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## STD BUDGET PLANNING MEETING

May 10th  
6:30pm

(See details  
on page 7)

## *Bloomingtondale Resident's Garden is for the Birds...and the Butterflies.*

*By Laura Frazier, Editor*

Inspired by magazine articles and photographs of flourishing butterfly gardens, Bloomingtondale resident Deb DiVincenzo decided just over a year ago to plant a few of the suggested flowers and "see what happened". What happened was the beginning of what would become a lush and thriving back yard butterfly habitat. Hundreds of Monarch, skipper, zebra swallowtail and hair-streak varieties now visit, live in, breed and beautify the DiVincenzo's back yard from early spring through late fall.

Deb is gearing up for her second year of welcoming the butterflies

back into her garden. She says there has been a fair amount of work involved in planning and maintaining her butterfly garden, but that the rewards have been plentiful. Her enthusiasm with continuing and expanding on her project is contagious. "I have found butterfly gardening to be even more enjoyable than I had imagined," she says. So, how does her garden grow?

Deb provides food for the insect's larval stage by planting such sources as milkweed

and parsley in abundance throughout the garden. Red pentas, lantana, butterfly bush and indigo spires provide a nectar source for the adult butter-  
*(Continued on page 5)*

*"I have found butterfly gardening to be even more enjoyable than I had imagined."*

*Son Nick's former tree house serves as the DiVincenzo's gardening shed.*





# Your Inside Connections

## The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Rd.  
Valrico, FL 33594  
BHA Voice Mail: 681-2051  
E-mail: BHA-INC@ALTAVISTA.NET  
(no website)

Randy Wolfe <i>President</i>	Ann Underwood <i>Director</i>
Ted Grable <i>Comptroller</i>	Pam Liguori <i>Director</i>
Patricia Radel <i>Director</i>	Rick Pitrowski <i>Director</i>
LaWayne Wyatt <i>Director</i>	

**Property Manager:**  
DPMI ..... 684-6617

### Bloomingdale Special Taxing District ..... 684-6667

Thom Snelling, *President* ..... 681-9186  
Tom Mackiewicz, *Vice President* ..... 653-4145  
Don Cassels, *Treasurer* ..... 681-8855  
R. Dickey, *Corresponding Secretary* ... 689-2177  
Alice Burleson, *Recording Secretary* .. 685-1076  
Tim Golden, *Trustee* ..... 653-1337  
Paul Almeida, *Trustee* ..... 661-2018

### Bloomingdale Mobile Watch Core Committee

LaWayne Wyatt, *Coordinator/Scheduler* ..... 685-2072

### Mobile Watch (Continued)

Paul Kelmer, *Treasurer* ..... 681-9701  
Tony Diolosa, *Equipment Manager* ... 681-1146  
Steven Heckel, *Membership Chairman* 654-4266  
David Guy ..... 681-5943  
Paul Warr ..... 685-7883

### Meetings

All meetings take place at the Community Office at 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

**BHA Board of Directors**  
Second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

## THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

### Bloomingdale Gazette Staff

Laura Frazier ..... *Editor*  
Mack Austin ..... *Associate Editor*  
Elton Dumont ..... *Restaurant Critic*  
Paul Almeida ..... *Feature Writer*

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Share your news with the community! Write to Editor, at 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594 or fax to (813) 681-2051

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TIMES  
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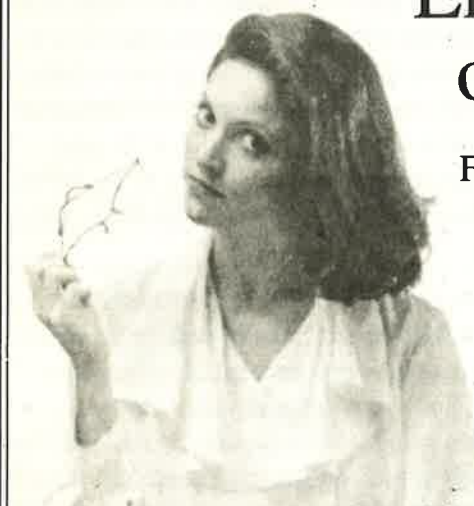
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**Bloomingtondale  
Special Taxing  
District**

**Property  
Manager's  
Report**

**March 1999**

Submitted by Devney  
Property Management, Inc.

**1. Irrigation:** Brandor Irrigation completed the system in front of Park East. DPPI corrected or replaced 2 solenoids, 31 spray heads, 1 rotor and 12 risers. Three systems were non-operational due to electrical and/or pump problems.

**2. Landscaping:** DPPI sent soil samples to the University of Florida Extension Service to test certain flowerbeds. The results were generally negative. A fungus problem does exist, and DPPI will attempt to correct it during the next planting. DPPI met with the representatives of four contractors to discuss the proposed renovation of the entryway at John Moore. Neighborhood Pest Control completed a fertilizer application. A & W installed sod in front of park East. DPPI completed the monthly property inspection. There were very few deficiencies. Al Devney, President of DPPI, indicated "a great improvement in the overall appearance of the area".

**3. Miscellaneous:** Damage to the wall at Glenhaven and Nature's Way was repaired. The cost to the district was \$1,170.24. DPPI obtained the accident report and anticipates the STD will recover a portion if not all of the cost from the vehicle owner's insurance company. DPPI reports that representatives of Bristol Green Phase Two plan to request that the STD take over services not currently covered by the STD. DPPI prepared an inventory to help budget costs if the take over is approved.

**4. In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window:** DPPI picked up 22 bags of litter, two pairs of socks, three tennis balls, one football, one soccer ball, a picture frame, a sofa, a vase, a pillow and one hubcap. It was a slow month financially as collections eroded to only 26 cents, compared to February's \$1.12. The domestic beverage of the month remains Bud Light. The premium import choice has gone from Corona to Heineken for March.

**Resident's Garden (Continued from page 1)**

flies, which feed on the flowering plants and deposit their young on just about anything that doesn't move. She points out several cocoons already nestled in early April on a passionvine plant and on the fence surrounding her property. "At peak season, we have cocoons everywhere," she says. "I have even found them inside our gardening shed". 'Gardening shed' may be too casual a term for the little house beautifully custom made by husband Jim. The shed, which in a previous life served as son Nick's tree house, bears a charming resemblance to the DiVincenzo's home. It is filled with gardening supplies that will be put to good use in the coming months.

You will not, however, find any diazinon or Malathion in the family's gardening shed. "Butterflies will not tolerate chemical pesticides of any type," says DiVincenzo. How then to control the inevitable onslaught of summer pests? "Aphids were a problem last year," she recalls. "I found the best defense to be a little dishwashing liquid mixed with water and sprayed directly onto the plants," she says. The soap in effect smothers the bugs and the solution can then simply be rinsed off the plants with a garden hose.

Another pest DiVincenzo battled in her garden last year proved to be a much worthier opponent. Much to her dismay, the bug feasted upon hundreds of helpless butterflies in the caterpillar stage. She describes its 'modus operandi' with horror. "It would land on a caterpillar and viciously jab its feeding appendage into the caterpillar and then proceed to suck the insides out". This predator remains unidentified pending further investigation by Deb.

Another unexpected garden visitor of the more pleasant variety took the family by surprise last fall. "I was in the kitchen and by sheer luck happened to be glancing out the window and saw something very small and quick flit by," says Deb. She was about to

enjoy the first of several fleeting but memorable encounters with a hummingbird. She watched as the creature, no bigger than a person's thumb, flew over to a red powder puff plant, helped itself to some nectar, and left as quickly as it came.

Deb provides this "puddling" water source for the butterflies, which sit on the small rocks and extend their proboscis into the wet sand to draw water out.



persistent squirrels that abound in Bloomingtondale.

Deb's husband Jim was to have a small stake in the family's backyard garden. A single orange tree was planted in the corner of the yard, it's promise of spring

*"A blue gazing globe has proven to be a great curiosity for the birds, which frequently perch on it and comically interact with their own reflections."*

fruits with his name on them. But whatever the squirrels don't squander is quickly devoured by Deb's precious caterpillars, gorging on oranges with no threatening can of Raid in sight. "I felt so bad, I told Jim I would pick the caterpillars off by hand," Deb says sincerely, but laughing. Jim's response? "Oh never mind." This garden is definitely for the butterflies.

The DiVincenzo's have been Bloomingtondale residents for the past nine years, enough time to feel quite at home in the community. The family

enjoys their house and their wooded Monte Lake Drive homesite and obviously enjoys working at maintaining and improving their home. Of their neighborhood, Deb says, "We appreciate the close proximity of Bloomingtondale to all the stores and conveniences, we really like Nick's school (Burns Middle), and we have great neighbors". Sounds like a great place to maintain a butterfly garden, and a terrific place to call home.



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**Providing Quality Child Care in Bloomingdale**

Before making your decision about a child care provider, visit several facilities. The more you know, the easier your decision and the more comfortable you will feel making it. The editors at iVillage and CareGuide have compiled a handy checklist.

[www.ivillage.com]

*How many children is the facility licensed to provide for?*

*What is the philosophy of the center or home?*

*Does the facility allow non-toilet trained children?*

*Does the facility serve meals? Are they hot meals or snacks? Are they well balanced and nutritious?*

*Does the facility charge for sick days or when the child is on vacation? Does the provider close for holidays and if so which ones?*

*What is the facilities policy on sick children?*

*What supplies/equipment does the facility provide and what is the parent expected to provide?*

*Does the facility offer transportation? Is it safe and reliable?*

*Is your participation and involvement encouraged?*

**Facility Atmosphere:**

*Do the children at the facility look happy?*

*Did your child feel comfortable during your visit?*

*Did she/he like the other children?*

*Does she/he think it would be fun to go there?*

*Is there a feeling of belonging at the facility?*

*Would you enjoy spending your day in this environment?*

*How is the lighting and ventilation?*

*Are safe, sanitary, hygienic conditions maintained?*

*Are there several toilets and wash facilities available and are children encouraged to wash their hands?*

*Where do children nap?*

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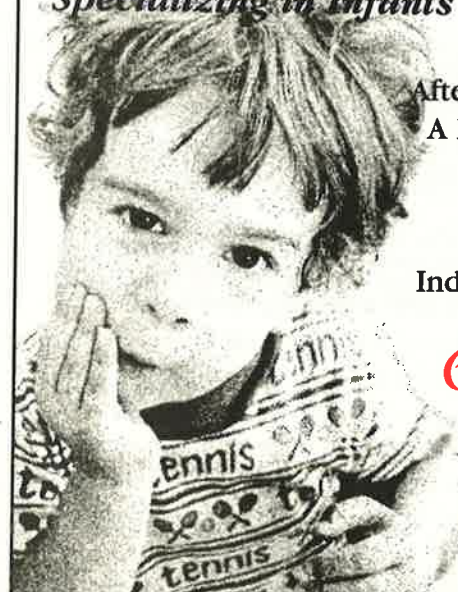
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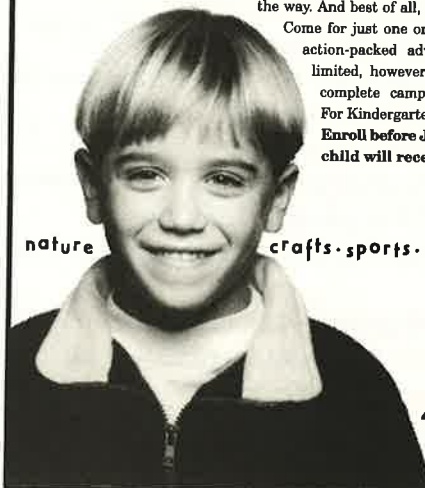
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- April 26 - Aug. 5 Summer Swim Team
- May 2 Gymnastic Session 2 begins
- June 1 Summer Sport Camp begins
- June 6, 13, 20, 27 July 11, 25 Dive Camp weekly
- June 7, 14, 21, 28, July 5, 12 Swim Camp weekly
- June 12 Competitive Soccer Tryouts for U10, U12, U14, U16
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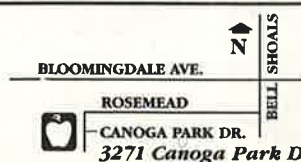


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## Bloomingtondale Community Substation Notes

by Deputy Pete Maurer

With the phenomenal number of homes being built in the Bloomingtondale area comes the potential for an increase in the number of home burglaries and the theft of personal property such as cars and bicycles. Statistics show an increase in these types of crimes during the summer months. Many people are on vacation and school is out, which means there is more idle time. Now is the time to act.

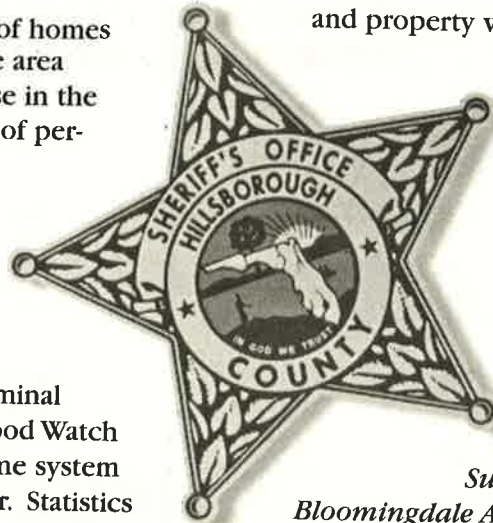
One proven way of thwarting such criminal activity is to have an effective Neighborhood Watch Program, which puts into effect the old-time system of one neighbor watching out for the other. Statistics show that when an effective Neighborhood Watch Program is put in place, the number of crimes decrease because there are simply more people involved.

There are several Neighborhood Watch Programs already in the Bloomingtondale area. Coordination is currently being completed with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Crime Prevention Bureau and Homeowners' Associations in the area to increase the number of programs. Residents in areas without established programs are encouraged to contact their Homeowners' Associations about getting a program in place.

Representatives from all Homeowners' Associations within the Bloomingtondale Community Resource Deputies' Area ( Bloomingtondale Avenue on the North, John Moore Avenue on the West, Alafia River on the South, Lithia Pinecrest Rd. through River Ridge to the Alafia River on the East) can call the Community

Substation at 635-8040 to verify their association's contact information.

These good neighbor actions work. Word gets around about the neighborhoods where people are concerned and won't stand for having their homes and property violated. To get involved, get an effective Neighborhood Watch Program in place and save yourself and your neighbors the pain of being a victim. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Bureau at 247-8115.



**Editor's note:** The Bloomingtondale Community Substation works closely with the Bloomingtondale Area Community Council to identify and address issues of importance to our residents such as traffic problems, environmental protection, home security and crime prevention. Residents are invited to contact Deputy Maurer at the Substation (635-8040) to express any concerns they may have or issues they would like to see addressed in this monthly column.

### Correction

The April "Bloomingtondale Community Substation Notes" column included a phone number for residents to report dangerous driving activity around school buses. The number has been changed to 1-888-786-7454. We apologize for any inconvenience encountered due to this change.

## Bloomingtondale West Recreation Center News

The following classes and activities are now being offered at the Rec Center. Classes will begin the week of June 7. Volunteers are needed to assist in the tennis and soccer programs. For more information, contact Donna Clouse at 744-5907, 6:30 pm-9:00 pm Monday through Friday.

Activity	Age	Day/Time	Fee
Youth Tennis Camp	5 & Up	Mon.-Thurs., 7:30-8:30am	\$24.00/session
Youth Tennis Camp	5 & Up	Mon.-Thurs., 8:30-9:30am	\$24.00/session
USA Junior Tennis League	10-18	Thursday, 6:30-8:00pm	\$30
Rallyball Tennis League	6-12	Tuesday, 6:30-8:00pm	\$30
Summer Soccer Program	4-10	Monday, 6:00-7:00pm	\$15
Karate	5 & Up	Tues.-Fri., 2:45-4:45pm	\$3/class
Daisy Fun Shoot	9 & Up	Thursday, 3:30-4:30pm	\$10
Wrestling	5 & Up	Thursday, 4:00-5:00pm	\$3/class
Ceramics	6-8	Monday, 10:00-11:00am	\$25
Ceramics	9-12	Wednesday, 10:00-11:00am	\$25



(Left) Bloomingtondale West Recreation Leader Jeff Kleinotas, Jordan Buford and Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano prepare to begin the games at the T-Ball/softball ceremonies at Bloomingtondale West Rec Center.



(Right) Bloomingtondale Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano demonstrates professional skill as she throws out the first ball during the season opening ceremonies. Photos by Tim Golden

## Bloomingtondale Residents Invited to Attend STD Budget Planning Meeting

Familiar questions overheard at various Bloomingtondale locations: "What exactly is a Special Taxing District? I know that as Bloomingtondale residents we pay a 'special' tax that goes to the 'STD' each year, but who are these people and what are they doing with our money?"

Thom Snelling, President of the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District, along with Vice President Tom Mackiewicz and the STD board of Trustees, Secretaries and Treasurer, would like to invite all

Bloomingtondale residents to a special meeting of the STD, Tuesday May 10, 6:30pm at the Bloomingtondale Community Offices, 3509 Bell Shoals Road.

Board members will discuss upcoming budget proposals and options, and will encourage any comments or questions from interested residents. Major issues to be budgeted for include community property repairs, maintenance and improvements. For more information, please call the STD office at 684-6667.

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Recovering after surgery at a military base in Panama, the U. S. Army Private picked up a pen and began sketching to pass the time. The year was 1976, and Private Jerry Fields was about to discover a previously untapped artistic ability that would inspire him years later to accept his longest assignment of all, as owner and operator of Fields Art and Framing in Bloomingdale.

Fields, who after 26 years of total service in the U.S. Army retired as a Full Colonel in 1989, refers to his career as an artisan and framing shop owner as his "second life". "I discovered quite by accident that I had an ability and interest in painting and drawing," he says. During that three-week convalescent period and in his spare time after recuperating, Fields began drawing and painting the nostalgic Panamanian landscape, and found his work to be in demand. "By the time I left Panama," he recalls, "I was well known, not as an officer but as an artist". Fields fondly refers to this exciting time in his life as "my fifteen minutes of fame."

But customers and admirers of Fields' local work have acclaimed his artistic abilities for considerably longer than 15 minutes. Fields Art & Framing has been a Valrico fixture for the past ten years. Fields tells the story of how he came to settle in the Bloomingdale area.

"While I was stationed in Panama, there was a lot of travel back and forth to Florida by fellow personnel involved in military planning at MacDill Airforce Base. Everyone returning from Tampa raved about the

weather and how beautiful it was," recalls Fields. During a successive assignment in Alaska, Fields made his initial visit to the Tampa area and found the green landscape and mild weather to be "quite a contrast to the 14-degree below temperatures and snow up to your knees" he had left behind in Alaska. It was at that point that Fields decided, "I was definitely a shorts and sandals guy." He put in a request for his final military assignment at MacDill, and the Army complied. Fields transferred to MacDill and he and his wife Eva became Valrico residents in 1989.

Fields originally set up shop in the Winn Dixie shopping center on Lithia and Bloomingdale in 1990, and soon built up a sizable customer base. In 1996, he built his own facility at 3407 Lithia Pinecrest Road just north of Bloomingdale Avenue, in an effort to expand a bit and avoid growing lease expenses.

Of choosing to remain in the Bloomingdale area, Fields says of his decision, "We had built up such a great customer base and wanted to remain a reasonable distance from our original location. We also are very comfortable with the positive, active community of the Bloomingdale area. We find most clients from this area to be pleasant and friendly, and receptive to giving us some freedom with the creative process of showcasing their treasures and family heirlooms".

Fields offers traditional mat and frame work for photographs and prints, a service that can be found at various locations in Brandon but has been upgraded to an art form at the Bloomingdale shop. "We now have

four full time employees, and we restrict our hiring to those who have an artistic or crafting background," Fields says. "It has always been my intention to build a business based on qualities that people seek out and spread the word about; a quality product, value, consistency and friendly service."

Fields' motto, "We Frame Memories", speaks volumes as reflected in the work displayed at his shop. Elegant and unique touches can be found in every corner of the shop. Mat carving and embellishments add polish and singularity to treasured photographs. Three-dimensional framing preserves family heirlooms, such as a baby's silver feeding spoon and cherished christening medals or grandmother's needlework, for generations to come.

A fine testimonial of Fields' skill in preserving and displaying needlework is reflected in his distinction of having framed the needlework art awarded "Best of Show" prizes at the Plant City Strawberry Festival and the Florida State Fair...for the past seven years in a row! Here we truly see evidence of the consistency Fields strives for at work.

Jerry Fields may be the only proprietor in town with a flourishing Bloomingdale business whose current goals include growing his operation smaller and working himself out of a job. "It was always my intention to have this little framing shop and just sort of be the artist working quietly in a back room somewhere," Fields says wistfully, "but at the same time we have so much work to do and I find myself being very hands on and involved in every area of the business." Rather than expanding and hiring more management, Fields would like to personally scale back some of the routine framing jobs the shop handles and focus more on the specialty, heirloom items the shop produces. "I do not want to expand because I think it's important for me to be involved in day to day operations, to keep

that control. I think when a business of this type grows too large, it is bound to be reflected in the end product," he says.

So for now, Jerry Fields and his associates busy themselves framing memories for hundreds of Bloomingdale area residents, and some customers from as far away as Australia, week by busy week. Fields would like to eventually find time to travel a bit, and ironically would really like to find some spare moments to visit the old past time that started him along in his second life... to simply sit and paint and draw. Sometimes, great ideas have a way of snowballing full speed ahead.

For more information call Fields Art & Framing at 654-8616. If Jerry is not in, remind them to check that quiet little room way in the back of the shop. He just might be hiding from that snowball, paintbrush in hand.

## The "Second Life" of JERRY FIELDS

By Laura Frazier, Editor



Jerry Fields reminisces with his very first drawing, an impressive sketch of Panamanian ditch diggers drawn from a friend's old photograph.



Needlework artist Mary Llewert of Valrico displays one of her many award winning creations custom framed by Jerry Fields.

## Welcome to Bloomingdale

We are pleased to welcome several of Bloomingdale's newest arrivals:

*Benjamin Lee Coulter*, born March 19 to parents Robert and Devon Coulter.

*Ashleigh Sarah Dubie*, born March 29 to parents Jennifer and Eric Dubie.

*Hunter Randall Harris*, born March 31 to parents Jessica and Randall Harris.

*Kyle Peter Mustal*, born March 31 to parents Michelle and Kurt Musial.

Congratulations to all, and "Welcome to Bloomingdale"



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# Vacation Driving Safety Checklist

Here's a must-do list for you or your mechanic to follow before your family heads out on the road.

- ✓ Examine all tires, including the spare, for cuts, unusual bulges and excessive tread wear. Rotate tires if necessary; replace if tread depth measures 1/16 inch or less. Inflate properly.
- ✓ If your car wanders a bit, pulls to one side, or vibrates at high speeds, or you see unusual signs of tire wear, get wheels balanced and aligned by a professional.
- ✓ Fill the radiator or coolant recovery tank to recommended levels with a 50-50 mixture of antifreeze and water. Rusty-color fluid indicates dirt that could clog or cause overheating; flush the system. Check with your mechanic if you see wetness around the thermostat or water-pump housing.

- ✓ Look closely at every hose you can reach, and replace any that are cracked, brittle, or soft. Slightly twist the V-shape belts that operate your fan, water pump, and other critical accessories; replace if you see cracks, fraying, or smooth, shiny spots. Press on each belt a point midway between the pulleys, and tighten any belts that give more than a half inch.

## Some Tips for Having a Safe Trip

- ✓ If your car starts with difficulty, idles roughly, stalls, spews smoke on acceleration, or chugs after being switched off, or you detect a decrease in gas mileage, the car probably needs a tune-up.
- ✓ Examine the battery for frayed cables, loose clamps, and corrosion around the terminals. Remove corrosion with a stiff wire brush and a baking-soda-and-water solution. On a maintenance-free battery, check the charge indicator light on top. For a conventional battery, look at fluid levels in each cell, fill with distilled water.

- ✓ Does the brake pedal go more than halfway down or feel spongy? Then your brakes need adjusting or the fluid is low.
- ✓ Top off your oil, power steering, transmission, brake fluid, and windshield washer reservoirs. Change oil and filter if oil looks or feels gritty.
- ✓ Check headlights (high and low beams), taillights, brake lights, hazard lights, turn signals, emergency brake, over-head light, horn, air-conditioner, heater, fan, and defroster.
- ✓ Test windshield wipers and washer.
- ✓ Listen to the exhaust system: vibrations, hissing sounds, or loud noises indicate loose or worn parts.

Check these:

- |              |            |           |
|--------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Tires     | 5. Battery | 9. Wipers |
| 2. Alignment | 6. Brakes  | 10. Hoses |
| 3. Cooling   | 7. Fluids  |           |
| 4. Exhaust   | 8. Lights  |           |

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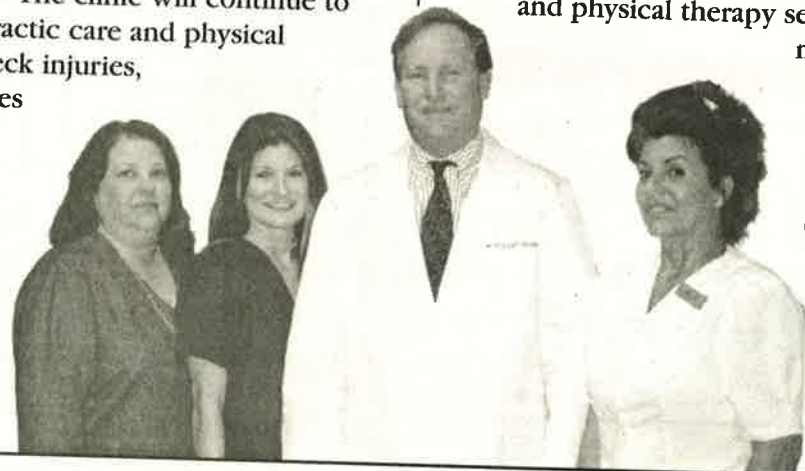
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## Bloomingtondale Chiropractic Clinic Moves to Bell Shoals Road

Bloomingtondale Chiropractic Clinic, established in Bloomingtondale Square since 1989, is moving its practice to a new, larger facility. But patients of the clinic's owner, Dr. Richard Robinson, can take heart—the facility's new location is a mere stones throw from Bloomingtondale Square, at 3601 Bell Shoals Road, just south of Sun Trust Bank.

"Our patient base is expanding," explained receptionist Debi Gilmore. "In the new facility we will have 10 examining rooms, nearly twice the space we have at our present location." The clinic will continue to offer traditional chiropractic care and physical therapy for back and neck injuries, sports injuries, headaches and other chronically painful conditions. "Dr. Robinson also uses Diathermy, a form of physical therapy using infra-red heat, to successfully treat chronic bronchitis and sinusitis," says Gilmore.



Dr. Robinson, a Brandon resident and chiropractor for 14 years, chose to remain in Bloomingtondale due to the large volume of current patients and growing number of new patients drawn from the area. "I like the area schools and churches, and find this to be a very active, growing community," says Dr. Robinson.

The new facility is expected to be open sometime in May. Dr. Robinson and his staff would like to invite Bloomingtondale residents to stop by the clinic's new office and feel free to inquire about the chiropractic and physical therapy services available. Most

major insurance is accepted. For clinic hours or more information, please call Bloomingtondale Chiropractic Clinic at 654-3921.

*Dr. Robinson and his staff look forward to welcoming patients into their new facility at 3601 Bell Shoals Road this month.*

## Yard of the Month by Paul Almeida

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The process of selecting the Yard of the Month is a growing challenge, with so many of our residents busy planting, seeding, weeding, fertilizing and just 'coloring up' in general. Ken and Cari Pullaro of 2006 Dumont Drive in River Crossing have been doing just that, and their property has been selected as May's Bloomingtondale Yard of the Month.

The Pullaros have personally replanted and re-sodded their yard to bring it up to its current showcase standard. Cari reports that the yard is 'Ken's second love'. He enjoys working outside and is constantly on the lookout for ways to improve the appearance of his yard. He has obviously succeeded.

The yard boasts an assortment of new plants including coleus, hibiscus and palms. The shrubbery is scattered around a beautiful Robellini palm that really stands out to accent this manicured beauty. Those of you considering a landscaping remodeling project

might want to drive past the Pullaro's home for some ideas.

Our congratulations and thanks to Ken and Cari for adding to the value and beauty of the Bloomingtondale Community.

Editor's note: Bloomingtondale residents with suggestions or nominations for the Yard of the Month feature are invited to contact Paul Almeida at 661-2018.



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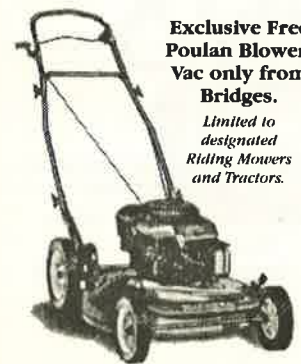
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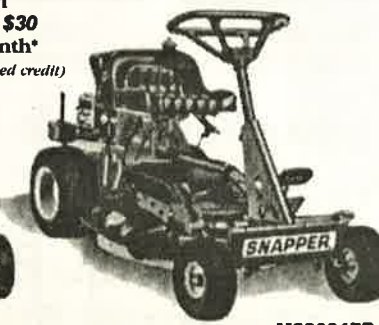
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## B.S.H.S. Summer Reading Program

By Mack Austin, Associate Editor

School is out for most students, but many will be taking courses in summer school.

Part of the summer school curriculum at Bloomingdale Senior High School will include participation in a continuing special reading program. The program proved to be extremely successful this past school year when 95% of Bloomingdale High students passed the reading portion of the recently administered High School Competency Test.

Two items are needed from the community to keep this program going. Magazines, those teens like such as 'Sports Illustrated', 'Teen', 'Seventeen', 'Readers Digest', or those on subjects such as entertainment, computers, music or cars are needed. The magazines are also shared with other departments at the school for use in R.O.T.C., computer classes and history classes.

Deputy Pete Maurer, Community Resource Deputy for Bloomingdale, and Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano collect magazines at the Bloomingdale Community Substation at 4342-B Bell Shoals Road (ad-

acent to Beef O'Brady's). Magazines can be dropped off at the substation during office hours (8am - 5pm), Monday to Friday. Please remove any mailing labels.

Volunteers are also needed, to help tutor students with basic reading skills. All that is required is an hour



Kathy Steed (Left), Volunteer Coordinator for the Bloomingdale Senior High School P.T.S.A., coordinates Reading Program activities with Linda Weronik, Reading Resource Specialist and Nicole Diaz, Reading Teacher. Photo by Mack Austin

or two at a time and a desire to help. Volunteers need not have a student at BHS. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend some time making a very lasting contribution to your community.

The reading program will continue through the summer and will be offered next school year. To become a part of this truly rewarding program call the BHS PTSA voice mail at 744-8018 EXT 563. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

## Alafia Gets New Solar Lights



A significant step towards improving traffic safety around Alafia Elementary School has been completed. With the help of Ron Messersmith of the Hillsborough County Public Works Department's Traffic Section, coordination to have the light installed was smooth and timely. Photo by Mack Austin

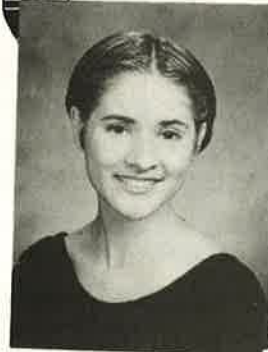
## Where to get the Gazette

We are continuing the process of updating our mailing list in an effort to deliver the Gazette to every home in Bloomingdale. Copies are also available at area grocery stores including the Bloomingdale Square Publix and the Royal Oaks Plaza Winn Dixie, and area convenient stores including the Village Center Radiant Food Mart and the Citgo station on Bell Shoals Road.



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## "Mr. Clarence", Crossing Guard Extraordinaire

By Laura Frazier, Editor

To the hundreds of children walking and bicycling along Culbreath Rd. to Alafia Elementary School each day, he is the kind and familiar face waiting to escort them safely across the street to school grounds. To Principal Tanly Cabrera and the staff of Alafia Elementary, he is the gatekeeper who never fails to regard the children's safety first and keep the car drop-off line moving as smoothly as possible.

Crossing Guard Clarence Dempsey, known affectionately to Alafia's students as "Mr. Clarence", has held his post at the corner of Nature's Way and Culbreath, the "ground zero" of the school's auto and pedestrian traffic, for the past three years. Each day he deals with both perfect little angels and unruly kids, patient drivers and obstinate motorists, lapses in activity alternating with episodes of frenzy. And every day, he comes back for more. "I love it," Dempsey says of his job. "I keep my mind on what I'm there to do, but I do enjoy talking to the kids and seeing them every day," he says.

A retired Army Sergeant, father of two and Grandfather of eight, Dempsey has a firm but kind way with the children. Students can be heard greeting him as they arrive at his post, sleep still in their eyes, "Good morning Mr. Clarence!" One little girl who is accompanied to kindergarten each day by her Grandfather treats Dempsey to a daily hug. Many children bestowed candy and gifts upon "Mr. Clarence" during the holidays. A homemade card from a 2nd grader was especially touching to the Crossing Guard and is proudly displayed at the Dempsey home. "They act like they love me," he reflects, with genuine delight.

But it's a little tougher getting love from the hundreds of motorists finding themselves backed up in traffic during "school zone" hours as Dempsey intermittently holds traffic to let the children cross Culbreath and Nature's Way. Dempsey says there are more good than bad drivers out there, but some ongoing situations never cease to amaze him. "There are so many folks going through the crossing with phones



on their ears, they can not be paying attention," he laments. "There is even one parent who goes through the crossing reading the newspaper behind the wheel!" He is especially astounded at the sight of drivers dropping their own children off at the school running through the crossing at very high speeds. "It seems like so many people are in such a rush, not able to take that extra minute or two to follow the speed limit and stop for the flags," he says. In Dempsey's eyes, nothing could be more important than the safety of the children he is entrusted to protect. "If people who are on their way to work or elsewhere find themselves stuck in that school traffic, they should know that they can go around it, there are other roads to use at those (pre and post school hour) times of day," he says. "And parents heading to the school should try to be patient, follow the rules and remember that the children's safety must come first".

So what does "Mr. Clarence" do to unwind from his sometimes stressful job? "Well," he ruminates, "since I am supposed to be retired I bought a reel and a rod, but I have yet to put it together!" Perhaps the upcoming school summer vacation will convince him to drop a line.

It took some convincing to get Clarence to move to Florida. He was comfortable and happy in his North Carolina home, and besides, there were all those great pinochle buddies of his. But wife Doris had dreams of retiring to the sunshine state and, now that the Dempseys are residents of Bloomingdale, Clarence enjoys the great weather and finds the community to be "very pleasant and well-kept with a laid back atmosphere". When the Dempseys discussed their options as Clarence retired from 22 years in the military, Doris had a vision; "Let's move to Florida and live like the rich and famous!" "But," Clarence countered, "we're not rich!". The parents, faculty and students of Alafia would beg to differ, finding Clarence Dempsey to be an exemplary Crossing Guard, rich in principle, dignity and dependability, with a wealth of admiration and gratitude from all who cross his path.

## Restaurant Review

By Elton Dumont

Exclusively for the Bloomingdale Gazette

### Bob's Kountry Kitchen

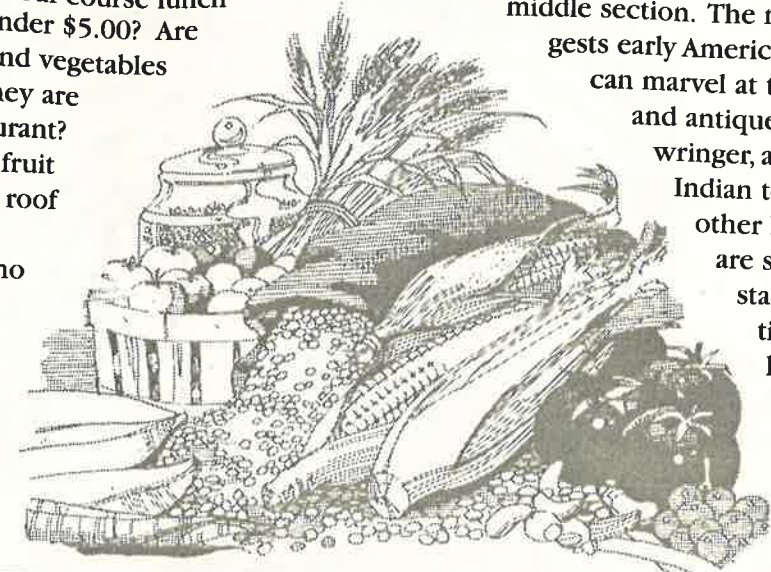
604 E. Bloomingdale Avenue

Brandon, FL 33511

654-6266

Are you looking for a four-course lunch and a beverage for under \$5.00? Are you looking for fruit and vegetables in your lunch so fresh that they are grown right beside the restaurant? Are you interested in buying fruit and produce under the same roof you're dining in? Does the pleasant diversion of live piano music as you dine appeal to you?

If your answer is yes to any of these questions, please stop in at Bob's Kountry Kitchen. You all know where it is. Some of you drive past



it three or four times a day. It is diagonally across from Bloomingdale Square on the Bloomingdale Avenue side, adjacent to Bob's Fruit and Produce Market.

Once inside, you order your lunch at a window from the posted menu, and then find a seat on the vegetable stand side, the country store side, the white picket fence side or the French doors side. And, if that isn't enough, try the 'family style' middle, where a long table seats up to 20. We chose two seats in the middle section. The motif and de'cor suggests early American Indian West. You can marvel at the old weaving spindle and antique hand washer and wringer, as well as a very large Indian tom-tom, tomahawk and other Indian artifacts. There are some neat panes of stained glass, one in particular with a light-house pictured on it.

Okay, so how's the food? Wonderful, just wonderful. You order

(Continued on page 22)

# Personal Injury & Wrongful Death

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## Spring Cleaning-What Do I Do With All This Stuff?

by Mack Austin

With the annual ritual of spring cleaning comes a series of questions on how to properly dispose of items that can be dangerous to humans, pets and the environment. With very strict environmental protection laws and expensive penalties in effect, it is worth the time to determine how to 'do the right thing' when it comes to getting rid of things that have piled up or lost their usefulness.

Most residents are familiar with the collection of yard waste and recyclable materials that are collected each week. Residents moving in or out of the area may request 'special' pickups by contacting the Solid Waste Management Department at 272-5680. But most disposal problems arise with non-collectible items or household chemical items.

The community collection center for Bloomingdale residents is the Alderman Ford Facility located on State Road 39 in Lithia. This facility accepts non-collectible waste, scrap metal, tires, and lead acid batteries. The collection center is open Monday through Saturday, 7:30 to 5:30, phone 757-3820. (Lithia-Pinecrest to State Road 39, turn left and the center is on the left near Alderman Ford Park).

Please note that documentation is required. Bring the Property Tax Bill in its entirety, showing taxes are being assessed for solid waste collection and disposal. New homeowners can bring a copy of their closing statement to show these charges are being assessed. Also, bring a picture I.D. showing your current address or a current bill statement, such as T.E.C.O., showing your current address.

Non-collectible items include furniture (couches, chairs, tables, mattresses and box springs, etc.), appliances (refrigerators, ovens, water heaters, window air conditioners, televisions, and similar items), non-com-

bustible materials (steel, concrete, brick, glass, asphalt roofing materials and similar items), motor vehicles and vehicle parts (tires, machinery, equipment or other metals).

Our area household chemical collection site is located in Apollo Beach at 626 Golf and Sea Boulevard. Chemical collections are held monthly, with dates and times listed in local newspapers. The current schedule calls for collections on May 15, July 17, September 18, and November 20. All dates are on Saturday, and may be subject to change. You can call the Hillsborough County Solid Waste Management Department for dates and times. (272-5680).

Materials accepted include, but are not limited to, paint and solvents, automotive products, household cleaners, pool cleaners, pool chemicals, household batteries, lawn and garden supplies and other potentially

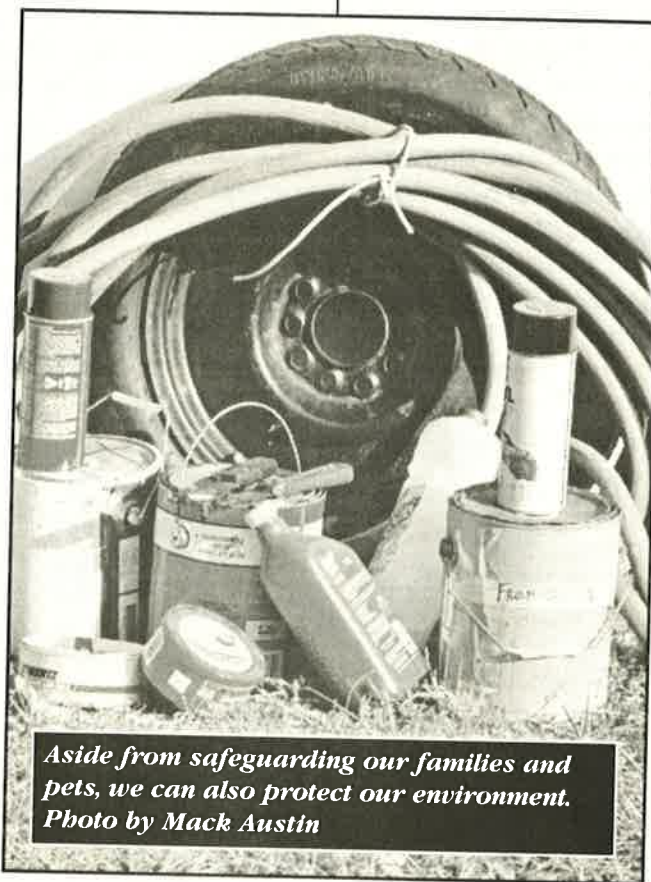
toxic substances.

Materials NOT accepted include, but are not limited to, explosives, flares, radioactive material and bio-medical material. Absolutely no commercial waste is accepted, and household material may be limited.

Currently, the Apollo Beach center is the only chemical collection site available for residents of the Bloomingdale area. With the unbelievable growth in the community, another site located closer is certainly needed, a subject sure to be addressed in the near future. Several local stores offer disposal options for batteries and motor oil. Walmart and Radio Shack accept rechargeable Nicad or small sealed lead acid batteries. Discount Auto accepts used motor oil.

As we delve into our spring cleaning projects, the above information can help keep our homes safe and at the same time protect our environment.

The Bloomingdale Gazette wishes to acknowledge and thank Community Codes Investigator, Barney Taylor for his contribution to this article.



Aside from safeguarding our families and pets, we can also protect our environment. Photo by Mack Austin

## Maximize Your Computer.

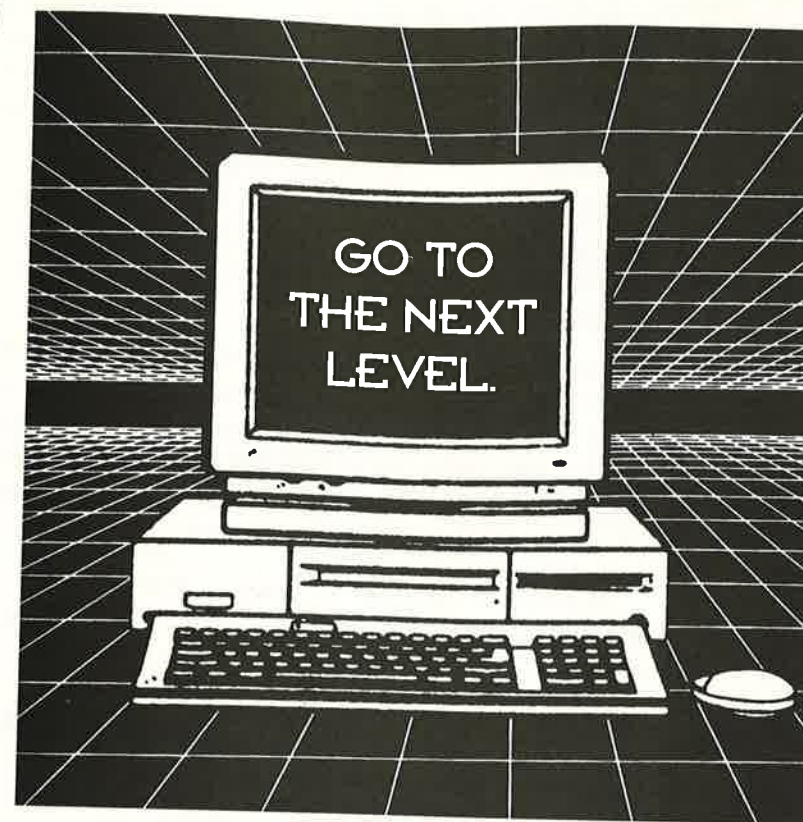
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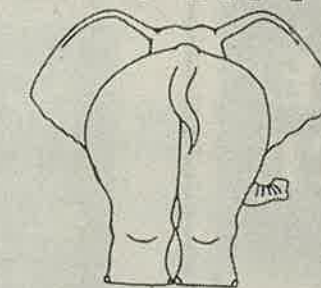
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**Restaurant Review** (Continued from page 19)

at the window from a common menu. For course number one, choose from selections including a honey-basted turkey sandwich with cranberry, mayonnaise and romaine lettuce, served on a croissant. I had the barbecued beef sandwich, which is similar to a Sloppy Joe. My wife had the southern ham and Swiss sandwich. We highly recommend either one.

For your second course, choose from southern vegetable soup or creamy potato. Once again, we went in different directions. My wife said that the potato soup was very good. My comment on the vegetable soup is that it was excellent. I could easily identify the tomatoes, corn, potatoes, carrots, green beans and peas in the soup, which was almost as thick as a stew.

For course number three, choose from a pasta salad or a farm fresh tossed salad. My wife had the pasta, which included cauliflower, broccoli, zucchini and squash. My tossed salad had lettuce, tomato, cucumber, carrot and celery. I chose the Italian dressing from the seven different types of dressing offered. According to our server, a lot of the salad ingredients are grown right next door at Bob's farm.

Course number four was desert; strawberry shortcake with whipped cream and ice cream, a fresh fruit cup or a fresh fruit cobbler. I had the cobbler d'jour, which was peach, served warm and delicious. My wife had the strawberry shortcake, which once again was very tasty.

And finally, choose a beverage of your choice including soft drinks, lemonade, and regular, sweet or raspberry flavored tea. There is no charge for refills on the teas and lemonade.

Once again, the price is only \$4.99, a tremendous bargain for the amount, quality and variety of food offered. There is live piano music on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. We were there on a Saturday, and were treated to a wonderful lunch and great music, and the piano player took requests.

If you're in the area and hungry, I predict Bob's Kountry Kitchen will become your new best restaurant find. Until we eat again, Elton Dumont.



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**REAL ESTATE UPDATE**

By Luana Russell

**INTEREST VS. EQUITY**

**QUESTION: My first mortgage payment was almost all interest. At what rate does the loan payoff increase and interest decrease?**

Inasmuch as most mortgages are self-liquidating loans, you will pay a level amount each month toward paying off the interest and reducing principal. However, interest is computed on the balance due and therefore the first payment is practically all interest. About midway during the term of the mortgage, the interest and principal payments are about equal.

The one saving grace in early years of higher interest payments, is that this interest is tax deductible.

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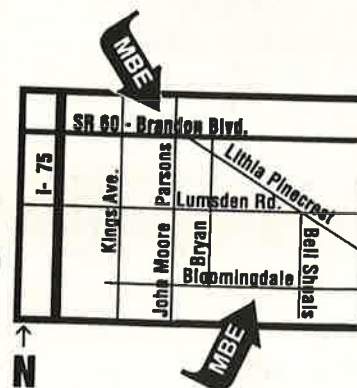


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