

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXV  
Number 3

MARCH 2008 • THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

## BHA Helps Neighbors

Abandoned car?  
Green pool?  
The BHA can help.

PAGE 4

## Auction Boosts Band Treasury

Bloomington High  
School's Rajun' Bull  
Band readies for its  
annual live auction  
fundraiser.

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# Pooling Resources



JOY BOISELLE/Gazette photo, inset photo from the Campa Family YMCA

Juan Rivera, a Campo Family YMCA employee, in February posts signs heralding a 3-slide plunge pool (see inset), part of a new aquatic complex slated to open at the YMCA in June. The project was funded through a partnership between the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department and the estate of Ray and Josie Campo, for whom the facility is named. See story on page 12.

## Civic Center To Be Built

*Winthrop site selected, see page 15*



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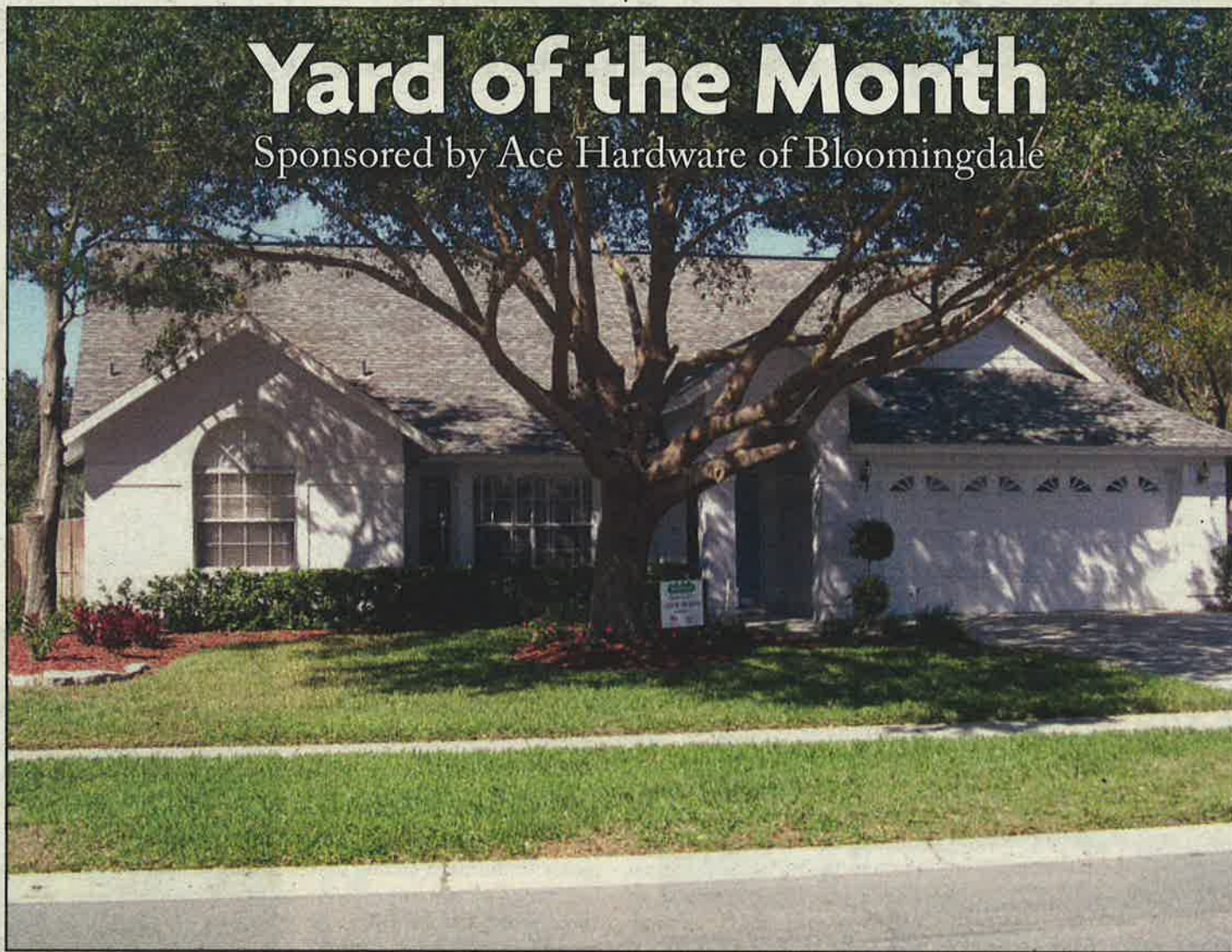


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Send Yard of the Month nominations to bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net or call (813) 681-2051. Winners receive a \$25 gift card courtesy of Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale.



# Yard of the Month

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## ACE TIPS

By Chris Korte

Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale

By now the leaves have finished falling and it's time to rake your grass to keep it from smothering under layers of leaves. Use the leaves as mulch or to start a compost pile.

Fertilize your yard to help jumpstart it into our warmer season. A "weed and feed" formulation is a good idea, but make sure you use the right product for your grass type.

Spring is a great time for tree trimming. Keep limbs away from the house to help keep insects out of your home.

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# BHA Helps Neighbors Resolve Complaints

By JOY BOISSELLE

Bloomingtondale residents who are concerned about neighborhood safety issues or private and public property maintenance can turn to the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association for advice, support and assistance.

A complaint system put in place to assist residents by the association's volunteer board of directors is simple and effective.

Derry Wilson, Bloomingtondale Community Office manager, processes about 15 complaints delivered in writing each month to the homeowners association. Wilson said most of the complaints involve potential violations of neighborhood deed restrictions and county codes such as deficient home and yard maintenance and illegal vehicle parking. The association also receives complaints concerning utilities, streets and sidewalk maintenance, such as an ongoing safety issue regarding cracked sidewalks and asphalt repairs on Natures Way.

Wilson said the complaint process starts when residents submit their concerns in writing, including their contact information and a brief explanation of the problem and its location. Complaint forms are available

on the community's Web site, [bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://bloomingtondalegazette.com), or at the community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, open 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Monday to Thursday. Residents may also bring their concerns to an association board meeting, held at 7 p.m. on the first Monday each month at the community office.

When the association receives a written complaint complete with contact information and pertinent details, Wilson said her first step is to determine if the issue is of an urgent, safety-related nature.

For example, she said, "If there is an abandoned vehicle or a green pool, I will inform the Hillsborough County Code Enforcement agency immediately. Otherwise, BHA board members and I will investigate the complaint.

Association volunteers may conduct an on-site inspection or place a phone call to the potential violator. If a violation is found, the association issues a written citation for non-compliance of neighborhood and/or county standards. If the matter is not resolved after a reasonable period of time, a second notice is sent.

In some cases, complaints are forwarded for action to other appropriate agencies, such as

code enforcement or the sheriff's office.

Wilson said the BHA attempts to help residents resolve every issue, but she urged neighbors to get involved in the process. In cases where complaints are in violation of county codes or ordinances, in addition to filing a complaint with the homeowners association, Wilson said, "Residents should also contact the county code enforcers. They have the legal powers to resolve county code and ordinance violations."

Complaints received by the association, Wilson said, are investigated in about three weeks. In cases where issues go unresolved, the association provides guidance to residents who wish to proceed further with possible legal action.

Wilson stressed the fact that residents can report complaints anonymously.

"Every complaint is completely confidential, and we have had many success stories," she said. "Sometimes it's just about residents doing the right thing."

For more information call Wilson, (813) 681-2051, e-mail [bloomingtondale.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingtondale.homeowners@verizon.net) or go to [www.bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingtondalegazette.com).



JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette photo

Jogger Ashley Olive negotiates a cracked, partially repaired sidewalk along Natures Way in Bloomingtondale. Olive said, "This can be really dangerous for roller bladers, bikers and just about anyone if you are not paying attention."

## County Codes Set Standards

### A Gazette Report

Nearly every Bloomingtondale subdivision has its own deed restrictions, a set of rules generally more restrictive than county standards. However, the following Hillsborough County code standards apply to all homes in Hillsborough County.

To report potential violations to County Code Enforcement call (813) 641-6946.

### Vehicles

- Vehicles must be operational (able to move under own its own power) and intact.
- No more than two unregistered, untagged or expired tag vehicles are allowed.
- Commercial vehicles over one ton may not be parked overnight in residential areas.
- Boats or RVs limited to 20 feet in

length may be parked in front of a house.

- Boats or RVs over 20 feet may be parked in rear or side yards but must be kept 5 feet from the property line.
- Boats or RVs must be operational and may not be connected to utilities, except for battery charging.
- Boats or RVs cannot be parked on the right-of-way (area between the sidewalk and the road).
- Boats or RVs may be parked anywhere for loading or unloading for a maximum of 24 hours.

### Sheds

- Sheds must be at least 3 feet from the property line.

### Garage Sales

- Garage sales are limited to one every six months, for no more than three days in duration.

### Swimming Pools

- Swimming pools must be screened or fenced to prevent access by small children.
- Swimming pools must be maintained, sanitary and mosquito free.

### Fences

- Fences must be maintained, sound and sturdy.

### Storage Pods

- The use of temporary storage pods is limited to seven days, no more than six times per year.

### Nuisance Conditions

- Weeds, grass, or underbrush shall not exceed 18 inches.
  - Junk, trash and debris -- abandoned motor vehicles, furniture, appliances, rotten lumber, paper, trash, etc. -- are all considered nuisance conditions and are not permitted.
- Structural Conditions

- Roofs shall be maintained and have no defects which will admit rain.
- Windows shall be maintained without cracks or holes.
- Residences must be adequately painted so as to prevent the entry of water or pests.

### Lawns and Landscaping

- Weeds, grass, or underbrush shall not exceed 18 inches.
- Dead or dying trees which may present a hazard are not permitted.

### Pets

- Report violations to Animal Control, 744-5660
- Pets are not allowed to stray from owners' property or owners' control.
  - Owners are responsible for the pick up and disposal of animal feces. Fines are: First offence \$50, Second offence \$100, Third offence requires a court hearing; person reporting offence

See CODES, Page 19



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# Your Inside Connections

## BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION INC.

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594

Phone: (813) 681-2051

Fax: (813) 684-2358

E-mail: bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net

Office hours: Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

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

Web site: www.bloomingdalegazette.com

President: Joe Hickle

Vice president: Stanley Lee; Treasurer: Pam Liguori

Directors: Ted Grable, Don Grevert, Jim Harris, Sheila Harris, Lydia Harrod; Jane Lee; George May and Myron Magedanz.

## BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594

Phone: (813) 684-6667

Fax: (813) 684-2358

E-mail: bloomingdale.district@verizon.net

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

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

President: Thom Snelling

Vice president: Russell Jones

Treasurer: David West

Corresponding Secretary: David Steck

Property manager: Al Devney

Trustees: Joe Harless; Joe Liguori and James Laughlin

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The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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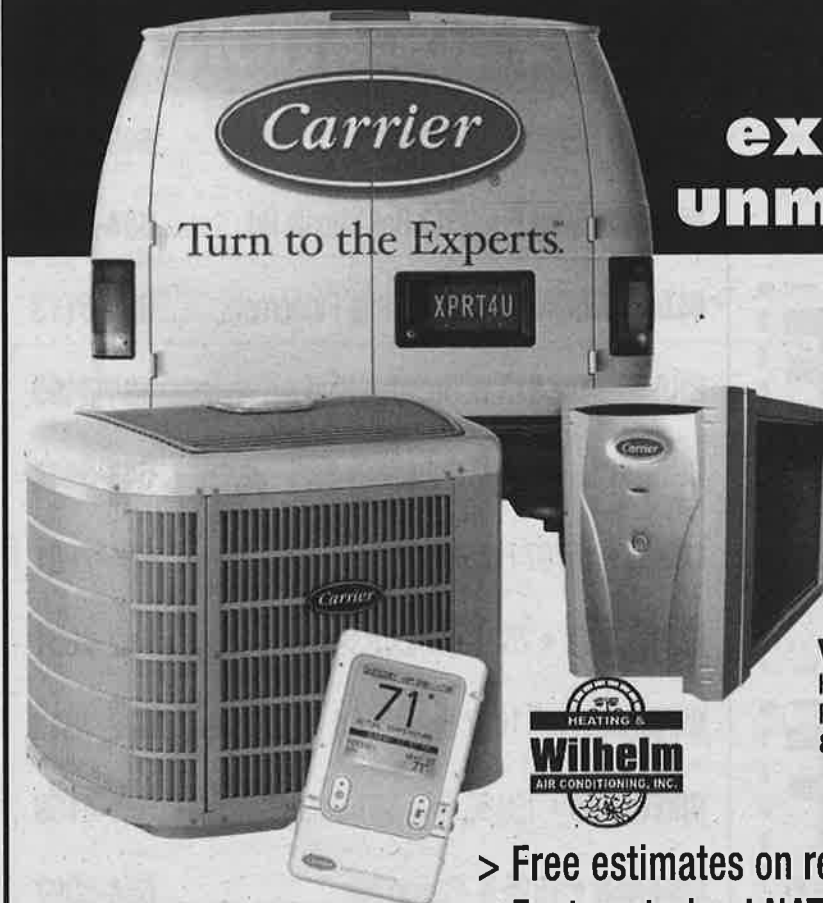
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## Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Meeting Schedule

The all-volunteer Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. Board of Directors holds monthly meetings, open to the public, at 7 p.m. on the first Monday each month (or as otherwise noted when holidays fall) at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico. All residents are encouraged to observe the meetings or bring their neighborhood comments and concerns before the board. For more information call (813) 681-2051, e-mail bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net or go to bloomingdalegazette.com.

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April 7, 2008  
May 5, 2008  
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# Pilferers Pick Peck of Petunias

By AL DEVNEY  
Property Manager

Bloomington Special Taxing District Property Manager, Al Devney, oversees maintenance and improvements to community common areas such as entryways, landscaping and irrigation. Devney submits a report each month to the taxing district board of trustees. The following is a synopsis of the property manager's report for January 2008. Contact Devney at (813) 684-6667 or bloomingdale.district@verizon.net.

In the month of January, Cardinal Landscaping replaced 12-dozen red and white petunias

that were stolen from the Rosemead Lane entrance.

Davidson Landscape and Irrigation installed landscaping and St Augustine grass sod at the Golf Manor Boulevard entrance, located and repaired a short in the irrigation wiring in the links system, installed new wiring for zones four and five in the links irrigation system and installed Indian hawthorn bushes and St. Augustine grass sod along 700 feet in front of Savannah Landings.

Morningstar Electric installed a new light sensor at the Highlander Way and Eagle Bluff Drive entrances.

ZK Construction repaired a

wall on Glenhaven Drive that was damaged in an auto accident, removed a broken knee wall at the Tyndale Drive entrance, repaired a broken knee wall at the Briarlake Drive entrance and repaired a large crack in the wall at the corner of Greenhollow Lane and Natures Way.

Signs By Mineo constructed and installed a new entrance sign on the north side of the John Moore Road entrance and removed the existing sign for cleaning and painting. In addition, they installed a new sign at the entrance to River Crossing and removed the existing sign for cleaning and painting. The sign at the entrance to Bloom-

ingdale Village was also removed for cleaning and painting.

In Bloomington East and West, about 33 Indian Hawthorn bush plantings are in various stages of disease and need to be replaced. The bushes are 6- to 8-years-old and are close to the end of their life span. In addition, a severe pruning four or five years ago, coupled with a severe drought at the time, might have weakened the bushes. An infestation of Chilli thrips, two-spotted mites and spider mites has also taken its toll on the plants. A gradual build-up of mulch over the years also caused lack of air circulation in and around the plants.

Valley Crest removed dead palms from the Culbeath Cove median. The remaining palms were sprayed with preventive insecticides, and a soil sample was taken from the area and sent to a lab for analysis.

In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, there were 32 bags of litter, 48 signs, a soccer ball, a queen-size mattress, half of a tire, a timing belt, two hedge clippers, a cell phone, a Sweetbay Supermarket grocery cart and 31 cents.

The beverages of choice were Coke for soft drinks, Coors Light for beer and Jagermeister, an herb-flavored liqueur, for distilled spirits.

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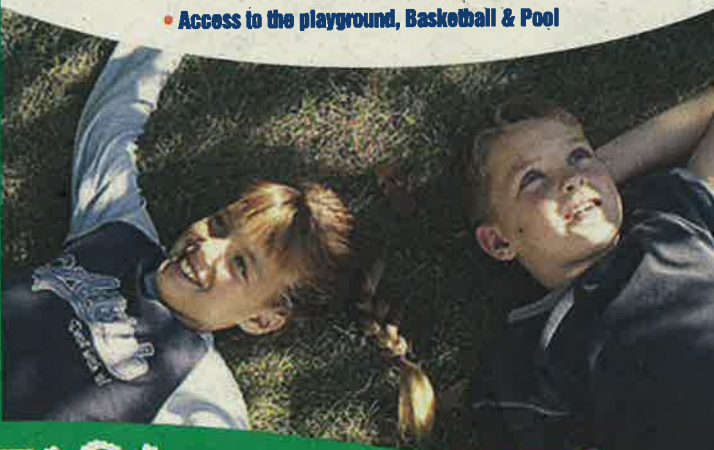
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## Bloomington Special Taxing District Meeting Schedule

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March 10, 2008

April 14, 2008

May 12, 2008 - Budget Workshop & Meeting

June 9, 2008 - Public Hearing & Regular Meeting

July 14, 2008

August 11, 2008

September 8, 2008

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# Caring FOR THE Heart

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Additionally, non-invasive cardiology services are offered. The facility also supports a dedicated chest pain unit for the rapid evaluation and diagnosis of chest pain patients. The Heart and Vascular Center at Brandon Regional Hospital's comprehensive services include Cardiac Rehabilitation for both inpatients and on an outpatient basis.

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TOGETHER, PERFORMING AT A HIGHER STANDARD

# 5K Race Today To Benefit Cancer Society

A Gazette Report

The MOMS Club of Valrico/Bloomingtondale will host a 5K Run/Walk, "Run For Your Life...Or Someone Else's" today to benefit the American Cancer Society.

The race will begin at 8 a.m. March 1 in the parking lot of the South Brandon Little League Complex on Bloomingtondale Avenue at Culbreath Road in Valrico. Participants will race south on Culbreath to the end of the road, then double back to the finish line

at the Little League complex. The total distance is about 3.1 miles.

Registration (\$25) starts at 7:30 a.m. The event will include a family-friendly after party with entertainment, food and drink vendors and raffle prizes. Awards will go to the first cancer survivor who finishes the race overall and the top three finishers in each of several age-group categories.

For more information contact Sarah Woodyer at (813) 685-1690 or e-mail her at woodyer1@gmail.com.

## Scholarship Deadline Is April 3

Bloomingtondale Senior High School seniors have just 34 days left to apply for the \$2,000 B. J. Stelter Bloomingtondale Community Scholarship, sponsored by the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association Inc. For eligibility information or an application, go to [www.bloomingtondalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingtondalegazette.com) and click on the "scholarship" button at the top left of the homepage, or see guidance counselor Alexia Haldane in the guidance office at the school. For more information call (813) 681-2051.



JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette photos

## Feel The Love

Keeping fit and proving that tennis is a sport for all ages, Joe Ambriano, 81, and his tennis buddy, Gary Jangraw, shake hands after a friendly battle. The pair play twice a week at Bloomingtondale East Park on Natures Way, which features four tennis courts, outdoor racquetball, handball, basketball and volleyball courts, a play structure, an outdoor pavilion and restroom facilities.

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- 5. ABDOMINAL ULTRASOUND ..... \$85**  
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### Q. Why should I have these tests if I have no symptoms?

A. It is important to have a screening to identify problems before symptoms arise, potentially avoiding a serious health crisis. Unfortunately, our body's warning signs often come too late.

### Q. Does my doctor do these tests as part of my routine checkup?

A. No. Most physicians can only prescribe ultrasound tests if you are already having symptoms. They are unable to order them for preventive reasons. Prevention Plus is here to identify individuals with disease before a problem occurs.

No Prescriptions necessary. These tests are not included in routine physicals.

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# County, Benefactor Pool Resources For Aquatic Park

By JOYBOISSELLE

As the dog days of summer approach, a new aquatic center, complete with three pools targeting various ages and abilities, is under construction at the Campo Family YMCA in Bloomingdale. A groundbreaking ceremony for the \$1.6 million center, slated to open in June, was held Feb. 13.

Jonathan Dearolf, YMCA membership director, said plans for the center have been in the works for seven years.

"It will help us continue to serve the needs of the community," Dearolf said.

The complex was made possible by funding from the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department, which provided \$992,000 toward the project, in addition to a large bequest from the estate of Ray and Josie Campo, for whom the facility is named. Due to the funds partnership, the complex will be open to all Brandon area residents, and not just to YMCA

members.

Dearolf expects attendance to be high at the one-of-a-kind water complex.

"We will be adding more swim lessons and water aerobics, and we expect to double our lifeguard staff," he said.

Additional activities planned include water therapy and water safety classes.

The center will feature three pools: the current lap pool, a plunge pool, and a zero-entry pool. The current pool is a 75-ft. square heated pool designed for

year-round usage. The plunge pool, measuring in at 40-feet-by-20-feet, will feature three water slides and "plunge" to a depth of 4.5 feet.

Perhaps the most anticipated addition is the zero-entry pool aimed at families with young children. Calling it more of an "aquatic playground," Dearolf said the 2,954-square-foot pool will consist of a toddler water-spray park, spinning water nozzles, dumping buckets, and a central play structure. In addition to the two locker rooms already

inside the YMCA building, the new center will have a separate family changing facility.

Other planned building projects at the YMCA include a second exercise room, expanded family fitness center and a youth and teen wing.

The Campo Family YMCA is at 3414 Culbreath Road, Valrico. For information on the new water complex, swim lessons currently under way (classes begin March 3), or other YMCA programs, call (813) 684-1371, or go to [tampaymca.org](http://tampaymca.org).

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# Tourney Proceeds Strengthen Foundation

A Gazette Report

The fifth-annual Greater Brandon Community Foundation Charity Golf Classic was "a great success," said Lithia resident Carlos Tosca.

Tosca, the bench coach for the Florida Marlins, lost his 2-year-old son, C. J., to cancer. The C. J. Tosca Fund, established to assist families of children with cancer, is one of many Brandon-area charities who benefit year-round from the foundation's fundraising efforts.

The classic was held Feb. 7-11 at River Hills Country Club, where participants enjoyed 18 holes of golf at the Tournament of Champions, Celebrity Pro-Am Golf Tournament and the First Tee Brandon Invitational Golf Tournament.

"We are thrilled to be part of

Brandon Foundation because they do so much for the community," said Gerry Tosca, C. J. Tosca's mother. "This eases the pain for families that are stricken by such trauma."

Among the celebrity golfers were retired NFL player Mark Royals, Major League Baseball's Gary Glover, Fred McGriff and Jason Romano, along with current NFL players Shelton Quarles, Michael Pittman, Matt Bryant, Yo Murphy, Mike Pearson, PT Willis and others. NBC News correspondent Kerry Sanders, local WFLA talk show host Cyndi Edwards, BaySports TV's Dick Crippen and Sports Animal radio talk show host Steve Duemig played in the Pro-Am.

Foundation president Anne Nymark said the celebrities created their own excitement by interacting with players and

fans who lined up along the golf course to meet them or ask for autographs.

The tournament raised \$330,000 in 2007. Nymark said tournament officials are in the process of tallying up this year's results, to be announced soon at a check presentation.

"We can't wait to give to charities registered with our organization, through our grant process," she said.

Foundation vice-president, Arlene Waldron, said, "Players, fans, charities, sponsors and volunteers were very complimentary of the format and that we are able to touch more lives. This paves the way for bigger tournaments and charity dollars in the future."

For more information go to [www.brandonfoundation.com](http://www.brandonfoundation.com) or call Liz Brewer, (813) 661-8683.



Above, Liz Brewer, Anne Nymark, Alex Smith and Arlene Waldron chill at the 19th hole of River Hills Country Club. At right, Custom Buccaneers Golf Cart Auction winner Bartlett (on right) with friend Mitch Burley.



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# Civic Center To Be Built

By LINDA CHION-KENNEY

A location has been named for a long-awaited civic building to bring to the greater Brandon area a public space reflective in size and scope of the community's substantial growth. The yet-to-be-named civic center will be built at the Watson and Watson roads corner of the Winthrop community, just west of Symmes Elementary School off Bloomingdale Avenue in Riverview.

The public space has been three years in the planning and the subject of many public meetings, including those involving the Brandon Main Street initiative. For discussion purposes, the civic space has been called the Brandon Advantage Center, in keeping with the name of the not-for-profit organization responsible for securing funding and overseeing the project.

"I love the location," said Brandon Honorary Mayor George T. May IV, a member of the initiative's funding board who also serves on the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

"It's not Main Street, but it's a great location, no ifs, ands or buts about it," May said. "And for

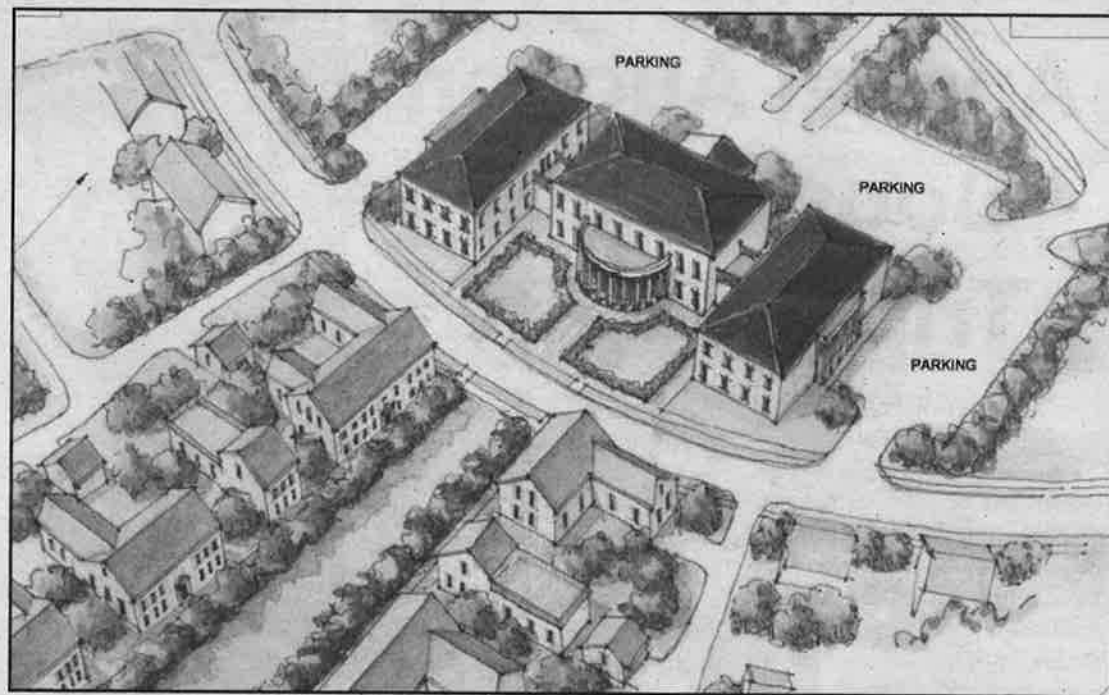
the Bloomingdale people, it's just down the road, in our back yard. What more can we ask for?"

Despite its size and growth, the greater Brandon area has been lacking a civic space large enough to accommodate its main events, including those hosted by the Center Place Fine Arts & Civic Association, the Greater Brandon Community Foundation, the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce and the Roundtable Charities of Greater Brandon Inc., more commonly known as the Presidents' Roundtable.

In partnership with Winthrop and Hillsborough Community College, the projected 20,000 square-foot building will likely include a 10,000 square-foot room designed for the civic, social, cultural and educational needs of the community. Moreover, federal funding will allow the building to serve as a disaster relief center for people with special needs.

Rep. Trey Traviesa, R-56, announced the site selection Feb. 18.

"People told me, 'We want Brandon to be more recognized and recognizable and we want a real community center, a



A rendering of the civic building to be built on the Winthrop site.

place where we can gather," Traviesa said. "I'm beyond excited it's coming to pass here today. This day has been a long time coming."

To date, \$3.4-million has been secured from state and federal sources with additional local support anticipated. Secured funding will cover the design and construction of the exterior of the building, a Greek Revival structure with a Jeffersonian influence reminiscent of turn-of-the-20th-century public structures.

A fundraising drive, including various naming rights and sponsorships, will begin in earnest

to secure the building's interior build-out and operating costs. Groundbreaking is expected in six to eight months; construction is expected to take 18 months.

A weeklong series of public meetings will be held March 4 through March 8 at the Barn Theatre at Winthrop, 11349 Bloomingdale Ave., Riverview. Workshop participants will be invited back to a closing presentation on March 9, where a summation of resulting plans will be presented.

Project CEO Earl Lennard, former Hillsborough County Superintendent, said, "Represent-

tatives from the community and its growing number of business, education, artistic and charity interests are invited to attend the [workshops]. We want you to meet with... architects, engineers, builders and environmental and regulatory staff representatives involved in the project."

For information and workshop meeting schedules, call Lennard at (813) 310-1101.

**Linda Chion-Kenney was recently named programming director for the new Brandon civic center. She can be reached at (813) 389-1809.**

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# Annual Auction Boosts Band Trip Treasury

By JOY BOISSELLE

The words "sold to the highest bidder" will be music to the ears of many tonight at the Bloomingdale High School Rajun' Bull Band's 20th annual live auction fundraiser.

About 250 items valued at more than \$15,000 will be up for bid at the event, sponsored by the school's band boosters club. The auction begins with an item preview and entertainment by the school's jazz band at 5:30 p.m. Professional auction caller, Evan Minck, will begin the bidding at 6 p.m.

The auction is the band's major fundraiser. Rob Jensen, who is a booster parent and auc-

tion chairman, said two-thirds of the proceeds go to the group's general fund, which pays for items such as instrument repairs, uniform upkeep and water for marching practices. The remaining funds are earmarked to help defray students' expenses for the band's annual spring trip, which can run up to \$500 per student.

Jensen said students collect items for the auction from area merchants. A third of the "sold" price for each item is credited to the trip account of the student who procured it.

"Some motivated students have paid for their spring trip and earned spending money entirely from their auction donations," Jensen said.



Bloomingdale High School band members, Caleigh Vazquez, 18, and Rosie Nelson, 17, organize items up for bid tonight at the Rajun' Bull Band's 20th annual live auction.

JOY BOISSELLE/Gazette photos

Close to 500 music students, parents, and teachers will take part in this year's trip to Gatlinburg, Tenn. Not just a pleasure trip, students will compete in "Fiestaval," a weeklong series of

competitions involving musical and performance groups nationwide. Groups competing from Bloomingdale include the Rajun' Bull Band, Jazz Band, Orchestra, Chorus, and the Crimson Dolls dance ensemble.

Patty Fuller, band booster historian, said, "Everyone is looking forward to the excitement of a live auction, and we are really pushing the attendance."

Among the items available

are sports and event tickets, a signed Tampa Bay Lightning jersey, restaurant gift certificates, a golf package, and a class ring from Herff Jones. In addition, attendees can purchase tickets for several door prizes, including a 42-inch plasma screen TV.

The event is open to the public and food is available throughout the evening. Bloomingdale Senior High School is at 1700 E. Bloomingdale Ave.

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### Beauty and the Bull Calendars Available

A Gazette Report

Calendars featuring contestants from the Beauty and the Bull pageant held in February at Bloomingdale Senior High School are now available for purchase. To request a calendar, send a check for \$20 made out to Bloomingdale High School (write "Junior Steering, Beauty and the Bull calendar" in the memo line and please include your contact information). Send orders to Debra Toth, Social Studies Department, Bloomingdale High School, 1700 E. Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico, FL 33594. For more information, contact Toth at (813) 744-8018, ext. 465 or [debra.toth@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:debra.toth@sdhc.k12.fl.us).

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## Substation Notes

By PETE MAURER  
Bloomingdale Community  
Resource Deputy

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bloomingdale Area Community Substation, at 4342 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. For information call (813) 635-8040.

### Tax Cuts Affect Services

Residents may enjoy a drop in taxes thanks to the recently passed property tax bill. However, they can also expect some decreases in county services. Regardless of where and when cuts are made, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our communities.

### Citizen Patrol Readies To Roll

The sheriff's Volunteer Citizen Patrol Program is in the process of training volunteers to patrol Bloomingdale area neighborhoods, serving as an extra set of ears and eyes for deputies.

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association actively supports many programs sponsored by the sheriff's office. Association vice-president Stan Lee and board member Jane Lee attended the February meeting of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council. Plans are under way to increase the association's involvement in law enforcement activities.

### Report Gang Activity

Gang activity has increased in many areas, including Bloomingdale. The sheriff's office needs the eyes and ears of our residents to help them stop gang activity. Parents must become educated on how to spot potential gang recruitment. Residents with questions or concerns about gang activity in Bloomingdale are urged to call Deputy Maurer at the substation, (813) 635-8040.

### Keep Kids Safe

The recent anniversary of the kidnapping and murder of Jessica Lundsford reminded us all how vulnerable our children can be to those who would harm them. Parents, talk to your children. Explain how important it is for them to be aware of their surroundings. Remind them to be cautious of strangers, and tell them what to do if someone tries to harm or abduct them. Build a relationship of trust with your children. Make it your business to know where they are and what they are doing.



Deputy Pete Maurer

Several groups in the community help prepare parents and children for the unseen dangers in our world. Fingerprinting is offered through the sheriff's office and other groups, and YMCAs offer classes in self-defense. Many Web sites also contain excellent information on these critical topics. Take the time to get informed and take action now.

For additional information about child safety, go to [www.childsafetyexperts.com](http://www.childsafetyexperts.com); [www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com); [www.theparentreport.com](http://www.theparentreport.com). For a list of registered sexual offenders and predators who live in our communities, go to [www.hcso.tampa.fl.us](http://www.hcso.tampa.fl.us).

### NO TRESPASSING

To address ongoing problems with trespassing, illegal dumping and possible gang activity in a wooded conservation area in the Oakcrest subdivision, in the area of Moreland Drive, Quail Briar Drive and Levonshire Place, "No Trespassing" signs have been posted and the area will soon be fenced. In addition, a privately-owned portion of the property on the south side will be fenced off. The area will continue to be monitored by the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Dept. and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office. To report problems (non-emergency only) call the Bloomingdale substation, (813) 635-8040 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Program Nets Smarts For Kids

A Gazette Report

More than 123,000 Hillsborough County children have completed a key Internet safety program, NetSmartz, enacted this year by Hillsborough County government, public libraries, schools and numerous private sector sponsors.

NetSmartz was created by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to give young children and teenagers the tools they need to be safe when they go online.

"The computer is not the enemy, and education is the key," said Hillsborough County School Board Chairwoman Jennifer Faliero.

The Tampa Bay Advertising Federation also unveiled its support for the public effort with a branding and public awareness initiative that includes in-your-face graphics and images in print ads, billboards and a video public service announcement. The message is simple: you don't know who's out there online, and predators often hide behind the anonymous face of the Internet. All creative work, event coordination and public relations, valued at about \$50,000, was performed gratis.

Verizon announced in February that it would provide funding support in the coming year, and Florida State Representative Kevin Ambler's office said the representative will sponsor legislation to make the cyber safety program a reality in all of Florida's 67 counties.

Congressman Gus Bilirakis also voiced his support of the initiative.

"Anything I can do on the federal level, I most definitely will," Bilirakis said. "This is outstanding and I want it to be in the schools all over the country, the libraries, and parents need to be taught too."

For more information go to [netsmartz.org](http://netsmartz.org).

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From page 4

must be willing to testify in court).

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Report violations to Department of Public Safety, 9-1-1 Administration, 744-5911

- Emergency Services requires residential addresses to be clearly visible from the street from both directions either on the house or on both sides of the mailbox. Address numbers/letters must be at least 3 inches high, in a color contrasting the background to which it is affixed. Violations can result in a \$50 per day fine until corrected.

### Vehicle Parking

Report to Law Enforcement,

247-8555

It is illegal to stop, stand, or park under any conditions which leave less than 10 feet of available access to roadways and streets, and in the following areas (vehicles may be ticketed for these violations):

- On a sidewalk
- On a crosswalk
- On a bicycle path
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- Within 15 feet of fire hydrant
- Within 30 feet of a stop sign
- On the right-of-way (the area between the sidewalk and the road)
- Every vehicle stopped or parked on a two-way roadway must have wheels within 12 inches of the curb or roadway edge.

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- No maintenance or disturbing of area is allowed.
- May not be used for any other purpose.

### Mailboxes

The U. S. Post Office requires boxes to be sturdy, operational, at least 42 inches in height, and free of obstructions, including branches.

### Trash Collection

Report violations to 276-2927. Violations can result in a citation, fines, or property liens.

- Tuesday – regular trash and recyclable materials.
- Friday – regular trash and yard waste.
- Trash may not be set at the curb before 6 p.m. the night

before pick-up.

- Trash and waste/recycling receptacles may not be left at the curb after 8 p.m. on pick-up day.
- All regular trash must be contained in trash cans, bags, or boxes to preclude access by animals.
- Yard waste is limited to 12 bags per pick-up, 50 pound weight limit per bag.

### Watering Restrictions

Report to Water Department, 272-6680. Violations are a civil infraction with fines up to \$500.

### County Maintenance Standards

Report to County Maintenance, 671-7619.

- Pot holes in streets.
- Street signs damaged or miss-

ing.

- Storm sewers full of trash or not draining.
- Sidewalks, trip hazards, overgrown branches or branches blocking passage.
- Street lights inoperable, report directly to TECO at 223-0800 (may need pole number).

### Special Taxing District Maintenance Standards

Report to Property Manager, 684-6667, or E-mail [bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net).

- Trash on streets or right-of-way, signs on right-of-way, etc.
- Sprinkler system problems (broken or inoperable sprinkler heads), sprinklers on at wrong times.
- Graffiti on walls, etc.
- Damaged walls, entryways.
- Entryway lights inoperable.



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