

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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Ending on a high note

After 35 years of teaching music, Beverly Sutherland is celebrated in song. See story, page 4.

INSIDE

Operation Medicine Cabinet

Residents will be able to clean out their in-house pharmacies as well as their yards thanks to Operation Medicine Cabinet become a part of the June 11th BHA Community Cleanup day. See story, page 6.

SUSAN GREEN

The Ambassadors, a show choir long shepherded by retiring chorus director Beverly Sutherland, performs "Fly Me to the Moon" at a farewell concert May 12 at Bloomingdale High School.



Beverly Sutherland, retiring after a 35-year career as a music director, conducts one of several choirs at her last concert May 12 at Bloomingdale Senior High School.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Never look down on anybody unless you're helping him up."

Author Unknown



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Students past and present sing praises of retiring choral director

BY SUSAN GREEN

When Beverly Sutherland started teaching, teenagers were still spinning music from vinyl records and trying to find their way into adulthood in hip-hugger, bell-bottom jeans.

As she retires 35 years later, she looks out on fresh faces that may be framed by green or purple hair and punctuated by piercings. For many students, separation anxiety means living without an I-pod or cell phone at their ear during school hours, and almost any tune they want is available at the touch of a computer mouse.

The world has changed, but Sutherland's main achievement as a music teacher, sounded over and over again at a farewell concert last month, remains the same:

"They helped us grow as people. They taught us confidence," said Kristen Richardson, an officer in Bloomingdale High School's beginning chorus, as she thanked Sutherland and intern Jenn Mani-

no during a standing-room-only concert May 12 at Bloomingdale High School.

"And Ms. Sutherland taught us not to fidget."

Over and over, students and colleagues reminded Sutherland that she had taught them more than how to round their vowels, sound their consonants and stand still during performances. Her legacy to thousands of students is increased poise, discipline and a sense of teamwork to get the job done.

The concert marked the last time the longtime choral director would conduct hundreds of voices in song on a very familiar stage. She tried in vain to focus the program on the outgoing class of seniors embarking on college or career adventures, but students and colleagues insisted on recognizing the chapters of Sutherland's life - new and old - as she transitions into retirement.

Students serenaded their mentor with specially chosen tunes, including "To Suth, with Love."



Beverly Sutherland, retiring from Bloomingdale High School after a 35-year career as a music director, dabs at her eyes as she learns of a gift of a trip to Scotland, presented by students, colleagues and music booster members at a farewell concert May 12.



SUSAN GREEN

Beverly Sutherland, retiring after 35 years of teaching, reacts to jokes from students and colleagues at a farewell concert.

Despite her best efforts, Sutherland spent much of the concert dabbing her eyes.

"I don't think I've been that emotional in ... well, in ever," she said a few days later.

Students, colleagues and members of Bloomingdale's music booster programs raised \$8,500 to send Sutherland to Scotland, long a dream destination for the teacher. She said she plans to go this summer.

Apart from that, Sutherland's retirement was a bittersweet moment. Asked by band director Jon Sever what she most wanted to do with her new spare time, she replied, "Go to the beach," and "You know, teach."

She said later she had entered the state's Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) a few years ago, with hopes of teaching beyond the typical five-year DROP period if possible. Legislative changes this year did away with that option.

Sutherland, who attended Brandon High when it was housed at what is now McLane Middle School, graduated from the University of Tampa and began teaching at her alma mater - then a junior high school - in 1975. She taught at King High from 1979 to '92, then at Bloomingdale from 1992 on, except for a stint at Newsome High from 2004-06. She has taught band, orchestra and chorus.

Sutherland, looking out on the

audience from the concert stage last month, recognized many faces from all three high schools.

"I see a lot of my former babies," she said, asking each group of alumni to stand. "You have no idea how much this means to me, guys."

Also taking the stage to honor Sutherland's career were Ted Hope, music education supervisor with Hillsborough County Public Schools; John Acosta, former music education supervisor who worked with Sutherland at King; and Scott Rudes, now principal at Orange Grove Middle Magnet School. Rudes told the crowd he graduated from Bloomingdale and later came back to teach, taking over Sutherland's orchestra program as she focused on chorus.

Rudes said he found, in questioning his new class, that he had big shoes to fill.

"All of them said their favorite memory of orchestra was Ms. Sutherland," Rudes recalled. "And I have to say ... my favorite memory of Bloomingdale is Ms. Sutherland."

Highlights of Sutherland's career include trips to London and New York with Bloomingdale music students.

She sums up the years: "I had the best job because I've had the best kids, and I've had the best co-workers, and a very understanding family."

Bloomington Buzz

BY SUSAN GREEN

In May, just months before the 10th anniversary of the al Qaeda terrorist attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center and heavily damaged the Pentagon, Americans learned that U.S. forces found and killed mastermind Osama bin Laden in Pakistan. We posed the following question to customers in the waiting area at Carwash on the Greens:

Where were you when you heard Osama bin Laden was killed, and what was your reaction?



GEORGE FOUGERON OF VALRICO

"On the way to my office. The security guard told me. My reaction was it was about time, and it was just a matter of time."



CATHIE CABRAL OF VALRICO

"I was at home, and my husband asked me, 'Didn't you hear about it at work?'" And I said no. I work at a preschool.

"I said, 'Thank God they got him.' But it's only the beginning. I don't know what kind of retaliation the Taliban is going to do now."



RANDY MAGRUDER OF VALRICO

"I was getting up to go to work when I found out. ... At first I thought it was satire. I wasn't sure whether they were pulling my leg or not.

"After I found out that it actually happened, I felt a strong sense of relief."

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Operation Medicine Cabinet comes to Bloomingdale

On Saturday, June 11, the Bloomingdale Homeowners' Association (BHA) will hold its Community Cleanup day from 8 a.m. through 1 p.m. at the Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance Facility at 1626 Nature's Way, directly west of Alafia Elementary School.

In conjunction with this community activity the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office will be setting up "Operation Medicine Cabinet," a special site where residents can bring their old medicines/drugs and dispose of them in a safe manner. This service will be open from 9 to noon.

To take advantage of

this safe drug disposal project, simply bring any unwanted or outdated medicines or drugs to the parks maintenance site. Give them to the deputies running the operation and that's it. There is no formal documentation required. You may remove the labels from your medicine bottles if you like.

The main purpose of this special operation is to provide residents with a safe way of disposing of old medicines/drugs. Another major purpose is to keep these medicines/drugs from being misused. Too many cases have been documented of medicines/drugs being taken

The main purpose of this special operation is to provide residents with a safe way of disposing of old medicines/drugs.

from medicine cabinets and being misused by children, teens or anyone with access to them. Also, another major reason is to help protect our environment! Medicines/drugs that are flushed down toilets or drains end up in our water supplies, contaminating our eco system and causing significant harm to animals and to us.

To date, over ten thousand, yes, that's 10,000 pounds of outdated prescription drugs and medi-

cations have been collected. Many lives have been saved and our environment is much safer.

Please put this article on your refrigerator as a reminder. Start clearing out your medicine cabinets and other places you keep medications and drugs. Take a few minutes on June 11 to drop off your old medications/drugs.

Thanks in advance for doing your part to make our environment a safer place to live!

Bloomingdale High to get summer makeover

BY SUSAN GREEN

Students at Bloomingdale High School will return to classes in the fall to find a fresh look, thanks to a \$15 million makeover approved in May by the Hillsborough County School Board.

Construction signs already went up around the school, which was built in 1987. Much of the work is planned for the summer months when classes are not in session.

The project includes new fencing, painting inside and out, bleacher repairs, replacement of the heating and air conditioning system and remodeling to meet federal handicapped accessibility requirements. The school also will receive improvements to lighting, ceilings and kitchen equipment, electrical upgrades and safety improvements.

Not all work will be done this summer, according to information provided to the school board last spring. The target completion date for the remodeling project is Dec. 31, 2012.

ed

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-Kathy Murphy



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Congratulations honor students

Bloomington County Public Schools hosted a reception and recognition of the National Merit Finalists, National Achievement Finalists and National Hispanic Scholars on April 14 at Raymond O. Shelton School Administrative Center in Tampa. Bloomington had four National Merit Finalists and one National Hispanic Scholar.

Semifinalist submitted a detailed scholarship application, which included writing an essay and providing information about extracurricular activities, awards, and leadership positions. Semifinalists also had to have an outstanding academic record, be endorsed and recommended by a school official, and earn SAT scores that confirmed their qual-



KIM WALLACE

Mark West, principal, with National Merit Finalists Taylor McDade, Daniel Flaws, Austin Keeler and Skip Reagor. Not pictured is Conor Malloy, National Hispanic Scholar.

ifying test performance.

These students have received full scholarship to the colleges of their choice. Taylor A. McDade, Valedictorian of 2011 graduating class will be attending University of Central Florida, Daniel R. Flaws will be attending Universi-

ty of South Florida, Eric A. Keeler will be attending Auburn University and Michael J. Reagor will be attending University of Notre Dame. Congratulations to these students and their accomplishments and to their future achievements to come.

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USF graduate starts scholarship fund drive

BY SUSAN GREEN

It was a small start on a big dream, but Evonne Monét Archer was happy with the turnout for her first event aimed at raising \$30,000 for college scholarships for underprivileged young people.

Archer, a personal trainer at Lifestyle Family Fitness at Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road, organized a 5K Run/Walk for Education through her business, It's a New Day with Monét LLC, and a nonprofit organization, The Circle of Winners Inc., which was started by a group of former University of South Florida athletes.

"If 30,000 people would donate \$1, we would have \$30,000" for a scholarship, Archer said. She said she plans to develop a questionnaire to be submitted by students wanting to apply for financial assistance.

"This year we want it to be one big one [scholarship], and after that break it up into four or so," she said.

About 15 people gathered May 14 at Bloomingdale East Park to participate in the fundraiser. Each paid a \$25 registration fee to be donated to the scholarship fund. Archer said she was familiar with the park and running

opportunities on Natures Way Boulevard because she and her twin sister, Evette Archer, did practice runs there during their years on the track team at Riverview High School.

The sisters said they plan to hold additional fundraisers during the summer. The two graduated from USF in 2008, Evonne with a business management degree and Evette with a degree in international business.

Evonne Archer said she knows friends and family members who can't afford to attend college or had to turn down offers from the universities they preferred



SUSAN GREEN

Participants in the 5K Run/Walk for Education ran along Natures Way Boulevard in Bloomingdale East to raise money for scholarships for disadvantaged young people.

because they couldn't pay the tuition and fees.

Bethany and Brittany Cooley, also twins, of Fish-

Hawk Ranch, said Archer is their trainer and they wanted to support her effort.

"Education is very important and everyone should get an opportunity," Bethany Cooley said.



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Local vet treats lion on Discovery Channel's Swamp Brothers

The premier episode of Discovery Channel's Swamp Brothers included award winning local veterinarian Dr. Kane of Care Animal Hospital. In the video segment Dr. Kane and the staff of Care Animal Hospital work with the stars Robbie and Stephen Keszey to sedate, diagnose and treat the sick male lion "Simba."

The producers of the show asked Care Animal Hospital to assist with segments as needed due to their reputation for excellent care, diversity of animal expertise, and mobile facilities that service West Central Florida.

When the staff got the call about a sick lion who had stopped eating and had an infected tail, they moved quickly to respond.

In the video segment

Robbie Keszey sedates the sick lion. Dr. Kane and the staff of Care Animal Hospital give the lion fluids, diagnose the concern, and administer antibiotics.

"Taping was very straight forward. There was no script or retakes. What you see in the video is what actually happened. Our top priority was the care and safety of the animals and the people. We did what we could to make sure the lioness was able to stay calm and collected while we treated Simba," according to Dr. Kane.

If you want to see more of Dr. Kane and his staff you should keep watching new episodes of the Swamp Brothers which are scheduled to regularly air Fridays at 10 p.m. on Discovery Channel. Dr. Kane explains "We can't be sure

what will air in the future but we have assisted the Swamp Brothers with some other animals already."

Care Animal Hospital was founded by award-winning veterinarian Dr. Richard Kane and is Hillsborough County's largest, full-service, mixed animal, veterinary facility. Treatment ranges from small animals, to large and includes exotics and equine patients. As part of their community outreach program, Care Animal Hospital donates countless hours to Wildlife Rescue Ministries, an on-site rehab center for injured animals and wildlife. For information, visit Care Animal Hospital at 511 E. Bloomingdale Ave. They may be reached via phone at (813) 684-7387.



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Quality car wash a putt away

BY SUSAN GREEN

He doesn't play golf, but Al Kleinotas knows he scored a birdie when he opened Car Wash on the Greens almost 12 years ago at 3618 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, where the busy road intersects with Erindale Drive.

Love bugs, loyal customers and an oil change-

car wash package unique to his business have kept his books in the black, even during an economic downturn that saw similar enterprises close up shop.

"We are doing as well, if not a little better, than normal," Kleinotas said last month. "People in general who are avid car wash people would rather sacrifice a night out to eat

than have their neighbor see them with a dirty car."

Kleinotas, with more than 40 years in the car wash business in Central Florida and New Hampshire, likes to think people flock to the site for the quality service.

"I don't want to sacrifice quality for quantity," he said, "and I feel that's why we're still here."

He acknowledged, though, that a big draw is the customer waiting area, a cozy bit of floor space packed with comfy furniture, an eclectic mix of merchandise, free popcorn from a vintage pop machine, gourmet coffee and two table-sized checker boards with chairs that invite a game.

Customers also can watch their vehicles get a scrub-down through big picture windows that look out on the wash garage.

Need a car air freshener? It's there on the pegs. For-

get your nephew's graduation? Pick a greeting card from the racks.

Al credits his wife, Carole, with creating the space that most corporate-owned detail shops can't match.

"Carole is the heartbeat of the place," her husband said.

The "heartbeat" often sits behind the pay counter, watching employees finish cleaning cars, keeping up with customer vehicles and knitting or crocheting while she's doing it. Three of the couple's four grown children work at the wash, but Carole answers to "Mom" whether she's technically related or not.

Al said the most unusual vehicle he's ever washed was a circus elephant that needed a bath years ago when he operated a car wash on State Road 60 in Brandon.



SUSAN GREEN

Al Kleinotas, owner of Car Wash on the Greens.

He said he picked the Bloomingdale site for his business because he lives nearby. He chose a golf theme because of the proximity of golf course developments, including Bloomingdale and Buckhorn.

Daniel Stahl of Seffner said he doesn't mind bringing his 12-year-old stepson, Ben Greer, to get the car cleaned, as long as it's at Car Wash on the

Greens.

"The big thing is I can get my oil changed quickly, and they clean out my car real good, and there's something to do while I wait," said Stahl, who juggles the chore with his duties as pastor at the Palms Community Church on Bloomingdale Avenue.

"It's a family affair," said sheriff's Maj. Ron Hartl, who's been bringing his personal vehicle to the car wash since it opened. "They're just good people. ... They'll do what it takes to make you happy."

Steve Springer of Bloomingdale is another longtime customer. He said he usually brings two cars a week to the business.

"They all know me, and they know how I like my cars done," Springer said.

In December, Al received a Citizens Award from the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office for alerting deputies to a burglary of a neighboring business. The car wash also has been recognized for participating in charity drives.

A full-service car wash costs \$11.99. An oil change and wash costs \$29.95. The business offers a number of bargains, including AAA, military and teachers' discounts. For information, call (813) 657-6500.



Ben Greer, 12 (left), plays a game of checkers with his stepdad, Daniel Stahl, while the pair waits for their car to be cleaned at Car Wash on the Greens.

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School is almost out for the summer and that means vacations for lots of families. But take precautions before leaving home. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, residential burglaries increase 10 - 18 percent during the summer when many families are away:

Give your house a lived-in look

- ◆ Put automatic timers on several lights on each level of your home, on a radio and on the television. Set the timers so the lights and appliances will turn on and off randomly.
- ◆ Leave shades and blinds in the same positions they are in when you are home.
- ◆ Arrange to have your lawn mowed while you're away.

- ◆ Install dusk-to-dawn or motion sensor lights on all outdoor lights.
- ◆ Have a neighbor get your mail and any deliveries, or have the post office hold them until you return.


Inform as few people as possible of your vacation plans

- ◆ Tell the Sheriff's Office or your local police department you are away on vacation, and who has a spare key to your house.
- ◆ Don't post your plans on social media sites.
- ◆ Leave your contact and itinerary information with a trusted neighbor and ask that neighbor to keep an eye on your property.
- ◆ Don't turn on email auto-reply to indicate you are not at home.

Make sure your home is secure when you leave

- ◆ Lock all outside doors with deadbolt locks.
- ◆ Lock your windows and the garage door.
- ◆ Make sure your smoke and burglar alarms are functioning properly.
- ◆ Place metal rods in the tracks of sliding windows and doors for extra security.
- ◆ Securely fasten pet entrances onto your patio.
- ◆ Make a home inventory list complete with photos and video.

This crime prevention tip is provided by the Hillsborough County Criminal Justice Department. For more information or more safety tips, residents should call 813-276-2033 or visit .



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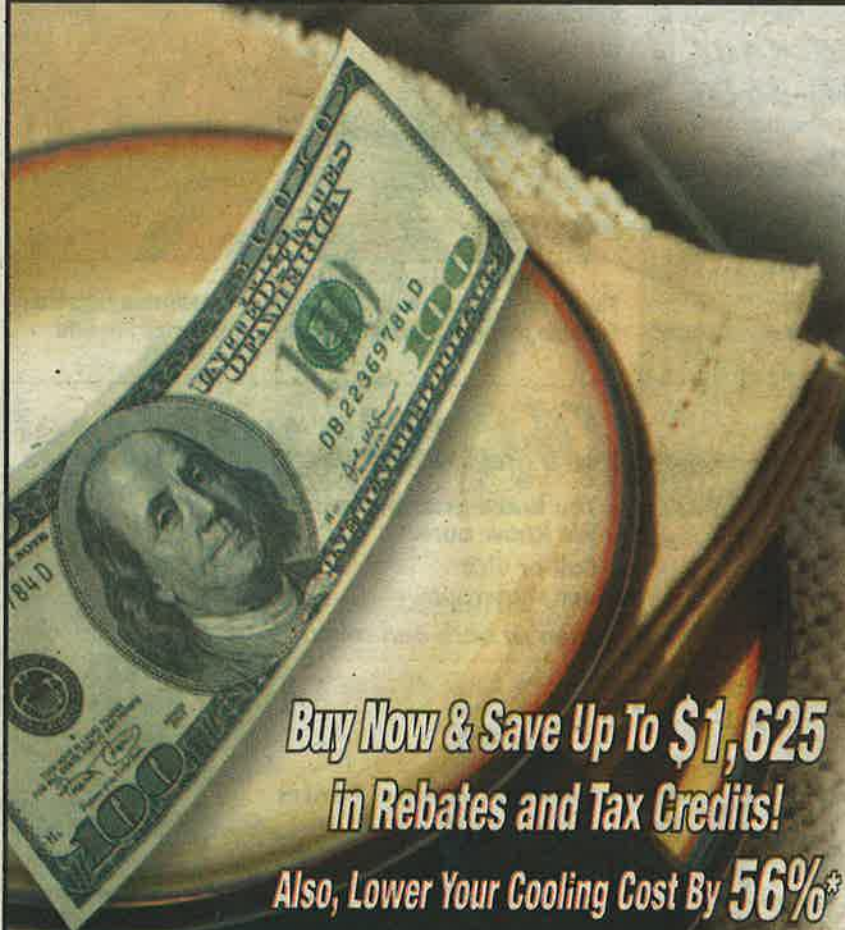
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KIM WALLACE

Christian Slater, number 34, shoots to try to put points on the board for the students.

Second Annual Bloomingdale student and faculty basketball game held for Lyrics For Life

BY KIM WALLACE

This year, Bloomingdale Senior High School basketball coach Joe Willis along with Cormac McCarthy, owner of Beef O'Bradys on Bell Shoals Road, teamed up again for a great cause to raise money for Lyrics For Life. Last year the faculty took on the students in overtime and ended up winning 71-64, the game raised \$1,300.00.

Coach Willis headed up the basketball game be-

tween the faculty and the students this year and the faculty were able to pull off another win over the students, 66-51, and was able to raise \$1,500 with the help of Cormac McCarthy, who donated giveaways to raffle to help raise money during halftime. They also had a free throw contest to help raise money.

Students that played to raise money for Lyrics for Life: Alec Anderson, TJ Donahue, Matt Dunham, Billy Edouard, Tony Gruzca,

Greg Holland, Jesse Lastinger, Roberto Lopez, Jordan Lowe, Matt Neil, Malcolm Peck, Justin Potts, Jessica Sawicki, Christian Slater, Constantine Tetric

Faulty that played to help raise money: Donny "Sweet Peekalicious" Peek, James "Big Boof" Booth, John "Shooter McGavin" Booth, Kate "Foul Out" Honahan, Grant "Pretty Boy" Radebaugh, Danielle "The Punisher" Bayard, Joe "J-Will" Willis, Danielle "D-Mac" Leffler, Pat "Big Sheezy" Sheehan, Nia "Ni-Ni" Campbell, Aman-

da "Mandy" Raschke, Scott "Crawfish" Crawford, Tim "The Hammer" Lee-seberg, Jim "Teacher of the Year" Anteau, Margeau "Cinnastix" Sinibaldi.

Bloomingdale High School and Beef O'Bradys enjoys being able to give back to the community with such a great cause. Coach Willis commented that this would not have been successful without the dedication from the faculty and students; "we will continue to help with Lyrics For Life next year, so mark your calendar for game in May of 2012!"

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Faulty and Students at Bloomingdale teaming together to raise money in basketball game for Lyrics For Life

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Cimino Elementary's first grade classes 'Sing into Summer'

BY KIM WALLACE

The Cimino first grade team wanted to thank the parents for this school year by putting on a "Sing into Summer" show for parents. Mrs. Gonsalves' and Mrs. Jenkins' classes performed "Pizza Love" and "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," Mrs. Porter's and Mrs. Hageman's classes performed "Rainy Day" and "Let's Go," Mrs. Dees' and Mrs. Bowers' classes performed "Aloha My Friend" and "I Like to Have Fun," and closing the show was Mrs. Bird's and Mrs. Mitchell's classes performing "Best Friends" and "It's Summer."

The first grade team is very proud of all their students and wish them a fun, safe and read, read, read summer!



Mrs. Bird's and Mrs. Mitchell's classes perform "Best Friends" and "It's Summer!"



Mrs. Dees' and Mrs. Bower's classes perform "Aloha My Friend" and "I Like to Have Fun!"



Mrs. Gonsalves' and Mrs. Jenkins' classes perform "Pizza Love" and "Take Me Out to the Ballgame!"



Mrs. Porter's and Mrs. Hageman's classes perform "Rainy Day" and "Let's Go!"

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Bloomingtondale Hosts Spring Jamboree football game

BY KIM WALLACE

The Bloomingtondale football team hosted this year's spring jamboree at Friday, May 20. The schools participating were Jesuit against Newsome and Bloomingtondale against Brandon. This year's jamboree gave the high school teams a chance to show off what they have and what they need to work on for the upcoming year.

Jesuit took on Newsome in the first half of the game with Jesuit winning 21-14. Bloomingtondale took on Brandon with no score in the second half of game. The jamboree was a success and all the teams did very well. Coach Booth commented that the kids played hard the entire half. Coach Booth is proud of his team and looks forward to the upcoming season with the Bulls.



Coach John Booth gives Jacob Campoamor, No. 79, encouraging words during warm-ups.



Brandon High School faces off against Bloomingtondale High School in Spring Jamboree Game.



Jesuit High School and Newsome High School clash at during the Spring Jamboree game at Bloomingtondale.

KIM WALLACE

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Ray
Chadderton

your closing fees are several hundred dollars more than their Good Faith Estimate listed. Suddenly, your excitement turns to pressure to just pay it and close the deal.

Now those days are over, thanks to the Mortgage Disclosure Improvement Act (MDIA). What was once the Truth In Lending Act has been

Suddenly, your excitement turns to pressure to just pay it and close the deal.

rewritten with new rules to help consumers understand the loan costs and alert borrowers to changes in fees well in advance of closing.

Now, the lender must provide their Good Faith Estimate within three days of receiving the borrowers' application, and closing cannot occur until the buyer has seven days to review the disclosure. If the final APR (annual percentage rate) differs more than 0.125 percent from the original quote, a new disclosure must be provided, granting the borrower the

right of rescission.

This relieves the pressure that buyers once felt to agree to pay higher fees and rates at the very last minute. As always, borrowers can review the final document one day before closing, providing an excellent opportunity for you to review all the figures with your Realtor and ask any lingering questions before you make it official.

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The Green Boutique shows appreciation for our teachers

BY KIM WALLACE

The Green Boutique along with Lindsay Phillips, the creator of SwitchFlops, teamed up to show their appreciation to the teachers in our area.

Lindsay Phillips is a supporter of Donorschoose, an organization that helps schools everywhere. Phillips first came up with her ideas for SwitchFlops in a high school art class. Now that she has teamed up with DonorsChoose.org, this will give other students the opportunity to follow their dreams just like she did. Lindsay crossing the country to help raise awareness and funding for local school projects, and together with our on local community she has teamed up with Roz Creager, the owner of The Green Boutique, to



Cimino Elementary teachers are excited by teacher appreciation at Green Boutique! Left to Right, Tiffany Gleason, Liz Sanchez, Kelley Hill and Virginia McRae show off their new snaps they received from Anna Cline.

make a difference. Lindsay commented that she loves helping local schools and other charities fund things that sometimes they cannot do on their own.

On April 7, Sue Larmon, sales representative from Lindsay Phillips, joined Roz Creager to help with the teacher appreciation day at the Green Boutique.



KIM WALLACE

Bloomington High School was the winner for donating the most on Donorschoose.org. Pictured are Roz Creager, owner of Green Boutique; Bloomington teacher Candice Teague; Lindsay Phillips, creator of SwitchFlops; and Sue Larmon, sales representative of SwitchFlops.

The event offered 20 percent off all Lindsay Phillips products. The first 25 teachers received a free pair of snaps. Along with that, there were sixty \$10

Donorschoose.org gift cards for the teachers. They also had special drawings and refreshments for all teachers.

In support of our local

schools and teachers, The Green Boutique accepted \$5 donations for a chance to win one of five \$100 Green Boutique gift cards. The drawing was held on Monday, May 9, while Lindsay Phillips visited the store. All of the funds raised were donated back to local Donorschoose projects and Lindsey Phillips herself matched it with a donation of \$1,000 to the school that had the most donations. The school that won was Bloomington Senior High School. Lindsay was honored to meet Bloomington English teacher Candice Teague who also participated in the Donorschoose project. Candice commented that she was excited to receive a project through Donorschoose.

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Weir's music looking for summer strummers

BY SUSAN GREEN

Tim Weir is a closet Metallica fan with a professed penchant for the acoustic guitar.

The Brandon native and longtime music teacher is comfortable with just about any style of guitar. He says the important thing is to feel a sense of achievement in producing music and enjoying the camaraderie of other performers.

Usually, he says, he can have a beginner playing a song within a week.

"You can make a song simple and then add onto it later," Weir explains. "I've seen kids come in here the shyest in the world, and now they're king of the neighborhood because they can play the

guitar."

This summer, he will offer summer music camps for youngsters with or without experience who want to huddle for a week with other musicians and learn to play the guitar. Weir uses a technique of framing chords that helps less experienced players blend with those more accomplished.

"The cool thing is they feel like they're sitting and jamming with everybody," Weir says. The desire to produce the right sounds as a group typically leads to individual improvement, he adds.

"They don't want to be the slacker. It really inspires them to practice at home."



SUSAN GREEN

Tim Weir, who has been teaching guitar for 20 years, works with Riley Patterson of Valrico, 12, at Weir's Music in front of the Royal Oaks shopping center at Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

Weir stumbled onto his calling at a young age.

"When I was 7 years old, I found a guitar in my grandma's attic," he recalls. He remembers lis-

tening to a Marty Robbins record and playing along on the guitar.

"Music came natural to me," he says.

Later, at age 21, he re-

ceived a scholarship to attend a songwriting school in California. The experience, including spending time with other musicians, exposed him to a lot of different styles and deepened his appreciation of music.

He operated his first music business on Pauls Drive in Brandon for many years before moving to his current location on the second floor of a strip center at 3322 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, where he has been offering lessons and guitar services for nearly 10 years. Three other instructors also offer guitar or keyboard lessons there.

"I'll never be rich, but at the end of the day, I really love what I do," Weir says.

"I see kids grow up before my eyes."

Weir has two daughters, Taylor, 14, and Faith, 9.

Weeklong camps will be offered from 1 to 4 p.m. weekdays throughout the summer from June 13 to early September, except for the week of July 4. The cost is \$100 a week or \$25 a day, with early drop-off and late pickup available. The price includes bottled water and snacks each day and a pizza party and performance for family on Fridays.

Half-hour weekly lessons also are available year-round for \$75 a month.

For information, call (813) 240-5243 or search for Tim Weir on Facebook.



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Bloomington school expanding at new site on Boyette Road

BY SUSAN GREEN

The two-story building going up near Boyette and Bell Shoals roads is hard to miss, but motorists might do a double take at the sign announcing Valrico Lake Advantage Academy.

The charter school's principal, Bonnie Guertin, acknowledges the academy won't be in Valrico anymore once students and faculty move to the new Riverview address this summer. She said the school, set to welcome students in August, may change names at some point, but for now it will remain Valrico Lake to capitalize on its reputa-

tion.

"We're still toying with the idea" of a name change, Guertin said.

For two years, the school has operated on the campus of Celebration Church, across Bloomingdale Avenue from Bloomingdale High School. Students number about 210 in kindergarten through seventh grade. Already, 700 potential students have applied for enrollment at the new location, Guertin said.

The large building motorists see under construction is the first phase of a campus that eventually will include two buildings on 7 acres. The building under construction will

encompass 41,000 square feet and offer classroom space for up to 650 students, Guertin said. By August 2012, the school is expected to add eighth grade.

The second building, which will measure 17,000 square feet, will be a dedicated middle school housing about 300 students, the principal said. No timetable has been announced for construction.

While in Bloomingdale, the school has attracted students from Brandon, Valrico, FishHawk and Riverview, Guertin said. The new site is expected to be convenient for many families, she added.



SUSAN GREEN

Valrico Lake Advantage Academy, a charter school with emphasis on math and science, will move from Celebration Church in Bloomingdale to this new 41,000 square foot building on Boyette Road.

"It was accessible to all areas," she said. "It just seemed ideal."

The charter school generally operates much like a private institution, but it's funded with public education dollars and thus is tuition-free, Guertin said.

Valrico Lake has built a reputation in math and science excellence and will continue to offer special programs, she said, including a partnership with the nonprofit Tampa Bay Watch organization that encourages schools to

grow sea grass for estuary restoration.

The school is operated by Charter School Associates of Sunrise. For information about the school, call (813) 699-5049 or visit www.valricolakeacademy.com.

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Community Station Notes

Help fight these crime trends

At the May Sheriff's Bloomingdale Area Community Council (BACC), I briefed members on several recent incidents that our residents need to be aware of. These included:

STOLEN PURSES – Organized groups throughout Florida have been traveling the interstates and targeting businesses like fitness centers, YMCAs, day-cares, any place where a woman might leave their purse in the car for a short time – but long enough for it to be stolen. Several purses were recently stolen from vehicles parked at the Bloomingdale YMCA. Reports have also been received of personal items stolen from lockers

at local fitness centers. Folks, your purses and billfolds contain a lot of critical items – credit cards, drivers license and other IDs, as well as personal information criminals can use. Do not just leave them on the seats in your vehicles or in lockers that can be easily broken into. Treat them like your life depended on them, which they do. Lock them in the trunks of your vehicles or take a special billfold with limited items in them to places like fitness centers or gyms. Take your own combination lock. You never know who will be in these

places and some are there for one purpose – stealing!

OPEN VEHICLES – Again too many of our resident's vehicles have been broken into. Most of them were found to be left open. One thief even got the garage door opener and opened the garage door. These criminal acts only took a few minutes and the results could have been tragic. There is no easy way to say it – make sure your garage doors are closed. Most burglaries and robberies today are committed to get money for drugs. Don't help the criminals out by



Curtis Warren

making their crimes easy.

SCHOOL IS OUT, TALK TO YOUR KIDS

Hillsborough County schools will be out June 10. It will not take long for kids to get bored and commit what we call "boredom crimes" – vandalism, stealing on dares, etc. – but all still crimes.

Parents, take the time to sit down with your kids and work out a plan for the summer. Some will be busy with lots of activities. Some will be latchkey kids, left at home alone. Make sure you know where they are at all times and who they are with. Ensure that they know the consequences of getting into trouble and especially if it is something that will give

them a criminal record. You're also helping to keep them safe. Be sure that your teens that drive know the rules and obey the rules. We want them to enjoy their summer vacations and not end up in trouble or injured in an accident.

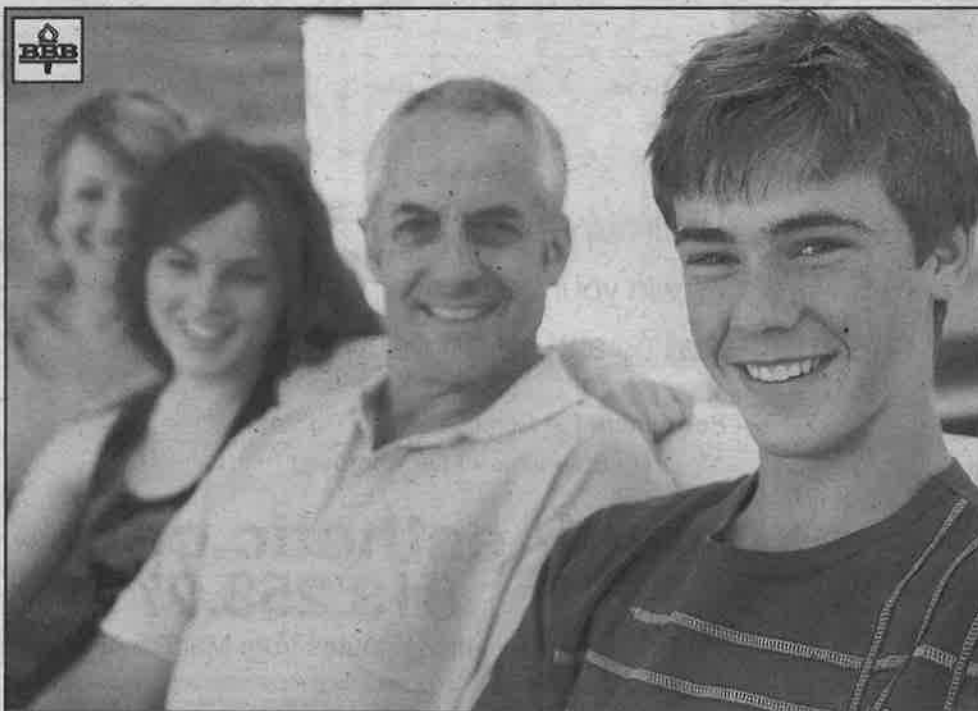
HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE –GET READY NOW!

June marks the beginning of the 2011 Hurricane season. The weather throughout the nation leading up to this date has been tragic and destructive. From the tornadoes across the south to flooding of the Mississippi River, thousands of people are still recovering and will be for months and years to come.

Now is the time to prepare your family, your home and your businesses. Hillsborough County Emergency Management has an outstanding website with lots of great information to help you prepare for the storms, for evacuations and for the recovery. For a copy, go to tbrpc.org and click the link to the 2011 Hurricane Guide under "Quick Links."

REMEMBER

If you notice any suspicious activity or a crime being committed, get all the information you can – descriptions of individuals, descriptions of vehicles and license numbers, and immediately call the Sheriff's Dispatch at (813) 247-8200! Time is critical!



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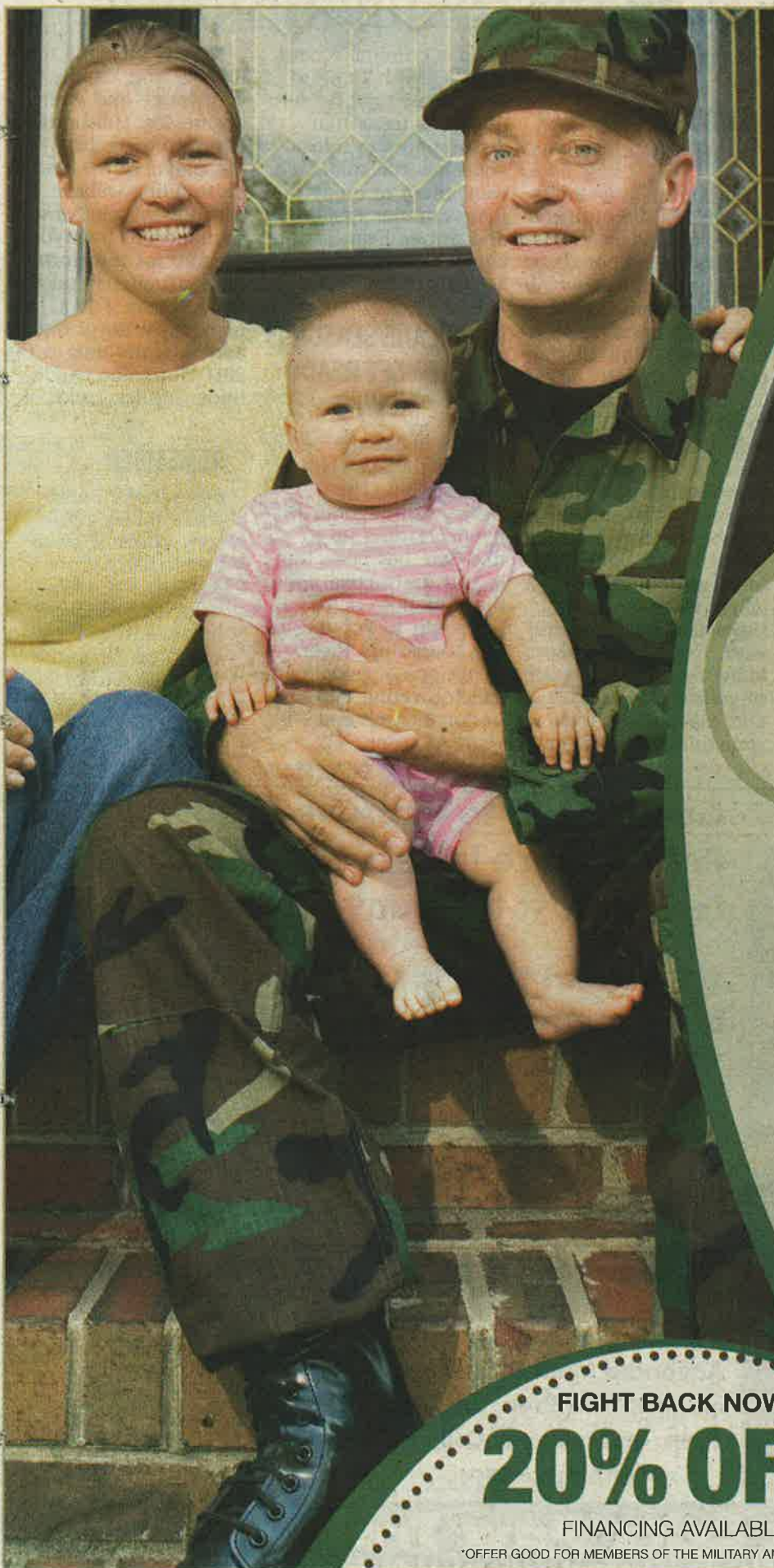
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