

FEATURE STORY



Hillsborough County School Board District IV chairwoman Jennifer Faliero outlines the current search for a new schools superintendent. Public comments and questions are welcomed.

BUSINESS

A recently revamped business caters to young ladies, offering theme parties, makeover sessions and girly gifts

PAGE 10

INDEX

Neighborhood Improvement 2
 Schools 4
 Neighborhood News 6
 Law Enforcement 8
 Special Taxing District ... 9
 Business News 10
 Yard of the Month 14

Top Grads Share Top Goals: Family, Career Balance



Hard work and stellar GPAs put Valerie Torge, valedictorian, and Dennis Rankin, salutatorian, at the top of Bloomingdale Senior High School's Class of 2005. The duo, among 468 Bloomingdale seniors graduating this year, will take the stage at the University of South Florida Sun Dome May 25. See story, Page 4.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT ♦ PAGE 2



Cleanup Day
 Bloomingdale High School student volunteer Elisabeth Casto does her best to keep up with a fast-growing load of reusable items dropped off for the Salvation Army at the April cleanup. More volunteers are needed for the May 14 Cleanup Day.

LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Volunteers, County Spring For 2nd Cleanup May 14

APRIL EVENT
EXCEEDED CAPACITY

BY LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Due to the unprecedented, overwhelming response to the BHA's April 9 Community Cleanup Day, a second spring cleanup is set for this month.

The nonprofit, all-volunteer organization will hold another cleanup day Saturday, May 14 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The collection site is at the County Parks Maintenance facility on Natures Way near Alafia Elementary School.

The April 9 event was scheduled to run until 3 p.m. But by 11:30 a.m., all six roll-off dumpsters at the site were filled to capacity with mattresses, appliances, non-commercial construction debris and more. Even before the site officially opened at 9 a.m., a steady stream of residents dropped off an unprece-

See CLEANUP, Page 14

County Collection Sites Open Five Days A Week

Staff Report

Hillsborough County operates five Community Collection Centers where residential customers can deliver their own solid waste for free every Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Customers must show a copy of their property tax bill plus one form of photo identification.

For maps and directions, and details about the types of trash they allow (acceptable items vary among sites) log on to www.bloomingtongazette.com. Or, call the Alderman Ford site, 757-3820 or the South County site, 671-7611.



LAURA FRAZIER/Staff photo



Above, Bloomington High School student volunteer Raquel Casto, Elisabeth Casto and Drew Mery organize items dropped off for charities at the April cleanup. At left, at the early end of the April 9 cleanup, BHA volunteer board members, from left, Ken Pyse, Steve Heckel, Tony Diolosa and Lydia Harrod, discuss how to make the next cleanup run more smoothly.

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Time for a Smile Overhaul

By Jackie Rowe

Meet Carol Hastings of Tampa, Florida, who had been making regular trips to her dentist in Brandon for a myriad of problems. She liked her dentist just fine but she was getting tired of going back over and over again. She thought it might be easier to have an overhaul than to continue doing what she was doing.

She also knew there was a better solution because she had seen the smile makeovers on the hit television shows *The Swan* and *Extreme Makeover*. She began to think she should look into *who* could do that kind of work around here.

Carol had gone back to work a couple of years ago and was commuting to Brandon five days a week. On one of her lunch breaks she happened to see an ad in the *The Brandon News & Shopper* for a cosmetic dentist. The ad touted the miracle of the smile makeover and the credentials of the dental team who could perform it. According to the ad, this dentist, Dr. Scott Arnold of Arnold Dentistry in Brandon, was trained at one of the most prestigious cosmetic dental institutes in America, the Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies.

Carol made an appointment for a complimentary consultation. Her first impression was... wow! "The office is beautiful," said Carol. "I knew this wasn't any ordinary dental office; especially because the people that work there were so friendly and happy, and there was no pressure to do anything I wasn't comfortable with."

"Meeting the doctor was the clincher though," continued Carol, "He is awesome. Dr. Arnold was very nice and explained what was going on with my teeth and gave me several options for treatment."

Dr. Arnold explained, "Carol required what we call a complete smile makeover. She needed some of her old dentistry replaced, lower teeth whitened and ten porcelain veneers on her upper teeth in what we refer to as *the smile zone*."

"I didn't know it when I went in but you actually have to choose the type of smile you want," said Carol. "Many people walk into Arnold Dentistry with a picture from a magazine and say...this is the smile I want. The ladies in the office have a book of smiles to choose from; however, I still had a hard time knowing which one would be right for me."

She continued, "Dr. Arnold helped find the perfect smile for me. He was like an artist. He looked me over carefully: he had me smile, not smile, he looked at me close up and then he stepped back. He considered the size, shape and color of my teeth. Finally he said, 'I think you would look best with a youthful Hollywood smile.' I took his word for it and I look great! Thank you Dr. Arnold."

And one of the amazing things about Arnold Dentistry's treatment," said Carol, "is how pain-free it was. I couldn't believe it. I have always taken something to help me get through my dental visits, now I joke that I am a drug-free patient. I recommend Arnold Dentistry to everyone I meet."

"Carol is one of the most vivacious people I have ever met," said Dr. Arnold. "I cannot express the confidence and new outlook on life her beautiful new smile has brought her."

Carol's story is almost commonplace for the team at Arnold



Dentistry. Many of us had a great smile when we were teenagers, but life takes its toll on our teeth. Aging causes us to wear them down. Our teeth get shorter and

discolored. Often, they crack, chip and break. They can become more crooked and spaces can develop or get larger. If we have the old amalgam silver fillings, chances are, the teeth will crack and break apart some day.

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Longtime Friends To Share Stage At Graduation

TORGE, RANKIN RULE CLASS OF 2005

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

They've shared the same social circle, academic classes and extracurricular activities many times over the past four years.

And on May 25, Valerie Torge and Dennis Rankin will share the stage at the University of South Florida Sun Dome as Bloomingdale Senior High School's Class of 2005 valedictorian and salutatorian.

Torge and Rankin, both advanced placement course classmates and active members of the Bloomingdale Rajun' Bulls Band, National Honor Society, LEO Service Club and Senior Steering, staged a friendly behind-the-scenes competition of sorts for the class's top grade point average.

With their GPA's nail-bitingly close in the first quarter of the school year, both students quietly — and unbeknownst to each other — turned to Florida Virtual

School to boost their scores. Florida Virtual offers online, accredited courses students can take at home in addition to traditional school classes.

Torge emerged as valedictorian, with a 6.24 GPA. Rankin's close second, a 6.16 GPA, earned him the honor of salutatorian.

Torge said she somehow managed to make all A's and B's her freshman year at Bloomingdale, and just decided to keep the ball rolling. She acknowledged it was a lot of hard work but said she really enjoyed setting and achieving her academic goals.

"After freshman year I just decided to keep trying my best, and my parents and my whole family just kept encouraging me to do the best I could," she said.

Rankin always expected to be in the top 10. When the competition heated up, he really gave it a go for the top spot, but is more than honored to serve as salutatorian.

"No matter where I placed, what I really wanted to do is get up there (at graduation) and make a speech," Rankin said.

"Even if I didn't make it to salutatorian, I was brainstorming for ways to get up on that stage. I was thinking I might propose that the band captain, or the president of the National Honor Society (both positions Rankin holds) really should be able to speak on graduation day," he said.

But as salutatorian, the honor to address his fellow classmates on graduation day is now all Rankin's.

On May 25, Torge will stand at the head of the class, with Rankin by her side, like it's been so many times throughout their high school career.

Both students pledged their loyalty to their alma mater and said they'll miss everything about Bloomingdale, especially their friends and the countless teachers they both praised.

Torge said there are so many ways for all kinds of people to get involved in student life at Bloomingdale.

Rankin said, like New York City, "Everything (at Bloomingdale) is very vibrant and exciting."

This fall, the duo will go their separate ways, along with 466 other seniors

graduating from Bloomingdale this year.

Torge will attend the University of Florida, where she plans to major in business and Spanish. Rankin will attend the University of Notre Dame, where he plans to major in mathematics.

Looking 10 years into the future, Torge envisions herself with a family and a good career, and a balance between both.

Rankin, the oldest of five siblings, sees himself married, "with a good head start on the 30 or so children that I'd like to have."

"I want to be happy by then, with a family and a career that keeps me busy and on my toes. I want to enjoy waking up every day."

A popular country music song in which a man returning home from work describes the view he loves the most — the outside through-the-window sight of his wife and children safe and happy inside the house — fuels Rankin's hopes for the future.

Ten years from now, he said, "I'd like to be on the front porch looking in."

Hillsborough Schools Garnered Financial Management Award

The Florida Board of Education awarded the School District of Hillsborough County the Seal of Best Financial Management on April 19 in Tallahassee. Hillsborough Schools Superintendent Earl Lennard said the district enacted the 38 action plans recommended by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability in 2002, effectively saving taxpayers \$35 million over five years. Pictured left to right are Phil Handy, chairman, State Board of Education; Candy Olson, chairwoman, Hillsborough County School Board; Dr. Earl Lennard, superintendent, School District of Hillsborough County; and John Winn, commissioner, Florida Department of Education.



County School Board Seeks Superintendent, Public Input

RECRUITMENT PERIOD
ENDS MAY 12

By JENNIFER FALIERO
Hillsborough County School Board

The Hillsborough County School Board has launched a nationwide search to replace Dr. Earl Lennard, the school district's out-going superintendent.

Lennard will retire June 30 after serving as district superin-

tendent for nine years.

Hiring a new superintendent is one of the most important decisions the school board can make. Who will lead our school district? Throughout the current recruitment and hiring process, many critical factors — including public comments and questions — are under consideration by the school board.

See FALIERO, Page 15

Your Inside Connections

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
Phone: 681-2051 Fax: 684-2358
E-mail: Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net
Web Site: www.bloomingtondalegazette.com
BHA meetings are at the community office on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

President: Ted Grable Vice President: Joe Hickle
Treasurer: Pam Liguori Director: Tony Diolosa
Director: Lydia Harrod Director: Steve Heckel
Director: Dale Kahn Director: Jane Lee
Director: Stanley Lee Director: Myron Magedanz
Director: Ken Pyse

Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
Phone: 684-6667
BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

President: Thom Snelling
Vice President: Russell Jones
Treasurer: David West
Correspondence Secretary: Paul Sims

Recording Secretary: Michael Buday
Trustee: David Steck
Trustee: Joe Harless
Property Manager: Al Devney

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Coordinator/Equipment Manager:
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BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.
President: Bill Grace
Treasurer: Fred Englehart

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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Phone: 627-1322; E-mail: tdonaldson@tampatrib.com

Pirates Invade Alafia Elementary

Paulina Dabrowski, Michaela King and Olivia Dabrowski had a blast on the dance floor recently at Alafia Elementary's second annual Gasparilla Dance. Katheryn Bryant, PTA special events chairwoman, acted as DJ. Best-dressed costume contest winners were first-graders Chris and Thomas Zamanis and third-grader Kelsey Edwards. Each received a Barnes & Noble gift certificate.



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Schools Beef Up Security To Address Safety Concerns

NEW FENCE INSTALLED AT CIMINO

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

In light of the recent tragedies involving child safety in and around Hillsborough County, Bloomingdale's elementary schools are doing all they can to keep students safe and parents at ease.

Alafia and Cimino Elementary School administrators are diligently enforcing safety guidelines that were already in place, and are beefing up efforts to ensure safe, orderly

and caring school environments.

Students throughout Hillsborough County are being encouraged more than ever to walk or bike to school in groups.

Alafia Elementary now requires parents to sign in as visitors to accompany tardy children to their classrooms.

At Cimino, an extended private drive leading up to the school is now being outfitted with a roadside gate and a fence leading halfway up the driveway.

See SAFETY, Page 13

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Park Improvements Progressing Nicely

NEXT UP: NEW LANDSCAPING, RESTROOMS

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Three-year old Julianne Lee recently learned to ride her bike at Bloomingdale East Park on Natures Way.

Julianne's mother, Tracie Lee, said the wide, winding sidewalks installed last month at the park provide the perfect bike trail for preschoolers.

"The new sidewalks are nice and wide so there's room for error, and now there's one continuous loop that passes right by the benches where the moms like to sit in the shade."

Now when Julianne rides her bike at the park, Lee said, "It's nice because I can just let her go and still keep an eye on her."

The sidewalk improvements are just part of an ongoing \$200,000 project to upgrade the recreation facilities — and the appearance — of the park.

Earlier this year, the parks department kicked off the improvements by repainting the handball court, replacing the water fountain and adding some landscaping and sod.

Last month, the parking lot was reconfigured and resurfaced, new basketball stanchions were installed and the court was resurfaced. New play equipment and swings were added, and the playground areas were freshly mulched and bordered. A new park sign was set for delivery

the last week of April.

A new restroom building and major landscaping project are in the works.

Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association volunteers are working closely with the county's parks department staff to make improvements to the facility.

In March, county staff said the \$8,000 landscaping budget was approved for plants, shrubs, trees and sod at the park, but additional funds to hire a landscape architect were not available. BHA volunteers in April agreed to roll up their sleeves and work with county staff to draft a plan of their own.

Project manager Rebecca McGuire said, "If the homeowners association can give us a general idea of what they'd like to see planted, working with our budget and county-approved plants, we'll work with the contractor to get them installed."

McGuire provided the homeowners association with a site map of the park and a list of drought and heat-tolerant plants to consider.

BHA volunteers are expected to meet with parks department officials sometime this month to begin planning the new landscaping.

Other improvements under consideration are a 20-by-20 picnic shelter, new barbeque grills and trash cans, security lighting and additional picnic tables.

Send questions or comments about this project to info@bloomingtondalegazette.com.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Above, 3-year-olds Julianne Lee and Ernest Houston enjoy the playground equipment, sidewalks and sand pile at Bloomingdale East Park. Below, workers installed new basketball stanchions resurfaced the court last month at Bloomingdale East Park.

Pro Bono Help Needed

If you are a Bloomingtondale resident with landscape architecture experience and would like to assist Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association volunteers with plans to refurbish landscaping at Bloomingdale East Park, please e-mail info@bloomingtondalegazette.com or call Laura, 643-2990.



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Brandon Bears Forced To Tear Down Concession Stand

HELP NEEDED TO DRAW AND FILE BLUEPRINTS, SITE PLAN

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

The Brandon Bears youth football league took a big hit recently when its board of directors was ordered by the county to tear down the concession stand at the league's Providence Park practice field.

Bloomingtondale resident Mike Laquerre, president of the Bears' board of directors, said, "From what we understand, the concession stand was not built to code, meaning it was illegal to run it. We were told to take it down, and our new board has dismantled it."

Tearing down the stand leaves the league at a great disadvantage. Concession sales were a primary source of fundraising for the Bears, bringing in up to \$300 a night, five nights a week in July, and three nights a week for the rest of the season.

"The majority of kids and families here for practice in the evening buy their dinner at the concession stand," Laquerre said.

The Bears want to put a concession stand in an existing structure on the property, and acquire a commercial permit to serve food. Professional blueprints are required, along with proper sewage and septic construction.

Laquerre said the cost is estimated to be in the thousands, and though the Bears are a non profit youth league, county officials made it clear there are no shortcuts.

"We want to do everything the right way, but it's going to be expensive, and we're going to need the community's help."

The league is looking for people in the construction industry with the time and skills to help the league get the ball rolling on the concession stand project.

Laquerre and other board members will do their part and share the workload to see the project through to completion. They need someone to help them draw up the blueprints and a professional site plan to file with the county. In exchange help, the Bears will provide free advertising banners displayed at their games and a full page ad in the 250 yearbooks distributed to players and cheerleaders.

"We would mention their names at all our games and let the community know what they're doing for us," Laquerre said.

"They will definitely not go unnoticed."
Since 1988, the Brandon Bears have offered a positive, teamwork-building atmosphere for area boys and girls through their football and cheerleading programs. To volunteer your skills or to make a donation to help build a concession stand, visit www.brandonbears.com.



Photo Courtesy Of The Bloomingdale Bullets

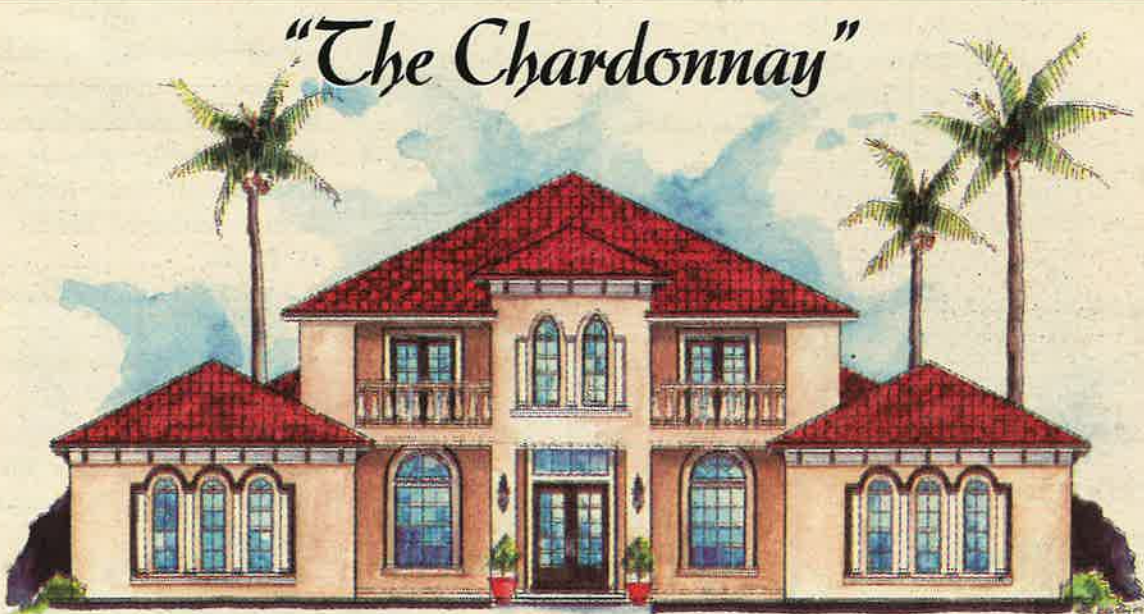
Bullets Slugged Competition In Winter Haven

The Bloomingdale Bullets 8 and under baseball team won the Amateur Athletic Union's Slug-A-Rama Tournament in Winter Haven April 22-24. The team beat Largo's West Florida Sluggers 9-2 in the semifinals and beat the Apopka Rage 8-0 in the championship game. The Bullets will compete in the AAU State Championship Tournament May 27-29 in Tampa.

Used Book Sale At Bloomingdale Library May 21

The Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library will hold a used book and media sale at the Bloomingdale Avenue branch Saturday, May 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

A wide variety of gently used books are available, including fiction, non-fiction, self-help and children's books and VCR tapes. Paperbacks will sell for 50 cents, hardcover books for \$1 each. VCR tapes are \$2 each. Information: 635-1644.



at the "Vineyards" in Brandon

THE TOAST OF THE TOWN

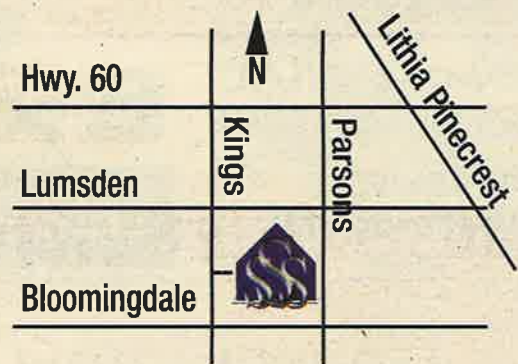
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SUBSTATION NOTES

Community Reacts With Disbelief To Latest Tragedy

KEEP TABS ON KIDS, TEENS THIS SUMMER

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER

Totally unbelievable.

We just cannot believe that another young girl, now right here in our own county, was abducted and killed. It is just too much, too soon for us all.

Sheriff David Gee and Hillsborough County deputies, along with hundreds of other law enforcement officers and volunteers, were given the difficult task of searching long and hard for the young girl missing from Ruskin.

Again, the long hours of searching, waiting and praying ended in the news that her young lifeless body had been found. The heartless man who confessed to committing the most heinous of crimes is now in the custody of law enforcement.

We must emphasize to parents that this is not just another news item. The subject of child abduction is a very real, hard fact of life that we all must face, even more important now since school will be out this month. Our kids will be all over the place. Steps must be taken to protect them.

Parents, be sure know where your children are at all times. Talk with your teens, especially those who will be hanging around malls and other open areas. Be absolutely sure children left home alone know

what to do to stay safe. Children playing at our parks and playgrounds must be extra cautious too.

We do not need to become paranoid, but as we can see from the most recent cases, simple mistakes — like leaving children home alone with known criminals in the area, and not really knowing your neighbors — can become very costly. We must do all we can to protect those we love.

Parents, take the time now to sit down and calmly and carefully explain to your children, boys and girls, how important it is to be aware of their surroundings, to be cautious of strangers and to know what to do if someone approaches them or tries to abduct them.

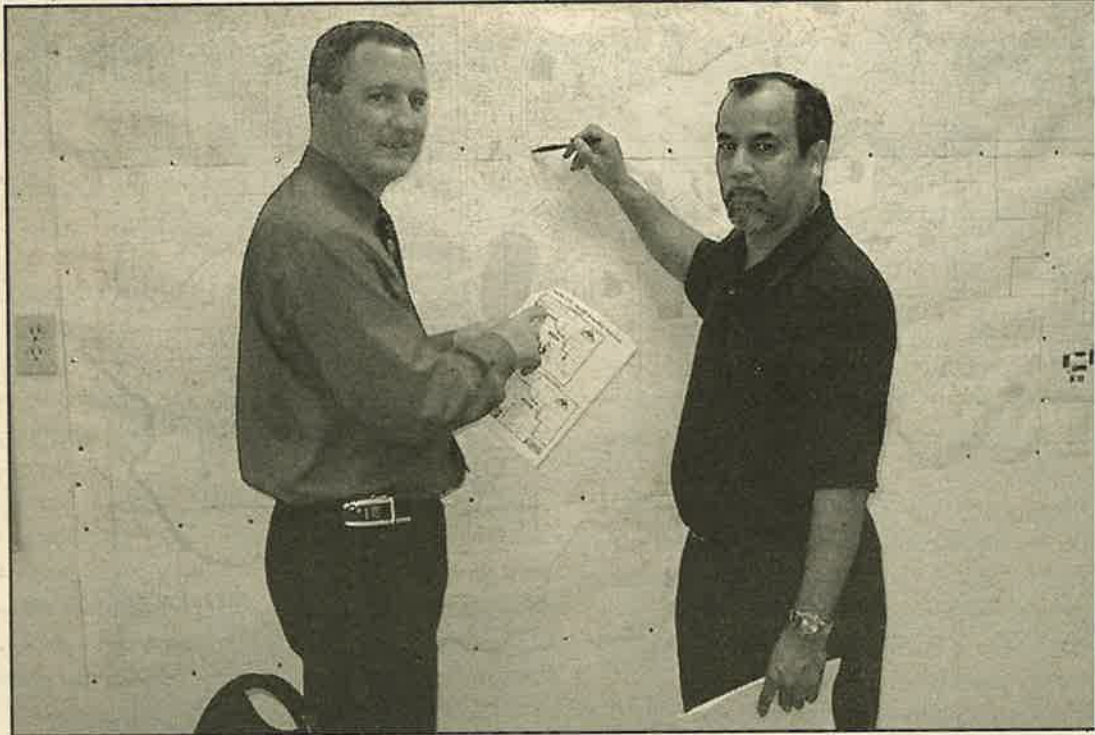
Make good use of the many groups in our community involved in helping prepare both parents and children for unforeseen dangers. YMCAs are offering special classes in self-defense. Many Web sites contain excellent information on personal safety.

We can live safely in this unpredictable world, but only when we take the time to get informed and take the precautions we need to take.

One important precaution is having your child fingerprinted. This service is offered through the sheriff's office and other groups. For infor-

See MAURER, Page 13

BACC REPORT



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

HARTline representative Robert Trout, at left, and community council member Norbert Gobin, a Bloomingdale resident and MacDill worker, discuss the important transportation study currently being conducted to survey Bloomingdale, Brandon and Fish Hawk residents.

Military Personnel Need Better Bus Service To MacDill AFB

HARTline Fast Facts

HARTline wants input from Bloomingdale residents about how to improve and expand its public transportation system. Take the online survey at www.hartline.org.

Every route now has two to three buses with three separate departure times each.

Current transit times average one-and-a-half to two hours.

The federal government covers the costs for active duty and civil service workers to use the HARTline system.

Each route currently averages 80 to 100 riders with more growth anticipated due to rising fuel costs.

Each route includes several stops at MacDill AFB.

Plans are underway to include stops in the FishHawk area.

Bikers may use buses with dedicated space for bikes.

Special allowances for retirees are being considered.

RESIDENTS ASKED TO SUBMIT ONLINE SURVEY

By MACK AUSTIN Correspondent

The Bloomingdale Area Community Council is actively supporting a special transportation project in progress by the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority, known as HARTline.

HARTline is in the process of evaluating both current and proposed bus routes throughout Hillsborough County. Through a series of surveys, HARTline is gathering input from all workers who travel to MacDill.

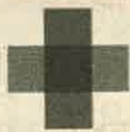
MacDill workers and the general public — particularly those traveling to MacDill from the communities of Bloomingdale and FishHawk Ranch — are now encouraged to submit

See BACC, Page 13

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BSTD REPORT

Taxing District Budget, Landscaping Plans On Table

ALL MEETINGS
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District board of trustees meets 7 p.m. on the second Monday each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. Days and times for special committee meetings are announced in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtongazette.com. All meetings are open to the public. For more information call 681-6667 or e-mail bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net.

Budget Committee
Takes Plans To Board May 9

The BSTD Board of Trustees held two meetings in April to identify, prioritize and budget for community maintenance and improvements slated for the next fiscal year (October 2005 through September 2006). The budget committee will take its recommendations to the full taxing district board May 9 for discussion. The budget will be finalized at the board's June 13 meeting. All meetings are open to the public; interested Bloomingdale residents are invited to attend.

Bloomingdale Oaks Taxing District Needs Volunteers

SERVES 184 RESIDENCES

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District has two seats open on its volunteer Board of Trustees.

The special taxing district area includes 184 residences in the Bloomingdale Oaks section, with entrances on Bloomingdale Avenue, across the street from Bloomingdale High.

Trustees meet for about an hour once a month to budget for, prioritize and oversee

maintenance of the neighborhood's entryways and common areas.

Board members, all volunteer residents of Bloomingdale Oaks, work with funds collected by Hillsborough County on each homeowner's annual property tax bill.

President Bill Grace said the group would like more input from its residents about issues such as landscaping, signage, lighting and general maintenance.

The group meets 7:30 p.m. on the second Monday of

each month at 3419 Cade Lane. Meetings are open to all Bloomingdale Oaks residents. For information, contact Grace, 685-2817.

Editor's note: The Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District is not part of the larger Bloomingdale Special Taxing District area, which includes about 4,500 Bloomingdale residences. For information about the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, call 684-6667 or log on to www.bloomingtongazette.com.

Special Taxing District area. It was determined that original plans for the section included a Bell Shoals Road entrance, with no through-street into Bloomingdale. Some board members felt since the section was developed with an interior Bloomingdale entrance (off River Crossing Drive) homeowners in that section share the common area property maintained by the BSTD and should be assessed accordingly.

The board will look into the process to consider adding River Crossing Estates to the district. Bloomingdale's special tax assessed annually by the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser is \$100 per home.

Landscaping Committee
Meets May 23

The Landscaping Committee of the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District will meet 7 p.m. on Monday, May 23 to discuss landscaping improvements planned for sections of Bloomingdale East. Residents with questions or suggestions are invited to attend.

Minor Entryway Signs Painted

Minor entryway signs were painted and/or repaired in March and April at the following intersections: Blooming-

field at Canoga Park; Natures Way at Holleman, Polumbo, Callista, Moondale, River Crossing Drive, Oak River Circle and River Close; Culbreath Road at Allwood, Groveway, Golf Manor, Culbreath Court Cove, Delamere and Needham; Erindale Drive at Culbreath, Windell, Gotham and Wrencrest.

March 2005
Financial Report Approved

Vince Ferraro of Ferraro, Higginbotham & Hayes presented the financial reports for

March 2005. Balance sheet for February shows cash on hand in Am-South Bank at the end of the month was \$468,549. Some expenditures noted were \$806 for storage facility rental, \$1,026 for insurance, \$14,845 for fertilization, \$3,755 for accident site repairs, \$1,252 for irrigation supply parts.

Board Questions
River Crossing Estates Status

At the April BSTD meeting, trustees questioned why the River Crossing Estates section is not part of the Bloomingdale

Property Manager Bagged
17 Sacks of Litter, Blue Bike

In March, property manager Al Devney picked up 17 bags of trash, one blue bicycle, one traffic cone, a hubcap, one sweatshirt, two shirts and a tire. The beverages of choice were Diet Coke for soft drinks, Old English 800 beer and Seagram's Extra Smooth Vodka for distilled spirits.

Contact Devney with questions about community property maintenance at 684-6667 or bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net.



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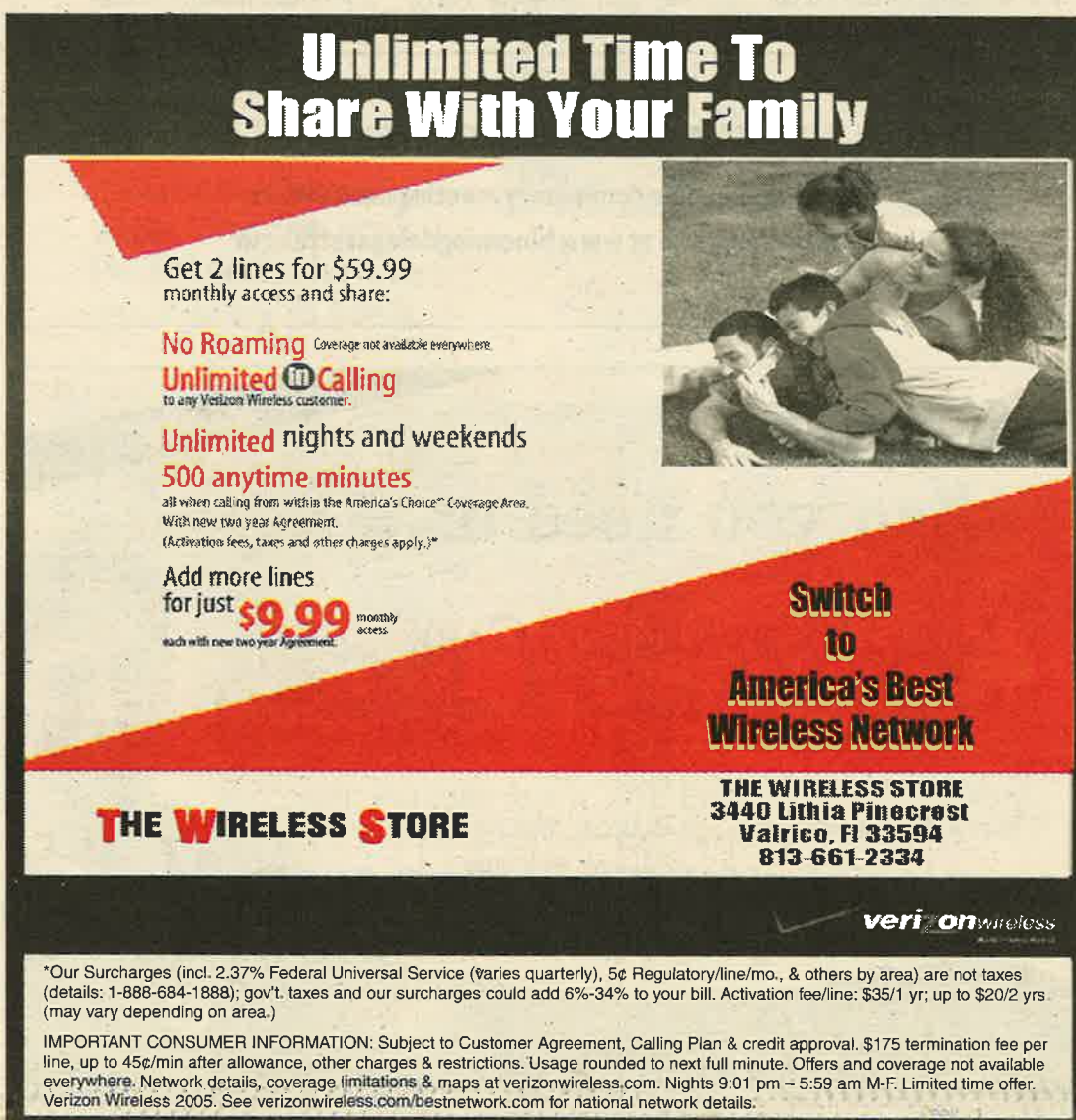
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Photo Courtesy of It's All About Me Parties and Boutique

A gaggle of girls vogue for the camera after their glam makeover at All About Me Parties and Boutique. The store recently added a lounge and party room for girls' theme parties.

Gift Boutique Gets Glam Makeover

HOSTS THEME PARTIES FOR GIRLS

A Gazette Report

A gift boutique in Lithia catering to girls of all ages was recently revamped and renamed.

La Jolie Maison, on County Road 39, two miles south of FishHawk Boulevard, is now All About Me Parties and Boutique.

The store still carries a retail

line of gifts, clothing, accessories, jewelry and room décor for girls of all ages.

In April a lounge and party room was added to the back of the store to hold theme parties for young ladies.

"We gathered girls of all ages, from 7 to 55, to discuss their idea of an ultimate girl store," said owner Amy Spruengli-Sierra.

Girls can design their own package party or choose from themes like Princess Party,

Tea Party, Diva Star Party or Pajama Party. Packages include invitations, makeovers, dress up fun, food, beverages, snacks, games and goody bags. Party hosts take care of all the details, from organizing activities to cleaning up.

It's All About Me is at 10425 County Road 39 in Lithia, two miles south of FishHawk Boulevard. Information: (813) 650-8899 or www.allaboutmeparty.com.

ON OUR COMMUNITY WEBSITE

For Bloomingdale community meetings and events, visit our Web site at www.bloomingtongazette.com

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Po' Boys Creole Café Debuts In Bloomingdale

LONG WAIT, GOOD FOOD

By ELTON DUMONT
Exclusive To
The Bloomingdale Gazette

New Orleans-style Cajun food has finally arrived in Bloomingdale.

First, I must admit I've never met a Creole dish that I didn't like. Soon after it opened for business, Mrs. Dumont and I, along with our friends Tina and Dennis Coyle, ventured over to Po' Boys Creole Café on Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

The atmosphere is standard Cajun — loud and friendly, with New Orleans photos and beads strung everywhere, probably left over from Fat Tuesday.

Southern fried pickles stand out among standard appetizer options like jalapeno poppers and chicken tenders. Although they were perhaps too thinly sliced, they were definitely southern fried. Be adventurous and try them.

There are almost two dozen Po' Boy sandwiches to choose from, all under \$8, including traditional oyster, Andouille sausage, crawfish and crab or blackened chicken. Try the Muffuletta, a round loaf of bread layered with ham, salami, Swiss, provolone, mayo, and Creole mustard in an olive salad dressing and then baked ... wow, are they good!

Wraps are under \$7, and down home entrees like Carmen's Red Bean Dinner with Andouille, tomatoes, peppers

and onions are around \$10. Creole delights include Shrimp Etouffee, Jambalaya and Sausage or Seafood Gumbo. Sunday Brunch, complete with beignets, is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

I ordered an Oyster Po' Boy with a side of Shrimp Etouffee; both were terrific. My wife had a very good Pork Po'Boy. Tina enjoyed the Shrimp Basket with fries and homemade cocktail sauce.

Dennis gave the fried Shrimp Po' Boy better than average marks. A Philadelphia boy, Dennis had a Yuengling draft. Tina had one good glass of Chardonnay and another that was suspect.

Po' Boys has a full bar, outside dining, take out service and a children's menu. The staff was friendly enough, but we waited 30 minutes for a table, and their ability to turn the food out of the kitchen was much too long. Hopefully they can work on that.

All in all, it was a pretty good experience and we'll go back to try some of the other uniquely Cajun dishes. The bill for both couples including tax and tip was about \$65 including the adult beverages.

Po' Boys Creole Café is at 3345 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, in the Albertson's plaza. Information: 643-7777.

Rating based on 5 stars:

Food: ★ ★ ★ ½

Ambience: ★ ★ ★

Service (long wait for table and food): ★ ★ ½

Overall: ★ ★ ★

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B L O O M I N G D A L E B U S I N E S S N E W S

COMMENTARY

Planning Is Key To Home Organization

STORAGE SYSTEMS CONTROL CLUTTER

By CAROL WEATHERSBY
Special To The Gazette

Hold everything — wouldn't that be nice? Having a place that holds everything would be great. A place to hold your memoirs of yesteryear; a place to hold your favorite sweaters in the off season; a place to hold your garden tools, and so much more. Who says you can't have it all?

Today, you can have it all because home organization is the hottest trend in home decorating. Complete home organization can be accomplished by customizing your storage space. For instance, bedroom closets and kitchen pantries can be customized by installing shelving, drawers, baskets, and

so much more. Garages can be customized by installing cabinets, shelving and wall hooks.

Before beginning the customization of your storage areas, assess your needs and research your options. First, determine what items will be hung, folded, stored on shelves, or tucked away in baskets or drawers. This will help you develop an idea of how to customize your storage area.

Next, determine your budget. Affordable storage systems can be created by using a top-quality wire shelving with accessories. Wire shelving is typically available with a white coating. Choose wire shelving that is sturdy and durable. Select a brand that offers a variety of accessories which will help you maximize your storage space.

Luxury storage systems can be created by using a furniture-grade particleboard with a durable melamine coating. When choosing this system, research your options and spend your money wisely.

Recreating your personal space through home organization helps you to efficiently manage your household. Choosing to customize your storage areas will increase your storage space and help you to maintain a tidy and well-organized home.

Imagine your satisfaction knowing you can hold everything, by creating places to hold all of your favorite treasures.

Tim & Carol Weathersbee own Encore Closets Inc. in Plant City. Information: (813) 956-1051.



Photo Courtesy Liz Pet Salon

Salon Offers Special Services For Pampered Pets

Bloomington resident Paula Stewart and her sister Liz Stewart recently opened Liz Pet Salon on Bloomington Avenue just west of Lithia-Pinecrest Road. A lifelong animal lover, longtime groomer and former veterinary technician, Liz Stewart specializes in gentle, humane grooms for dogs and cats. Dental hygiene services, manicures and pet massages are offered. Advantage flea control and specialty shampoos and conditioners are also available. For information call 661-4600.

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Say you saw it in The Bloomington Gazette!

Company Spotlights Hard-To-Find Bulbs

SPECIALTY BULBS FOR HOMES, BUSINESSES

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Bloomington homeowners in the dark about where to find light bulbs with uncommon shapes, sizes and screw-in bases have a helpful neighbor to turn to.

Liz Congero, a Bloomington resident and manager of Aamsco Lighting in Brandon for the past 17 years, frequently comes to the rescue of people frustrated in their search for hard-to-find bulbs.

"People are buying all kinds of unique light fixtures now at home improvement stores," Congero said.

But just because the store carries the fixture, doesn't mean they carry suitable

replacement bulbs.

A frequent refrain Congero hears from visitors to her Falkenburg Road office is, "I've been walking around with this bulb in my pocket for two weeks and I can't find a replacement. Can you help me?"

The answer, with rare exception, is yes.

"If you need to replace a hard-to-find light bulb, you'll find it here," she said.

Established in 1975, Aamsco also manufactures specialty bathroom vanity light fixtures at its Summerville, S.C., plant.

Aamsco is at 501 S. Falkenburg Road, a quarter mile north of Brandon Boulevard. The showroom is open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays by appointment. For information, call 654-7339 or visit www.aamsco.com.

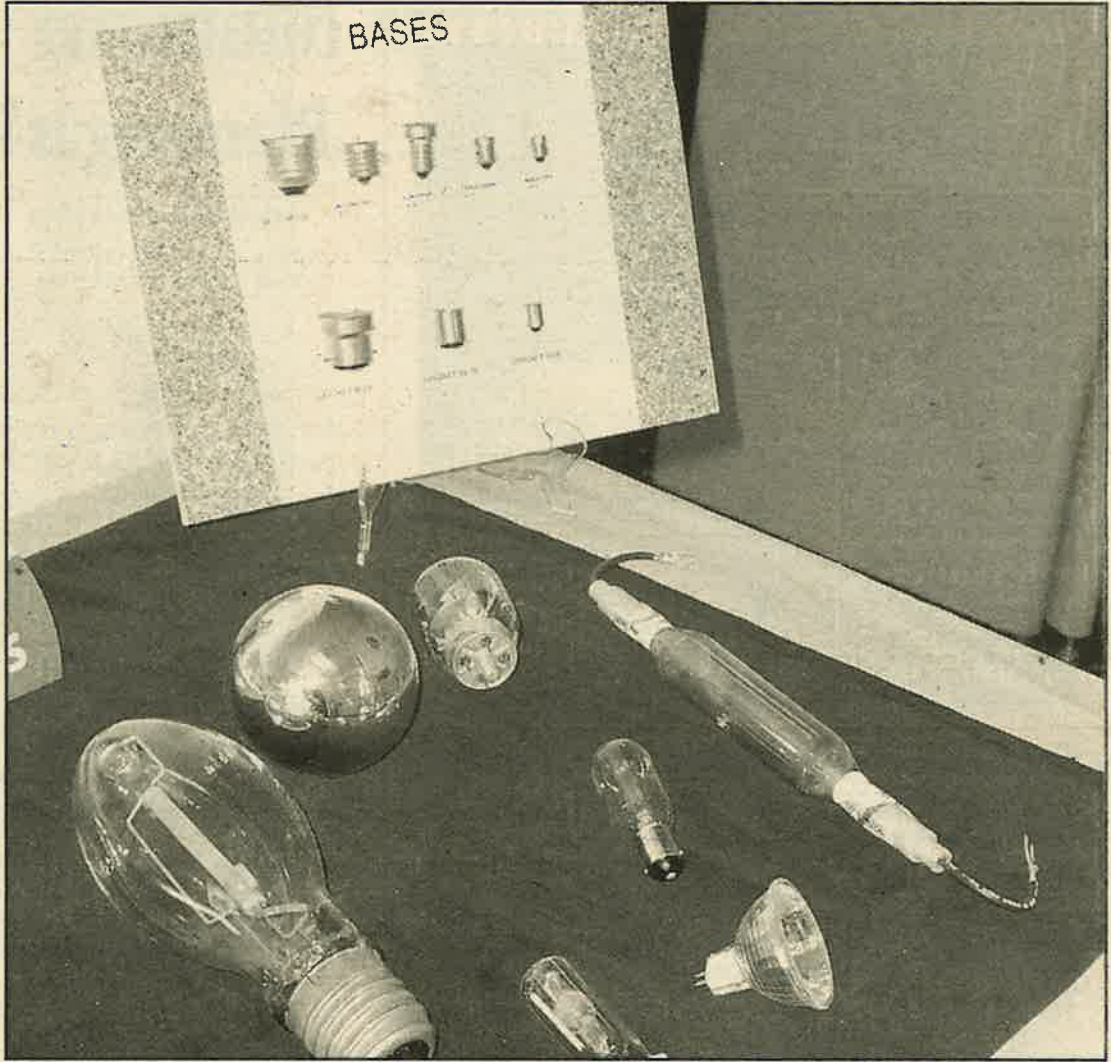


Photo Courtesy of Aamsco Lighting

A variety of hard-to-find lightbulbs for residential, business and commercial use are available at Aamsco Lighting.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

New Shop Specializes In Old Treasures

Bloomington resident Joe Warner, pictured, and his wife, Anita, recently opened Sun Coast Antiques, Etc. at 912 Bloomington Ave., next to Bloomington Self Storage. Antiques, newer fine furnishings and décor are offered at the shop, open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. In-store and eBay consignments are welcome. Information: 653-9773.

Rezoning Hearing Postponed

The Hillsborough County Zoning Hearing Master hearing for the 174,000-square-foot retail store proposed on Bloomington Avenue just east of Lithia-Pinecrest Road has been postponed to May 24 at 6 p.m.

For updates, visit www.bloomingtongazette.com.

ON OUR COMMUNITY WEBSITE:

Deed restrictions for Bloomington's 40 neighborhood sections are available to download at our community Web site at www.bloomingtongazette.com

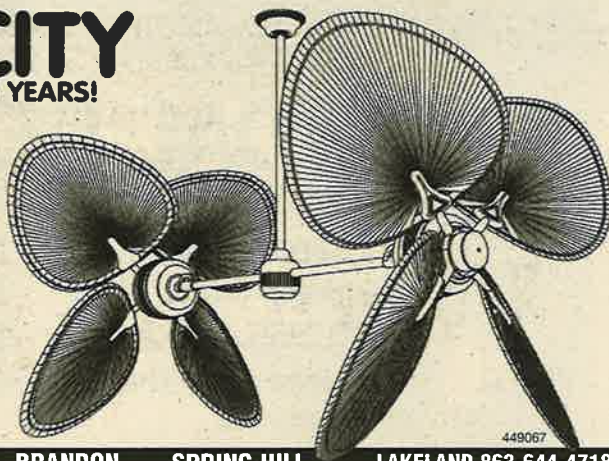
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Creative Writing Program Encourages Young Authors

Cimino fourth-grader Ashlyn Gaughan, accompanied by her father, Ken, displays her award-winning creative writing project, "The Adventures of the Ghostly Titanic." The school recently held a "Read, Write & Blue" program to recognize junior authors and readers. All students were encouraged to create their own stories and illustrations. Two books were selected from each class to be displayed at the school's media center for all to enjoy.



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Summer Fun, Learning Offered At Cimino

CAMPS BLEND LEARNING, FUN

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

The countdown is on until the last day of school. What then? Beach trips, theme park visits, sleeping in? Yes, all work and no play make Jack a dull boy, but a summer full of all play and no work can dull Jack and Jill's academic skills.

Cimino Elementary School is offering the best of both worlds — fun and learning — in its Summer Enrichment Camps.

Principal Lou Cerreta, the father of three young children himself, understands the parental predicament about filling the summer vacation time-void.

"Parents wonder what to do with their children during the summer, and there are summer camps everywhere. We are offering a variety of alterna-

tives that include academics, but with so much fun tied in," Cerreta said.

The hands-on, out-of-your-chair camps for kindergarten through sixth grade students offer everything from basketball to bugs, art and adventure. The camps run five days a week from June 1 through July 1. Sessions are from two to four hours a day, between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. A volleyball camp is open to middle schoolers in grades six through eight.

One of the classes, "Video Extravaganza," offers campers a glimpse into the world of television and movies. Students will tour the local Channel 13 studio behind the scenes and take a trip to Universal Studios.

The program is open to the public; children do not have to attend Cimino to participate. The registration fee is \$275 per child, \$240 for additional family members. For more information, call 740-4450.

SAFETY

Continued From Page 5

The gate will be open on school days from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Although the fence was initially proposed last year to curtail vandalism occurring after hours at the school, it now serves another purpose — to enable the administration to secure the campus in the event of a threat to students, and to provide parents with at least a

little more peace of mind

Parents of Alafia and Cimino elementary school students are encouraged to closely follow their schools' guidelines for drop-off and pick-ups and sign-in and sign-outs, and can contact their child's school with questions about student safety and school-security. Alafia Elementary: 744-8190. Cimino Elementary: 740-4450.



ANDREW HATCHER/Photo

Tough Bull

Bloomington High School senior T.J. Bryan, seated next to Bulls head football coach Corey Brinson, smiles as he signs a scholarship with Methodist University in North Carolina. Bryan played every position on the offensive line for Bloomington, and he said coaches at Methodist project him as a center. Behind Bryan, from left, are Principal B.J. Stelter, Bryan's grandparents Bob and Betty Bryan, his 12-year-old sister, Morgan, his parents, June and Steve Bryan, and Bulls Athletic Director Danielle Shotwell. Bryan plans to study sports management in college.

MAURER

Continued From Page 8

mation call the Bloomington substation at 635-8040. Also, be sure you have recent photos on hand in case any emergency should take place.

And please check out www.hcs0.tampa.fl.us to famil-

iarize yourself with the registered sex offenders and predators living in our communities. Those of you in the market for new homes, check out the areas you're interested in first. Those of you who are already

settled in, make it a habit to check out the website frequently.

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BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

YARD OF THE MONTH



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Colorful impatiens thrive under the shade of a live oak tree at the home of Deborah and Jaime Ibarra.

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Colorful impatiens are blooming in shady spots all over Bloomington, including the BHA's Yard of the Month for May; Deborah and Jaime Ibarra's home at 706 Bloomington Drive.

Deborah, with the help of her 12-year-old daughter Samantha, tucked bouquets of the prolific perennials into a neat wooden flower bed hand-crafted by Jaime. The pink and

purple plants share the bed with palms and shrubs, all under the protective shade of a live oak tree.

Ferns and elephant ears are Deborah's favorites. She tends to the flowers and shrubs, and Jaime battles the lawn. Although pests and the lack of rain are a big challenge for most homeowners these days, Jaime does a good job keeping the yard mowed, edged and weed free.

Deborah said when she's not

busy working outside in her yard, she's always busy inside with something. Her current project is refurbishing a Barbie house she found for her daughter at a yard sale. Naturally, the house will be furnished with its own tiny garden.

The Ibarras received a \$25 Ace Hardware of Bloomington gift certificate, courtesy of the BHA. Send Yard of the Month nominations to info@bloomingtongazette.com or call 643-2990.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Coach Sam Presented With Good Neighbor Award

Ted Grable, president of The Bloomington Homeowners Association, presents the BHA's Good Neighbor Award to Samira Haslet, center, in April. Bloomington West Park recreation director Donna Clouse, at right, accompanied Haslet. A recreation leader at the park's after-school program, "Coach Sam" was lauded for completing a year-long project with the after-school students to clean up, revitalize and replant what was once an unsightly pond on the park grounds. In cooperation with Hillsborough County's Adopt-A-Pond program, the group tore their way through overgrowth and underbrush, removed more than 75 cubic yards of trash and debris from the water, and planted dozens of native species plants selected to attract wildlife like butterflies, hummingbirds and wading birds to the pond.

May 14 Is Cleanup Day

- Cell Phone At Natures Way Site: (813) 293-3319
- To Volunteer: 643-2990
- Elderly, Disabled Resident Free Pickups (call before 11 a.m. on May 12): 681-2051
- BHA Web Site: www.bloomingtongazette.com
- General Info: info@bloomingtongazette.com or 681-2051
- Acceptable items: Appliances, mattresses, water heaters, televisions, steel and other metals, furniture, non-commercial construction debris and tires. Goodwill Industries will accept tax

deductible donations of reusable household goods, clothing, toys, etc. will be accepted. A private recycling company will accept obsolete computer components (printers, faxes, monitors, etc.).

• Some Items Cannot Be Accepted: Yard waste will not be accepted. Hazardous materials including paint, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals — and any waste from commercial activities — cannot be accepted (see sidebar for information on disposal of these items at Hillsborough County Community Collection Centers).

CLEANUP

Continued From Page 4

ed 200 loads of household and garage junk, a truckload of charity items and two pallets full of obsolete computer components.

With no additional refuse containers available from Waste Management, whose offices are closed on Saturday, cleanup volunteers were regrettably forced to close the site down before noon. Residents who arrived after it closed were directed to Hillsborough's South County Collection site near Big Bend Road to dispose of their trash, and to the Goodwill Industries dropoff near Bloomington Wal-Mart to unload their reusable charity items.

The homeowners association held a special meeting April 12 to organize a second cleanup day and make plans to prevent a recurrence of the serious inconvenience experienced by residents who loaded up their cars and trucks only to find the site closed early.

The BHA will now publish a cell phone number manned by volunteers at the site that residents can call to confirm the site is still open and accepting discards. The number, (813) 293-3319, is posted on the community's Web site, www.bloomingtongazette.com.

Many more volunteers are needed to staff the site, direct

traffic and help residents unload their cars. Students and Scouts are eligible to receive community service hour credits for helping with this project. To volunteer, call 643-2990 or e-mail laurafrazier@tam-pabay.rr.com.

Bloomington's Community Cleanup Days are made possible by neighborhood volunteers, residents' annual BHA membership dues, and a grant from the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations.

Refreshments for volunteers at the April cleanup were provided by Dunkin' Donuts, Albertson's Supermarket and McDonalds.

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Continued From Page 4

Hillsborough Is Ninth Largest District In Nation

Hillsborough County has the ninth largest school district in the nation, roughly the size of Rhode Island. Our district — with an annual operating budget of \$1.2 billion (for salaries, textbooks, technology transportation, energy bills, etc.) and a \$619 million annual capital outlay budget (for construction and renovations) — has 31,000 employees and serves more than 197,000 students.

School Board Has Sole Authority To Hire

The school board has created a candidate profile and list of desirable qualifications, while soliciting a broad range of input from school administrators and staff, advocacy and parent groups, bargaining units, taxpayers, civic leaders and representatives from businesses and community organizations. The elected members of the Hillsbor-

ough County School Board have the sole authority to hire the next superintendent.

Firm Hired To Conduct National Search

ProAct Inc., a national search firm, was hired by the school board to cast the widest net possible to recruit both traditional and non-traditional candidates. Some board members say a national search is the way to attract candidates who can offer a fresh perspective, especially important in a district as insular as Hillsborough, which has hired from within since 1967. Other board members felt a limited Florida search would be best, because the state's stringent open records law would discourage many out-of-state candidates from applying, and some applicants could be motivated to apply just to come to Florida.

Board Outlined Ideal Qualities

As the recruitment process moves forward, the ideal candidate should possess exceptional

leadership skills to continue to raise the academic bar for all students, eliminate achievement gaps, develop and direct an executive management team and to serve as the primary ambassador for the district with the school community, government entities and the broader public.

The next superintendent will need to be a quick study, decisive and politically astute as our district continues to swell. Our new superintendent will have to find creative ways to come up with additional funding to build new schools, while balancing the needs of a diverse population.

The person hired must be a good culture fit, someone who brings a fresh perspective to the job, has a passion for public education, and is highly qualified.

Students Want Accessible, Visible Leader

According to input from those outside the school district organization, some feel the next superintendent should have school-aged children, be techno-savvy and think strategically

in terms of five, 10 and 15 years ahead. Accessibility and visibility were mentioned most frequently by students surveyed.

One group said they would like to see the superintendent institute a "work day," where the superintendent would do the job of one school district employee, one day per month. As your District IV representative, I like this idea.

Recruitment Timeline In Place

ProAct Inc. has received numerous applications and will continue to recruit and accept applications until May 12. A slate of 10 to 12 final candidates will be submitted to the school board by May 13. Final candidate interviews will be held with board members from May 13 to 17. From May 17 to 27, the school board will conduct site visits and check references. From May 31 to June 6, final activities and the selection of the new superintendent will be made.

This timeline is tentative and may change.

Mail, E-Mail Or Fax Comments, Questions

To give your input, please go to the school district Web site at www.sdhc.k12.fl.us, download a copy of the survey, fill it out, and mail or fax it to Dr. Nancy Noeske, ProAct Search, Inc., 126 N. Jefferson St., Suite 360, Milwaukee, WI 53202. The fax number is (414) 347-0202.

You may also e-mail me at Jennifer.Faliero@sdhc.k12.fl.us with your thoughts or potential questions to ask the candidates. All comments received will be shared with the other board members. The Hillsborough County School Board will make its final selection of a new school superintendent on or before its June 6 meeting.

Jennifer Faliero is the Hillsborough County School Board District IV representative. District IV encompasses eastern Hillsborough County, including the municipality of Plant City and the communities of Brandon, Lithia, Riverview, Seffner and Valrico. Faliero can be reached at 272-4045.

BACC

Continued From Page 8

the latest survey available online at www.hartline.org. Go to "Top Stories" on the right side, then follow the link to "Service Modifications."

With enough public input, the results of the survey should indicate a need for more — and better — bus service originating from the Bloomingdale and Fish-Hawk areas.

HARTline representative Robert

Trout attended the council's April meeting. Trout reported 86 percent of those responding to HARTline's initial survey were workers from MacDill.

Volunteer council member Norbert Gobin spoke on behalf of MacDill Air Force Base workers who use the HARTline transportation system.

Gobin said, "This demonstrates the importance of MacDill workers getting

directly involved in this project."

"It is very important that those workers who participated in the first survey also participate in any other surveys that follow. For the surveys to be effective, the results of the first survey should be incorporated into the final results."

Trout said, "The new survey is better organized and participants can directly submit their results."

Council members encouraged non-military residents to support MacDill workers by taking the survey.

Helping our Bloomingdale military residents obtain reliable, timely transportation is a small but very important way to show them we appreciate all that they do. Final results of the surveys will be presented to the HARTline board in June.



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- 3721 Cold Creek Drive.... \$244,900
- 2518 Groveway Drive \$247,900
- 2303 Colusa Lane..... \$263,000
- 2618 Allwood Avenue..... \$287,500
- 4322 Fair Court Drive \$320,000
- 1528 Crooked Stick Dr.... \$355,500
- 2529 Centennial Falcon Dr. \$417,000

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