June Is National Safety Month

### BUCKLE UP, DRIVE WITH CAUTION

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER  
Bloomington Community  
Resource Deputy

June is National Safety Month, a time to emphasize the importance of all areas of safety — at home, at work and at play. Whether we're out driving to work, enjoying time with our

families and friends or just running errands, we must all pay special attention to the many dangers we face while driving.

This summer, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and Florida Highway Patrol will focus their full attention on enforcing safe driving in our area. Please pay special attention to the following behaviors and discuss them with all the

members of your family who drive, especially teens.

### Speeding Kills

Speeding kills more than 12,000 people each year and increases the severity of a crash. HCSO and FHP officers are monitoring speeding in our area and are writing citations

See SAFETY, Page 18

## OFFENDERS

Continued From Page 6

predator unit that closely monitors and tracks all predators in our area.

Residents with questions or concerns can stop by the substation on Bell Shoals Road, open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or call 635-8040.

Maurer advises residents to check the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Web site, www.fdle.state.fl.us, for new information about monitoring programs and upgraded access to the sex offender and predator database.

## CIMINO

Continued From Page 6

the crime.

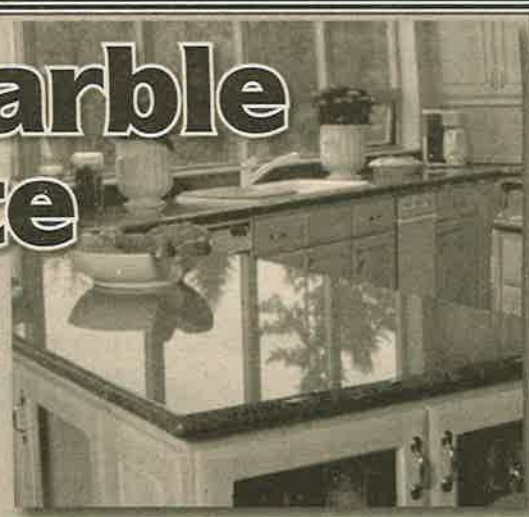
"If you do something wrong, you're going to suffer the consequences," Maurer said.

School officials and detectives are trying to determine how the suspect(s) gained

access to the campus, which is gated at night. Hillsborough County - property detective Mike Sardone is conducting the investigation. If you have any information about the burglary, please call Detective Sardone at 247-0455.

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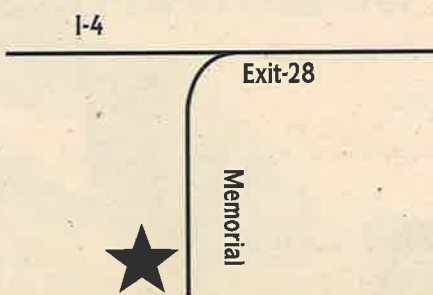
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# Cimino Elementary Dedicates Memorial

## SANDRA FROST READING GARDEN

By LESLIE WHITE  
Correspondent

Six months after the death of Cimino Elementary Principal Sandra Frost, the school staff, student body and community gathered for the ribbon cutting and dedication of the Sandra Frost Reading Garden.

Frost passed away in October 2004 after a year-long battle with cancer. A corner of the campus dedicated to the love of reading now stands as a memorial to the long time Hillsborough County educator.

Cimino Principal Lou Cerreta said, "Mrs. Frost was an avid reader and promoted reading, encouraging children to do the same. What better way to honor her than with this reading garden?"

Frost's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bennett, her son, Ragon, her brother, Barry, and several representatives from the Hillsborough County School District and school board attended the ceremony, along with Brandon High Principal Danny Yoest and his wife, both longtime friends of Sandra and Ron Frost.

Cimino teacher and close friend to Frost, Chris Carlson, said, "This is a place where Mrs. Frost devoted all her time. She loved her staff and the community, and mostly she loved the children." Carlson encouraged the children and teachers to come and sit in the special place created in memory of Frost, who would be very proud that her favorite pastime will be enjoyed in the garden.

A collaborative effort



LESLIE WHITE/Photos

At left, Cimino PTA volunteers Dave Shapiro, Kim Wallace and Holly Shapiro work last month to assemble benches to place in the Sandra Frost Memorial Reading Garden. The creation of the garden was funded totally by donations, and most of the work was done by PTA volunteers. Below, Ragon Frost thanks the students and staff of Cimino Elementary for keeping his mother's memory alive through the creation and dedication of the Sandra Frost Reading Garden.

between the staff, parents, community and students, the garden is a paved area just outside the media center, dotted with statues depicting children reading. Lush landscaping and park benches surround the perimeter, which will later include a tiered fountain and a plaque honoring Cimino's inaugural principal.

Most of the work was done by volunteers. PTA President Shannan Powell praised their efforts.

"It's been a very good combination effort between our PTA, the teachers, the community and our student council," Powell said.

The school's Cougar Chorus, joined by first-graders from teacher Nina Czaja's class, performed two songs. Other stu-

dents read poems. Then the Bennetts and Ragon Frost cut the ribbon surrounding the garden.

Assistant Principal Debbie Talley presented Frost's family with a commemorative brick from the garden. Ragon Frost thanked the school for keeping his mother's memory alive.

"She would be so pleased," he said.

Cimino Elementary is not the only school keeping Frost's memory alive. A new elementary school on Falkenburg Road in Brandon has been named in honor of Sandra Frost and her husband, Ron, former principal of Durant High School, who preceded his wife in death. The new elementary school will have two cougars as its mascot — blend-



ing the Cimino Cougars and Durant Cougars — to honor the couple, who greatly impacted Hillsborough County schools.

The creation of the garden

was funded totally by donations, which are still being accepted to help offset the cost of the memorial plaque. To make a tax deductible donation, call 740-4450.

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Photos courtesy Cimino Elementary School

### Cool Cats Have Character

Above, Cimino Elementary School Cool Cats for Character for the month of April, in kindergarten through second grade are (bottom row) Marshall Gonsalves, Matthew Belcher, Matthew Shibatta, (second row from bottom) Ben Coughenour, Julia Fontana, Alexa Panter, Dylan Smith, Danielle Owen, Sara Gizzi, (third row from bottom) Koby Davis, Kelsey Klein, Kayla Byrd, Maximino Rodriguez, Madison Anderson, Jocelyn Pavelschak, (top row) Paul Wallace, Evan Rapp, Anna Marie Decort, Heather Allen, Caden Raymond, Ian Williams and Courtney Wadstrom. Not pictured; Nicholas Prindle and Beattie. Below, Cool Cats in grades three through five are (bottom row) Yvette Lomax, Erik Kough, Kara Licause, (second row from bottom) Ayana Ariola, Zach McCarthy, Arabella Hall-Woodring, Jessica Daly, (third row from bottom) Jesse Fuhs, Cristiana Capozza, April Showalter, Petie Bistolfi, Courtney Wiedrich, (top row) Jake Baer, Joran McBurney, Cassidy Erickson, Shanna Bland, Maribeth Mitchell an, Chelsy Davis. Not pictured; Jenny Scharp, Andrea Kelly, Brandon Biddle and Kevin Cox.



## Bloomington High Ranks 331 Nationwide

### TEN HILLSBOROUGH SCHOOLS IN TOP 1000

A Gazette Report

Bloomington High School Guidance Department head Mary Grable reports Bloomington was ranked by Newsweek magazine No. 331 out of 27,468 high schools nationwide. Newsweek ranked the schools using a ratio; the number of Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate tests taken by all students at a school in 2004 divided by the number of graduat-

ing seniors, a formula the magazine reports gives a good indication of students prepared for high level careers. Ten Hillsborough County schools made the top 1,000 list. They are:

- School and rank
- Hillsborough — 10
- King — 36
- Plant — 69
- Bloomington — 331
- Tampa Bay Tech — 504
- Plant City — 618
- Chamberlain — 708
- Sickles — 780
- Alonso — 840
- Wharton — 939

## New County School Superintendent Appointed

### BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County School Board voted unanimously last month to appoint MaryEllen Elia the district's next superintendent of schools.

Elia is currently the district's chief facilities officer. Prior to that, she served as general director of secondary education and director of nontraditional programs.

She is credited with launching the district's successful magnet schools program. She began her career in Hillsbor-

See ELIA, Page 18

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## B L O O M I N G D A L E N E I G H B O R H O O D N E W S

## Chamber Task Force Leads Charge To Widen Lithia-Pinecrest

TOWN HALL MEETING  
SET FOR JUNE 7By LAURA FRAZIER  
Editor

Lithia-Pinecrest Road, the heavily traveled two-lane thoroughfare between State Road 60 in Brandon and County Road 39 in Lithia, is on the "unfunded" list of Hillsborough County roads in need of improvements.

By state standards it's classified as a failed road, but Lithia-Pinecrest is not slated for widening five, 10 or even 15 years out.

Bloomingtondale resident George May, chairman of the board of the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce, said if something isn't done now to secure funding and begin planning improvements, it could be 20 years before traffic congestion and safety hazards on the road are remedied.

As burgeoning business and residential development continues along the road, traffic jams and accidents can only increase unless improvements are made to the road.

The chamber's transportation task force, headed by former state Rep. Sandra Murman, met with county commissioners in April to present their ideas to fast-track the project. The group suggested that if the road is built to federal standards, the county would be eligible to tap into federal funds to pay for it.

The commission agreed to conduct a transportation study and to consider the federal funding option, May said. The findings of the study are expected to be presented at the county commission's June 15 meeting.

If the Lithia-Pinecrest project can be moved forward using federal funds and additional pockets of resources

*"We'd like to encourage any residents who have questions or comments about widening Lithia-Pinecrest Road to attend the town hall meeting on June 7."*

GEORGE MAY

Chairman of the board, Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce

available, other unfunded road improvements in Brandon could follow suit.

"We basically feel like this is the first step," May said.

"If we can move the (Lithia-Pinecrest) project forward with federal funds and other resources, it will make it easier to improve other roads."

"This opens the door for us to not only go to the builders, developers, the county and the state for funds."

The next project that needs to be done, May said, is the widening of Parson's Avenue between Lumsden Road and

State Road 60.

Traffic is so backed up at times, May said, "You can't even get to the hospital at rush hour."

The task force plans to blitz the Brandon area this month with a petition asking the county to aggressively move the project forward.

Residents who wish to sign the petition can do so at the chamber office, 808 Oakfield Drive, or at the Pinch-A-Penny store in Royal Oaks Plaza, Lithia-Pinecrest and Bloomingtondale Avenue.

The task force will host a

town hall meeting to discuss the issue June 7 at 6 p.m. at Foundation Christian Academy, 3955 Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

May and Murman will provide information and answer questions about the project. Commissioner Ronda Storms, a proponent of the widening project, is expected to attend.

"So far we have had a very positive response to our approach," May said.

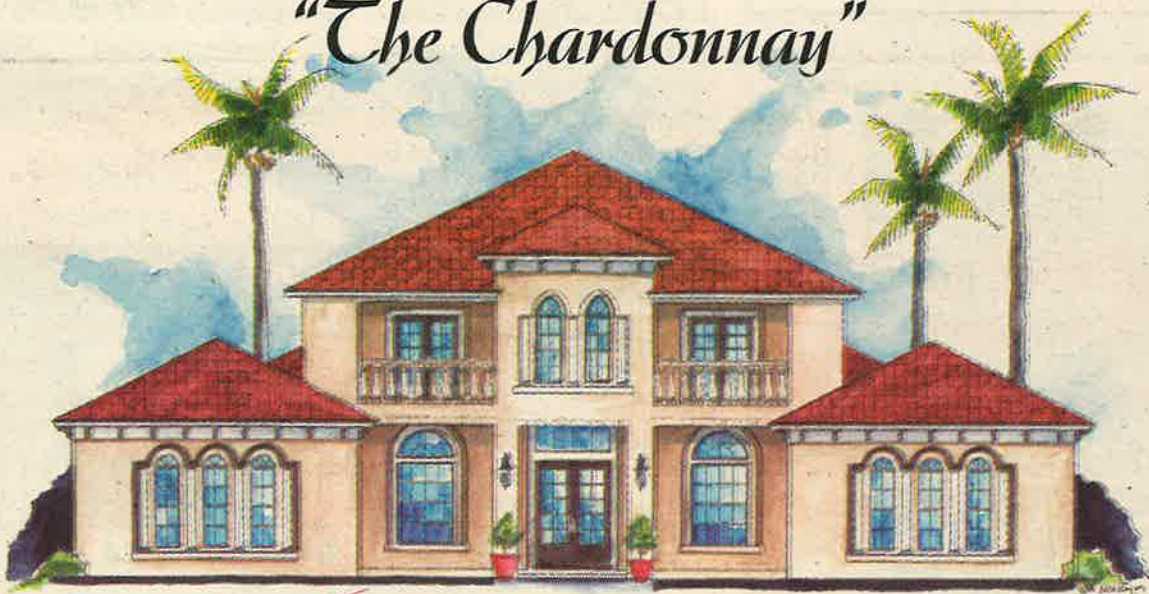
"We'd like to encourage any residents who have questions or comments about widening Lithia-Pinecrest Road to attend the town hall meeting on June 7," May said.

The group has chartered a bus to transport residents who wish to attend the June 15 county commission meeting at County Center in downtown Tampa.

For information, call the Brandon Chamber of Commerce at 689-1221.

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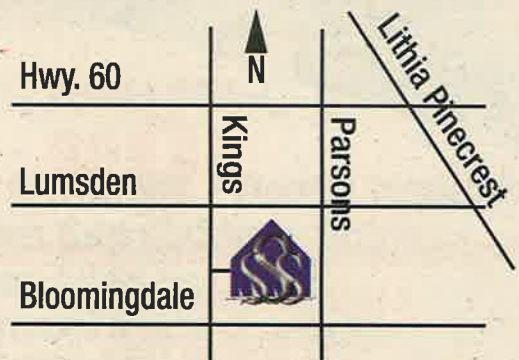
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# Online Group Gives, Takes Unwanted Goods For Free

BRANDON/VALRICO  
FREecycle CAFÉ

By LAURA FRAZIER  
Editor

There's a new café in Brandon that's open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Cappuccinos and vanilla lattes are not on the menu, but completely free, pre-owned household goods are served up daily online at the Brandon Freecycle Café.

Bloomington resident Lisa Conn recently launched the Brandon/Valrico chapter of Freecycle, a nonprofit Internet-based group with more than 2,400 chapters worldwide.

The Freecycle movement began in 2003 as a grassroots effort in Tucson, Ariz., to promote the reduction of landfill waste.

The project spawned a global virtual community, currently with close to one million members. There are 76 chapters in Florida. The Brandon/Valrico chapter has 1,200 members and is one of the fastest growing groups in the state.

Individuals and non-profit organizations with household goods they no longer need can put the items up for grabs on the Freecycle Web site. Those in need of particular items can post wanted ads on the site.

All goods must be offered



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Lisa Conn, in the garage of her Bloomington home, organizes items she plans to give away for free online.

100 percent free of charge, and no trading or bartering is allowed.

Items offered are pictured and described on the web site. The café section of the Brandon/Valrico group's site serves as a chat room for members to talk about their Freecycle experiences and to get to know one another.

When users offer a new item

free for the taking, all members on the group's list receive an e-mail advising them of the new posting. Anyone interested in the item can e-mail the owner directly.

The owner chooses who receives the item, oftentimes based on the needs of the person requesting the goods.

"We had a child's car seat posted not too long ago, and

there were many requests for it. The owner wound up giving it to a single mom who needed a car seat for her baby so she could go out and look for a job," Conn said.

The site is not restricted to those with crisis needs. Participants have picked up children's toys and bicycles, musical instruments, video game consoles, collectibles and more on

the site. Conn has acquired free artwork for her home, a Pampered Chef baking stone and her favorite find — dozens of clear plastic totes she needed for storage.

On the giving end, Conn has Freecycled a Lazy-Boy recliner, Queen Anne chair, toaster oven and tons of baby clothes.

The Freecycle option is less wasteful and better for the environment than throwing away reusable items, Conn said. Freecycle also has advantages over running a "for sale" ad in the newspaper, posting items on eBay, or delivering goods to charity drop-off locations.

"The service is completely free, no strings attached. You get to choose a good home for your old possessions, and takers come right to your door to pick them up."

The best thing about Freecycle, Conn said, is the satisfaction that comes from simply giving away something you don't need or want to someone who does.

"It's a great feeling when you give something away free and clear. You are just giddy when they are driving away with it."

For more information contact Conn at freecycle.mod-brandon@gmail.com. The Brandon/Valrico group's homepage is linked to www.freecycle.org.

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# Presidents Roundtable Holds Annual Public Affairs Dinner

## BRANDON COUPLE RECEIVES TOMKINS SERVICE AWARD

By LAURA FRAZIER  
Editor

The President's Roundtable of Brandon presented its annual community service award to T. J. and Richard Weaver at its public affairs dinner May 17.

The award, named for the late Alice B. Tompkins, a community activist and editor of The Brandon News in the 1960s and 1970s, is presented annually to residents who display a long-term commitment to community service.

The Weavers were lauded for their extensive involvement with many local organizations including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, General Federation of Women's Club Services, American Cancer Society, Eagle Scout and ROTC programs and the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce.

Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association board members in attendance were president Ted



Richard and T. J. Weaver accept the Presidents Roundtable of Brandon's Alice B. Tompkins Award May 17.

LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Grable and directors Steve Heckel, Stan Lee and Lydia Harrod.

Public officials at the event included state Senate President

Tom Lee, Hillsborough County Sheriff David Gee, Hillsborough County Commissioner Mark Sharpe and state Rep. Rich Glorioso. Representatives

of the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce, Hillsborough County Property Appraiser's Office and Metropolitan Planning Organization

*"I don't think you can really know where your future's taking you."*

**TOM LEE**  
State Senator, Brandon

also attended.

The guest speaker was Tampa Tribune columnist Dan Ruth. Ernest Hooper, a columnist for the St. Pete Times, served as moderator.

Guests were invited to ask questions of the government officials in attendance.

Sen. Lee, whose two-year term as Senate president ends next year, was asked if he intended to run for the U.S. Senate in 2006.

"I don't think you can really know where your future's taking you," Lee said.

"My aspirations now are to come back home to the home-building business I left in 1996 and to link arms with you all again."

Reflecting on his nine-year legislative career, Lee said, "This has been an awesome experience."

## Parks Dept. Help Bears Move Concession Stand

### READERS REQUEST STORY CLARIFICATION

By LAURA FRAZIER  
Editor

Several readers called the Gazette asking for clarifications about an article published in the May issue of The Bloomingtondale Gazette ("Brandon Bears Forced To Tear Down Concession Stand").

The callers were concerned that the story could lead readers to believe that Hillsborough County officials left the non-profit youth football league to fend for itself after shutting down its concession stand due to county code and safety violations.

Gazette staff spoke with parks department spokesman

John Brill. He said when inspectors ordered the league's original concession stand closed last season, parks department staff went to great lengths to help the organization move its stand to an accessory building on the site. Staff provided manpower to relocate the stand and installed an ice machine at county expense.

In addition, after last summer's hurricane season, parks staff helped clean up damage and debris at the park, and provided generators at the field to keep food in storage from spoiling. Brill said, "When the county inspector said they couldn't work out of one place, we tried to provide another."

The callers also took issue

See BEARS, Page 18

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BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

BSTD REPORT

# Taxing District Set To Finalize Budget June 13

6:30 P.M. AT  
COMMUNITY OFFICE

A Gazette Report

The Bloomington Special Taxing District board of trustees meets at 7 p.m. on the second Monday each month at the Bloomington Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road

Days and times for special committee meetings are announced in the Gazette and on [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com). All meetings are open to the public. For more information, call 681-6667 or e-mail [bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net).

### Final Annual Budget Meeting June 15

The taxing district's budget committee has identified, prioritized and budgeted for community maintenance and improvements slated for the next fiscal year, October 2005 to September 2006. At the May BSTD meeting, the board voted unanimously to approve the proposed budget written for presentation to the public on June 13. The final budget meeting is set for 6:30 p.m. at the Bloomington Community Office. For more information, e-mail [bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net) or call 684-6667.

### April 2005 Financial Report Approved

At the board's May 2 meeting, Vince Ferraro of Ferraro, Higginbotham & Hayes presented the financial reports for April 2005. The balance sheet showed cash on hand in AmSouth Bank at the end of the month was \$466,295.00. Some expenditures noted were \$4,123 to repair signs, \$4,998 to repair accident sites, \$2,069 for

## Special Taxing District FAQs

By LAURA FRAZIER  
Editor

The Bloomington Homeowners Association Inc. and the Gazette often receive questions about the functions and responsibilities of the Bloomington Special Taxing District, known as the BSTD. Following are some frequently asked questions. For more information, visit [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com) or call 684-6667.

### 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 does Bloomington have a taxing district?

The purpose of the BSTD is to maintain a reserve of funds to pay for community repairs and improvements.

### How long have we had a special taxing district?

A group of Bloomington residents petitioned the county in the mid-1980s to create a

special taxing district for the Bloomington area. The county commission approved the petition and the BSTD was formed.

### What area does BSTD encompass?

The BSTD area includes every one of nearly 5,000 homes in Bloomington East and West, with the exception of River Crossing Estates in Bloomington East. At the April 2005 BSTD meeting, trustees questioned why River Crossing Estates is not part of the BSTD area. It was determined that original plans for the section included a Bell Shoals Road entrance, with no through street into Bloomington. Some board members felt since the section was developed with an interior Bloomington entrance (off River Crossing Drive), homeowners in that section now share the common area property maintained by the BSTD and should be assessed accordingly. The board will look into the process to consider adding River Crossing Estates to the district.

### How much does the BSTD cost residents?

Bloomington's special tax assessed annually by the Hillsborough County Property

Appraiser is \$100 per home. The assessment is added to each homeowner's annual property tax bill. The BSTD is a non-ad valorem district; every property owner pays the same \$100, regardless of the value of their residence.

### 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, Bloomington, 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.

### How can I report a maintenance or improvement need?

Bloomington residents are invited to attend special taxing district board meetings, held 7 p.m. the second Monday each month at the Bloomington Community Office, to voice their concerns. You can also call 684-6667 or e-mail [bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net).

general parts and supplies and \$1,489 for irrigation parts and supplies.

### Property Manager's Report

Property Manager Al Devney reports the following activities will take place in June:

landscaping improvements in Bloomington East will be finalized; irrigation for the Springvale system and modifications to the Hickory Ridge, Culbreath and The Links systems will be started; annual flowers will be installed at

major entryways.

In May, Devney reported the following actions were completed: a broken wall on Bell Shoals Road was repaired and repainted; accident damage at Culbreath Road on Bloomington Avenue was repaired and

billed to the vehicle owner; new yellow bows were placed on entryway flagpoles; signs at Holleman, Polumbo and Bloomington West entryways were painted. In addition, graffiti on the wall along Canoga Park Drive, which covered 115 linear feet, was covered and repainted; a vandalized light timer at the John Moore Road entry and a damaged TECO light pole on Springvale were replaced; the injection system for the Springvale irrigation system has been installed and appears to be functioning properly.

### Dunaire Residents Want Wall

Trustee Joe Harless, Capital Improvements chairman, reported in May he received several comments from residents about the wood fence along Natures Way at Dunaire Drive. A group of residents is circulating a petition to ask the taxing district to install a block wall on the premises. The fence is on private property. President Snelling asked Harless to bring the petition in for the board to review at its June 13 meeting.

### Landscaping Plans Changed

Trustee Paul Sims, Landscaping Committee chairman, reported in May the committee determined after several meetings that a few areas where landscaping improvements were being considered in Bloomington East do not need improvements at this time. The last landscaping committee meeting, previously announced in the Gazette and on [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com), was May 23. The committee will take its final recommendations to the full board of trustees at its June 13 meeting.

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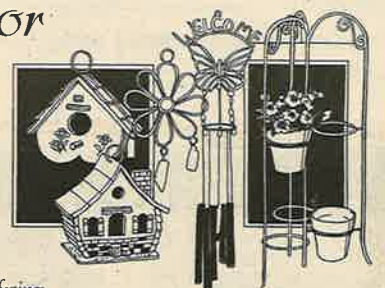


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# New Assistant Manager Tees Off At Bloomingdale

## APPRENTICE PGA PRO, TOURNEY COORDINATOR

By DEREK MAUL  
Correspondent

Every morning scores of joggers, bike riders and walkers circle Natures Way in Bloomingdale East.

Inside the five-mile loop, and screened by homeowners fortunate enough to enjoy the frontage, the Bloomingdale Golfers Club resides like a suburban oasis.

The course, designed by architect Ron Garl, boasts 219 pristine acres. Half the land remains a wildlife preserve. With 13 lakes thrown into the mix, the layout is not only beautiful but also challenging.

It is here that apprentice PGA professional and tournament coordinator Andy Zaras has chosen to launch his management career.

Zaras, 20, moved from the Miami area in 2004 after growing up immersed in the sport of golf.

His father, Tom Zaras, worked as a golf professional at Miami's legendary Doral Resort.

"I started playing when I was 2," Andy Zaras said.

Three 2-A state championships with Christopher Columbus High School translated into a "full ride" scholarship at Miami's St. Thomas University. Zaras hit two holes in one in competition and has played scratch golf (at or below par) for several years.

He admits he probably enjoyed playing too much.

"College didn't work out," he said. "I was always finding myself at the golf course more than school. I got the golf part; I just didn't get the scholarship part."

The Professional Golfers' Association apprenticeship was timely.

"There are three professionals on staff," Zaras said. "I'm first assistant and tournament coordinator. I enjoy the business side, interacting with the

members."

Current responsibilities don't leave much time to shoot at the flag.

"I'm working too much in the office to play," he said. "I can see the course; I just can't go out there."

The three-year apprenticeship program leads to a Class A professional status, qualifying Zaras to be a head professional and course manager.

With explosive growth in the industry, timing could not be better.

"I think most of it is from Tiger's influence on the game," Zaras said, referring to golfing icon Tiger Woods. "Did you see the Masters? Unbelievable. That's predominantly the reason why."

Just 10 years old when Woods hit the scene a decade ago, Zaras has grown up with the phenomenon.

"Every time he goes to a tournament, it affects the industry," Zaras said. "I went to Doral (Miami) this year. There were so many people following Tiger, you couldn't see him, just the sea of people."

In addition to a new generation of players, baby boomers are building lifestyles around recreation. With new courses constantly under construction, fair-weather states such as Florida have made golf an economic juggernaut affecting everything from real estate to the marketing of equipment.

Zaras is preparing to meet the challenge.

"We offer lessons," he said. "We have club adjustment and repair; we offer playing lessons; the practice facilities are awesome. You can be as good as you want to be by putting in the practice time. You write your own ticket. We offer pretty much anything."

It helps that Zaras gets to work in his favorite environment.

"It's a nice atmosphere and everyone's willing to help," he said. "People here go out of their way."

Home base to PGA touring pro Michael Bradley, the

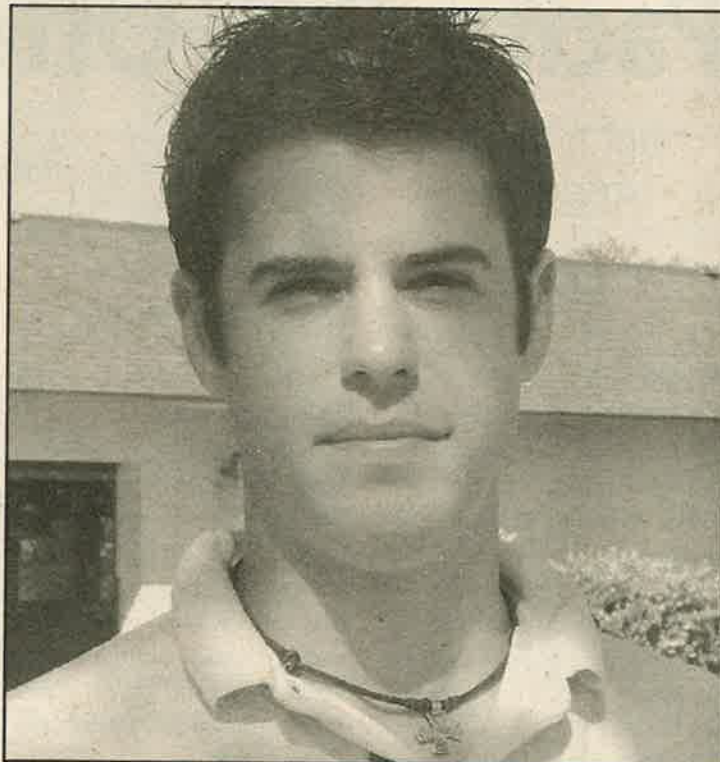
Bloomingdale Golfers Club is a semiprivate facility in the process of expanding its member base.

"We offer great deals," Zaras said. "There's a \$150 initial membership fee and it's only \$100 a month. There are a lot of benefits."

The facility, owned by Fore Golf of Manassas, Va., has recently seen \$1 million in renovations.

"It's in great shape and it's only getting better," Zaras said. "When you're out there playing, there's wildlife, water and birds. You feel like you're not in the city. I think it's the best course in town."

For information on the golfers club, call 685-4105 or visit [www.bloomingtongolf.com](http://www.bloomingtongolf.com).



DEREK MAUL/Photo

Andy Zaras will begin his career at the Bloomingdale Golfer's Club.

### ON OUR COMMUNITY WEBSITE

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## All Aboard!



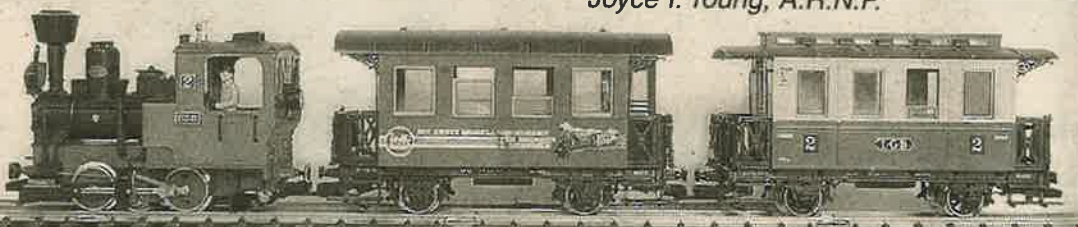
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RESTAURANT REVIEW

# Pacific Grill Offers Sushi, Non-Sushi Fare

MRS. DUMONT:  
"DEE-LISH!"

By ELTON DUMONT  
Exclusive To  
The Bloomingdale Gazette

Quick now, where is the Pacific Grill?

I didn't think you knew. So let's clear that up immediately. It is next to Stein Mart in Lithia Crossings, just south of Bloomingdale Avenue.

This restaurant has been open just over a year. Even though it took me this long to try it, the secret is out among the locals.

It was quite busy on a recent Friday night. The seating capacity is about 50, including booths and a sushi bar, complete with barstools and your personal sushi chef, if that is

your pleasure. The décor, neither oriental or casual, is quite elegant and impressive.

The sushi and sashimi menu is extensive. It includes sea urchin, fresh water eel, smelt roe and squid, as well as the standard tuna, salmon, scallops and sweet shrimp.

Sushi roll varieties include Mexican (fried shrimp, avocado, cucumber and smelt roe); futomaki (eel, crab stick, vegetables and smelt roe) and spider (soft shell crab, cucumber and smelt roe), all for less than \$9. If you're still not on board, fried or baked sushi dishes are also offered.

We ordered from the non-sushi menu, where starters included pork or vegetable egg rolls with plum sauce, edamame — which is steamed

soybeans, Shanghai pot stickers, lettuce cup chicken and soft shell crabs.

Soup selections include Tokyo miso (tofu, seaweed, scallion, fish stock and soy bean paste) and hot and sour (shrimp, mushroom, basil tomato and pineapple in spicy Thai broth). Seaweed and Sunomono salads are offered. Sunomono features octopus, shrimp, crab stick, seaweed and cucumber with Amazu dressing.

We ordered the pork egg rolls — smaller than typical Chinese restaurant fare, but so much more delicate and light. The plum sauce was a treat for any palate. We also had the hot and sour soup. It was really very spicy, but I can handle it. The basil was absolutely, posi-

tively fresh. And the hot pineapple gave it a flavor I've never experienced before. I would order it again and again, but remember it is not for the faint palate.

My wife ordered the Cantonese lo mein with beef for \$9.95. The egg flour noodles were stir-fried with assorted vegetables in a light soy sauce. Her comment was, "Dee-lish!" (thanks, Rachel Ray).

I settled on the Shrimp Prosperity, crisp-coated shrimp with a coconut milk glaze, sprinkled with honey glazed walnuts and jasmine rice, all served on a bed of sliced oranges.

The presentation was like a five-star restaurant; absolutely fantastic.

They have wine, beer and

sake including Nigerizake, unfiltered sake according to our server. They offer a lunch menu and a kid's meal including hamburgers, chicken nuggets, macaroni and cheese and fries. There is something for every member of your family.

We will definitely take another journey to Pacific Grill, and wish we had tried it sooner.

Our total for beverage, appetizers and entrees was about \$40. Pacific Grill is at 3452 Lithia-Pinecrest Road. For more information, call 657-8744.

Rating based on five stars  
Food — ★★★★★  
Ambience — ★★★★★  
Service — ★★★★★ 1/2  
Overall — ★★★★★ 1/2

## Boats, Trailers Can Become Projectiles During Storms

YARDS, STREETS UNSAFE STORAGE SPOTS

A Gazette Report

The official hurricane season started June 1. The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association encourages all residents to consider making whatever hurricane preparations they feel are needed.

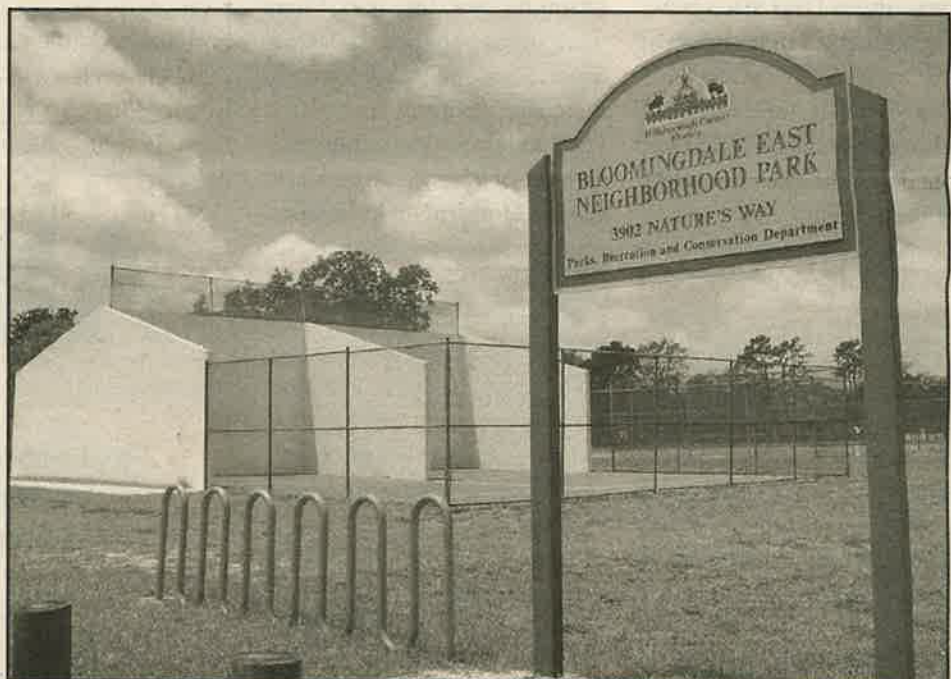
Everyone is aware of the damage these storms can cause. The Bloomingdale community had a very small taste of Mother Nature's fury last year. Of particular concern to many residents during last year's storms were the boats, trailers, RV's and inoperable vehicles parked outside within the community.

During a major storm these vehicles can become devastating and

catastrophic missiles, posing a significant threat to their owners and neighbors. Last year several residents removed their boats from slips and storage along the coast and parked them in their yards to protect them from the storm. This posed a significant risk to residents within the community.

Most of the Bloomingdale community's sectional deed restrictions prohibit these vehicles from being parked or stored on the owners property (check deed restrictions online at [www.bloomingtongazette.com](http://www.bloomingtongazette.com)).

If you have a neighbor with one of these vehicles stored on their property in violation of deed restrictions, please contact Neighborhood Standards by e-mail at [neighborhoodstandard@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:neighborhoodstandard@tampabay.rr.com) or call 833-0759.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

### Bloomingdale East Park Gets New Sign

The Hillsborough County Parks Department installed a new sign last month at Bloomingdale East Park on Natures Way. Volunteer board members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association are working closely with parks department staff to complete facility and landscaping improvements at the park. The BHA board has also inquired about replacing the sign at Bloomingdale West Park on Canoga Park Drive.

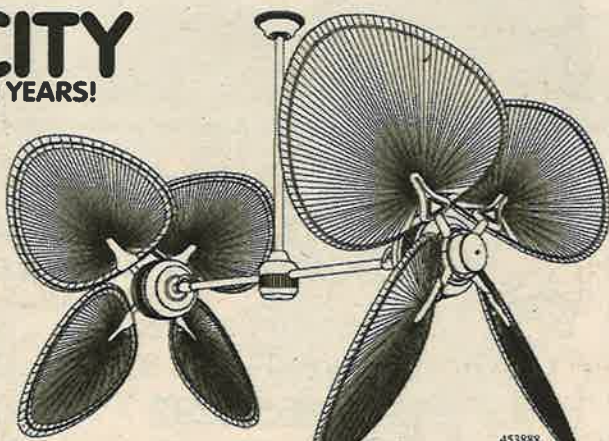
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# Brandon Author Appeals To Young Fantasy Fans

## BOOK IS FIRST IN SERIES

By D'ANN WHITE  
Correspondent

In the tradition of J.K. Rowling's popular Harry Potter series, a Brandon author is weaving some magic of her own with the first in a series of fantasy tales she's writing geared to young readers.

Fifteen-year Brandon resident Lisa Michaud Kalaf has just published "The Legend of The Dream Castle," the first in what she calls her Tales of the DreamKeepers Series.

She currently is working on the next book in the series, "The Legend of the Moose Fairy," and has storyboards ready for six more books.

Kalaf, who lives in Dogwood Hills with her husband, John, and three children, Johnnie, Robbie and Christopher, said the idea for the series came to her, appropriately enough, in a dream.

"On Dec. 29, 2002, I had a colorful dream of a wonderful story for children" said Kalaf. "It was about DreamKeepers, who protect children's dreams, and SnitchSnatchers, who steal the dreams, desires, energies and hopes of children. I awoke, wrote down the story line and I have been writing ever since."

Raised in New England, Kalaf said she didn't watch much television as a child, preferring to play and explore outside.

"However, every Sunday night, after a nice hot bath, my mom would make a big bowl of popcorn and the family would settle in to watch the "Wonderful World of Disney" and then head off to bed for quiet time with our favorite books," said Kalaf. "Being a mom myself now, I want all children to have the opportunity to experience that Sunday night feeling."

Kalaf, who writes under the pen name Soliza, believes reading at bedtime is especially important because she feels that's when a child is most impressionable.

"We should enlighten our children with tales that allow and encourage them to use their imaginations and dream of worlds and places far away," she said. "My dream is to see the DreamKeepers Series come alive for children."

In this first book, three brothers, Victor, Rudy and Walt, along with the beautiful Britta, face the evil Snitchsnatchers from the Black Hole Vortex who steal children's dreams, wishes, energies and desires. With the help of giant



Photo courtesy Lisa Kalaf

Brandon resident Lisa Kalaf received rave reviews from neighbor Elaine Owens, 9, for her book, "The Legend of Dream Castle."

mice and a white horse that wants to be a zebra, the four main characters make their way to Dream Castle on fabled Gumdrops Mountain to battle the Snitchsnatchers.

A top award winner in the 13th annual Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America 2004 Novel Writing Competition, Kalaf's first novel is receiving positive reviews from both big and little readers.

In his review of the book, former Disney Vice President Larry Pontius gave it a thumbs up.

"The Legend of the Dream

Castle' makes me think we could be seeing the birth of a new set of epic stories for young adults," he said. "With wonderfully imaginative new twists and turns at every step, the DreamKeepers Legend is one page-flipping story. I highly recommend it."

Even more important was the review from Kalaf's 9-year-old neighbor, Elaine Owens.

"I loved the DreamKeepers story," she said. "It was a great adventure. My favorite character was Britta. Mom said she is just like me."

Kalaf received a bachelor's

degree in marketing from St. Leo University in 1983 and is president of Creative Gift Incentives, which provides companies throughout Florida with rewards gifts for employees and clients.

In her free time, Kalaf is typically at her computer writing.

"When I was growing up, my parents taught me I can accomplish anything in life as long as I believe in myself and take that first step" said Kalaf. "I am grateful for challenges. They have allowed me to grow, not only as a person but creatively and spiritually as well."

Kalaf is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators; The Publishers Marketing Association and is a group leader for the Florida Writers Association. She serves on the board of directors and is Central Florida regional director of the Florida Publishers Association.

"The Legend of the Dream Castle" is available online at Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble.com and directly from the publisher, Trafford Publishing, at 1-888-232-4444 or www.trafford.com, international standard book number 1-4120-4229-1.

The retail price of the 206-page novel is \$19.99.

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LINDA CHION KENNEY/Staff photo  
School board member Jennifer Faliero, right, congratulates newly appointed School Superintendent Mary Ellen Elia.

## ELIA

**Continued From Page 10**

ough County in 1986 as a reading resource specialist at Plant High School.

Elia has a bachelor's degree in history from Daeman College in Buffalo, N.Y., a master's degree in social studies from the University of Buffalo, and a master's of professional studies in reading from the State University College of New York at Buffalo. She received her educational leadership certification from Nova Southeastern University.

Elia's term will begin June 30 when Earl Lennard, district superintendent since 1996, retires.

## SAFETY

**Continued From Page 7**

with very expensive fines.

### Aggressive Driving

Improper passing, weaving in and out of traffic, following too closely — totally inexcusable. Aggressive driving endangers the lives of others. Put down your cell phone and use your turn signals when changing lanes. Tailgating is one of the worse types of aggressive driving and is against the law, so back off. When you tailgate or fail to signal properly, other drivers can be forced to brake quickly, causing serious accidents.

This makes you an aggressive driver. No warnings are being

### Distracted Drivers

Distracted drivers are dangerous drivers. Their minds are not on driving. Talking on cell phones, applying makeup, adjusting the radio, talking to passengers, daydreaming and even eating while driving can be deadly to you and others.

### Drinking and Driving

Last year 17,401 people died in alcohol-related crashes, several 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

### Teen Driver Safety

For those of you with newly licensed teen drivers at home this summer, consider this fact: motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for young adults between the ages of 16 and 24. More than 11,000 drivers and passengers in this age group were killed in crashes last year. Our busy roads and highways are very dangerous places to learn how to drive. Tell your teens: "Drive like your life depends on it, because it does."

### Always Buckle Up

Remember to buckle up. Seat belts are for everyone under the sun.

## BEARS

**Continued From Page 13**

with comments attributed to Bears board of directors president. Mike Laquerre, who said in the article the group's concession stand was "dismantled" and "taken down," later clarified that although equipment and provisions have been removed from the site — and concession operations have ceased — no buildings at the county-owned park have been demolished.

Carl Conte, Hillsborough County manager of inspection services, confirmed the Bears will not be allowed to run its concession stand at any building at the park until improvements are made to meet county codes and safety regulations.

Laquerre said the league will start the 2005-06 season without a concession stand, and still seeks volunteers to help make plans for a new stand. For information visit [www.branndonbears.com](http://www.branndonbears.com).

## WATER

**Continued From Page 4**

home address.

On the twice-a-week schedule, addresses ending in even numbers or the letters A-M may water on Tuesdays and Saturdays; addresses ending in odd numbers, the letters N-Z or locations with no address (such as common areas) may water on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Watering is allowed before 8 a.m. or after 6 p.m. on the assigned days.

For more information about watering restrictions, log on to [www.hillsboroughcounty.org](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org), call the recorded message information line at 275-7094 or call customer service at 272-6680.

ON OUR COMMUNITY WEBSITE

For Bloomingdale community meetings and events, visit our Web site at [www.bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingtondalegazette.com)



## BACC

Continued From Page 6

Maurer wrote more than \$5,000 worth of speeding citations — all in front of Bloomingdale High School. The average citation fee was \$360, with one for \$560 (30-plus mph over the speed limit). And this is in front of a high school

Maurer also reminded members the fine for running red lights has increased from \$60 to \$120. The Traffic Blitz will continue and citations will be written. It's very simple: obey the speed limit and stop at the red lights, or get ready to pay some very heavy fines.

## Use Locks, Awareness To Deter Burglars

Maurer said burglaries continue to be a concern for detectives in our area. He emphasized the fact that residents can help decrease burglaries by not making them so easy for the criminals. Close your garage doors, lock your cars and homes, don't leave valuables in your cars and keep an eye out for strangers. He asked all residents to continue to be vigilant and report suspicious activities.

Maurer provided information on the recent burglary at Cimino Elementary School (see story in this issue). Vehicles were burglarized and equipment was

taken from the school. Residents living near our schools and those out walking or jogging are asked to keep an eye on the schools and report suspicious activity to the sheriff's office, 247-8200.

## Illegal Dumping Violates County, State, Fed Laws

Maurer briefed members on the continued problem with illegal dumping in our area. One specific area is the vacated Eckerd's drug store at Bell Shoals and Boyette roads. Illegal dumping is also an environmental issue and can lead to big fines for county, state and federal violations.

## Students Can Help Council, Earn Service Hours

The BACC is looking for teenagers interested in becoming active members of the Sheriff's Community Council.

Volunteers will learn about the concerns of their community, how a community functions, how county departments work, and how the sheriff's office provides security and protection.

High school students can earn community service hours for time spent on the council.

Interested teenagers should contact Deputy Pete Maurer at 635-8040.

## POND

Continued From Page 4

plants to grow," said Waters.

In the late '90s, the Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission cited the neighborhood for the pond's poor condition. That's when residents decided to take action.

Waters applied for the minigrant and, in October, Belle Timbre was awarded \$1,500 to clean up and restore the retention pond within a year.

After developing a restoration plan, Waters and her neighbors purchased aquatic plants and rock for the pond near the subdivision's front entrance. Waters also applied for and was awarded \$2,500 by the Office of Neighborhood Relations to bring in low-volume irrigation for the flower beds at the entrance, a system which uses 10 percent less water than regular irrigation systems.

"We really want to stop wasting all this water. We also want to set a good example that we're concerned about our environment," said Waters.

Belle Timbre consists of 24 homes. About 20 neighbors turned out one Saturday to help get the work done.

Families weeded the edge of the pond, using rakes to rid the shallow areas of unsightly grass

and algae.

Waters said the restoration wouldn't have been possible without the county's help.

"We want to thank the Board of County Commissioners for creating the Office of Neighborhood Relations.

They keep us informed about what is going on in our area, and are so easy to work with," she said.

"The main purpose of the grant is to get people involved in any project that will benefit their community." Said Tony LaColla, neighborhood program coordinator for the Office of Neighborhood Relations.

Projects vary from newslet-

ters and Web site construction to youth programs, sporting activities, block parties and spring festivals.

"These projects help them meet their neighbors and actually talk to each other, some for the first time," said LaColla, adding that working toward a common goal unites the group and strengthens the bonds of the community.

The Office of Neighborhood Relations offers four grant programs: the Neighborhood Minigrant of \$1,500, available to any neighborhood or community group in unincorporated Hillsborough County; a cleanup grant of \$2,500; the low-volume irriga-

tion system grant of \$2,500; and the tree-planting grant, also \$2,500.

The latter three grants are available on a continuous basis. New Neighborhood Minigrant applications will be accepted until July 22, after which they'll be reviewed by a committee with the funds awarded after Oct. 1.

The Office of Neighborhood Relations hands out 60 to 65 grants per year, culled from more than 200 applications.

"It's a good thing to get that many," said LaColla, "and we encourage people to apply because there are a lot of great projects that can be done."

In applying for a minigrant

LaColla said "the more people from the neighborhood or community group involved the better."

The Office of Neighborhood Relations is holding an orientation for the minigrant program June 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Brandon Recreation Center, 502 E. Sadie St. The class will review the application, criteria, projects that qualify, and staff will answer any questions regarding the grants. Completed applications are due July 22.

Call: Nancy Rubin, 272-5860; e-mail rubinn@hillsboroughcounty.org, or Shelley Blood, bloods@hillsboroughcounty.org.

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## MINIGRANT

Continued From Page 4

ciations throughout Hillsborough County are being accepted through July 22.

Orientation classes are being offered around the county to help guide interested applicants through the process.

An orientation will be offered June 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Brandon Recreation Center, 502 E. Sadie St.

The deadline for applications is June 22. For applications and more information, visit [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/onr](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/onr) or call 272-5860.

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- 2008 River Crossing Drive....\$223,000
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- 3913 Turnbury Street .....\$255,000
- 2612 Clareside Drive .....\$264,000
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