

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XX  
Num

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

## Serious Fun

Some young residents learn what to do when they suddenly find themselves in the water.

PAGE 4

## Board Oversees Use of Monies

From landscaping and lighting to cleaning up vandalism, the BSTD board of trustees is there.

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Yard of the Month .....2

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## Set In Stone



JOYBOISELLE/Gazette photo

George May, Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board member and chairman of the organization's public works committee, at right, with property manager Al Devney, inspects sidewalk repairs completed in April on Natures Way Boulevard. When a resident homeowner approached the board with concerns about deteriorating sidewalks and poorly executed temporary asphalt repairs, May implored county officials to address the issue, and they delivered. See story on page 7.

## Brutal Attack Stuns Bloomingdale

*Deputy Maurer urges residents to be vigilant, see page 21*



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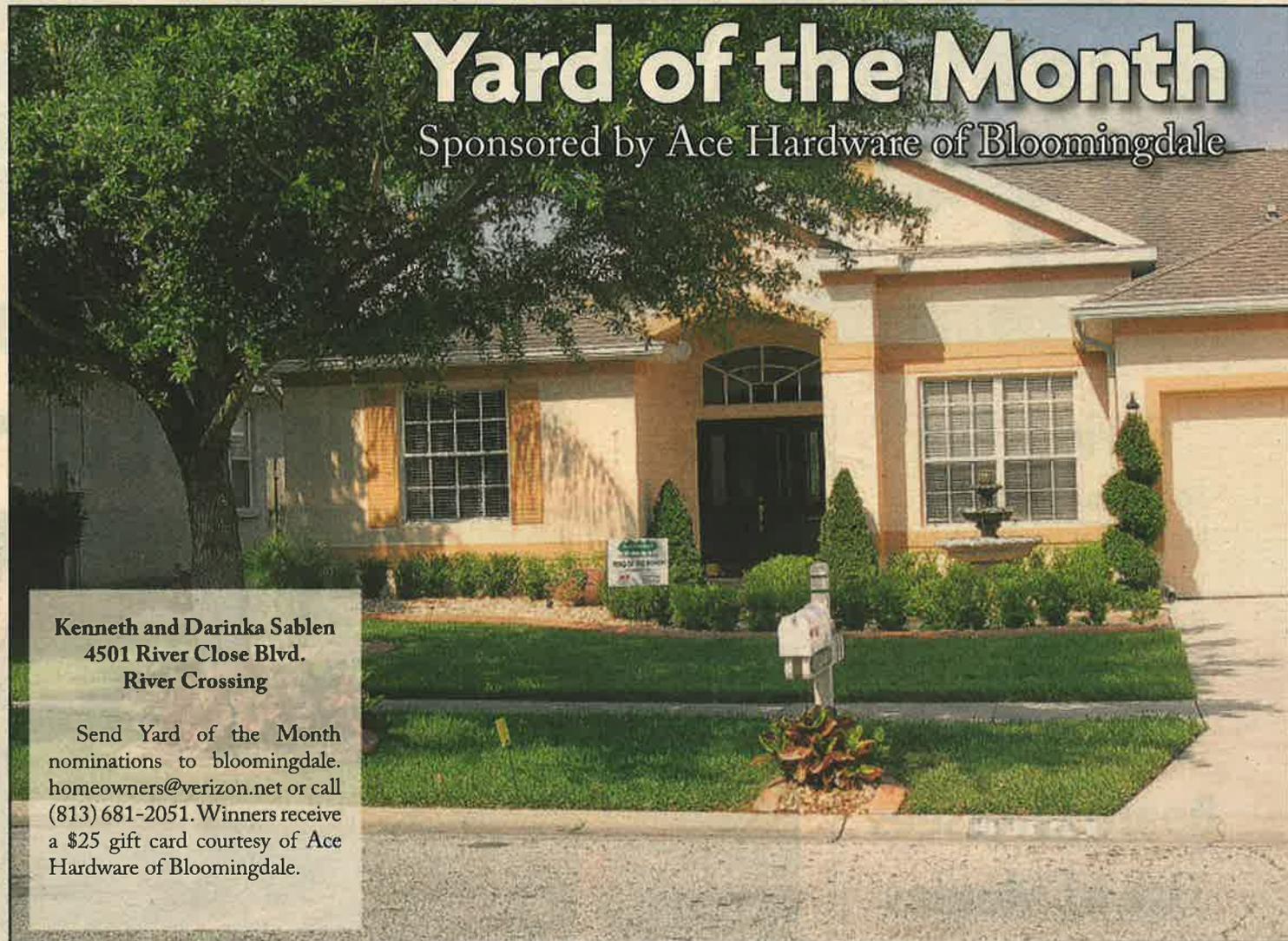
**Ace Tips**

By CHRIS KORTE  
Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale

Warmer temperatures are just around the corner, and your air conditioning system will soon be working extra hard. Filters have a slightly shorter life in hotter months, so keep an eye on them and change them regularly. You're sure to keep the house cleaner and the energy bill down.

May is a great time to plant and to spruce up the yard. Look for plants that are low maintenance and thrive in the environment that's right for your bed, whether you have shade or sun.

Combat weeds with weed killer on a regular basis, starting now. Try spraying your flower beds each time you mow and trim. Just be sure to keep the spray off the grass when using a total vegetation killer, and thoroughly rinse your sprayer after every use.



# Yard of the Month

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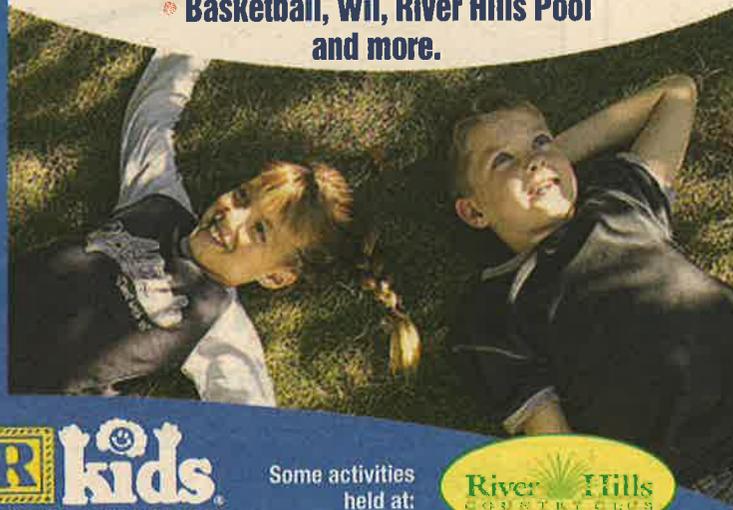
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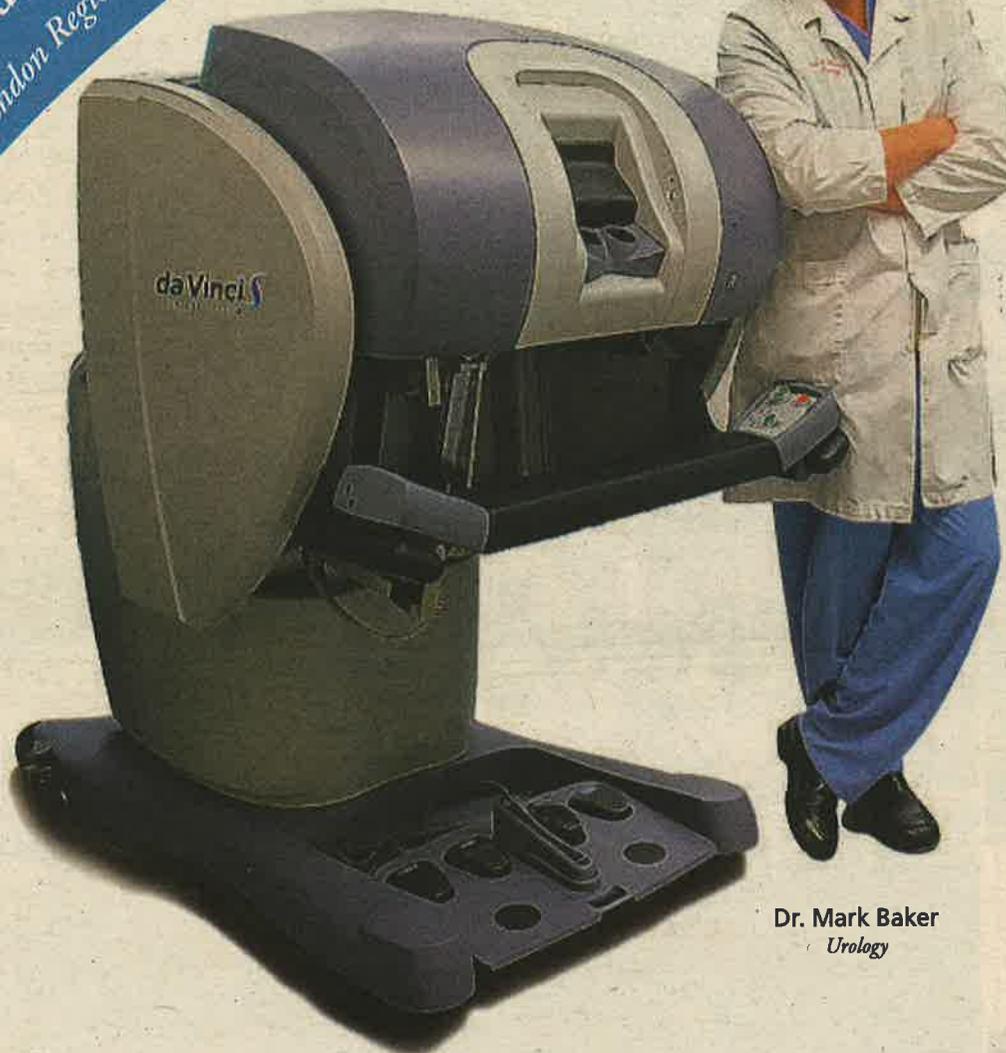
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# Serious Fun



Some of Bloomingdale's youngest residents had some serious fun during recent swim lessons at the Campo Family YMCA on Culbreath Road at Bloomingdale Avenue. For swim lesson schedules and program information, call (813) 684-1371.

JOYBOISSELLE/Gazette photos

Swim instructor Kristen Matson supervises as Brooke Summers and Daniela Garzon, both 4, cruise through the YMCA pool in an inflatable boat.



The girls enjoy a dunk in the drink...



... and then swim safely to "shore."

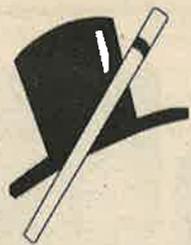


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3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594

Phone: (813) 681-2051

Fax: (813) 684-2358

E-mail: bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net

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

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

Web site: www.bloomingdalegazette.com

President: Joe Hickle

Vice president: Stanley Lee; Treasurer: Pam Liguori

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

## BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

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Fax: (813) 684-2358

E-mail: bloomingdale.district@verizon.net

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

President: Thom Snelling

Vice president: Russell Jones

Treasurer: David West

Corresponding Secretary: David Steck

Property manager: Al Devney

Trustees: Joe Harless; Joe Liguori and James Laughlin

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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CGC 1511831

# Association Pushes For Sidewalk Repairs

By JOY BOISSELLE

When Bloomington residents have issues, the Bloomington Homeowners Association board of directors does more than just listen – they take action.

Case in point – a resident homeowner recently attended the association's monthly meeting to voice concerns about the condition of sidewalks along Natures Way Boulevard and Culbreath Road.

The homeowner asked the board to look into the matter for two reasons. In addition to creating a safety hazard for walkers, joggers and bicyclists, the cracked sidewalks – poorly patched with black asphalt in some areas – are unsightly.

George May, a BHA director and public works committee chairman, assured the homeowner the board would look into the issue. May not only looked, he spearheaded efforts that prompted the Hillsborough County Public Works Department during the past six weeks to replace asphalt-patched walks with concrete and to complete numerous additional repairs. The county also agreed to grind down sidewalk joints in an attempt to level uneven areas.

"Between County Commissioner Al Higginbotham's office and John Newton, who oversees public works for our area, I explained our concerns and what would be acceptable to our community," May said. "I was determined to be the squeaky wheel."

May outlined to county officials the waste of taxpayer money for temporary asphalt patches, safety issues and possible lawsuits that could result from a resident's injury due to a misstep on the uneven sidewalks. Repairs

began shortly thereafter and, according to May, will continue as long as the need exists.

The bottom line is that Bloomington residents have safer and more attractive sidewalks due to the efforts of the Bloomington Homeowners Association.

"This is just a portion of your \$25 annual dues working for you," May said. "We are only limited in what we can do by the

numbers of BHA members we have, the money to work with, and our volunteers."

Residents can report cracked and broken sidewalks to the BHA by phone, (813) 681-2051, or e-mail, bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net. Residents should provide a detailed physical location and the number of the nearest TECO pole in order to pinpoint the area for inspection.

**"We are only limited in what we can do by the numbers of BHA members we have, the money to work with, and our volunteers."**

**— George May**

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# Congregation Performs Good Deeds

A Gazette Report

Members of Congregation Beth Shalom in Brandon recently participated in a number of volunteer activities to help local organizations in need. The activities were held on Mitzvah Day, a community service day recognized by Jewish congregations worldwide.

See MITZVAH, Page 13



Photos from Congregation Beth Shalom

At right, Jeff Goodman, Lauren, Jeff and Jordan Shaw of Lithia, with Carolyn Miller of Brandon, work at CARE on a pet memorial garden at the CARE facility.



At left, Congregation member Justin Shaw helps move mulch for a garden at the CARE facility in Ruskin.

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## Students Surf Through The Scriptures

St. Andrew's United Methodist Church offers "Surfin' Through the Scriptures," a vacation Bible school for children ages 3 through fifth-grade, from June 23 to 27. Children will rotate through activity centers with a beach theme and daily Bible stories. Registration forms are available at standrewsb-[randon.com](http://randon.com) or call (813) 689-6849, ext. 220. The church is at 3315 Bryan Road, Brandon.

## Summer Camps, Classes?

Send announcements about children's summer camps, classes and activities for publication in the June issue of the Gazette to [lfrazier@tampatrib.com](mailto:lfrazier@tampatrib.com). Please include detailed program and contact information.

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# County Health Care, Public Art Seats Open

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County Commission seeks residents to serve on its Health Care Advisory Board and Public Art Committee.

To be considered for appointment to the voluntary, non-paid positions, residents must be registered to vote in Hillsborough County and must submit an application no later than Friday, May 9. The Board of County Commissioners will issue appointments at a meeting to be announced in June.

Applications are available at County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa and online at hillsboroughcounty.org. The online form can be downloaded and printed out, but cannot be submitted electronically. For applications and information, call (813) 272-5826.

The Health Care Advisory Board provides information and recommendations to the county commission concerning the Hillsborough County Indigent Health Care Plan, particularly in the area of standards of community care; policies for providing care to the medically

poor in Hillsborough County; allocation of limited financial resources; enhancing the efficiency of health care delivery systems; coordinating community resources; and evaluating the effectiveness of implemented recommendations. Three posi-

tions are expiring. Terms are for four years. Meetings are held at 3 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

The Public Art Committee acts in the public interest on all matters relating to the Public Art Ordinance including the selec-

tion, placement and maintenance of works of public art throughout the county. The committee and its staff are responsible for the administration and planning of the Public Art Program and the curatorship of the county's public art collection. Members

and staff serve as countywide liaisons to the public art community. One position is vacant due to resignation. The remainder of the term expires Dec. 31, 2011. The committee meets at 11:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

## Club News?

Send club news, announcements and photos for publication in the Gazette to lfrazier@tampatrib.com. Please include detailed information and a contact phone number and e-mail address.

Summer Camp  
**Fun & Activities** for Kids

Summertime to TRAIN  
**Hit the Trails**  
RUNNING AND OUTDOOR GEAR

### FREE Training Clinic

- **WHEN:** Saturday May 31st @9am
- **WHAT:** How to Train for XC & High School sports over the Summer
- **WHO:** Middle School students moving on to High School or new runners
- **WHERE:** Hit the Trails! FishHawk Park Square

### Summer Running Clinic Run Fast! Run Strong! Build Endurance!

- Great for XCountry, Soccer, Football. Learn how to run.
- **WHEN:** July 28th - Aug. 1st and Aug. 4th - 8th • 7am-10am
  - **WHERE:** Hawk Park in FishHawk Phase 1
  - **Physically demanding.** 13+ year olds. Learn proper nutrition, hydration and injury prevention. Participants will receive a certificate of completion, personal evaluation and t-shirt at the end of the 2 week period. Total \$350. for the two weeks: Early Bird Special - \$300, if paid before July 1. The cost is only \$200. for a one week clinic. \$50. non-refundable deposit must be paid before July 1st to reserve your spot and full payment is due before July 25th. Standard parental waiver required.

### Summer Training June 9th - July 25th, 7:00am - 9:00am

- Monday, Wednesday, Friday run meets will be offered from HTT.
- Running Program supplied by Hit the Trails • Newsome XC/Track Runner will lead the runs.
- Complete program cost \$200. or \$35./wk. \$50. deposit before June 5th. Standard parental waiver required.

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## MITZVAH

From page 8

More than 90 members of the congregation kicked off the event with a bagel breakfast at the synagogue on Bryan Road. Participants were then dispatched to assigned locations throughout Brandon and the Tampa Bay area to help with charitable projects which involved landscaping, serving lunch to children, creating cards for seniors and more.

Rabbi Betsy Torop said, "As Jews, we feel a strong sense of responsibility to be actively engaged in helping the community in which we live, and Mitzvah Day is a wonderful way to put that belief into action."

Event organizer Dale Kann, a Bloomingdale resident, said, "It's great to see participants of all ages, including whole families, work on a project together. Many people told me what a great feeling they had in doing something nice for the local groups that we helped this year."

One group went to Critter Adoption and Rescue Effort in Ruskin to help with landscaping and to play with the animals.

Justin Shaw, a fourth grade student at the congregation's religious school, said, "It makes me feel good to be able to help the dogs and cats at the shelter. I definitely will do this again next year."

Photo from Congregation Beth Shalom

At right, The Shaw family of Lithia and the Peterson family of Brandon help out at CARE, the Critter Adoption and Rescue Effort in Ruskin, during Mitzvah Day 2008.



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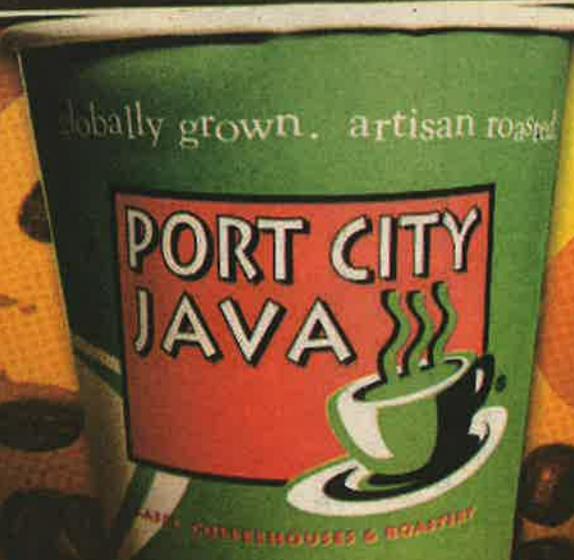


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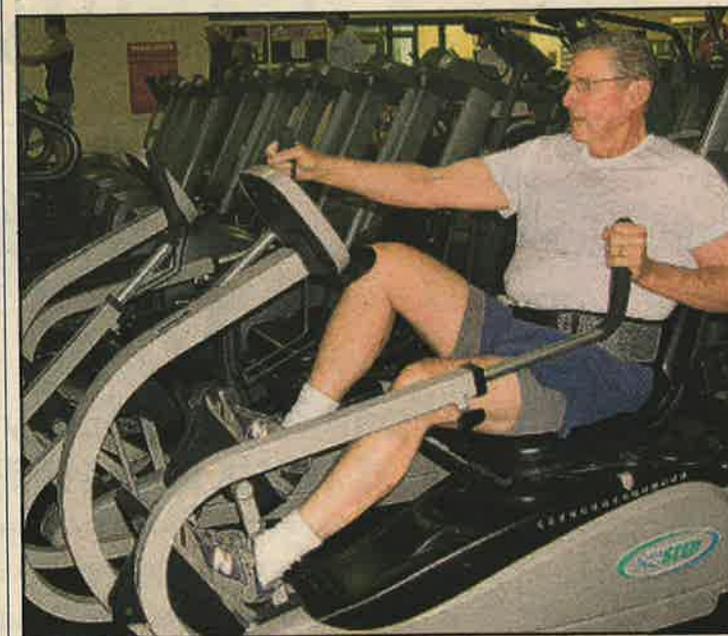
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## Folks Keep Fit at the Y



JOY BOISELLE/Gazette photos

Bloomington resident Laura Pekarek keeps in shape at the Campo Family YMCA on Culbreath Road at Bloomingdale Avenue. She said, "I like that it is so close to home and in particular I like the childcare programs available."



Bloomington resident Steve Richmond keeps in shape at the Campo Family YMCA on Culbreath Road at Bloomingdale Avenue. A YMCA member for many years, he said he values the center's close proximity to home.

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## Board Oversees Use of Homeowners' Tax Dollars



JOY BOISELLE/Gazette photo  
Landscaping, signage and lighting at major community entryways are maintained using funds paid by each homeowner and managed by the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District board of trustees.

By JOY BOISELLE

There is much to enjoy in the community of Bloomingdale – beautifully maintained landscaping, recreation areas, the well-traveled walks on Natures Way and Culbreath Road and top-notch schools.

Keeping Bloomingdale's common areas up to par takes money – your money, in the form of a \$130 tax assessed and added to each Bloomingdale homeowner's annual property tax bill.

In the 1980s, residents of the newly-formed development petitioned Hillsborough County to establish the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, known as the BSTD. Special taxing districts, in general, are formed to cover an area's unique funding needs. In Bloomingdale's case, each taxpayer shares an equal assessment regardless of their property's value.

The BSTD includes all homes in Bloomingdale East and West,

See BOARD, Page 16

# All Aboard!

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0002426032-01

## BOARD

From page 15

with the exception of River Crossing Estates which as a later development was not included in the original petition. Heading the district is a seven-member, volunteer board of trustees comprised of Bloomingdale residents. They oversee the district's funds and meet monthly to determine community needs with regards to ongoing maintenance, repairs and improvement projects.

According to BSTD treasurer David West, it is the largest taxing district in Hillsborough County, with approximately 5,000 homes.

"In fiscal year 2008, we will add over \$600,000 dollars to our funds," West said. "This is money that stays in our community. We as a board are constantly trying to maintain the aesthetic value of our community common areas and preserve our property values."

In Bloomingdale, residents can look around them to see their special tax money at work. West cited some of the board's current budget figures – more

than \$90,000 spent on landscape maintenance, including irrigation system; \$175,000 for lawn maintenance; \$33,000 for wall painting; more than \$20,000 to date to repair damages resulting from vandalism; \$2,000 for Christmas decorations, and the list goes on.

Overseeing the board's projects is Al Devney, Bloomingdale's property manager.

West said, "Al is responsible for the day-to-day operations of our community including contracting, work inspection, and basically making sure we get what we paid for."

In addition, Devney inspects Bloomingdale's common areas, entryways and irrigation systems for proper operation and possible vandalism.

Vandalism, according to West and Devney, is a big concern.

West said, "Vandalism costs residents money... money that could be used to improve our community in other ways. If we catch 'em [vandals,] we will prosecute them."

West also commented on misconceptions concerning the

BSTD and the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association.

"Some residents don't understand what each group does. We are totally separate by our missions; yet, together, our common ground is to make Bloomingdale a better place to live."

This is an election year for the BSTD board, with five current trustee terms expiring Sept. 30. The deadline to submit an application for the upcoming Aug. 26 primary election ballot is noon on May 19. For information and requirements, prospective applicants may contact Tim Bridge with the Supervisor of Elections Office at (813) 276-8269 or [bridget@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:bridget@hillsboroughcounty.org).

The BSTD Board of Trustees meets at 7 p.m. on the second Monday of each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. At its May 12 meeting, the board will focus on the annual budget. Meetings are open to the public. For more information call (813) 684-6667, e-mail [bloomingdale.district@verizon.net](mailto:bloomingdale.district@verizon.net) or go to [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com).

### Five Seats Open Sept. 30

Do you want to help determine how Bloomingdale's special taxes are spent in the community? If so, please consider applying to become a Bloomingdale Special Taxing District trustee. The deadline to submit an application for the Aug. 26 primary election ballot is noon on May 19. For information and requirements, prospective applicants may contact Tim Bridge with the Supervisor of Elections Office at (813) 276-8269 or [bridget@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:bridget@hillsboroughcounty.org).

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# Windsor Woods, Heritage Park Entries Hotspots For Vandalism

## Property Manager's March 2008 Report

By AL DEVNEY  
Property Manager  
Bloomingdale Special Taxing District

ZK Construction, Morningstar Electric, Davidson Landscaping and Thunder Irrigation completed repairs to a damaged wall on Groveway Drive and Culbreath Road.

Danielle Fencing replaced a vandalized section of fence on Erindale Drive west of the Eagle Point entrance and also repaired a damaged fence across the street.

Morningstar Electric repaired two vandalized lights at the Heritage Park entrance on two separate occasions.

Planscape Inc., began replac-

ing 4-inch pop up sprinklers with 6-inch pop ups on Canoga Park Drive and Natures Way Boulevard.

A notice to trim 130 trees to meet Department of Transportation standards on Natures Way and Green Hollow Lane was mailed to six contractors. The proposals were due by April 3.

Davidson Landscaping and Irrigation repaired a leaking main line in the median at the Eagle Pointe entrance.

Planscape, Inc., helped canvass the community to select bush and palm groupings and entryways that need to be replaced this year. The contract should go out for

bid late in the third quarter and be implemented in the fourth quarter, when rain can supplement the irrigation.

Entrances with flood lights were surveyed to determine the quantity of halogen lights that would be required to replace them. The cost for fixtures to replace 33 lights would be \$4,300 to \$6,200, depending on the size of the lights installed. There would also be additional installation costs.

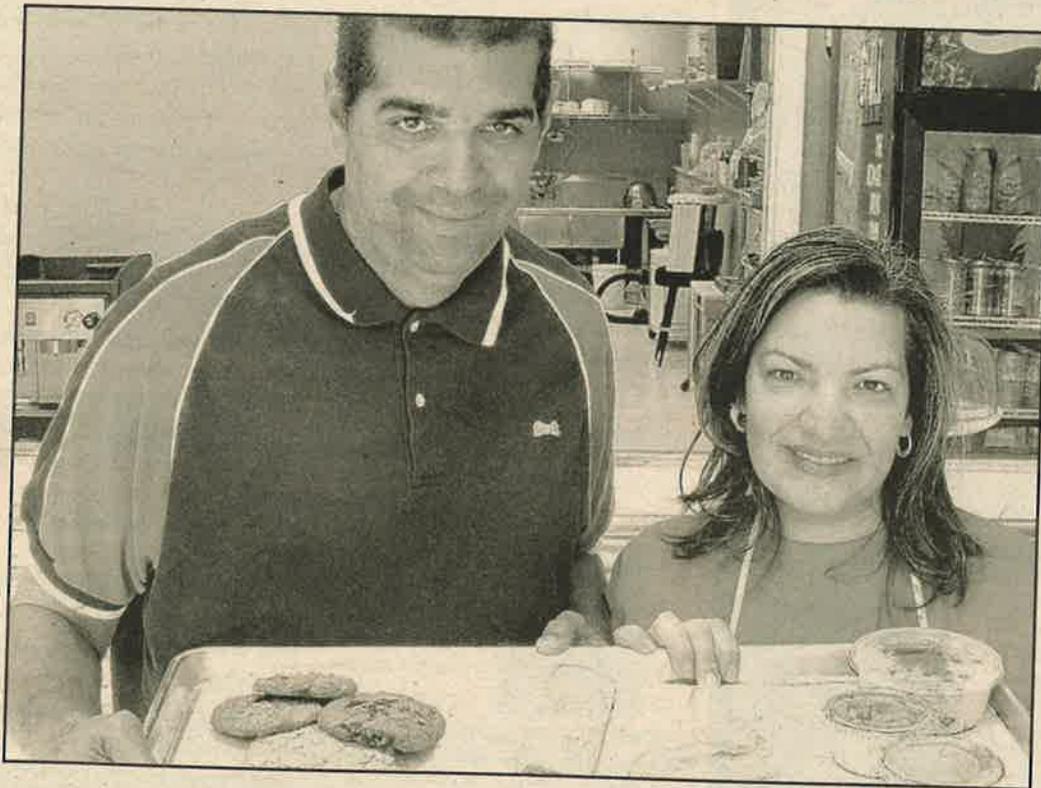
The common area between the road and the bollards on Canoga Park and Bloomingfield Drive near Bloomingdale West Park was measured to determine

costs to install a well and irrigation system. The area measured 23,500 square feet. The estimated cost is presently \$29,500.

Entryways to Windsor Woods on Treeline Drive and Heritage Park on Culbreath Road continue to be hotspots for vandalism. At the Windsor Woods entrance 25 light bulbs were destroyed or stolen and at Heritage Park two

halogen lights were vandalized on two separate occasions.

Bloomingdale's property manager oversees maintenance and improvements to community common areas such as entryways, landscaping and irrigation. To report maintenance needs or concerns, contact Al Devney at (813) 684-6667 or bloomingdale.district@verizon.net.



LAURA FRAZIER/Gazette photo

## Latin Flavor

Maritza and Frank Reynoso recently opened Latin Delights Bakery at 4326 Bell Shoals Road next to Beef O'Brady's in the Village Center Plaza. Sweet specialties made fresh daily include guava and cheese turnovers, crème horns and puddings made with rice, bread or coconut custard. Savory selections include Spanish-style meatballs, chicken croquettes, empanadas and pressed Cuban sandwiches. All items are available for individual purchase or large-quantity orders. Hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Information: (813) 653-9767.

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# Stonewood Grill Is Smokin'

By ELTON DUMONT

It has been quite a while since I did a restaurant review for our friends at the Gazette. So by way of apology, I'll tell you all that this review was definitely worth waiting for.

Stonewood Grill and Tavern, at 612 E. Bloomingdale Ave., is right in our backyard. The Brandon location is the latest to open in the chain of 18 restaurants in Florida and North Carolina.

Mrs. Dumont and I had dinner there on a recent Friday night with our good friends from Bloomingdale West, Sandy Wynnwood and Misty Schots.

When you first arrive, you notice that the covered outside waiting area has a marble table and comfortable benches. Diners who waited for a table were treated to samples of a smoked salmon appetizer and red, white and blue chips topped with a warm bleu cheese and balsamic

vinegar reduction.

Our wait was less than a half hour because we took advantage of call-ahead seating, a service that lets guests phone ahead to put their name on the waiting list shortly before they intend to arrive at the restaurant.

After our name was called, on our way to our "tabooth" – half table, half booth – we passed through the bar area. To our right we saw a large semi-circle bar with plenty of stools. To our

left was a walk-in wine closet with glass doors that allow you to view the large wine selection available to compliment your meal.

Chris, our server, told us about some of the specials and said they make their soups, croutons and salad dressing fresh in-house every day. He went on to explain that the cooking is done on an oak grill.

We started off with bruschetta, which was enough for the four of us and was unusual for two reasons. The bread was soft and not crunchy, which added to the wonderful taste. Plus, it was served with a balsamic vinegar reduction which was so good and actually sweet that in addition to spooning it over the bruschetta, I drizzled it on my salad. Whatever else you do, ask for a small portion of this to top off whatever you are ordering.

Three of us ordered a house salad which was served on a chilled plate and had large plum tomatoes, crisp lettuce and big homemade croutons. The sourdough bread we had to ask for was warm and just acceptable, but the homemade salad dressings were very good.

Our entrée selections were quite different. Mrs. Dumont ordered the oak-grilled pork chop with apple chutney, served over garlic mashed potatoes and accompanied by a side of French green beans. She gave it an A-plus.

Misty selected the lemon chardonnay chicken Florentine, two tender breasts of chicken sautéed in a caper-laden citrus chardonnay and served with spinach and fresh grated mozzarella. Her rating was also A-plus.

Sandy chose the scampi shrimp with spinach and pasta, medium-sized tiger shrimp with fresh baby spinach sautéed in a light scampi sauce and tossed with imported linguini. Once again it was a large portion. Sandy raved about it and gave it an A.

I thought long and hard about the Emerald Bay crab cake platter, but decided on

**Stonewood Grill and Tavern**  
612 E. Bloomingdale Ave., Brandon, FL 33511  
(813) 655-9561  
[stonewoodgrill.com](http://stonewoodgrill.com)

Rating based on 5 stars:

**Food**  
☆☆☆☆½

**Service**  
☆☆☆☆½

**Ambience**  
☆☆☆☆½

**Overall**  
☆☆☆☆

*Elton Dumont*

the oak-grilled shrimp and scallop skewer, grilled basted tiger shrimp and cold water scallops, served with a creamy corn risotto and basil cream sauce. The scallops were small but tender, and the shrimp was very good. I increased my rating from a B-plus to an A-minus strictly because the corn risotto was that good.

This time we didn't pass on dessert. Some selections were Key lime pie, cheesecake, chocolate bread pudding and a six-layer Kahlua chocolate mousse cake with sliced strawberries and whipped cream on the side. After choosing the chocolate cake, we were presented with four chilled dessert spoons and immediately dug in. It was once again a terrific selection.

We found the prices to be moderate and not out of line for this level of dining. Appetizers run from \$3.50 for a cup of soup to \$11 for quesadillas, and our bruschetta was \$8. Entrees range from \$12.90 for a chicken pot pie to \$30 for the grilled New York strip. Misty's lemon chardonnay chicken Florentine was \$14.50, and Sandy's scampi with linguini was \$15.50.

Overall, I must say it was a very fine dining experience.

Until we eat again, I remain your humble gastronomical servant—

*Elton Dumont*

## BRANDON Business Expo & "Taste of Brandon"

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# Bulls Name New Head Coach

By LESLIE WHITE

The football program at Bloomingdale Senior High School is undergoing a major renovation and the project manager is stoked. More precisely, he is Stokes – Jason Stokes – recently named head coach of the Bloomingdale Bulls football team.

Formerly the defensive coordinator at Riverview High School, Stokes replaces Corey Brinson, who resigned in November 2007 after the Bulls' last game. Since that time, Stokes has been busy rebuilding the program, which has yet to see a winning season

since the school opened in 1987.

"I believe we're going to have a winning season, not just because I'm blowing smoke, but because we have a good senior class, a strong defense, great coaches and so much energy," said Stokes.

He said key seniors next season are running back Greg LaClair, outside linebacker C.J. Curran, offensive and defensive lineman David Laitetta and free safety Taylor Dunbar, are all on the rise.

Stokes' outlook goes beyond simply building a great coaching staff and strong players. It

See BULLS, Page 20

## Bulls Hold Fundraisers, Seek Service Projects

For more information about Bulls fundraisers, or to suggest a community service project for the team, contact head coach Jason Stokes, (813) 765-2882 or coachstokes51@gmail.com.

May 17

Car wash fundraiser, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Chick-fil-A, 11325 Causeway Blvd.

May 24

Bloomingdale Football Golf Tournament, registration begins at 11:30 a.m. at Bloomingdale Golfers Club, 4113 Great Golfers Place, Valrico. Tournament begins at 1 p.m.



LESLIE WHITE/Gazette photo

Bloomingdale High School head football coach Jason Stokes gears up for his first season with the Bulls.

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**BULLS**

From page 19

extends into building the confidence and character of the boys who share his passion for the game.

"The biggest thing right now is to get them confident. They've been beat up," he said.

The new coach said he wants his players to feel the same passion and competitiveness he feels. He played football for Oxon Hill High School in Maryland, where he was an all-state running back. He then went on to Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, where the team was two time conference champs and he was named All-League Linebacker.

Stokes said his approach is multi-dimensional, incorporating strength and strategy on the field as well as off. He looks for opportunities to serve in the community along with his players, involving the team in service projects that develop discipline, help the recipient and build a strong camaraderie between the players.

"Your football team is your

extended family, and you represent your family, your school and your community when you're on the field," he said.

Stokes said he looks to coaches like the Colts' Tony Dungy and the Miami Hurricanes' Randy Shannon for inspiration in coaching style.

"They offer the full package," he said. "They're about discipline and raising these kids to be good kids."

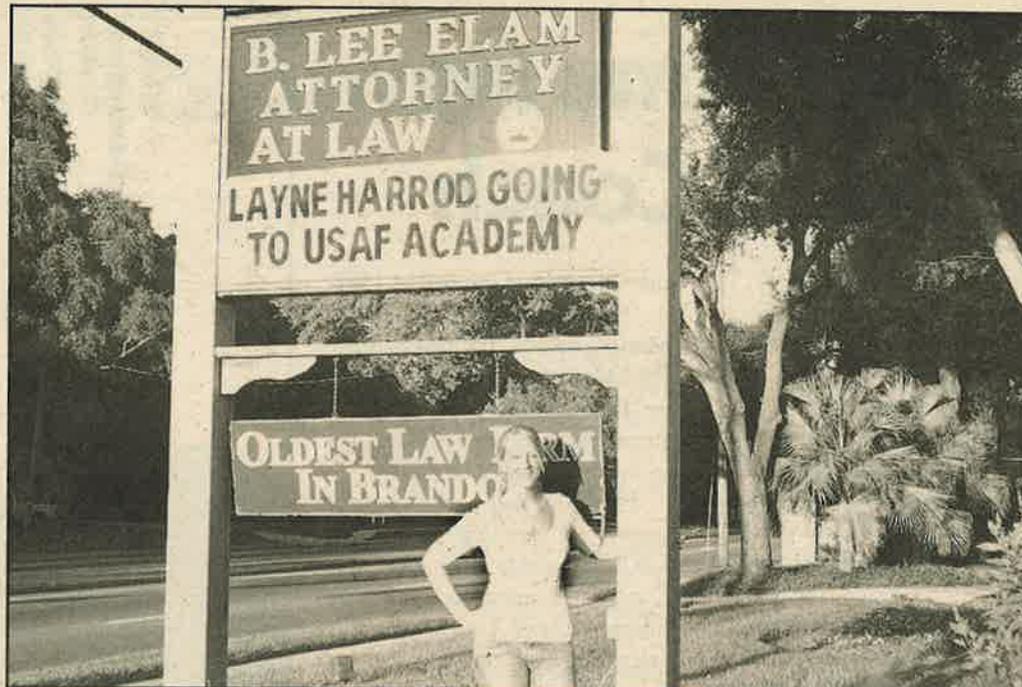
He also believes coaches are more than just coaches.

"You're not just their football coach. You're a mentor, a father figure, a big brother," he said.

Returning players are now training, lifting weights five days a week and playing seven-on-seven throughout the summer, Stokes said, "pushing their mind and body to the limits so they can reach new limits."

Stokes said he stands behind his players, ready to help them get to the next level on the field and in school.

"If they work hard in class and on the field, I'll work my butt off to get them in college," he said.



Harrod family photo

## Aiming High

Bloomington resident Layne Harrod, who will graduate from Bloomington High School this month, poses proudly in front of Brandon attorney B. Lee Elam's marquee sign proclaiming her appointment to attend the U. S. Air Force Academy Prep School in Colorado Springs, Colo.

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1:45 Southern Star Bluegrass Band  
3:45 HEADLINER: Patsy Cline impersonator Carolyn Cline

**Sunday**

9:45 St. Ann's Catholic Church Kids Choir  
10:45 Crossroads Bluegrass Band  
12:15 Billy McKnight  
1:45 Bryan Chris  
3:00 HEADLINER: Kelly Emerson and The Bluegrass Parlor Band

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# Protect Yourself

In the worst case scenario, do whatever it takes to survive - use your keys, hands, feet, teeth and voice as weapons. Be determined that you will survive. But beforehand, consider enrolling in a self-defense class because even

simple tactics can help save your life. And please do more than just glance at the following list of safety tips. Please take the time to review them with every member of your family.

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times, especially when you are alone, at night and in public areas such as parking lots or garages.
- If possible, do not go out alone at night. If you must, let someone know where you are going and bring a cell phone with you.
- Do not talk on the phone while walking in open areas or parking lots. You are distracted and predators look for this type of opportunity to attack.
- When walking to and from your car, have your keys in your hand. If you are near enough to your car, the car alarm can be used to alert others of an emergency. Test your car alarm and see how far away it works.
- Always lock your car doors. Use the keyless lock to turn on the interior lights and check the back seat before opening the door.
- If you have car trouble, get out, raise the hood, get back in, lock the doors and call for help.
- If you believe someone is following you, drive to the nearest public place and blow your horn.
- When walking at night, carry a flashlight, walk briskly and glance around.
- If you jog or ride bikes in the evening, do so with a companion. There is safety in numbers.
- If you receive a call from someone in distress, call 911 immediately.

- Pete Maurer, Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy

# Horrific Attack Stuns Community

By PETE MAURER  
Bloomingdale Community  
Resource Deputy

The community of Bloomingdale was dealt a terrible blow on Thursday, April 24. On an otherwise typically quiet spring evening, a high school student who was simply dropping off books after-hours at Bloomingdale Regional Public Library was sexually assaulted and viciously beaten unconscious.

On April 26, deputies arrested a 16-year old Bloomingdale High School student for the crime. The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office on Monday said DNA test results link the suspect, Kendrick Morris of Clair-Mel City, to the attack at the library and to a rape in Clair-Mel City about a year ago. The victim is not a student at Bloomingdale High, but her identity and the school that she attends are not being released due to the nature of the crime.

There are no words to describe

the pain, suffering, hurt and fear experienced as a result of this brutal attack. The community extends its thoughts and prayers to the victim and her family and friends.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time a crime of this nature has been committed in our area. The circumstances and the locations may vary, but there is always a common thread - a female, alone, at night.

Each and every individual must take steps to proactively prevent these crimes from occurring, because they can and do take place anytime, anywhere. It is now all too clear that our community is no exception.

We don't have to become paranoid about our surroundings, but we must be vigilant and prepared to act for our own protection and the safety of others. Serious crimes can and do happen in an instant. Please make sure everyone in your family is prepared to protect themselves.



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LAW ENFORCEMENT

# Council Acts In Community's Best Interests

By PETE MAURER  
Bloomingdale Community  
Resource Deputy

An organization of neighbors who aim to improve safety and the quality of life in the greater Bloomingdale area is looking for a few good men and women.

Volunteer members of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council, also known as the BACC, are residents of Bloomingdale and the surrounding communities. They work together and with local law enforcement and government agencies and representatives to proactively address at the local level issues such as traffic, vandalism, road improvements and personal safety.

The BACC invites all interested neighbors to attend its next meeting, 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 15. The group meets at the Bloomingdale substation at 4342 Bell Shoals Road on the third Thursday each month. Residents can also stop by the station for information (hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays) or call (813) 635-8040.

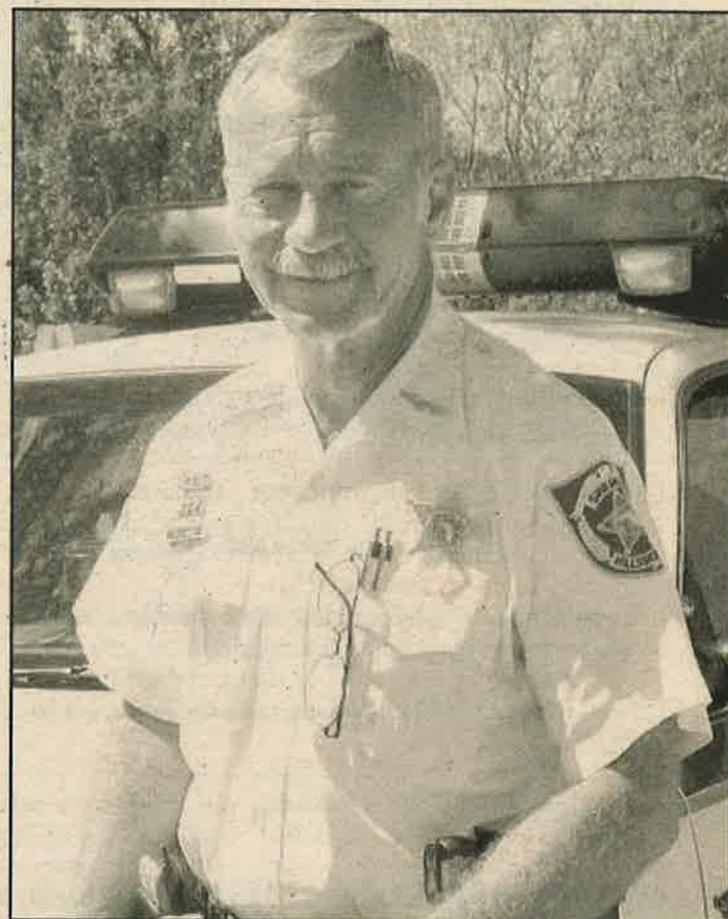
Current items of interest and discussion at BACC meetings are as follows:

### Roads

The widening of Bell Shoals Road will soon start. That means residents must be prepared to make adjustments to their schedules to offset traffic delays. The Boyette Road widening project has met some delays in right-of-way acquisitions. The Bell Shoals Road project includes several traffic safety enhancements including the installation of traffic signals on Bell Shoals near Wal-Mart, the installation of a left-turn lane onto Garnett Drive off Bell Shoals and other improvements at the intersection of Bloomingdale and Bell Shoals.

### Traffic Blitz

Special traffic monitoring activities will continue in the Bloomingdale area. There



Deputy Pete Maurer

have been some complaints about these blitzes, but most of the gripes are from drivers who were stopped for speeding or running red lights. The purpose is simple – to stop and cite drivers who break traffic laws and endanger other drivers and pedestrians. Basically, break the law and you will pay big. Running a traffic light will cost you about \$184.50. That is a lot of gas.

### COP Program

The Sheriff's Office volunteer Citizens Patrol Program, known as COP, was recently launched in Bloomingdale and is becoming very active and successful. With continued growth in our area and the large number of deputies deployed on active duty with the military, this program is a critical addition to the sheriff's patrol programs. We owe many thanks to the Bloomingdale residents who have completed their training and are now patrolling our community.

### Open Garages, Unlocked Cars

One of the biggest problems in our area is residents who actually help criminals by leaving their garage doors open at night or their cars unlocked with valuables inside. These are open invitations to criminals who look for easy targets. Please do not help the bad guys.

### Hurricane Season

Next month is the start of hurricane season. Now is the time for all Bloomingdale residents to make disaster plans for their families, homes and businesses. Experts expect this to be a very active season. Remember the Rule of 72 - be prepared to take care of your family and help your neighbors for at least the first 72 hours following a storm. As we all saw with Hurricane Katrina, it only takes one big storm to change thousands of lives forever. Be prepared, and feel free to stop by the station to pick up a 2008 Hurricane Guide.



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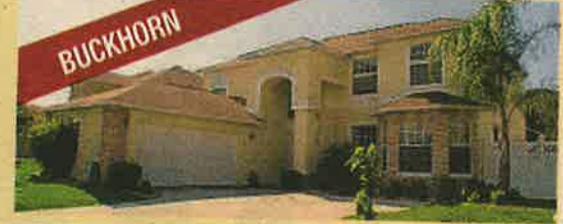
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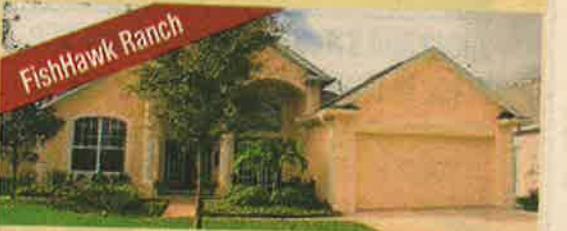


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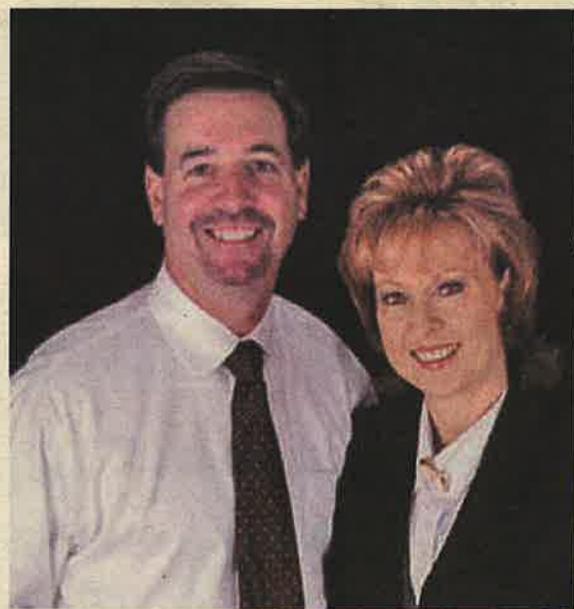
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