



Art
Artists thrive in our community. See more of our "Focus on Art" on pages 7 & 15.



Restaurant Review
Elton Dumont returns with a review of Romano's Macaroni Grill on page 13.

The Bloomingdale Gazette

Volume XIII, NUMBER 3

Published by the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

March 1993

Traffic circle update: Does it really control speeding on Bloomingfield?

by Mary Karcher

Entering Bloomingdale West from John Moore Rd., drivers are greeted with Bloomingfield Dr., a wide street parted at the entrance by a landscaped island. Homes boast huge oaks and tidy lawns. Yet this seemingly serene neighborhood has been fighting a 3 year crusade to control speeding of Bloomingfield Dr.

Recently several residents called the Bloomingdale Community Office inquiring about the 41 yellow rubber stanchions which were added to the traffic circle at the Rosedale and Bloomingfield intersection. Resident Tony Abbate complained, "It's incredibly ugly. I would not want that view out of my house." Toni Boman agreed, "To me it has just ruined the whole neighborhood. It used to be so pretty."

Yet all of the residents believe that a speed control measure is imperative. Ellen Van Eeopool worries about the reckless drivers who often reach speeds of 40-50 m.p.h. Sometimes the kids at the bus stops play ball and the ball goes into the street. She says everyone should be concerned about the speeding problem, "Even if you don't live on the street, you still have to drive through it." She relates an incident in which a driver sped past her on the left side while she was attempting to turn left into her driveway. The residents of Bloomingfield have many stories to tell about irresponsible drivers. They are hoping for an effective speed control device on their road before a fatality occurs.

See TRAFFIC, p. 9



Photos by Tim Golden

Speakers address BHA meeting

Parks and Recreation Department seeks park improvement ideas

by Mary Karcher

Bloomingdale Parks will receive a portion of the 20 million bond issue that voters approved last October. Recreational services manager Lois Kessler is listening to residents' suggestions and presenting them to Ed Radice, director of Parks and Recreation Department.

Suggestions for all the Hillsborough County Parks are analyzed with regard to needs and costs. Engineers and architects will present Parks and Recreation (P & R) with a plan for each park. P & R will return to the community with a rough sketch to receive residents' reaction. Then

See PARKS, p. 10

Andersen presents Crosstown Expressway task force recommendations to BHA

"We are trying to allow easy flow of traffic without getting what we call 'The Great Wall of China' going through Brandon"

by Mary Karcher

At the February BHA meeting Martin Andersen outlined the Brandon Transportation Plan Task Force's recommendations to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regarding the proposed extension of the Crosstown Expressway. The Task Force, asserting that the proposed extension does not "protect the integrity of Brandon's commercial center nor the nearby residential areas," offers a less costly alternative.

See CROSSTOWN, p. 10



Meletha Everett helps Bill McGowen during her Design in Watercolor class.

Artist profile

Multi-media artist Everett: A local success story

by Jeri Beel

You need not travel to New York or Los Angeles to procure wonderful works of art. Brandon, despite its small town image, has a plethora of talented artists with impressive credentials. Meletha Everett, a Brandon resident for 13 years, is one of them.

Though she started painting primarily for self-gratification while recuperating from an illness, her paintings now hang in numerous businesses, hospitals, and private

collections in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. She works in various mediums, including watercolor, oil, ink, acrylic, woodblock, line block, and silkscreen. She has exhibited in Texas, Mexico, and Florida, winning several awards including Best of Show.

Everett's resume testifies to her success, but she explains with much enthusiasm and a gleam in her eyes that, "I do it because I love it; not to sell and win prizes."

And love it she must, because when she's not putting in a seven-hour day painting, she teaches classes at both Center Place and The Art Place in Brandon. Workshops like these, Everett believes, are the best format for learning. Whereas university fine art programs offer students "a smidgen of many different art forms," she feels that workshops provide a solid foundation for work in a specific medium. However, Everett emphasizes that young people interested in an art career should definitely pursue a college education. It is difficult to support yourself or a family solely on an income from art, she cautions. A college education provides a backup if one's artwork is not a recognized success.

On the subject of success, Everett feels that many people have an aptitude for art. Pursuing it "takes interest and desire and someone showing you the techniques," she says. "Certainly, not every art student achieves recognized success in the form of awards or sales; the key is self-satisfaction."

Unfortunately, rejection may often get in the way of self-satisfaction for many artists. But true to her cheerful nature, Everett refuses to be affected by negativism. "Rejection is just someone's opinion," she offers. She learned to cope with criticism early on in her career when working out of her kitchen. "My children would come home and tell me what was wrong with my paintings," she reminisces, "but I didn't mind. I enjoyed what I was doing."

Sometimes, that enjoyment closes her mind to all else and she gets "too caught up" in painting. She's even been known to neglect dinner preparations while engrossed in her work. Years ago, she recalls her son excusing these occasional lapses, saying, "Mama hasn't put turpentine in the beans yet, so I guess it's okay."

With her three children now grown, Everett and her

See ARTIST, p. 6

BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY PAGE

From the editor . . .

March always seems to sneak up on me, yet it is always a welcome month. When we lived in the north it was the month of promise. Winter would indeed end despite a few more battles, and spring would always prevail. March is the month of St. Patrick's Day, of green, of spring.

This issue of *The Bloomingdale Gazette* is full of promise. Throughout the winter months, we have gradually reached our goals. We have asked you what you like and thank you for your suggestions and articles. As a community paper, it belongs to you and your contributions and ideas are imperative. Your concerns have prompted articles about your schools, your businesses, your athletic fields, your roads, your BHA. This month we introduce "Hats Off To . . .", a column born of your letters announcing individual's accomplishments. This is your paper and we invite you to be a part of it.

This month we also focus on art in our community through an artist profile, art around town, and Artists-in-the-Schools. Jeri Beel, a Bloomingdale resident and talented writer who joined us this month, wrote many of the art articles.

It seems that I was only meant to stay with you for a season, for this is my last issue as editor. I will write stories from time to time, but my primary focus will be my family. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. Special thanks to those who supported me in the final hours before deadline with either story information or pictures. Thanks to Carol Lopez and her students at BSHS, Mr. Carr and his students at Burns, Tim Golden and Steve Allen for their photographs, and the many people who write columns, including Elton Dumont, Pete Stecher, and LaWayne Wyatt.

I urge you all to take a few minutes each month to make a difference in your community. Ask questions, write a letter, send an article or an idea. If everyone expects someone else to speak for them, the voices will not be diverse, the ideas will not be varied. Together you have more power to solve problems and more occasions to have fun as a community. How about a bike parade, a 4th of July picnic, or a fun run? Speak out!

Sincerely,

Mary Karcher

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Rate cards available upon request.

MEETINGS

All meetings take place at the Bloomingdale Community Office. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District
Second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

BHA Board of Directors
Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District
First Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Mobile Watch & Neighborhood Watch
Watch this listing for dates & times. The meetings are held on a per need basis.

Letters to the Editor

Association angers resident

I have noticed in recent issues of the Gazette a plea for additional members, and support for the Homeowners Association.

It is time that the homeowners in the Bloomingdale area tell the Homeowners Association that membership will continue to dwindle until the Association supports the efforts of concerned citizens who attempt to improve the area and correct serious problems identified by those citizens.

I'm sure that I speak for many who see an ineffective Association. I have tried on several occasions to enlist the support of the Association to solve the traffic problems along Bloomingfield Drive, and Mr. Lembke was quick to take credit for the work done by a few of us in his editorial entitled "Presidents Perception", but the truth is that I met with the Association officers on three occasions and received absolutely no support. No one from the Association attended any of the public hearings concerning the traffic problems along Bloomingfield Drive. I have been involved in this project since May 1990, and I will see it through with the assistance of Mr. Wayne Kirby of Traffic Engineering of Hillsborough County.

If others have experienced the same response from the Association as I, then I'm sure the reason for dwindling membership is self-explanatory, and Mr. Lembke needs to ask himself not what we can do for the Association, but what the Association can do for us. Until that time, I'll not renew my membership in the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

Byron Newcomb

Editor's note: Mr. Newcomb is referring to the "President's Perceptions" editorial from the July 1991 issue of The Bloomingdale Gazette.

Endangered Species: Take an Interest!

Man shares the planet Earth with millions of species of animals, but due to man's carelessness many of these species have become endangered or extinct. This is a very unfortunate problem, and people need to take a larger interest in animal conservation. Animals are a beautiful part of nature and should be around for the enjoyment of generations to come. Man needs to learn to live in harmony with nature. Officials who care about the environment and animals should be elected to positions where they can take action and have legislation passed that would protect endangered species. The animal protection laws have to be enforced in order to be effective, so serious consequences must be the result of a violation.

For many people, jobs and money come before saving endangered animals. Companies would rather cut down an entire forest to provide four week's work than save the forest as a habitat for countless animals. If the forest goes, then the animals go too. The public needs to be informed and educated about the extensiveness of the problem of entire animal populations becoming extinct.

When voting for important public officials, people need to take into consideration what each candidate plans to do for endangered species if they are elected. Remember that those who are elected will play a crucial role in determining the future of endangered animals because they will or will not make protection laws. A good candidate to vote for would be one with a firm stand on protecting the environment and who plans to take action to protect it. There are people currently in office that favor protecting the environment, but there needs to be more for greater action to be taken.

To have any positive effect, animal protection laws must be strictly enforced. Why bother having laws if they don't bring results? Laws to protect endangered species should be enforced as any other law is. If there is a speed limit in a body of water because manatees live there and someone is seen speeding, they should not be pardoned. Speeding in a boat should be treated as speeding in a car - it should not be tolerated if there are laws against it! Serious consequences should be the result of a violation. Appropriate action should be taken depending on the seriousness of the crime.

Our animals must be protected and preserved for future generations. Those unfortunate species that have already been harmed need a boost to get back to the way they were, and man has the duty to give them that boost.

Greta Brinkman

Help us help you

Speak up about the parks' improvement program the county is conducting. Now is the time to present your ideas for our parks! Community support and contributions are welcome. See the article in this issue and call Lois Kessler at 975-6160 or a BHA board member with your ideas.

We are excited about the stories and recognition requests we are receiving! Check out our HATS OFF TO . . . column.

Do you have opinion you would like to share with the community? We welcome signed letters to the editor; please include your phone number so we can verify your letter.

We have several positions available in our writing and advertising departments. If you can help, please call our office at 681-2051.

Next month we will feature Brandon's history. If you have any old pictures, stories, or ideas, please let us know!

Newspapers are delivered the first weekend of each month. If you do not receive yours, please call the office.

Bloomingdale Gazette job openings

The Bloomingdale Gazette is in need of several residents with special talents to fill our vacancies. These are part-time positions. Our office is open from 9:30 to 2:30 daily, and we are closed on school holidays. The Ad Representative positions are perfect for any person who fits the criteria below:


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We are also looking for an editor and a writer. These are hourly wage positions requiring writing, minimal layout experience, and coordinating articles written by local residents and merchants. Each job is comprised of 75 to 100 hours per month spent primarily in the office.

Please call Janine B. Nickerson at 681-2051 for further information.

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY



Mobile Watch report

by LaWayne Wyatt

January and February were both fairly quiet months within our community. We recorded 19 events in Jan. and 24 through Feb. 20. Events logged included multiple speeders, a small teen party in a partially developed area, two large teen parties at homes, several cars at Alafia School late at night, several cars at the golf course late at night, a bike theft from an open garage, kids throwing oranges at cars and eggs at houses, several suspicious cars or juveniles walking the streets, vandalism, cars in the Parks after dark, and parties in the wooded area west of the golf course. Deputies flushed 10 to 15 cars out of this wooded area on Feb. 12 and another 5 were seen on Feb. 20.

One of our members reported finding a lost dog on Feb. 13. Within 3 - 4 days the owner had been located and the dog was returned.

During the week of Feb. 14, a lady was robbed in the Wal-Mart parking lot during daylight. Everyone needs to be fully aware of their surroundings and watch for strangers lurking nearby while in any mall parking lot. If anything looks suspicious, do not park and get out of the car or attempt to enter your

car. Continue past the area or return to the store.

Residents occasionally ask why we are so interested in cars in the Parks, the golf course, or other unusual places. In most cases there is no problem. The owners have probably left the car there for a number of acceptable reasons. It is possible the occupants/owners could be walking the neighborhood checking houses or looking to cause some form of trouble. It is for this reason we watch for these vehicles and record the description and tag number. If a crime has occurred in the area, the tag number may provide a lead to the Sheriff's office and result in an arrest.

We can still use additional volunteers. Any resident within our community is eligible to volunteer. This includes owners and renters as well as residents of the apartment and condominium complexes of Brookside, Bloomingdale Woods, and Pine Grove.

Our thanks to the following who have recently volunteered:

Robert and Susan Watts, West
Dean Chalk, West
Paul and Patricia White, East

Burns News



Artist paints mural in gymnasium

by Ryan McGown

Burns Junior High School has a new mural painted on the wall of the gymnasium. This particular piece is not the only work of Stacy Ridgeway, the artist who painted it. Some local schools that display Mr. Ridgeway's work include Brandon, Armwood, and East Bay. Mr. Ridgeway has been painting murals as a full time job for over six years. A retired art teacher, Mr. Ridgeway has loved art all of his life. When asked which mural he was most proud of he replied, "all of them."

School welcomes new principal

by Clifton Wiggins

The new principal at Burns Junior High School, Mrs. Kipley, has been here only a short time, but already students are astounded by the changes in their school. Since her arrival, Mrs. Kipley has commissioned a mural for the gym, had two soda machines installed, and had encouraged recycling at Burns.

Here are a few comments students had regarding Mrs. Kipley:

"She's done a great job boosting school spirit."

"She lets the students have more influence in the school."

"She's doing a great job. She's a great help to the Hospitality Club."

"More important things are being accomplished."

"She's nice."

"She's active in the school. She cares about the progress of the students."

"She's doing a great job."

"I think she can help the school to change."

"She has made school more interesting."

Already Mrs. Kipley's influence at Burns can be seen. The students regard her as not only the principal of Burns, but as someone who genuinely cares about the school and the students.

Band takes first place in parade

by Ashley Ussery

On February 27th the Burns Junior High Band marched in the annual Strawberry Festival Youth Band Parade located in Plant City. The band, under the direction of Kevin Lewis, won the Best Band Award. Burns has brought home first place three times and runner up in the best band category in the seven years it has marched. The parade started at 11:30 a.m. and included various organizations, bands, and floats.

Burns news articles are submitted by students in Mr. Carr's journalism class.

Resident concerned about vandalism

A Bloomingdale Estates resident is alarmed by acts of vandalism that have occurred in the area. Pranks such as slashed tires, eggs thrown at cars, deflated tires, and windows shot out of vehicles reflect irresponsible behavior.

The homeowner urges parents to discuss respect for others with their teenagers. The victims of these pranks, he warns, are tiring of dismissing the acts as childish pranks. Some may take the law in their own hands yielding a tragic price to pay for an evening of mischief.

The right to drive includes the responsibility to know and obey the rules of safety. These rules protect the driver, and passengers, as well as other drivers on the road. Drinking and driving is not a responsible act; the consequences could be fatal.

Parents cannot always rectify their children's behavior, yet they have a responsibility to teach their children right and wrong so children can make decisions. All children should be aware that eventually they will pay for their actions.

Editor's note: Residents concerned about vandalism in their neighborhood may consider joining Mobile Watch.



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Bloomington High welcomes new principal

by Gina Nance

In the past few months, Bloomington Senior High School has had to make several major adjustments concerning the leadership in the school. Not only did Mr. Charles J. Harris, former principal retire, but the school also gained new leadership in the person of Ms. B. J. Stelter, former principal



B. J. Stelter

"Watching the seniors that I have known for

of Horace Mann Junior High School.

After 36 years in education work, Harris has retired. He said that one of his fondest memories of being principal was attending graduations.

three years walking across the stage and shaking hands with them is one of the greatest feelings," said Harris. Harris' advice to Stelter is to "enjoy all good things, faculty, and students."

Stelter, having only been "in office" for about one month, is still making the necessary adjustments. Until February 17, Stelter was going back and forth between Bloomington and Mann in order to provide the junior high school with the leadership they needed until replacements were located. She stated that she is looking forward to being at Bloomington full time.

Stelter recalls her first response at having been chosen as principal for Bloomington as being "excited, proud, and nervous." Stelter comments that she has no major change planned for the school; she wants to be able to understand the climate and traditions before changing anything.

Although she is aware of the academic

emphasis at Bloomington, Stelter also believes that "students should enjoy school, and relax." Besides academics and relaxation, Stelter plans to also focus on student involvement in decision making.

The transition from Mr. Harris to Ms. Stelter seems to have gone smoothly as many students have welcomed Stelter to the school. Stelter said that she "feels like a part of the school already." Many have wondered whether following in the footsteps of Mr. Harris would prove to be difficult, but Stelter claims that she "plans to meet any challenges head on."

Though people are just beginning to get to know Ms. B. J. Stelter, Bloomington certainly appreciates her friendly attitude and positive outlook.



Jaime Spenser, Brandie Allen, and Sara Ammon helped raise money for burn victim Chris Wilson. Students from Buckhorn, Lithia Springs, Burns, and Bloomington raised more than \$1400 for the Chris Wilson trust fund. Bloomington teachers Greg Pink and Tasha Lohman coordinated the effort.

Rajun Bulls Band to hold Auction



by Nancy Waters

The 5th Annual Benefit Auction for the Bloomington Senior High School Rajun Bull Band and Crimson Dolls will be held on March 13 in the school cafeteria at 1700 E. Bloomington Ave. Local merchants are making the auction possible with generous donations such as sporting goods, dinner certificates, appliances, and other quality items.

The Auction is sponsored by the Bloomington Senior High Band Booster Association. Items can be previewed from 6 - 7 p.m. The auction will begin promptly at 7 p.m. with Colonel Rob Hennessee as the auctioneer. A concession stand will be selling refreshments; admission and parking are free.

This fundraiser will help to defray the cost of the band's trip to Nationwide Competition at Myrtle Beach in April as well as to raise monies for musical operational costs.

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Where in the world is . . . Alafia?

by Mary Karcher

- The Brooks Range, the northernmost part of the Rocky Mountains, is in which state?
- The Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804 began at the mouth of one river and ended at the mouth of another. Name one of the two rivers.
- The Canadian government's effort to protect the northern cod by imposing a 2 year ban on cod will affect the lifestyle of which Canadian Province?

Countries, rivers, mountain ranges, latitudes, longitudes, lifestyles, world religions, national parks, and capitals were all fair game for the National Geographic Geography Bee questions. Fifth graders at Alafia Elementary participated at the classroom level to qualify for the school level competition. Twelve students from the classroom contests qualified to compete in an oral competition to determine the representative from the school.

On January 15, one of the 12 students would survive the mentally taxing rounds of questioning. All 12 students impressively responded to questions worthy of "final jeopardy" on the popular game show. Their minds searched their mental files, acquired through reading, studying, and the quizzing of parents and teachers alike. Gradually, the competition whittled down to 4 students: Drew Emery, Mark Swanson, David Taylor and Chad Thorner.

The 4 took a break to get some water and stretch their muscles while the judges prepared for the final rounds of



Photo by Shirley Hefner

The top 12 competitors in the Alafia Geography Bee with competition coordinators: (kneeling, l to r) Laura Christensen, June Townsend, Lindsay Blount; (standing, l to r) Ms. Karen Wilson, Jacob Cordell, Garrett Oaks, Chad Thorner, Ben McClure, Mark Swanson, Winston Davis, Nick Smith, Drew Emery, Mrs. Nancy Ream, and David Taylor.

questioning. Mrs. Susan Lizer, principal; Mr. Robert Haner, assistant principal; Ms. Karen Willis, computer teacher; Mrs. Shirley Hefner, media specialist; and Nancy Ream, parent advisor, conducted the competition.

The overall winner was Chad Thorner, who correctly answered the most questions in the final two-contestant round. Fellow students excitedly shook Chad's hand, and patted each other on the back for a good competition.

The Geography Bee, which is sponsored by National Geographic, will continue at the state level with a written test. Winners will be sent to Washington D.C. to participate in the national geography bee, moderated by Jeopardy's Alex Trebek. Winners will receive scholarships with first prize yielding \$25,000; second, \$15,000; third, \$10,000; and the next ten winners receiving \$500 each.

Parent Nancy Ream brought the contest to the attention of computer teacher Karen Willis and a coordinated effort produced practices for the students. Already Alafia is beginning to set their sights on next year with plans to adjust the fourth grade geography curriculum. So parents and students, get a good atlas and concentrate on world cultures. Here's a start. The answers to the above questions are Alaska; the Columbia and the Missouri rivers; and Newfoundland.

Alafia kindergartners recreate medieval festival

by Jeri Beel

Pint-sized, fully costumed, kings and queens mingled with lords, ladies, court jesters, and fearless knights during the Alafia kindergarten medieval festival on Friday, Feb. 12.

Students from Mrs. Ruhle's, Mrs. Schino's, Mrs. Baker's, and Mrs. Clarkson's classes studied medieval times for several weeks, transforming their own classrooms into kingdoms. On Friday morning, they combined the whole-language skills learned in the classroom to perform short skits and plays, group chants, songs, and lots of merrymaking for family members.

In the afternoon, each of the four classrooms relived a medieval feast, complete with such fare as "wild boar" (ham salad artistically molded into a boar's head), grapes, cheese cubes, chicken drumettes, and bread pieces. Utensils, as in See KNIGHTS, p. 6



Photo by Kathy Giacomini

Queen Jessica Beel and Ryan Giacomini presided over the Royal Feast in Mrs. Ruhle's kindergarten classroom.



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Real estate moves

by Michael Davis

The Housing Act of 1992 not only deregulated the interest rates on VA home mortgages but also allows the VA buyer to pay points. That's good news because the veteran is now able to negotiate any interest rate and point structure with VA lenders. Selling your home should be easier now that you can offset excessive points with a slightly higher rate for the veteran. On the other side, veteran buyers should have more homes to choose from since sellers will be more inclined to offer VA terms because of the new negotiability. However, this new program will be evaluated over a three-year period to see if it has accomplished the goals intended.



Another major change to the Housing Act of 1992 is to grant VA home loan eligibility to Reservists not otherwise eligible for VA home benefits, but who have completed six years in the Selected Reserve and who:

- Continue to serve in the Selected Reserve; or
- Were placed on the retirement list; or
- Were honorably discharged from the service; or

• Were transferred to the Standby Reserve or an element of the Ready Reserve other than the Selected Reserve after service in the Selected Reserve, characterized as honorable service.

This provision for eligibility expires on October 28, 1999. If you are a Reservist and you meet these requirements you should apply for a certificate of VA eligibility using VA form 26-1880. The VA charges a funding fee on all VA loans; however, the funding fee for Reservists is .75% higher than for non-Reservist loans.

No one knows exactly how many Reservists are currently eligible for VA home loans. It could mean hundreds of thousands or even millions of new potential homeowners who have their eye on your home may be able to buy it with zero down!

In closing, if you've ever had a sale not close because a VA buyer did not qualify for their mortgage, don't give up. The good news is that VA has just offered its first adjustable rate mortgage. Instead of a fixed rate at 7.5 - 8.0% where the buyer could not qualify why not suggest the one year adjustable loan at 5.5 - 6.0%? What makes this loan so attractive is the 1.0% annual rate cap and the 5.0% lifetime cap. Combine these desirable features with an annual margin on the loan at 2.0%, and you have a powerful alternative to keep your sale together and your plans intact. Ask your Realtor for more information.

Michael Davis is a Realtor with the Brandon office RE/MAX Realty Unlimited

ARTIST from p. 1

husband, Bill, find more time for travel, something which offers much inspiration for her painting. Aside from occasionally losing luggage and the usual airline scheduling frustrations, one of the most difficult aspects of travel is arranging room in her suitcases for her paints. But she wouldn't be without at least one set. During her travels, she draws on simplistic subject matter for her pictures. A fishing shack in the Keys, and a painting of two hat racks filled to the brim caught my eye as examples of her very interesting work.

By teaching adult and children's classes within the community, Everett exemplifies her own belief that "art is sharing." Children, she believes, are positively affected by early art experiences. "Art is the basis for all creativity," she explains. Without early artistic exposure, especially in the elementary years, Everett fears that success in many careers like architecture and science may not always be possible. Sadly, our schools do not uniformly offer art classes. Everett suggests that artists could give more to the community by coming into classrooms, exposing children to what artists do.

Bill McGowan, who has been painting with Everett since 1985, says "Watercolor is more challenging than any of the other mediums, but mainly it's just plain fun."

In addition to her painting, Everett also designs greeting cards, and has published a how-to book entitled, "Cards Galore and More." Recently, she began writing poetry and has been published.

Everett belongs to the Brandon League of Fine Arts, Center Place Fine Arts and Civic Association, and a host of

other professional organizations. The public may view her work at an upcoming show in May at the Valrico State Bank.

Having met Meletha Everett, a petite, artistic "power-pack", quick to smile and obviously in love with life, I am not at all surprised by her success. We are fortunate that skilled artists like her reside in our community and are willing to "share their art" with us.

KNIGHTS from p. 5

days of old, consisted only of knives, making food consumption a slight challenge (though most 5 and 6 year olds happily reverted to using their fingers). Peasants (parent volunteers) humbly served the young aristocrats.

With help from teachers and parents, students made costumes for the festival and decorated "shoebox castles" which doubled as valentine boxes. The costumes were fun and not nearly as cumbersome as the originals. After discussing how a knight might feel in his hot, heavy armor, Sean Bar decided that, "If I was a knight, I would definitely quit that job!" Especially if he was a knight during a hot summer in Florida!

Though a trip back in time was educational and enjoyable, most of the children polled much prefer the modern conveniences of the 1990's.

Parenting: The underdeveloped skill

by Susan Narup

Often with our best intentions, Americans expose children to overwhelming pressures which can lead to low self-esteem. By expecting too much too soon, we force our kids to grow up too fast.

Lithia Springs Elementary will present *The Hurried Child - Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon* on March 9 at 7 p.m. This workshop offers parents and teachers advice for encouraging healthy development while protecting the joy of childhood. The presenter will be Joseph D. Sclafani, Ph.D., from the Brandon Center for Family Therapy.



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Tustenugee? Origami? Artists-in-the-Schools program enlightens students

by Mary Karcher

In Joy Sweeney's third grade class at Alafia Elementary, students anxiously eyed the doorway in anticipation of their visitor. A knock on the door elicited, "She's here! Mrs. Sweeney, she's here!" The students were mistaken, however. It was not their expected visitor, only a reporter. Who were these students anxious to see? They did not know her name, they just knew that she was the lady who taught "origami".

At Brooker Elementary, students filed into the media center curiously eyeing the animal skins, bones, weapons, turtle shells, baskets, and brightly colored clothing displayed on the tables. But Screaming Eagle, a Tustenugee Indian, captured their immediate attention, towering above them dressed in a bright red Indian tunic. His nose was pierced by a silver ring; long earrings dangled from his ears. A wide leather belt carried a knife at his waist. His legs and feet were covered by soft leather leggings and moccasins. The students' questions and comments were silenced by his deep voice as he spoke the Tustenugee language.

Origami, the oriental art of paper folding, and the culture of the Tustenugee Indians represent the diverse experiences offered by the Artists-in-the-Schools program. The program fuses the Arts Council of Hillsborough County with the Hillsborough County Schools to create varied visual and performing art experiences for students in county schools. The program is headed by Joe Testasecca, Coordinator of Visual and Performing Arts for the school system, and Lynn Norton, Director of Education at the Hillsborough County Arts Council. Through the program, which is funded by the school board, they hire 30 to 35 artists a year, as well as 50 performing arts groups to visit schools.

Ms. Andux taught the third graders to create folded building blocks which hook together to make various shapes. She fashioned a 12 sided star figure from the collection of folded building blocks made by Mrs. Sweeney's class. She also showed them examples of other items she had made; students were particularly intrigued by her tumbling blocks which seemed to endlessly tumble in her hands. She explained that origami brought pleasure to the kingdoms of the Orient, although later it became a pastime of peasants.



Photo by Mary Karcher

Screaming Eagle uses Stephanie Brown's head to model for a skunk skin hat.

Screaming Eagle, also known as Jack Exum, quickly dispelled the Indian often portrayed in Hollywood movies. He spoke richly of his heritage, his language, and his responsibility to his family. He related stories about his children, whose names translate to "stinking turtle" and "water frog". He quieted the children's laughter with an explanation; boys are supposed to be ashamed of their name so that when they complete manhood, they can earn a new name which they have proven they deserve. As Screaming Eagle held up animal skins, the children repeated their Indian names: "wadko" for a raccoon, "choolei" for a fox. Shaking turtle shells filled with pebbles, the students danced while Screaming Eagle chanted a prayer song.

These interactive programs encourage children to think, and to create. Pupils learned about a culture unlike their own by experiencing the art of that culture. Artists like Andrea Andux and Screaming Eagle have not only given children a memorable treasure, but also an inspiration to create.

Art around town

Center Place
619 Vonderburg Drive

by Jeri Beel

Many residents new to the Brandon area know Center Place only as the "mysterious office adjoining the Library." But a quick tour through the serene facility reveals a wealth of artistic resources for all ages and interests.

Established in 1976 as a non-profit organization, Center Place provides a gift shop, art gallery, art workshop rooms, and community meeting rooms.

The Gift Shop at Center Place carries assorted jewelry, crafts and clothing for sale, with many items created by local artisans. Profits from shop sales subsidize many children's programs, such as the "Children's Theatre". Recently, "Aladdin" and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" were presented as life-size puppet shows for \$2.50.

Artwork from different local artist is chosen monthly for display in the large meeting room at no cost to the artist. Student artwork adorns the rear corridor, with teachers from local schools selecting special student work to showcase.

Art workshops available each month vary, ranging from adult oil painting to ballroom dance, with specialty classes often geared toward holiday crafts. Children's art programs are offered as well. Center Place retains 25% of the profits.

The 300 seat auditorium often bustles with activity; it's a place where government meetings convene, where children's live theatre delights and educates, and where adults can enjoy dinner theatres, cabarets, dramas, and other live entertainment. Community members may also rent the auditorium for weddings, reunions, and other special events.

For more information, call Center Place at 685-8888.



Photo by Tim Golden

Artist John Gutcher offers advice to Carolyn Jefferson, while Alice Burleson and Celeste Doliar observe at Fields Art & Framing.

Fields Art & Framing
3244 Lithia Pinecrest Road

Fields Art & Framing is renown among artists for the fine framing they offer. Owner Jerry Fields says that they are the only place in the Tampa area that offers free-hand mat carving. He exhibits examples of dates and designs carved into the mat to complement the photo or artwork. One particularly effective mat displays two pictures of a husband and wife, one taken when they were married, the second at their 50 year anniversary. Fields has hand-carved the years of their wedding anniversary into the mat.

Fields' motto is "We frame memories". They have framed a variety of items including corsages and tea sets.

Fields' also offers a wide variety of art classes: oil painting, pastels, watercolor, needlework, clay, and fabric painting. They also offer children's drawing on Saturday mornings. Call 654-8618 for the schedule of classes.

John Gutcher teaches the oil painting class at Fields'. His class emphasizes the techniques of the Old Masters like Van Dyke and Caravaggio. His students benefit from his art experience; winning many awards has brought him sales to private collectors throughout the Eastern US and Canada.

See ART, p. 9

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