

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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HERO LAUDED

Fire Rescue Station 7
Capt. Bill Riley goes
beyond the call of duty.

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WANTED: CITIZEN VOLUNTEERS

Hillsborough County
seeks volunteers for
boards and councils.

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High Honors



Photo courtesy of Dale Kahn

Bloomington Senior High School valedictorian, Melissa Chudow, left, accepts the 2007 B. J. Stelter Bloomington Community Scholarship Award from former school principal B. J. Stelter, center and Bloomington Homeowners Association vice president, Joe Hickle. The graduate expressed gratitude to Stelter and the homeowners association for awarding her with the \$2,000 scholarship. "It is such an incredible honor to win this award because of the reputation associated with Mrs. Stelter. I hope that in the years to come I will be able to live up to the ideals she represents." Chudow added, "I truly loved my experience at Bloomington, so it is extremely hard to narrow it down to what I enjoyed the most. If I had to choose, it would be the diversity, not only in the courses available, but also the opportunities to become actively involved in the school. I will miss the supportiveness of all the teachers and the administration at Bloomington more than anything else." Chudow will attend the University of Florida in the fall, with plans to major in pharmacy.

Congratulations Bloomington Class of 2007 — see page 12

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Bloomingtondale's Station 7 Captain Honored For Bravery

By LAURA FRAZIER

Capt. William "Bill" Riley of Brandon, a 27-year Hillsborough County Fire Rescue veteran, was among 20 local law enforcement and fire rescue personnel recognized in May for outstanding performance and acts of bravery.

At the 13th annual Our Heroes Luncheon, held May 4 at the Tampa Convention Center, Riley was presented with the 2007 Chet Tharpe Firefighter of the Year award. He was lauded for saving a young boy who was hit by a car, dragged for nearly 30 feet and subsequently pinned beneath the vehicle.

On Feb. 22, 2006, Riley and his crew at Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Station 7, at 122 W. Bloomingtondale Ave., responded to a call involving a child who was hit by a car while riding his bike home from school.

Arriving at the scene, the firefighters found an 8-year-old boy pinned beneath the rear axle of a Toyota Camry. The boy, seriously injured, was wedged between the car's hot muffler and the pavement below.

Riley -- an athlete, professional wrestler and competitive weightlifter -- managed to single-handedly lift the vehicle

four inches off the ground, allowing his crew to extract the boy from beneath the car.

Prior to the luncheon last month, the Hillsborough County Commission honored Riley for his heroic actions.

At a board meeting in October 2006, Commissioner Jim Norman said, "This just shows the value and the effort that our service people give every day. I'm so proud that the board of county commissioners, all of us, each and every one, can award this to Capt. Riley."

Station 7 Fire Chief, Bill Nesmith, said, "His size and his strength provided him the opportunity to save this individual. Truly he made a difference in this little boy's life, so we're very appreciative of his efforts."

Riley said, "There's almost a thousand of us (law enforcement and fire rescue personnel) out there now. Each and every one of them equally deserves an award like this, because each and every one of them do this stuff."

"I just got lucky, and Engine 7 had a really, really good day that day. Thank you very much."

A mural memorializing the rescue is painted on the wall of the Firehouse



Photo courtesy Our Heroes Luncheon
 Captain William Riley
 Subs sandwich shop across the street from Station 7 at 119 W. Bloomingtondale Avenue.

Annual Luncheon Benefit Families of Fallen Public Servants

Proceeds from the annual Our Heroes Luncheon to honor local law enforcement and fire rescue personnel for outstanding performance and acts of bravery, are donated to organizations that provide funds for public safety personnel training and equipment, as well as financial assistance to families and scholarships to children of fallen local, state and federal law officers and firefighters.

At the 2007 ceremony, four children received the Coy L. Sykes Memorial Scholarship, a four-year scholarship providing \$2,000 each year to apply towards tuition, housing, books, etc. To date, more than 50 children have received the scholarship.

This year's luncheon paid special tribute in memory of Florida Highway Patrol Sergeant Nicholas Sottile, an officer shot and killed during a traffic stop in January 2007 while on duty.

For more information, call (813) 233-7101 or visit www.tampabayheroes.org.

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County Seeks Volunteer Citizens for Board and Councils

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough County is currently recruiting volunteer citizens to serve on numerous boards and councils. All nominees must be registered voters in Hillsborough County. Appointments are voluntary positions and members serve without compensation.

Anyone who wishes to be considered for appointment must submit a completed questionnaire form to the county. Forms are available at County Center, 2nd Floor, Commissioners' reception area, downtown Tampa, or by calling the Boards and Councils Coordinator, (813) 272-5826. The form is also available on the county's web site, www.hillsboroughcounty.org. Click on the County Commission link, then go to Advisory Boards and Councils.

Appointments will be scheduled for meetings of the Board of County Commissioners in June or July 2007. Other requirements are listed as follows:

CHILD CARE FACILITIES ADVISORY BOARD

This Board advises the Board of County Commissioners on recommended amendments to the Child Care Facilities Ordinance; proposes additional rules and regulations to the Board of County Commissioners which effectuate the intent and purpose of the Ordinance; recommends and assists the Hillsborough County Office of Child Care Licensing in the development and implementation of training materials for child care personnel. It also advises the Hillsborough County Office of Child Care Licensing on all matters pertaining to child care facilities.

One term is vacant due to resignation. Position is for remainder of term which expires 12/31/08. Position is specified as a member of an accrediting organization of a religiously exempt facility. Appointment to this board is contingent upon passing a criminal background check.

Meeting schedule: At least quarterly, first Thursday of the month, 1 p.m.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

This Board examines and advises department management on the development and operation of programs that treat children with special needs. The board also advises on parent training programs, emergency shelter service, and residential treatment programs for children in Hillsborough County. It also assures the coordination of Head Start and Early Head Start services with all other Children's Services offered by the County.

One term is expiring. Term is for four years. Nominees are to have a demonstrated interest in the welfare of children. Appointment to this board is contingent upon passing a criminal background check.

Meeting schedule: At least six times annually.

CONSUMER PROTECTION BOARD

This Board acts as a quasi-judiciary body to enforce the provisions of the Consumer Protection Ordinance.

Three terms have expired. Terms are for two years. Positions are specified as: (1) an unincorporated Hillsborough County resident, owner/operator/manager, business operating in Unincorporated Hillsborough County; (2) a Plant City resident; and (3) a Temple Terrace resident. Citizen appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly, second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m.

ELECTRICAL BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, APPEALS AND EXAMINERS

This Board confirms the competency and integrity of applicants applying for electrical certification in the County, and takes disciplinary action against those contractors that fail to comply with the Electrical Code.

One position is vacant. Term

is for four years. Position is specified as a representative of an Electrical Utility Company. Citizen appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly, third Thursday of the month, 8:30 a.m.

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME ADVISORY BOARD

This Board annually reviews and advises the Board of County Commissioners on recommended amendments to the Family Child Care Homes Licensing Ordinance or the Rules and Regulations Handbook including recommending and assisting the local licensing agency in the development and implementation of training materials for child care personnel; advising the local licensing agency on matters of licensing policy, procedure, and priorities; and proposes additional rules and regulations regarding the intent and purpose of the ordinance.

Four positions are vacant, one due to resignation. Positions are specified as (1 & 2) parents who have a child enrolled in a licensed family day care home, and (3 & 4) licensed family child care home operators. Three terms are for three years, and one is for the remainder of a term which expires 12/31/08. Appointment to this board is contingent upon passing a criminal background check.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly, third Thursday of the month, 7 p.m.

GAS BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, APPEALS AND EXAMINERS

This Board governs the certification of gas contractors doing work in Hillsborough County and enforces adherence to the standards set by the Gas Code.

One position is vacant. Term is for four years. Position is specified as a liquid petroleum installer. Citizen appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly, third Thursday of the month, 11 a.m.

HEALTH CARE ADVISORY BOARD

The purpose of the Health Care Advisory Board is to improve accessibility and efficiency of care for medically poor residents of Hillsborough County through annual recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for fund allocation, coordination, planning, and monitoring of health care delivery systems.

Five positions are expiring. Positions are for four years. Positions are specified as: (1) a Hillsborough County indigent health care plan consumer; (2) an at-large representative; (3) a consumer nonprofit organization representative; (4) a mental health care provider; and (5) a health insurance industry representative.

Meeting schedule: Monthly, third Thursday, 3 p.m.

HISTORIC RESOURCES REVIEW BOARD

This Board serves as an architectural review board for the protection of historic resources in unincorporated Hillsborough County. It recommends archaeological and historical sites for landmark designation and reviews alterations and new construction on landmark sites or districts.

Two terms are expiring and two positions are vacant, one due to resignation. This has an unexpired term ending 6/30/08. The other terms are for three years. Positions are specified as (1) an architect; (2) an anthropologist or archaeologist; (3) a planner or landscape architect or real estate developer or broker; and (4) a Historian (unexpired term). Citizens appointed to this board are required to reside in the unincorporated area of Hillsborough County.

Meeting schedule: Monthly, third Tuesday, 4 p.m.

HOSPITAL AUTHORITY

This Authority monitors the lease between the Authority and the Florida Health Science Center, Inc. with respect to occupying the Authority's Davis

Island property and operating Tampa General Hospital. Specifically, certain indigent care, MBE and campus maintenance obligations are reviewed and monitored by the Authority.

Four terms are expiring. Terms are for four years. Citizen appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure. Members who are practitioners of the healing arts may not constitute more than three members of the Authority at any given time.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly, generally fourth Monday, 9 a.m.

LAND USE APPEALS BOARD

This Board hears Appeals of decisions of the Land Use Officer on special use permits and variances from zoning regulations. The Land Development Code was amended which set specific criteria for membership of the Land Use Appeals Board.

One term has expired. Term is for three years. Position is specified as a business owners or operators. Citizens considered for this board must be residents of the unincorporated area of the county. Citizens appointed to this board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure.

Meeting schedule: Monthly, first Friday, 9 a.m.

MECHANICAL BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, APPEALS AND EXAMINERS

This Board confirms the competency and integrity of applicants applying for mechanical certification in the County, and takes disciplinary action against those contractors that fail to comply with the Mechanical Code.

Two positions are vacant. Terms are for two years. Positions are specified as alternates. Nominees for alternate positions must be knowledgeable and experienced in the technical codes of the mechanical industry. Citizens appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly,

Your Inside Connections

BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION INC.

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Treasurer: David West
Trustees: Joe Harless; Joe Liguori; David Steck
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THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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Recent County Revenue, Spending Warrant Closer Look



Gazette file photo
Commissioner Al Higginbotham represents District IV, which includes the Bloomingdale community.

By AL HIGGINBOTHAM
Hillsborough County Commissioner,
District IV

The last time I wrote to you, I told you of upcoming storms in the skies of property tax reform and comprehensive land use planning – I think my forecast was pretty accurate!

But May's flowers from these showers are a bit delayed as the Florida Legislature deferred property tax reform to a special session beginning the second week of June.

This delay gave me time to take stock of how Hillsborough County's budget reflects the priorities of its citizens.

When I campaigned for this office, the issue on which I heard the most from voters was the need for property tax reform. You elected me to ensure that a common-sense approach is used in spending your tax dollars – a responsibility I take seriously

and which led me to conduct an in-depth study of county spending.

I studied changes in revenues to the county and changes in spending since 2001, and I'd like to share my findings with you.

Hillsborough County has been proactive in trying to reign in spending. In February, the government watch group Florida Tax Watch commended Hillsborough for "taking the first steps at true budget reform" when we imposed a three percent per-year cap in certain types of government spending. Additionally, in each year since 1996, the commission has reduced the millage rate which determines your taxes.

Despite these proactive measures, revenues to the county have increased dramatically. In the overheated real estate market of the past six years, ad valorem property tax revenues to Hills-

borough County have increased nearly 63 percent. Other taxes have brought in more revenue as well – property, fuel, sales, and other taxes to the county brought in 65 percent more revenue in 2006 than 2001. Licenses and permitting fees have brought in more than 70 percent more revenue since 2001.

All this happened in a time of historically low inflation and while personal incomes rose at less than half that rate.

These increased revenues have caused the county's budget to swell almost \$1 billion. The question I want to answer is, "What did we do with these increased revenues?"

There are several ways that we could study these changes in spending, and I chose to look at the types of programs in which we spent the money. These categories include funding for personnel, programs and services,

and capital expenditures like buildings and equipment.

The largest share of these increased revenues went to areas of public safety. Twenty-seven percent went to law enforcement, detention and corrections, fire rescue, the medical examiner, consumer protection and disaster relief. Another 25 percent went into improving and expanding our water and wastewater resources, the conservation of environmentally sensitive land and environmental protection. Some of these funds are generated by the fees you pay for water and sewer services.

General government services accounted for another 25 percent of this increase primarily through outreach services like the new county service centers and for paying the interest on money we borrowed to build roads, libraries, and other facilities.

See COUNTY, Page 19

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Queen For A Day

Knicole Freideman, left, crowns Marilyn Hough "Queen For The Day" at a spring fashion show and tea held May 12 at Celebration Church, 1653 Bloomingdale Ave. in Valrico. In honor of Mother's Day, church members submitted letters nominating the special women in their lives for the award. Hough's daughter, Jennifer Curington, nominated her because, "She has always been there for me through everything. She helped me raise my son from the day he was born." Curington said her mother always reaches out to help and befriend those in need, adding, "She has such a giving heart." The event was sponsored by La Chic Boutique Upscale Retail in Brandon.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo



The Johnson Team

Putting clients' needs in front of their own is the goal of Johnson Realty Group leaders Chris and Stacy Johnson. Chris grew up in Lutz and served eight years in the Navy. While stationed in Arizona, he met Stacy, who was in the Air Force at the time. They have been married for 10 years, live in Valrico and have two sons. In the real estate business for the past two years, Chris has sold more than 100 homes. Chris heads the Johnson Realty Group team and Stacy manages the office. Both have the experience and professionalism you need when looking for your first, next or investment home anywhere in Hillsborough County. A team within SignatureRealty Associates, the Johnson Realty Group specializes in single-family, affordable homes, working with every price range and representing clients as they themselves would want to be represented. To put Chris and his team to work for you, call (813) 425-5923 or e-mail him at johnsonhometeam@tampabay.rr.com or visit www.johnsonhometeam.com.

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Elections Supervisor Prepares For Switch To New Voting System

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections Buddy Johnson has no doubts that a new paper voting system will be up and running smoothly when county voters go to the polls for the fall 2008 elections.

"Ever since the governor announced his intention of switching all county voting systems to paper ballots, we've been researching and preparing for the change," Johnson said. He admits it will be a challenge and that there will be additional costs involved.

Following Governor Charlie Crist's lead, the Florida Legislature has voted to eliminate

computerized touch screen machines at all polling places. The only exceptions will be for people with disabilities.

Hillsborough is one of 15 counties in Florida that has been using touch screen technology to record votes. Beginning in the 2008 primary election, all counties will switch to paper ballots that will be read by optical scanners.

Although critics have assailed the touch screen machines in other jurisdictions, Johnson said the machines have worked well in Hillsborough County and voters here are confident in the system.

"However, I applaud the

governor's leadership in diffusing what could become a potential controversy in the 2008 elections," Johnson said. "No one wants a repeat of the 2000 elections controversy," he added, referring to the numerous problems of the old punch card system that the legislature has since banned.

Although the legislature has appropriated funds to help counties like Hillsborough convert to paper ballots, Johnson said there will be additional costs. For example, the state will pay for one optical character reader at each polling place. But, Johnson said, there should be two readers at each of the

more than 300 polling sites, and each site will need screens so voters can make their selections in private.

However, the biggest challenge, Johnson said, will be in trying to find a way to recoup at least some of the \$13 million his predecessor spent on the more than 3,000 touch screen machines currently in use.

There is also concern about whether manufacturers of the optical scan voting systems can manufacture and deliver the machines in enough time to have them properly tested and elections staff thoroughly trained on the new system.

"But, whatever the chal-



Buddy Johnson

lenges, the governor and the legislature have spoken, and we will have the new system up and running in 2008," Johnson said.

Switching to a completely new voting system is but one of the challenges facing Johnson and his staff in the coming months.

"We're also gearing up new voter outreach and education programs to engage more citizens in the election process, updating our data systems, creating new and innovative options for citizens to cast their votes," Johnson said.

One project he speaks of with pride is the High School Voter Registration & Education

Program. More than 6,000 county high school students have been registered or pre-registered to vote since last year. Members of Johnson's staff visit every county high school, informing seniors about their responsibility to participate in our democratic process by registering to vote and then making their voices heard at the ballot box.

"Voting in free elections is the backbone of our democracy and a right that should be cherished by all Americans," Johnson said.

For more information, call (813) 272-5850 or visit www.votehillsborough.org.

16-Year-Olds Can Pre-Register To Vote

A Gazette Report

A new rule signed into law in May allows teens to pre-register to vote at the time they obtain their driver's license.

Once they are registered, they will receive a voter identification card in the mail on their 18th birthday, without the

need for additional sign-ups.

Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections, Buddy Johnson, said he pushed the idea earlier this year with members of the Florida Legislature to lower the pre-registration age from 17 to 16. Johnson said, "Most teens consider a driver's license

their first -- and most exciting -- step to freedom. I want to make it easier for them to take another exciting step toward freedom by pre-registering to vote as they get their driver's license."

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Bloomingtondale Resident Vies For Honorary Mayor Title

A Gazette Report

George May, a Windsor Woods resident and Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association board member, is one of two candidates vying for the title of Honorary Mayor of Brandon. May is the owner of American Investment Advisors of Brandon, Inc.

His opponent is Wayne Otto, owner of Otto's Doors on Adamo Drive.

The mayor's race is run by the Roundtable Charities of Greater Brandon Inc., more commonly known as the Presidents' Roundtable. The group also sponsors the Brandon Fourth of July Parade.

The candidate who raises the most money for charity from June 1 to July 4 wins the race. Ten percent of all campaign proceeds are given to the roundtable, whose membership is open to representatives from all greater Brandon area charities.

Otto is raising money for a Brandon Performing Arts Center building fund.

May, who is raising money on behalf of the Greater Brandon Community Foundation and the Brandon Outreach Clinic,



George May

recently announced his slate of upcoming campaign charity fundraisers.

The Baby Boomer Birthday Bash is set

for June 8 at the Palmetto Club at Fish-Hawk Ranch, 17004 Dorman Road. The event, started four years ago by a group of friends to celebrate their 50th birthdays, has been described as one of the best parties in Brandon. The bash will be catered by Carrabba's Italian Grill. Entertainment will be provided by Otis Velt and the Old School Band and the Brandon Blues Brothers.

Other fundraisers May plans include a golf tournament June 7 at Bloomingtondale Golfers Club; a Toga party June 16 at the home of Cliff and Terry Curry; a Full Monty Tour/Brandon Blues Brothers show June 21 at O'Brien's Irish Pub in Carrollwood, June 23 at O'Brien's in Plant City and June 28 at the restaurant's Brandon location. In addition, a Bachelor Auction with Full Monty Show will be held June 30 at the Italian Club in Ybor City.

Brandon's first honorary Mayor's race, held in 1959, was won by Nat Storms.

For more information about May's race for mayor and to purchase donation tickets for his fundraisers, call (813) 924-8642.



Patrice Valore Interior Decorator

Art and design have been an integral part of Patrice Valore's entire life. The talented Apollo Beach resident began her art career after earning a Bachelor's Degree in Art & Design from the University of Maryland. Patrice has worked as a graphic artist, watercolorist, teacher, illustrator and interior decorator. One of her most rewarding positions was as gallery director for an arts program designed to teach at-risk adolescents with special needs job skills through the arts. Immediately after earning her Master's Degree in Marketing, she began her own business as an independently owned franchise with INTERIORS by Decorating Den, a 36-year-old international company. Home is your sanctuary, and Patrice can create your own personal space to reflect your taste and style, within your budget. INTERIORS by Decorating Den offers one-stop shopping, featuring a large selection of window treatments, bedding, carpets, area rugs, lighting, furniture and accessories - all conveniently brought to your door step. Let Patrice share her talent with you, call (813) 671-9904, e-mail her at pvalore@yahoo.com or visit www.decdens.com/pvalore

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Newland Communities Purchases Lake Hutto Land

A Gazette Report

On May 25, Newland Communities acquired three parcels of land adjacent to the FishHawk Ranch community. The land, known locally as Lake Hutto, was previously owned by Pulte Homes. The non-contiguous parcels, totaling 1,129 acres, are approved for approximately 3,200 homes and 360,000 square feet of retail and office space.

Newland will assume responsibility for a number of financial and land contributions totaling nearly \$75 million, most particularly \$72 million in road improvements.

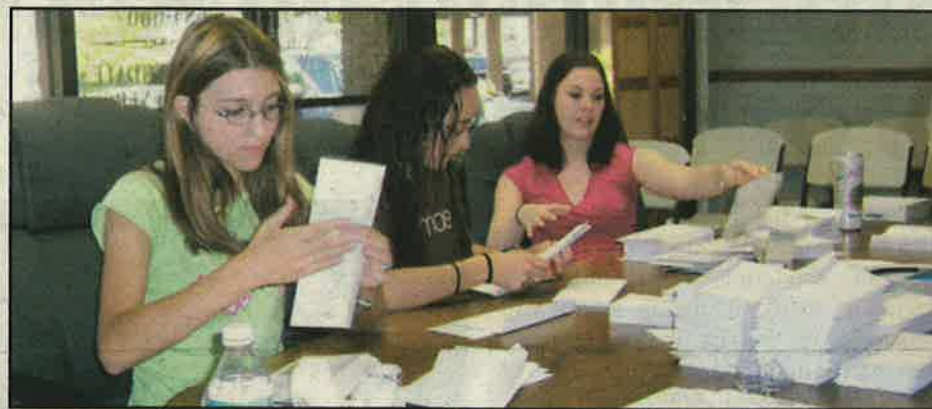
Don Whyte, President, Southeast, for Newland Communities,

said, "The transportation improvements are important to the entire community, and we're pushing the engineering and design along now rather than waiting any longer."

Newland reps said the company will begin planning the development on an expedited schedule, beginning with several community meetings with FishHawk Ranch residents. The initial phase of the new community is expected to break ground in late 2008. The community is temporarily being referred to as FishHawk West. Whyte said a final name will be determined this fall.

For more information, visit www.fishhawkwest.com.

Volunteers Have The Right Stuff



Gazette file photo (2006)

In preparation for its 2007 Membership Dues Drive, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association is planning an upcoming envelope stuffing party at the community office. Adult and teen volunteers are needed to help assemble and affix postage to the annual dues notices. High school students who help with the project are eligible to receive community service hour credits. The event date will be announced on www.bloomingtongazette.com, or call (813) 681-2051 for more information.



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Homeowners, Businesses Boost PTSA Event

A Gazette Report

Bloomington Senior High School Parent Teacher Association's annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, held at the school May 10, was a huge success. A generous donation by the Bloomington Homeowners Association this year allowed the important tradition to continue.

A buffet was served to all staff members in appreciation for their efforts throughout the school year, and many prizes were distributed during the luncheon. The delicious food served came from Pita's Republic which

opened recently in Bloomington Square. All the drinks were provided by Sweetbay Supermarket, with additional sandwich platters from Subway Restaurant.

PTSA luncheon coordinators Beth Nobles and Thyra Hayes would like to thank all the volunteers who obtained gifts, provided food, assisted in picking up donated items, helped with set up and clean up and helped serve food. Thank you to Bev Snelling, Brenda Esprit, Carla Downie, Cathy Forest, Connie Lay, Cynthia Alloway, Dale Wozniak, Deb Starr, Dianne Johansen, Doug

Alloway, Eva Applebee, John Hayes, Lynda Ratliff, Michelle Neal, Pam Brooks, Patty Zatkovich, Paula Fleck, and Robin Rogovin.

They would also like to thank all the local businesses who provided food, drinks, and gifts. The organization encourages Bloomington families to remember the support provided to the PTSA and annual luncheon by Albertsons Supermarket (Lithia Pinecrest/Bloomington); Animal Medical Center; Applebee's Neighborhood Grill and Bar; Asonipse Spa & Salon; The

Athletic Club Health & Wellness Center; Blooming Nail; Bloomington Florist; Entenmanns; Gel-ee-Beans; Green Boutique; Janet Matthews; Lithia Card and Gift; Lucy's Hair Design; MJ Barleyhopper's; Massage Envy; McDonalds (Bloomington Square); Mellow Mushroom; Michelle A. Kehoe; Moe's Southwest Grill; National Air Cargo; Orange; Pepperidge Farms; The Pizza Pie; Planet Beach; Port City Java; Robeck's; Shapes Fitness (Lumsden); Subway (Bloomington Square); Sweetbay Supermarket (Bloom-

ington); Westshore Pizza; and Zaxby's.

The PTSA would like to continue this tradition in years to come. However, PTSA membership is down to a bare minimum. Please consider joining the PTSA next school term to provide funds for this and many other functions the PTSA provides throughout the year. Your PTSA membership not only provides you with benefits from many businesses; it also supports our teachers and school. For more information call the school, (813) 744-8018.

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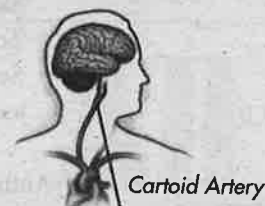
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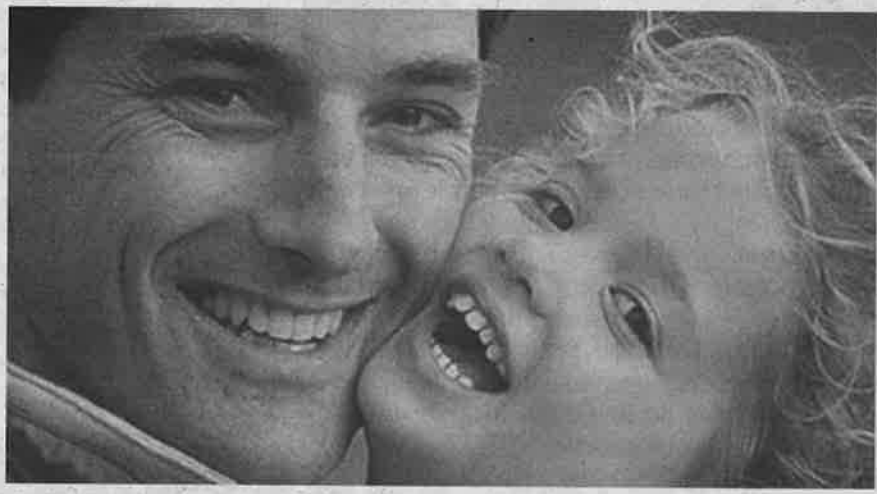
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Winner's Mark



Photo courtesy of April Lehoulier

Bloomingdale Regional Public Library's Friends of the Library on April 17 announced the winners of its bookmark design contest, pictured in back, Gabriel Maxwell, Jacob Fink; middle row, Devin Masson, Olivia Masson, Saylar Pascoe, Matthew Knowlton; in front, Joshua Puebla, Rachel Cabosky; not pictured, Dani Manganello, Mac Parsons, Angela Machina, Shawna Smelt and Laura Bober. Winners received an award certificate, a magnetic reproduction of their bookmark and copies for distribution to friends and family members. Friends volunteer Pat Boody said the bookmarks are in strong demand at the circulation desk. Bloomingdale Library is at 1906 Bloomingdale Avenue, Valrico. For more information call (813) 301-7257.

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PROPERTY MANAGER'S REPORT

A Gazette Report

Al Devney of Devney Property Management Inc., is property manager for the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District. Devney serves as a project coordinator for maintenance and improvement projects approved by the taxing district's board of trustees. He also provides regular inspections of Bloomingdale's common areas, entryways and irrigation systems. To report a property maintenance or repair need, call Devney at (813) 684-6667 or e-mail bloomindale.district@verizon.net.

The property manager reports the following maintenance and repair activities took place in April 2007:

- The eight American flags were lowered and raised in honor of the Virginia Tech shooting victims. The flags at John Moore and Erindale entrances were replaced due to wear and tear.
- Thunder Irrigation repaired two main line leaks in the Greenhollow system and replaced a pump control box for the Calista system.
- The Sandy Creek entrance sign at the corner of Garnet and Canoga park was destroyed by vandalism. A new sign was made and installed by Signs by Mineo.

- A section of aluminum fence on Erindale and the Heritage park entrance lights was vandalized. New lights and the section of fence have been ordered and will be installed in the near future.

- Thunder Irrigation was awarded the contract to replace 500 existing sprinkler heads with new 6-inch pop-up sprinkler heads in the Rivercrossing and Kendal irrigation systems.

- The contract to upgrade the Links and Gotham irrigation systems will be awarded in the near future.

- Morningstar Electric repaired an electrical problem with the lights at the Holleman entrance.

- The entrance lights on the south side and the flag pole light at the John Moore entrance were vandalized. The lights and receptacles were replaced.

- The remaining oak trees on Natures Way, Springvale and Culbreath were measured to determine if they meet the 13-foot, 6-inch criteria. There are 295 trees remaining that need to have their canopy raised and balanced. The initial notices have been prepared and mailed to a number of contractors. A pre-bid meeting will be held in

May and the bid opening will be at the June meeting.

- The results of the soil samples taken and processed by Graco Fertilizer company indicate a very high level of calcium and phosphorous on Natures Way and a very high level of Zinc and calcium on Greenhollow. The PH levels were 8.0 to 8.95 throughout the area. Neighborhood Pest Control was faxed copies of the test results and is going to talk to the Greco representative so they can advise corrective actions that can be taken to correct the problems.

- In April, Devney met with contractors and homeowners' association members to discuss sign paintings, landscape replacement, electrical problems, tree trimming, vandalism and fence repaired. Additionally two vandalism reports were filed with Hillsborough County Sheriff Office.

- In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, Devney collected 22 bags of trash, an electric typewriter, an umbrella stroller, a biker's water bottle, a cell phone, a 2-foot by 3-foot magnetic sign, 32 snipe signs and 13 cents. Additionally, there were 38 lights replaced.

SEEKS

From page 16

third Thursday of the month, 10 a.m.

PLUMBING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT, APPEALS AND EXAMINERS

This Board confirms the competency and integrity of applicants applying for plumbing certification in the County, and takes disciplinary action against those contractors that fail to comply with the Plumbing Code.

One position is vacant. Term is for four years. Position is specified as a registered engineer. Citizens appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure.

Meeting schedule: Quarterly, third Tuesday of the month, 1 p.m.

PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

This 12 member Board works with the Board of County Commissioners regarding the operation of the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System, including future planning and policy developments.

Four terms are expiring and one position is vacant due to resignation. Expiring terms are for three years. Vacant position is for remainder of term which expires 6/30/08. Positions are specified as residents of Districts 1 (two positions), 2, 3, and 4. Appointment to this board is contingent upon passing a criminal background check.

Meeting schedule: Monthly, fourth Thursday, 4 p.m.

SPORTS AUTHORITY (TAMPA)

This Authority was created by the Florida Legislature in 1965 to plan, develop, and

maintain sports and recreational facilities for residents of Tampa and Hillsborough County. It owns and operates the Raymond James Stadium, the home of the NFL franchise Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and the University of South Florida Bulls football team. In addition, the TSA owned the St. Pete Times Forum until December 20, 2004 when it was conveyed ownership to Hillsborough County. Also, the TSA manages three public golf courses for the City of Tampa.

Two terms are expiring. Terms are for four years. Members appointed by the BOCC are limited to residents who do not live in the City of Tampa limits. Citizens appointed to this Board will be required to file an annual financial disclosure.

Meeting schedule: Monthly, third Monday, 4 p.m.

Residents Urged To Prepare For Storms, Keep Watch On Teens This Summer

By PETE MAURER
Bloomingtondale Community Resource Deputy

Time To Prepare For Storms

This is a special note to all Bloomingtondale residents, particularly those who have moved here in the past year. If this is your first hurricane season, please pay attention to the following info. Likewise, if this is your 10th hurricane season, please pay attention to the following info.

Those of us in law enforcement need your help. When a hurricane or strong tropical storm approaches our area, we will all be working up until the storm arrives and especially after it has gone through our area. This is called the disaster recovery phase.

Our emergency management professionals tell us that all residents should be prepared to take care of themselves for the first 72 hours following a storm. This is a critical time when it will be very difficult for us to reach all of our assigned areas due to downed power lines, fallen trees or flooding.

All residents should prepare their families, homes and businesses to be self-sufficient until this period of time has passed. There are several sources of information available that tell you how to prepare. You can start with checking out www.hillsboroughcounty.org/emergency.

See WATCH, Page 18



Pete Maurer, Bloomingtondale's Community Resource Deputy, works out of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bloomingtondale Substation at 4342 Bell Shoals Road.

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Council Addresses Accidents, Vandalism, Fire Dangers

By MACK AUSTIN

Members of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC) held their monthly meeting in April to discuss topics of concern in our area and community.

The first concern discussed is a very serious one – traffic accidents and specifically accidents with children and teens involved.

Traffic Crash Analyst Todd O'Heir, a council member who was recently promoted and now covers vehicle accident investigations. He noted that in over 50% of the accidents in our area where there are serious injuries or deaths, the drivers and/or

passengers are not wearing their seatbelts.

"This is such a simple but critical action to take. Everyone must get into the habit! Simply put, it save lives," O'Heir said.

Community Service Officer (CSO) Sandy Capitano briefed members on the recent legislation that would have required booster seats for children ages 4-8.

"This very important bill did not pass due to the vote of one representative. Why he would not support it is not known. But I do know from the statistics that we receive that many children are seriously injured or killed because they are simply buckled in with the adult belts and

are not in a booster seat. Parents should take note of these facts and use booster seats," Capitano said.

Vandalism in our area and particularly around neighborhood entrances was discussed. Increased vandalism has resulted in over \$8000, yes, that's eight thousand dollars, in damage to lighting systems, sprinkler systems and other community property. Residents are asked to keep a watch for this type of criminal activity and report it. It does reflect on the character of our community.

Council members were asked to help spread the word about the increasing number of calls by deputies to "false alarms" from

residences' security systems. It was noted that these calls can be very expensive to residents. The Sheriff's policy requires a charge for false alarm calls after the first one. Residents should check their systems'

Sensors and settings carefully to help prevent the false alarms.

With the large number of wooded areas in our community, with many very close to homes and with the fire danger still at a high level, concern was noted about brush fires. Council member Howard Raymond said he is working to insure the area around his residence has underbrush removed to help prevent fires.

"Other residents should also

take preventative measures," Raymond said.

Residents should watch for suspicious activities in any wooded areas near their homes and report these to the Sheriff's Office or Community Station.

All Bloomingdale residents should check to insure their homeowner's association is represented on the Community Council and have their representatives attend the monthly meetings to address their concerns.

The council meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at the Sheriff's Community Station by Beef O'Brady's on Bell Shoals Road. For more information call Deputy Maurer, (813) 635-8040.

WATCH

From page 17

Please take the time now to prepare. Your preparation will help us serve and protect you, your family and your homes and businesses. Together we will survive!

Keep Kids At Home Summer-Safe

The good news for your kids is that there is no homework and no classes, just lots of fun and games -- and lots of time. Hopefully this time will be spent staying out of trouble. The news for parents is that now is the time

to be sure you know where your kids are, especially teens, and what they are doing.

Many teens spend a lot of time at home alone while their parents are working. This is why it is extremely important for parents to sit down with your kids and talk about the need to be careful,

to be cautious and to think. It is very important to emphasize to 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.

This free time offers opportunities to have fun and relax, but it also leaves open the time to get into trouble. Parents, you must know where your kids are at all times and 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. So, 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

National Safety Month is a special time to emphasize the importance of all areas of safety -- where we live, where we work and where we play.

One of our greatest dangers is when 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 involved while driving.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and the Florida Highway Patrol give their full support to promoting driving safety in our area. We ask that all parents in the Bloomingdale community do the same. And remember, "Buckle up! Click it or get a ticket."

LIFE = DAD

Make this Father's Day one he'll never forget.

Express your gratitude and love with a special greeting printed Sunday, June 17, in The Tampa Tribune's BayLife Section.

Ads without photos may have one of the following attention getters:



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THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

County Offers Neighborhood Project Grants

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough County is offering grants of up to \$1,500 to neighborhood associations.

Orientation classes for the Neighborhood Mini-Grants Program began May 29 and run through July 10. The deadline for mini-grant applications is July 20. The class most convenient to the Bloomingdale area will be held at 6:30 p.m. on June 19 at Brandon Regional Library, 619 Vonderburg Drive in Brandon. For additional classes and more information, call the county's Office of Neighborhood Relations, (813) 272-5860 or visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org/onr/.

Obedience Training Available At Dapper Doggie

A Gazette Report

Samantha Bednar, Certified Canine Training and Behavioral Specialist, will offer two six-week dog obedience training sessions starting this month at Dapper Doggie in Bloomingdale Square, 881 E. Bloomingdale Avenue.

The one-hour classes will be held on Tuesday evenings or Sat-

urday afternoons. Tuesday classes begin June 5 at 6 p.m. on. Saturday classes start June 9 at 1 p.m. on. The first class is a sign-up and lecture without dogs.

Dogs of all ages -- four months and up -- are eligible. All shots must be up to date.

The group class is designed for owners and dogs to learn

new behaviors and manners in a controlled environment with the added benefit of distraction, by working around the noise and presence of other people, dogs, and more.

Topics covered include socialization, how dogs learn, loose leash walking, and clickers, for pet owners who wish to use them.

Commands dogs will learn include sit, down, come and stay. Behaviors include proper greetings, courtesy at doors and store manners.

The class also includes a fun and games session with teaching tricks and a "fastest learner" contest.

Required equipment includes

a regular flat collar, whatever collar or harness you normally use, a six-foot leash (no flexi-leads), treats (small bites, preferably soft) and a clicker, if you would like to use one.

Cost is \$100 per dog. Class size is limited. For more information call (813) 662-0560 or visit www.dapperdoggie.com.

Verizon Crews Deploy FiOS In Bloomingdale

A Gazette Report

Verizon crews at work in Bloomingdale are replacing portions of the company's copper facilities with fiber-optic upgrades to enhance network reliability, improve service quality and "future proof" the community for technology advancements in TV, Internet and phone service.

Gary Campau, Verizon's Southeast Regional Marketing Manager, contacted the Bloomingdale Homeowners Associa-

tion in May to advise the group about the upgrades.

"Verizon wants to educate and inform the residents and board members on the many advantages and benefits of deploying Verizon FiOS in their community," Campau said.

Verizon also announced introductory pricing for a new triple-play bundle that features the company's 20 megabits-per-second (Mbps) downstream, 5 Mbps upstream service and a new double-play bundle. The new and 3 percent supported affordable housing, veteran's services and attracting new industry to the county.

Over the next few weeks, as we work with the Legislature to develop a sound, sustainable, common-sense and conservative tax policy, the county commission will work through the difficult task of prioritizing our

bundles, which will complement the company's existing 5 Mbps bundle, will be available immediately for FiOS-eligible customers in Hillsborough, Pasco, Manatee, Sarasota and Pinellas counties. More households, including many in Bloomingdale, will become FiOS-eligible in 2007 and beyond as Verizon continues to deploy more fiber and secure additional cable franchise agreements.

According to Verizon, at 20 Mbps, consumers can expect spending during a tough budget crunch.

I'd like to hear what your priorities are, so please call me at

download experiences from the Internet unlike anything they have witnessed before. For example, customers can download a two-hour movie in around nine minutes or a one-hour video or 20-40 digital photographs in approximately 20 seconds. With 5 Mbps upload speed, users also enjoy super-fast delivery of content to friends and family.

The FiOS Premier TV package was recently enhanced with the addition of three high-definition (HD) channels to the

(813) 272-5740 or e-mail me at higginbothama@hillsboroughcounty.org. I look forward to working with you, because I

national lineup, bringing to 29 the number of HD channels available in Florida -- the most of any television provider, according to Verizon. Freedom Essentials offers unlimited local and long-distance calling, along with caller ID, voice mail and call waiting, as well as the 99.9 percent reliability and user security Verizon promises with its landline network.

For information about FiOS and other Verizon services, visit www.verizon.net.

know that working together we will make a difference.

COUNTY

From page 6

Finally, 9 percent went to transportation to improve the flow of traffic on Hillsborough County's most clogged roadways; 6 percent went to parks, recreation programs and libraries; 5 percent went to health programs and public assistance;

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