

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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FEATURE STORY



Breanna Bautista and Chrisalyn Junkert show off their smiles and crafty hats at Alafia Elementary's Johnny Appleseed celebration.

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BUSINESS

Custom work and a creative staff form the framework of the successful Bloomdale business.

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DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

Among 76 residents participating in the Project Cure Walk in Bloomingdale Oct. 15 are Jane Kelly, left, and Elizabeth O'Malley with children, from left, Diana Bryson, Michael O'Malley, Alec Pickett, Aisling Carr, Richard Carr, Keeley Mattera.

Project Cure Surpasses Goal

GROUP RAISES MORE THAN \$25,000

A Gazette Report

The final steps in the Project Cure journey were taken in Bloomingdale East Oct. 15 as six walkers finished the three-day, 60-mile walk around Natures Way to find a cure for breast cancer.

While Mary Owens, D'Ann White, Ivette Wagner, Lisa Huetteman, Pam Stamey and Amy Meany may have achieved the goal of walking 60 miles, their real focus was on another goal: raising \$25,000 for Project Cure.

They not only met the goal, they surpassed it.

St. Stephen Catholic Church and School teamed up with the Tampa Bay Lightning Foundation to create Project Cure after three mothers at the school died of breast cancer. Proceeds from Project Cure will go to the Don & Erika Wallace Comprehensive Breast Cancer Program at the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, which is doing groundbreaking breast cancer research.

Lightning Foundation director Nancy Crane said in all her years of fundraising, she has never had an indi-

vidual group make this significant a contribution. She said the foundation feels blessed to have teamed with St. Stephen.

But the six core team walkers weren't alone in the effort, emphasized Huetteman.

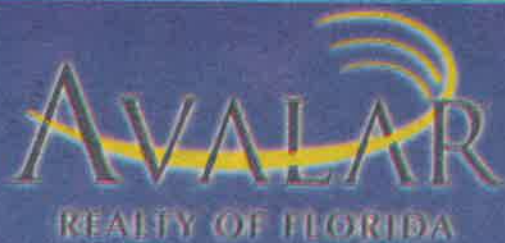
"It was the entire parish and the greater Brandon community coming together that contributed to the success of this new St. Stephen Catholic ministry," she said, noting that the parish plans to make it an annual event.

A total of 76 people walked during the three-day walk and 165 children

See CURE, Page 19

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS • PAGE 4

Bloomingdale Library Bustling With Patrons, Public Programs



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

Bloomingtondale Neighbors Adopt Overgrown, Neglected Pond**COUNTY TO HELP WITH INITIAL CLEANUP**By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

It takes a village to revitalize a pond — or at least a bunch of neighbors willing to pitch in.

A group of about five families whose homes back up to a retention pond in Bloomingtondale are rolling up their sleeves and getting ready to take the Adopt-A-Pond plunge.

The three-acre pond, bordered on one side by homes in Bloomingtondale's Sandy Creek Manors, and on the other side by the Southoak subdivision, has seen better days.

Lisa Pulliam, one of about ten Sandy Creek neighbors with homes that back up to the pond, said the whole neighborhood will be thrilled to see the pond revitalized.

"We were so excited to see the (county workers) out there in a boat spraying about a month ago. We can see a lot of the stuff turning brown and dying off. Hopefully the green slime on top of the pond, duck weed I believe, will clear soon too," Pulliam said.

The neighbors applied and were accepted into Hillsborough County's Adopt-A-Pond program. The program provides county staff and equipment for the initial cleanup of neighborhood ponds that meet its criteria (see sidebar). Ongoing maintenance in and around the pond, however, is ultimately the responsibility of the homeowners who live around it.

Environmental scientist John McGee, coordinator of the Adopt-A-Pond program, said the program exists to teach homeowners how to maintain their neighborhood ponds on a regular basis.



Photos Courtesy of Adopt-A-Pond

Above, this photo from 1994 shows the Bloomingtondale pond after residents cleaned up and revitalized it with the help of Hillsborough County's Adopt-A-Pond program. Below, the pond, shown here in the summer of 2006, was neglected for a number of years and is now overgrown, barren and muck-ridden.



"It is not a one-time fix, but a continual process," McGee said.

"We help groups with an initial restoration, but this is to serve as hands-on training to help residents learn to manage the pond over time, just like

they manage their yard landscapes."

The county will provide the manpower to accomplish the initial restoration of the pond, including brush removal and dredging if necessary. Residents may be asked to pitch in to weed around

the banks of the pond and help pick up any trash in the area. Once the site is cleaned up, the restoration, replanting and learning process will begin.

"We teach the residents about the natural processes in the pond, which plants are beneficial and how to maintain them, how to manage water quality problems, and so on. But it is ultimately the residents who have to take this information to heart and make use of it."

About 12 years ago another group of neighbors sought the assistance of Adopt-A-Pond to clean up the same body of water. In 1994, the pond was cleared and returned to pristine condition. But after a few years, interest waned and resident involvement tapered off. Without regular maintenance, the pond returned to its present slimy green state.

McGee said it can be a challenge for neighbors to maintain a pond, but his office is always there to answer questions and provide information once the initial restoration is done.

"We're not saying it isn't challenging, but this is what it takes to keep a pond looking good. Whether you hire a company or do it yourself, it has to be done or the pond will go fallow."

"It's important for residents to understand that just like they have to mow their lawns and weed their gardens forever, they have to manage and maintain their ponds to keep them from going wild."

An information meeting for all residents interested in helping with the restoration of the Sandy Creek pond is in the planning stages. To inquire about the project (reference Bloomingtondale pond 06-29) call McGee, (813) 307-1785 or E-mail mcgee@hillsborough-county.org.

Adopt-A-Pond Criteria

Not all retention ponds are eligible for acceptance into Hillsborough County's Adopt-A-Pond program. Eligibility criteria includes:

- The pond must be owned by the county or privately owned with one or more drainage easements dedicated to Hillsborough County.
- No wetland or protected conservation areas are allowed in the program.
- Adopt-A-Pond may not be used to satisfy permit conditions for the Southwest Florida Water Management District or any other agency.
- The pond group must submit an Adopt-A-Pond application and demonstrate a commitment to fully participate in the program and maintain their pond.

Access to the pond must be available for county crews and equipment for initial cleanup.

For more information call John McGee, (813) 307-1785, or log on to www.hillsborough.wateratlas.usf.edu/adopt.

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Bloomingtondale Library Bustling With Patrons, Public Programs

EXPANSION PLANS NOT ON THE BOOKS YET

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

It's main function may be to circulate the printed word, but numbers are getting a lot of attention these days at the Bloomingtondale Regional Public Library.

The Friends of the Bloomingtondale Library announced last week the latest count of library card holders, program participants and circulation at the bustling Bloomingtondale Avenue Branch.

Since opening in January 2005, the library has grown to boast the third largest materials circulation in Hillsborough County.

"In the first seven months of this year, 398,000 books and media items circulated through the Bloomingtondale library," said Pat Boody, the branch's Friends of the Library president.

Nearly half the greater Bloomingtondale population — 42.5 percent, Boody said — are library card holders.

Months before its second birthday in January 2006, the popular public facility is experiencing growing pains. Library supporters and patrons say it may be time to set the wheels in motion to expand the building.

Architects designed the 10,000 square foot library to accommodate a future 15,000 square foot expansion. Regional libraries are typically built to an area of at least 25,000 square feet.

More than 300 library-sponsored programs and classes attracted 8,048 participants to the library so far this year. Programs for every age group from infants and toddlers to children, young adults and seniors, fill up quickly, Boody said.

As a result, common caveats included in the promotion of library events are "limited seating available," and "register on the day of the program, no sooner than one hour before the program

Experts On Hand To Help Family Historians

Wondering what's in a name, specifically your family name? "Ask a Genealogist" this month at the Bloomingtondale Regional Public Library.

Volunteers from the Brandon Area Genealogical and Historical Society are available at the library twice each week to help with research in free, one-on-one sessions. The first-come, first-serve program begins at 9 a.m. on Wednesdays Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 and on Fridays Nov. 3, 10 and 17.

On Thursday, Nov. 9 at 1 p.m., volunteers will present an introduction to using military records for genealogical research. Space is very limited for this program; there is a limit of nine participants.

The Brandon Area Genealogical and Historical Society will meet at the library 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 14. All skill levels are welcome at this open meeting. Topics will vary.

For more information, contact Bloomingtondale librarian Julie Beamguard, (813) 635-1641.

for hundreds of Bloomingtondale residents on Election Day.

The branch is also a designated disaster center for Hillsborough County and as such must provide space, shelter, staff and supplies in the event of an emergency.

"These are great uses of the library, but they do impact the staff and the ability of the community to use the space for other purposes," Boody said.

With so many patrons and programs and county functions going on at the branch, staff and volunteers say the two-year-old library is officially bursting at the seams.

The Friends group plans to ask the Hillsborough County Public Library Board and Board of County Commissioners to consider plans to fund and design the library's expansion as soon as possible.

Jacquelyn Zebos, an administrative manager at the Tampa/Hillsborough County Public Library Board, said last week plans and funding to expand the Bloomingtondale library are not officially in the works. But she wouldn't rule out the possibility of an expansion in the near future.

"We have so many requests from neighborhoods across the county who need a library in their area or those with existing libraries who need help accommodating their growing populations," Zebos said.

"It's a good thing when everyone wants a library in their neighborhood or an expansion to meet their needs, but it's a balancing act."

The library board will discuss all requests received at one of its upcoming monthly board meetings. It's a process, Zebos said, that will take some time.

"Bloomingtondale is not yet on our "unfunded" list, and that would be the first step, to get it on paper, in the system and prioritized."

Beginner, Advanced Computer Classes Free At Library

The following computer classes, sponsored by the Friends of the Bloomingtondale Regional Public Library, are offered to adults free of charge. Limited seating is available. Registration is required on the day of the class, no earlier than one hour before the class starts. For more information call Bloomingtondale librarian Julie Beamguard, (813) 635-1641.

Microsoft Movie Maker

Nov. 2, Thursday. Class starts at 9:30 a.m.

Introduction to the Microsoft Movie Maker window layout and how to create, edit and save a video.

Microsoft Excel, Level I

Nov. 6, Monday, and Nov. 9, Thursday. Class starts at 9:30 a.m.

Covers Screens and toolbars, entering data, inserting rows and columns.

Microsoft Excel, Level II

Nov. 6, Monday, and Nov. 9, Thursday. Class starts at 11 a.m.

Calculation functions in cells and error message referring to faulty formulas; previous experience with Excel required.

Mouse Skills

Nov. 8, 15, 22, 29, Wednesdays. Class starts at 9:30 am

Learn how to grip, move and click the buttons on the mouse.

See LIBRARY, Page 6

Your Inside Connections

The Bloomingtondale 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:** Lydia Harrod
Director: Steve Heckel **Director:** Dale Kahn
Director: George May **Director:** Tim Shuman
Director: Myron Magedanz **Director:** Shelia Harris
Director: Stanley Lee

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
Recording Secretary: Michael Buday
Trustee: David Steck

Trustee: Joe Harless
Property Manager: Al Devney

Bloomingtondale Community Security Program

The Bloomingtondale Community Security Program committee meets the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m..

Coordinator/Equipment Manager:

Tony Diolosa, 681-1146
Treasurer: Paul Kelmer
Patrol Member: Steven Heckel
Patrol Member: Brad Scharp
Patrol Member: Paul Warr

Bloomingtondale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132
Phone: 685-2817
E-mail: Bloomingtondale.district@Verizon.net
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



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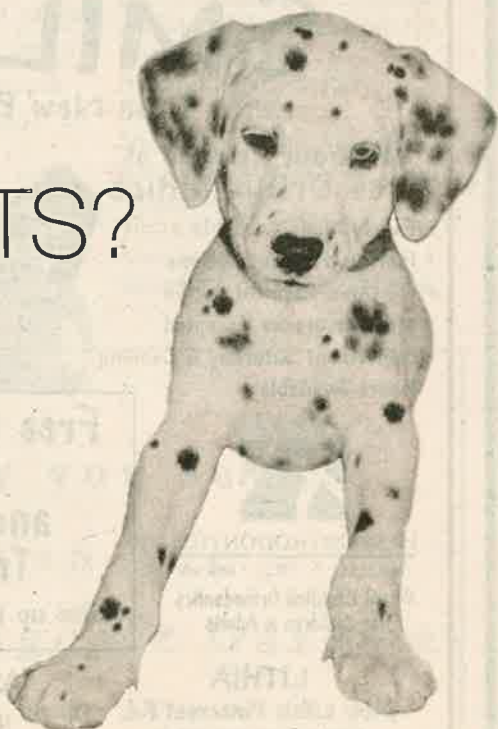
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Library Offers Activities For All Ages

The Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library sponsors a variety of free programs at the library for children, teenagers, adults and families. Offerings run the gamut from book discussions to hobby classes and pure entertainment. For more information contact Bloomingdale librarian Julie Beamguard, (813) 635-1641.

Battle of the Books Discussion

Calling all fourth graders! Prepare for the annual Battle of the Books by participating in a discussion of *Attack of the Tagger* written by Wendelin Van Draanen at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 16. Copies of *Attack of the Tagger* are available at the library.

Magician Doug Capen

Join magician Doug Capen as he delights children of all ages with his sleight of hand tricks and bal-

loon art at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 15.

Drama Sports For Teens

Join other teens ages 14-17 as you use your creativity, build confidence and have fun while participating in a variety of theatre improvisations and games at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 9.

Scrapbooking For Teens

Join other teens ages 12-18 as you create a short story card for your scrapbook memories at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 16. Please bring three 4"x6" photos.

Teen "Bored" Games

Teens ages 12-18, join us for board games and enjoy snacks at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 30. Bring your favorite board game or

choose from our games.

Digital Camera Class For Adults

Join Peggy and Darry Eggleston in the first of a three-part series as they share their experiences using digital cameras at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 15. Learn what features to look for when purchasing a camera and how to get more value from your camera.

Book Discussion For Adults

The *Red Tent*, by Anita Diamant, is the topic of discussion at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 8. The *Red Tent* tells the little-known Biblical story of Dinah, daughter of patriarch Jacob and his wife, Leah. The author fleshes out the brief story of Dinah, found in the Book of Genesis, through an imaginative retelling from her fresh perspective. Copies of the book are available to check out.

LIBRARY

Continued From Page 4

Keyboard Skills

Nov. 8, 29, Wednesdays. Class starts at 11 a.m. Learn to use the computer keyboard.

Microsoft Word, Level I

Nov. 13, Monday, and Nov. 16, Thursday. Class starts at 9:30 a.m.

An overview of screen layout, toolbars, opening, creating and saving documents.

Microsoft Word, Level II

Nov. 13, Monday, and Nov. 16, Thursday. Class starts at 11 a.m.

Covers standard toolbar and correcting mistakes.

Microsoft Publisher, Level I

Nov. 20, Monday. Classes start at 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

An introduction to window layout, toolbars, creating new documents and inserting text and picture frames.

Microsoft PowerPoint, Level I

Nov. 27, Monday, and Nov. 30, Thursday. Class starts at 9:30 a.m.

Use software wizard to create a presentation. Basic mouse and keyboarding skills required.

Microsoft PowerPoint, Level II

Nov. 27, Monday, and Nov. 30, Thursday. Class starts at 11 a.m.

Learn to edit text and add clip art to presentations. Previous experience with PowerPoint is required.

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A Gazette Report

For minute-to-minute General Election results Nov. 7, log on to www.vote-hillsborough.org or tune in to HTV-22.

The Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections Web site offers real-time local, state-wide and national elec-

tion results. The site is updated as each polling place closes and submits their tally.

Live cable-TV coverage will begin on HTV-22 at 8 p.m. Tuesday night and will continue until the last vote is counted. News about local races and issues important to Hillsborough County residents will be incorporated into the broadcast. The station will also produce a live Webcast at www.htv22.org.

Vote Early At Bloomingdale Library Through Nov. 4

Voters registered on or before Oct. 10, 2006 are eligible to vote in the Nov. 7 General Election and can cast their votes early through Saturday, Nov. 4 at 16 public libraries in Hillsborough County, including the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library. Early voting hours at the library are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Early voting is

also offered at the Supervisor of Elections Office, County Center, Tampa City Hall and the Robert L. Gilder Elections Service Center on Falkenberg Road.

For more information and other early voting locations, log on to www.vote-hillsborough.org or call (813) 272-5850.

See Sample Ballot, Locate Polling Place Online

To find your assigned polling place or view a sample ballot for the Nov. 7 General Election, log on to

www.votehillsborough.org or call the Supervisor of Elections office, (813) 272-5850.

BHA Thanks Scholarship Supporters

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. would like to thank the following residents who, along with their 2006 BHA membership dues contribution, made a donation to the B. J. Stelter Bloomingdale Community Scholarship fund. For more information about the scholarship, log on to www.bloomingtondalegazette.com or call (813) 681-2051.

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GROUP ASKS FOR LIGHTS, VOLLEYBALL SURFACE

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

A group of Bloomingdale neighbors have become regular fixtures a few nights a week at Bloomingdale East Park on Natures Way.

While the men and teenagers in the group dig in to a lively game of volleyball on a makeshift grass court, the youngest children in the group amuse themselves on the playground equipment. The 'tweens play basketball or knock around on the tennis courts, while their mothers keep an eye on everyone and get a little exercise walking around the perimeter of the park.

It might be a picture-perfect evening in the neighborhood, but you'd have a hard time seeing the picture after sunset.

Because there are no lights installed at the county-owned park, the group is often forced to play in the dark or call off their volleyball games and



DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

At Bloomingdale East Park last week, Lindsey Tillbrook smashes the ball over the net during a game with neighbors Rubin Vattamakal, Baby Sebastian, Joe Joseph, Joy Ayallore, Shaju Ouseph and Tommy Vattamakal. The group would like to see a permanent volleyball court and lights installed at the park.

power-walks long before everyone is ready to go home.

Cambridge Cove resident Jolly Mathew said the installation of lights at the park would be an asset to the entire com-

munity.

"At times over the past ten years, I have witnessed some undesirable activity around the park. That has all been stopped because of increased usage of

the park on a regular basis. The park is being used by more families now than ever before," he said.

Lights would further improve safety and security

conditions at the park, Mathew said.

The group recently approached parks department

See VOLLEYBALL, Page 21

All Aboard!

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Group Supports Wounded Soldiers, Families

OPERATION HELPING HANDS

By IRENE BUGGY
Bloomingtondale Resident

Each Nov. 11 our country pays homage to Americans who have served in the armed forces. Our veterans deserve to be remembered not only on this day but all throughout the year. One local organization is doing just that.

Bloomingtondale resident Dick Siegman, Ret. Lt. Col., recently invited me to a dinner held at the VA hospital in Tampa. The event was hosted by Operation Helping Hands, an organization of retired military officers whose mission is to honor and serve wounded service members recovering at the hospital.

Each month, the group hosts a dinner for these brave men and women and their families. Many of the wounded-service members have been at the VA hospital for over six months, some for as long as a year. They all come together for a couple of hours each month as one big, happy family.

About two years ago, the group of retired officers who formed Operation Helping Hands agreed that although the VA hospital was doing its best to take care of service members wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan — as well as their spouses and children — there were also parents of the wounded who were coming to the hospital to be with their sons



Photo Courtesy Operation Helping Hands

Bloomingtondale residents Dick Siegman and Bob Sawallesh are founding members of Operation Helping Hands, an organization that supports injured soldiers and their families recovering at the VA hospital in Tampa.

and daughters. The group realized the extended family members also needed some TLC, and they set out to provide it.

At the monthly family-support dinners, patients' families receive love and admiration from the community in many forms. They are presented with gift bags filled with gas coupons, prepaid phone cards, movie tickets and supermarket gift cards. One local florist

provides lovely bouquets each month for all of the wives, mothers and sisters. Then there is the food, and lots of it, all donated from local businesses. The dinner I attended was hosted by the Tampa Antique Car Club.

At the dinner, Bloomingtondale resident Bob Sawallesh, Ret. LTC, addressed the group.

"Bottom line is we are here to help

you for whatever you need," Sawallesh said.

Two checks were written on the spot that evening. One was for the sister of a wounded soldier. She had to travel back home to drive the family car to Tampa so they would have transportation here. Another donation was given to a soldier who was being released from the hospital after 14 months. The man's father, Yves Clavier, expressed his thanks to the group.

"We have enjoyed the food and fellowship for 14 months. We want to thank you for your support. It has meant everything to us. Operation Helping Hands was created for you heroes. God bless you, we'll miss you."

David Lefavor, retired Navy chaplain, said, "I see my son's face in all of the guys who come to our dinners each month." His son has been serving in the military for 18 years and has also been wounded in Iraq.

Operation Helping Hands needs the support of our community in order to continue its magnificent work. If you, your business or organization would like to help, please contact Robert Silah, (813) 963-1854, or Robert Sawallesh, (813) 654-3900. If you would like to make a monetary donation, mail checks to: MOAA Operation Helping Hand, P.O. Box 6383, MacDill AFB, FL 33608-0383.

Notarize Service, More Offered At Community Office

RECYCLE INK CARTRIDGES, PHONES

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingtondale Community Office, in the strip center behind SunTrust Bank and the Citgo service station at 3509 Bell Shoals Road, offers a number of services to Bloomingtondale residents.

The office is staffed part-time, Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to noon.

Services include free information about the Bloomingtondale community, Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association and Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District. The office also provides residents with free copies of neighborhood deed restrictions, along with referrals to county and government agencies and programs.

Notary services are available for a small fee during office hours or after-hours by appointment. Fees per docu-

ment are \$2 for BHA dues-paying members, \$5 for non-members and \$8 for the general public. For after-hours notary service, call office manager Derry Wilson, (813) 546-5639.

In addition, old cell phones and computer ink-jet cartridges can be dropped off at the

office. A Smart Choice of Florida collects the phones and cartridges and donates a portion of the profits it receives to Bloomingtondale area schools.

For more information call (813) 681-2051 or e-mail bloomingtondale.homeowners@verizon.net.

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DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

Survivor "Aunt T" Inspires Niece To Think Pink

Nine-year-old Lindsey Hauer, standing in back, joined by her friend Taylor, at left, cousin Haley, at right, and aunt Tammy Woodhall, set up shop on Culbreath Road Oct. 21 to sell pink lemonade and lollipops to benefit the Susan B. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. The Cimino Elementary School student was inspired to help the cause by Woodhall, her "Aunt T," a breast cancer survivor.

Committees Focus On BHA Interests, Services

MORE NEIGHBORS NEEDED TO HELP

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association uses a committee-based approach to help its volunteers focus on 18 unique areas of interest and services.

Association president Ted Grable and vice president Joe Hickle oversee four committee groups: Association Services, Community Services, Neighborhood Improvement and Government Services.

More neighbors are needed to help accomplish the goals set forth by each committee. Residents who wish to participate in committee projects are not required to hold a seat on the BHA board.

For more information log on to www.bloomingtongazette.com, call (813) 681-2051 or E-mail info@bloomingtongazette.com.

See BHA, Page 15

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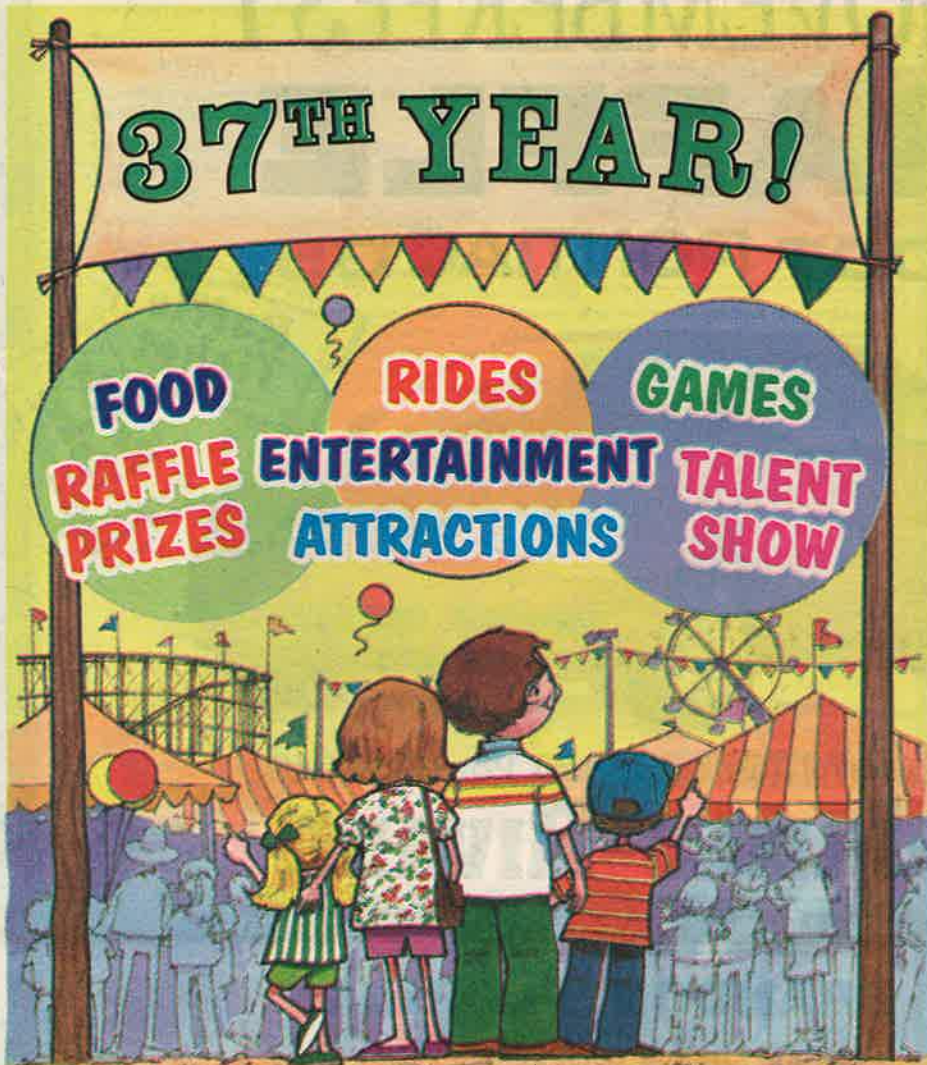
NATIVITY NEWS

NOVEMBERFEST 2006

Don't Miss This Year's Fun And Excitement!

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 8TH THRU SUNDAY NOVEMBER 12TH

Armbands Available Everyday!



TO BE HELD ON THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS OF
Nativity Catholic Church

Located on S.R. 60 (Brandon Blvd.) & Bryan Road in East Brandon

See you at Novemberfest!

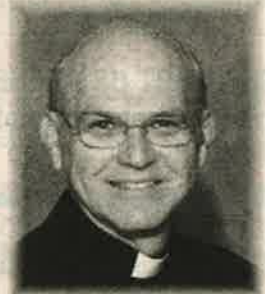
Dear Friends,

Nativity Catholic Church is a year round caring family where stewardship and hospitality are hallmarks of our parish. During Novemberfest, it will be our joy to welcome your family to ours.

This is our 37th year hosting this great community event where families and friends from all over the Tampa Bay area enjoy five days of festival fun. Please come out and sample our delicious foods, enjoy great entertainment, and ride your favorite carnival rides.

Perhaps, you will have the opportunity to meet and greet your neighbors, friends and old classmates.

I look forward to seeing you at Novemberfest!



Fr. Proulx

Father Arthur J. Proulx
Pastor

Festival Hours Announced

- Wednesday 4 pm - 11pm
- Thursday 4 pm - 11pm
- Friday 4 pm - Midnight
- Saturday Noon - 11pm
- Sunday Noon - 6 pm

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RIDES and ATTRACTIONS

Rides include the Power Surge, Drop Zone, Ring of Fire and much more!

We also feature our own Kiddie Land of entertainment, rides and amusements in a special area, featuring China Dragon, Speedway, Raiders, Rockin' Tug, Titanic and Bear-a-Fair. All rides and attractions are subject to change.

Armbands for unlimited rides are \$22 and are available on the carnival grounds.

Ride Tickets are \$1 each or a Family Pack of 22 for \$20.

EVENT SCHEDULE

Wednesday, November 8th

- 4:00 First Raffle Drawing
- 5:00 Raffle
- 5:05 In Step
- 6:00 Raffle
- 6:05 Joy Rodgers Music
- 7:00 Raffle
- 7:05 Official Opening
- 7:15 Nativity Catholic School Twirlers
- 8:05 Nativity's Life Teen Band
- 9:00 Raffle
- 9:05 Nativity's Life Teen Band Continues

Thursday, November 9th

- 4:00 Raffle
- 5:00 Raffle
- 5:05 Riverview High School Barber Shop Quartet
- 6:00 Raffle
- 6:05 Center Stage Performing Arts
- 7:00 Raffle

- 7:05 Music Showcase
- 8:00 Raffle
- 8:05 Riverview Idol Winner
- 9:00 Raffle
- 9:05 Band "Starecase"

Friday, November 10th

- 4:00 Raffle
- 4:05 Joshua Center for the Arts
- 5:00 Raffle
- 5:05 Center Stage Performing Arts
- 6:00 Raffle
- 6:05 TADA
- 7:00 Raffle
- 7:05 Shirley's School of Dance
- 8:00 Raffle
- 8:05 Brandon School of Dance Arts
- 9:00 Raffle
- 9:05 Main Tent - "Mike Harville & Sophia"
- 9:05 Beer Tent - Band "Crystal Blue"

Saturday, November 11th

- 11:00 Baby Contest Registration Begins
- 11:55 Baby Contest Registration Ends
- 12:00 Raffle
- 12:05 Baby Contest begins
- 1:00 Raffle
- 1:05 Baby Contest Continues
- 2:00 Raffle
- 2:05 Baby Contest Continues
- 2:30 Music Showcase
- 3:00 Raffle
- 3:05 Katrina's School of Dance
- 4:00 Raffle
- 4:05 Kim Hall's School of Dance
- 5:00 Raffle
- 5:05 Earl Harris Karate Studio
- 6:00 Raffle
- 6:05 Judy's Dance Academy
- 7:00 Raffle
- 7:05 Let's Twirl Baton Twirlers

- 8:00 Raffle
- 8:05 Let's Twirl Continues
- 9:00 Raffle
- 9:05 Main Tent - Band "Skywire Project"
- 9:05 Beer Tent - Band "Crystal Blue"

Sunday, November 12th

- 11:00 Talent Show Registration Begins
- 11:55 Talent Show Registration Ends
- 12:00 Raffle
- 12:05 Talent Show Begins
- 1:00 Raffle
- 1:05 Talent Show Continues
- 2:00 Raffle
- 2:05 Joshua Center for the Arts
- 2:30 Mosaic Center
- 3:00 Raffle
- 3:05 Music Showcase
- 4:00 BIG TICKET RAFFLE begins
- 5:00 Raffle Drawing for Car

Enter To Win 4 Tickets To See



Saturday, November 18th
St. Pete Times Forum

Courtesy of The Tampa Tribune

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN
Drop your entry form off at the Raffle Table located under the "Big Top" tent.

Nativity Catholic School Alumni Family Day

Sunday, November 12
Under the "Big Top" Tent
1pm - 5pm

- Come see all your old school friends
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Car Raffle to be held Sunday, November 12th at 5pm.

Need not be present to win. The vehicles shown in this ad are for illustration purposes only. They do not represent the actual vehicles.

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There are Raffle Drawings Each Hour during Novemberfest for More Great Prizes!

NOVEMBERFEST

is sponsored by Nativity Catholic Church as the major fundraiser for Nativity Catholic School and Parish Religious Education Programs. Nativity Catholic School is a non-profit, self-funded parochial school with classes ranging from early Childhood (3 years old) through 8th Grade. The School and Religious Education Programs, combined, serve over 1,500 students from its parish of 5,000 families.

Nativity Catholic School practices an open admission policy; namely, no person on the grounds of race, color, national or ethnic origin is discriminated against in admission or in receiving services in our school. Any child is admitted based upon the ability of Nativity Catholic School to provide services for the individual child.

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BATTLE OF THE BABIES

Event begins 12:00 noon **Saturday, Nov. 11th** under the Big Top. Registration is from 11:00-11:55am.



EVENT #1

THE CHASE Diaper Derby

- ▲ Babies will "chase" in three age categories:
 1. 6-8 months
 2. 9-11 months
 3. 12-18 months
- ▲ One adult must stay behind the Starting Line to direct their child while a second adult waits for their child in the Victory Zone.
- ▲ Adults are not allowed over the lines at either end at any time.
- ▲ Each child must crawl from the Starting Line to the Victory Zone on their own initiative.
- ▲ Each child must crawl. If a child begins to walk, they will be returned to the starting line to begin again.
- ▲ Each age group may be broken up into several different heats, depending on the amount of participants.

EVENT #2

NOVEMBERFEST 2006 KING & QUEEN Beauty Contest

- ▲ The children will be judged in four age categories:
 1. Birth-5 months
 2. 6-11 months
 3. 12-17 months
 4. 18-24 months
- ▲ A Prince and Princess will be crowned in each category.
- ▲ Participating children will be judged strictly on their own merits. Clothing will not be judged.
- ▲ No cosmetics are allowed.

The four final Princes and Princesses from each category will compete for the titles of Novemberfest 2006 King and Queen.

OFFICIAL RULES

1. All participants must be born after November 9, 2004. 2. Children may enter as many categories as desired but only once per category. 3. Each category will be judged by a panel of 4 judges whose decisions are final. 4. All participants must be on time for registration and each event. Registration ends promptly at 11:55am. 5. Each participant will receive a ribbon. Winners will receive a trophy and prizes.



NOVEMBERFEST ANNUAL TALENT SHOW

Sunday, November 12th

Nativity Novemberfest will host its Annual Talent Show under the Big Tent. Registration begins at 11:00am in the Big Tent near the stage. Registration ends at 11:55 (Entry is free). Everyone must register. Entries are limited to the first 100. Trophies will be awarded in each division. There will be adult and children's divisions. Categories: Dance, Vocal, Drama, Baton, Gymnastics, Piano, Musical Instruments, etc. If you have a talent you are welcome to participate.

Questions? Contact June Bryan at 653-2199.

A Festival of Food Under The Big Top!

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Check out the great food in one of the many booths under the Big Top!

Novemberfest Favorites

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- Mexican Pizzas, Nachos & Quesadillas
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- Back By Popular Demand
- Kids Value Meals
- Dippin Dots

Hamburger Booth:
Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Corn Dogs, French Fries

BBQ Booth:
BBQ Beef & BBQ Pork Sandwiches, BBQ Platter

Low Country Boil:
Boiled Shrimp, Shrimp Caesar Salad

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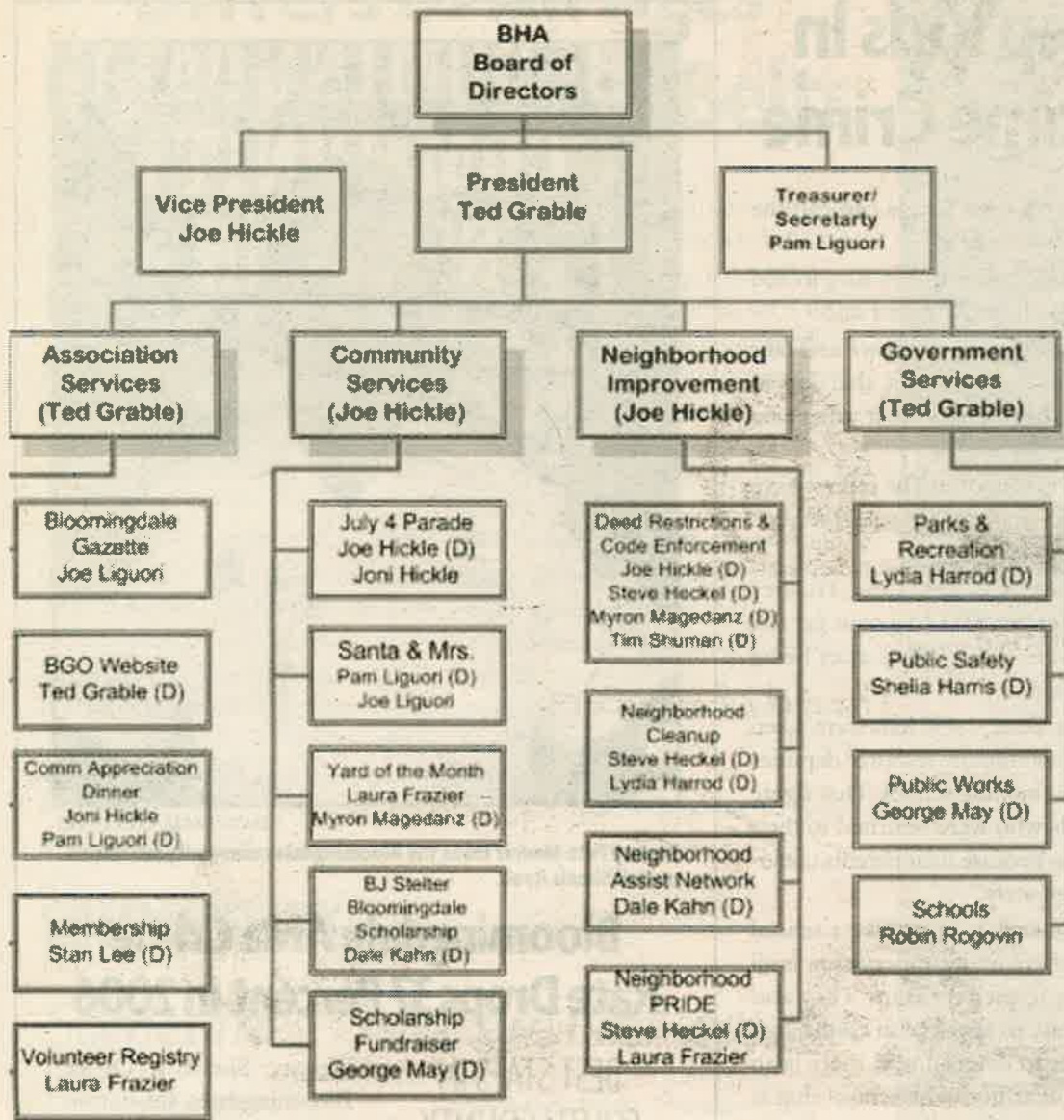
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Bloomingtondale Homeowner's Association, Inc.

Committee Organization



(D) = BHA Director
September 21, 2006

BHA

Continued From Page 10

BHA Committee Mission Statements

Abridged Version

The Bloomingtondale Gazette

The Gazette committee is charged with providing a quality monthly publication to present pertinent and timely information to the residents of Bloomingtondale and surrounding communities. The committee enlists the services of an editor and various reporters and photographers to gather publication content.

Bloomingtondale Gazette Web Site

The committee is responsible for operating the official BHA web site, at www.bloomingtondalegazette.com. The site provides useful information about Bloomingtondale and the BHA. It also provides information on the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District, local and state government services, schools and community contacts. A confidential E-mail registry on the site allows residents to sign up for "BHA News Alerts." The committee enlists the services of a Web site provider, administrator and content editor.

BHA Membership

The committee is responsible for the BHA's annual membership drive. It updates notice letters and mailing lists, and prints, assembles and mails notices to residents. The committee records and deposits membership dues payments and provides the BHA board with timely financial reports.

Volunteer Registry

The committee solicits, coordinates and corresponds with volunteers needed to assist with BHA projects, programs and events.

Fourth of July Parade

The committee represents the Bloomingtondale community in the annual Greater Brandon Fourth of July Parade. It enters a caravan or float decorated in national colors and invites residents to ride in the parade.

Santa and Mrs. Claus

Santa and Mrs. Claus visit Bloomingtondale one Saturday each December to give Bloomingtondale residents of all ages an opportunity to talk with Santa, have their picture taken and receive a small gift courtesy of the BHA. In exchange for the free visit, Santa and Mrs. Claus request a donation of non-per-

See BHA, Page 20

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Program Designed To Keep Kids In School Also Reduces Daytime Crime

1,450 TRUANTS PICKED UP LAST YEAR

By DAWN ZAMANIS
Correspondent

The success of a program implemented by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to cut down on truancy is twofold: the program helps keep kids in school and also reduces the number of daytime crimes.

A few years ago, a group of community resource deputies began patrolling their respective areas in southeastern Hillsborough County in search of truants. They discovered some kids were doing more than just cutting class or ditching school altogether.

The deputies discovered teenagers skipping school were breaking into people's homes and stealing their neighbors' cars.

Bloomingtondale's community resource deputy, Pete Maurer, is among the deputies active in the truancy program.

Since the program went into effect, Maurer said, "Daytime crimes have decreased considerably. We've had far fewer burglaries and auto thefts."

Maurer credits the program and the resource deputies involved for their hard work in locating and picking up truants, and keeping them off the streets so daytime crimes are controlled.

"It is a very viable program, more successful than we had anticipated."

The sheriff's office relies on residents and business owners in the community to help ensure the continued success of the truancy program. Children under 16 years old are required by law to attend school.

"If you observe school-aged children off campus, we want to hear from you," Maurer said. "Even if you are not sure, call it in anyway."

First and foremost, Maurer said, parents must ensure their children go to school. Those with

difficult situations on their hands can call the sheriff's office for assistance.

"We want parents to call us if they have a child that refuses to go to school," Maurer said.

"We will come out to their residence and take further steps if necessary to get that kid in school. We want to help. That's what we're here for."

"A child belongs in school and he cannot have control over whether or not he wants to be there. It's the law."

Deputy E.T. Ford, who heads the Truancy Intake Center in Tampa, said he's seen far too many kids brought in to his office after being picked up by deputies.

"Last school year alone, 1,450 kids were taken to our facility after community resource deputies picked them up for skipping school. That figure doesn't include kids who were returned to their school or sent home because their parents couldn't be located immediately."

The center, Ford said, is much like a school setting. Kids wait there under supervision until their parents arrive to pick them up. They also have the opportunity to speak with counselors and a social worker to determine if there is an underlying problem at home or school that is causing the kids to miss school.

Most truants brought to the center are teenagers, but the facility accepts kids as young as 6 years old.

Maurer credits the loyal and dedicated work of the following community resource deputies for their dedication and success in the truancy program: Dep. Janet Hill, Dep. Phil Merkle, Dep. Ralph Graulau, Dep. Harold Hoskins, Dep. Cliff Fletcher, Dep. Chris Gerard, Dep. Robert Thornton, and Dep. Carlo Spano.

To report kids who may be skipping school, call the sheriff's office, (813) 247-8200.



DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

Deputy Pete Maurer mans the Bloomingtondale community substation on Bell Shoals Road.

Bloomingtondale Area Crime Rate Drops 37 Percent In 2006

BEST STATS IN SOUTH COUNTY

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in September recognized the greater Bloomingtondale area as having the greatest annual local crime rate drop — down 37 percent in August 2006, compared to 2005.

Bloomingtondale had the biggest drop in the number of reported crimes out of fifteen areas in southeastern Hillsborough served by community resource deputies.

Deputy Pete Maurer mans the Hillsborough

County Sheriff's Office Bloomingtondale substation on Bell Shoals Road.

The substation serves the Bloomingtondale community and neighboring areas from Bloomingtondale Avenue south to the Alafia River, between Lithia-Pinecrest Road on the east and John Moore Road on the west.

Maurer gave credit to local residents who communicate with the sheriff's office and Bloomingtondale Area Community Council about safety and security concerns.

"The key is communication. We'd like to thank the Bloomingtondale community

See CRIME, Page 22

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B L O O M I N G D A L E L A W E N F O R C E M E N T

Drivers of All Ages Urged To Use Seat Belts

BUCKLE UP AND LIVE

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
Bloomingtondale Community Resource Deputy

Residents of the Bloomingtondale community and other surrounding areas are still recovering from the tragic deaths of several teenagers who died needlessly in recent auto accidents.

I'm not saying "needlessly" to be cold, but to try to get across a very important fact — the decisions each of us make every moment of every day can and do determine whether or not we get to live another day.

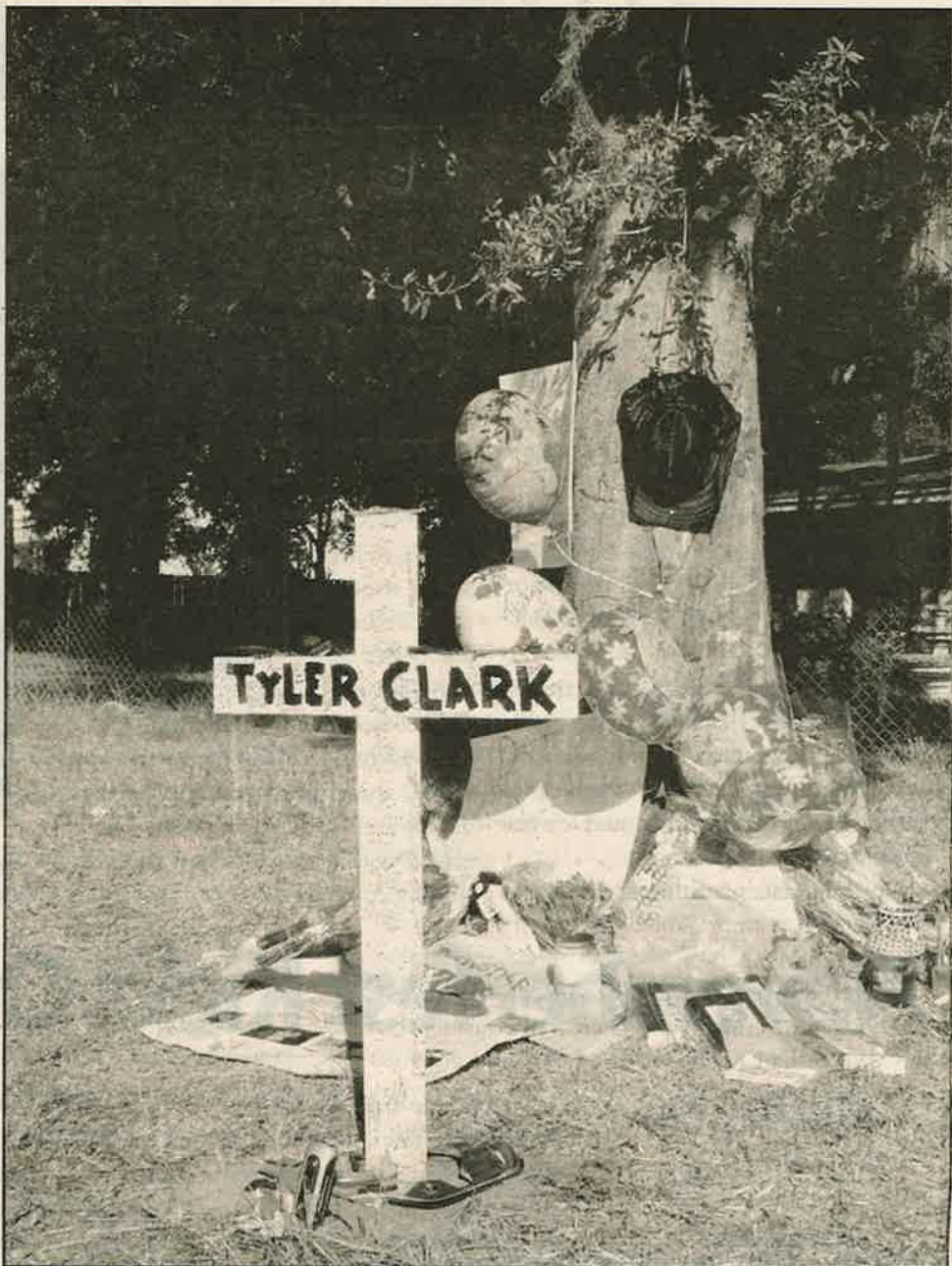
One of these very critical decisions is whether or not to wear our seat belts and to make sure our passengers do the same.

It's a very serious decision and, especially for our teens, it's the development of a lifelong habit. Once it becomes a natural habit, we'll do it automatically, just like hundreds of other things we do to protect ourselves from injury or death.

I have no magic answer on how to get every driver and passenger to buckle up. It comes down to each one deciding how important it is to keep themselves from getting seriously injured or dying.

I wonder, if each of us were asked by a recording each time we got into our cars, "Do you want to live? Then buckle your seat belt!" Would you buckle up then?

Yes, it is just that simple, so please just do it — buckle up and live!



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Friends and family members of Bloomingtondale High School student Tyler Clark placed a memorial at the accident scene on Bloomingtondale Avenue where the 17-year old died last month. Police said Clark was at the wheel of a Jeep Wrangler packed with seven teenage passengers when the vehicle clipped a curb, flipped and slammed into an oak tree in front of The Green Boutique. The major contributing factor to the accident, police said, was a distracted driver. Neither Clark nor his passengers (who survived the crash, some with very serious injuries) were wearing a seatbelt. The accident is still under investigation.

COMMENTARY

Sometimes There Are No Reasons

By D'ANN WHITE

It took a minute for me to connect the photo of the fresh-faced teen in the newspaper with the kid I'd chat with on my evening walks through the neighborhood.

When reality hit, I walked out my front door hoping I was wrong, hoping to see Tyler and the other neigh-

borhood teens skateboarding as usual on our sparsely traveled Bloomingtondale East street.

Instead, the street was eerily deserted. There was the usual collection of cars and trucks parked in front of the teens' houses but now the rear windows were painted with

See COMMENT, Page 23

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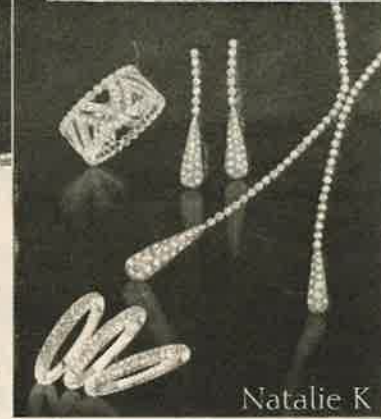
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Alafia Students Celebrate All Things Apple

STUDIES, FUN COMBINED

By AMY DREYER
Alafia Elementary School PTA Member

First-grade students at Alafia Elementary celebrated Johnny Appleseed's birthday Sept. 26 with all things apple.

Teacher Tammie Seifter said the celebration was the culmination of a special themed curriculum.

"The kids have been learning about apples and science in social studies all month long. We also studied the life of Johnny Appleseed and his accomplishments."

Tasty treats served at the party included freshly-sliced apples with chocolate and caramel dipping sauces, homemade apple bread, apple pie, apple butter, applesauce and sweet apple crisp.

Much has been written about John-

ny Appleseed over the years. John Chapman, his real name, was born in 1774 in Massachusetts. He moved to the wilds of Ohio and Kentucky, then unsettled by the colonists, and planted apple trees from seeds he carried from the east coast. He is said to have gleaned the seeds from the apple-cider process, taking them with him to the Ohio Valley.

Seifter said, "As the stories about the man have been told and retold over the years, some of the facts have gotten fuzzy at times and turned into tall tales, for better story-telling. The teachers also discussed with the children the difference between facts and legends."

In addition to tasting all the apple treats, students played apple-themed games and made apple crafts. The day ended with a movie about the life of Johnny Appleseed.



Breanna Bautista and Chrisalyn Junkert show off their smiles and crafty hats at Alafia Elementary's Johnny Appleseed celebration.

Photo Courtesy of Lynda Ratliff

Novemberfest Kicks Off Wednesday, Nov. 8

ARMBANDS ON SALE TIL NOV. 6

A Gazette Report

The 37th annual Nativity Catholic School Novemberfest kicks off Wednesday, Nov. 8 and runs through Sunday, Nov. 12.

The family-friendly festival draws more than 100,000 visitors each year. It is recognized as the third largest social event in Hillsborough County after the Florida State Fair and Florida Strawberry Festival. It is the main fundraiser for the school and parish religious education programs.

"Novemberfest is a tradition in the Brandon community," said Ernie Garateix, festival chairman. "It's an opportunity to meet up with old friends, make new ones and have a great and safe time doing so."

The annual event features live entertainment, food, games and raffles and a full midway of

rides for everyone, from toddlers to true thrill-seekers.

The festival is held on the church grounds at 705 E. Brandon Blvd., at the southeast corner of Bryan Rd and S.R. 60.

Nativity school students will sell "unlimited rides" armbands in advance for \$16 until November 6. After that date,

armbands can only be purchased on the carnival grounds for \$22. Individual ride tickets and food tickets will be sold at the festival. Parking and admission are free. Security staff will be on-site 24-hours a day throughout the event.

Information: (813) 571-9397.

Talented Couple Jazzed Up Alafia Festival

Bob and George Miller, better known as Banjo Bob and Jazz Time George, entertained Alafia Elementary students at the school's fall festival Oct. 21. The Millers, who live in Volusia County, bring their traveling "Humorous Sing-A-Long Entertainment" act to schools, nursing homes and AARP chapters across the state. "It's a happy, toe-tapping kind of music," they said. The couple has been married for 51 years. Info: (386) 740-7531.



DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

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BLOOMINGDALE BUSINESS

Extreme Makeover Underway At Village Center

NEW OWNERS, NEW LOOK

By DAWN ZAMANIS
Correspondent

With new owners on board, the Village Center in Bloomingdale is getting an extreme makeover.

Co-owners Howard Hunter, veterinarian Sharon Hunter, J.J. Massaro, Sean Mellody and Jim Mellody Jr. are working fast to complete the renovations before the holidays arrive.

Store owners and patrons alike say they're pleased with the changes to the 20-year-old shopping center, at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenhaven Drive.

Work has been under way since September including the replacement of the center's wood shake roofing. The exterior of all the buildings in the plaza have a new coat of stucco and fresh paint. The parking lot is also being expanded.

"The new roof is made of metal and will last at least about eight years," Howard Hunter said.

The center is home to a number of longtime tenants including Beef O'Brady's and the Bloomingdale Community Sheriff's Substation.

"It's been over twenty years since any major repairs have been done to the Village Center," said Bloomingdale Deputy Pete Maurer. "It's a great project and we are very content with the new owners' plans. It is definitely long overdue. The Village Center is a highly visible location and thanks to the new owners, this place will be a showcase rather than an eyesore."

Noah's Ark Animal Hospital, the busy veterinary clinic owned and run by Dr. Hunter, will gain much-needed space. The expansion will increase the current exam room to about three times its original size. The hospital room will be expanded as well. The extra space will make working conditions more suitable for additional staff Hunter hopes to hire.

J.J. Massaro, along with his brothers-in-law Sean Mellody and Jim Mellody Jr., owners of several Beef O'Brady's restaurants including the one in the Vil-



DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

Village Center co-owners Sean Mellody, Jim Mellody Jr., Sharon Hunter and J.J. Massaro hope to complete renovations at the Village Center before the holidays arrive.

lage Center, plan to update the interior of their restaurant at the same time exterior renovations are taking place.

"The new roof will really be an improvement and the new paint job, which we hope to finish over the next few weeks, will give it a contemporary look."

Even the parking lot is getting a makeover.

"The front lot is being repaved and re-stripped, and we've decided to remove the curb dividers, which also serve as concrete planters," Hunter said. "They have become worn and don't serve much of a purpose any longer. It will also allow for more parking."

They plan to expand the back parking lot to accommodate about 50 more parking spaces.

They're also trimming back some of the shrubbery along Bell Shoals Road to make the plaza more visible.

Other businesses at the center are Bloomingdale Pizza and the BP service station and convenience store. There are currently two spaces for lease in plaza. Call J.J. Massaro at (813) 653-1548 or 376-3875 for information.

CURE

Continued From Page 1

completed a youth walk on Oct 1. However, Huetteman said the support of the people on the sidelines was just as important.

Especially notable were the efforts of Jean Weber, a member of the core team who had been training for the walk and was devastated not to be able to participate due to a knee injury. However, she proved so much more valuable to the effort, registering walkers each day, making sure everyone had enough to eat and drink, and keeping track of the donations, said Huetteman.

"I missed being out there, but I really did enjoy my part as well," said Weber. "I loved being there when the walkers returned from each 4-mile lap. It was so wonderful to see all the support we got for this project from the smallest people (our children at St. Stephen) to the big people, like Moe's, which donated lunch on Saturday. Each day I got more and more excited about how big Project Cure could potentially become and that in our lifetime we will see a cure for breast cancer."

Also contributing to the success of Project Cure was Kevin Nance, a registered nurse who provided medical and moral support, the victory dinner at Cherry's, a discounted lunch from Westshore Pizza, along with a reminder of the reason for the walk: his young children, Olivia and Kevin, whose mother, Cheryl, died of breast cancer in January.

"I was overwhelmed by all the support we received during all three days of the walk," said Meany. "Not only from the people who showed up to walk a lap or more with us but those who came with water, food and blessings."

Among them were Bloomingdale East residents and St. Stephen parishioners Jane Kelly and Elizabeth O'Malley and their children who parked themselves at the halfway point each day and provided water and homemade breast cancer ribbon cookies for the walkers along with pink roses and balloons on the last leg of the walk Sunday; Jane Pollock and Diane Despaw who came bearing water, fruit, sandwiches

See CURE, Page 22

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BHA

Continued From Page 15

ishable food items to be delivered to local charities prior to the holidays.

Yard Of The Month

The committee selects and photographs a Yard of the Month, to be announced in the Gazette.

BJ Stelter Bloomingdale Community Scholarship

Created to honor the outstanding career of BJ Stelter, principal of Bloomingdale Senior High School from 1991-2005, this committee supports the efforts that result in the award of an annual college scholarship to one or more Bloomingdale High students. It organizes and administrates all aspects of the scholarship process from applications and overseeing the selection committee to awarding the winning student(s) and disbursing the funds.

Scholarship Fundraisers

The committee was created to provide grants for further education to Bloomingdale students at Bloomingdale Senior High School. It is comprised of BHA board members and Bloomingdale residents. The committee acquires funds to award scholarships to graduating seniors, through a variety of fundraising activities.

Deed Restrictions & Code Enforcement

The committee consists of three or more board members who review the inspection findings of properties reported to be in non-compliance with Bloomingdale deed restrictions and/or Hillsborough County codes. If necessary, the committee determines the next level of action the BHA will take to obtain compliance by the offending property owners.

Community Cleanup Days

The committee organizes semi-annual cleanup days at the Hillsborough County Parks Maintenance facility on Nature's Way in Blooming-

dale East. At these events (generally held in April and October each year), residents are invited to bring all items of trash and waste not normally accepted during weekly trash service. It also provides personal pick-up of refuse by appointment for the elderly and disabled.

Neighborhood Assist Network

The network serves as a clearing-house and referral organization for Bloomingdale residents who may not be able to care for their home or property due to reasons beyond their control. Qualifying causes may be age, illness, death of a spouse, and temporary unemployment. The committee accepts referrals from the BHA Enforcement Committee and residents who become aware of neighbors with special needs. It offers referrals to local charitable and governmental agencies that can provide appropriate assistance, including the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations, Dept. of Community Health and Social Services, Aging Services and Housing and Community Code Enforcement Dept.

Neighborhood PRIDE Teams

The committee corresponds with and assists residents interested forming Neighborhood PRIDE teams. When a team is formed, the committee acts as the liaison between the team and the BHA board. It also coordinates the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Naming and Signage Program.

Parks and Recreation

The committee monitors the appearance of and improvements to Bloomingdale Parks East and West, including the Stephanie Culbertson Recreation Center. It works closely with the county parks and rec department on items such as park landscaping and signage, reporting of problems that may arise (vandalism, loitering), pond cleanup and proper use of the park facilities. It also works with the director of the recreation center regarding programs and activities for the community.

Public Safety

The committee assists the BHA and Bloomingdale residents by communicating with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue Department to promote improvements to neighborhood safety and security. It works closely with Bloomingdale's Community Resource Deputy and the Bloomingdale Area Community Council. It may also establish community volunteers to patrol neighborhoods to monitor for undesirable or potentially illegal activities.

Public Works

The committee acts as a liaison between the BHA and the Hillsborough County Public Works Dept. and county planning agencies. It communicates with county staff in an effort to improve and maintain roadways and utilities in and around Bloomingdale. It also monitors the current conditions and future needs of the community.

Schools

The committee represents the BHA on issues of education and schools in the School District of Hillsborough County. It fosters regular communication with principals and PTA presidents at Bloomingdale High, Burns Middle, Alafia Elementary and Cimino Elementary schools. It monitors issues related to the general quality of public schools including funding, school boundaries, facilities, staffing and programs.

Community Appreciation Dinner

The committee organizes the annual BHA Community Appreciation Dinner to recognize individuals who actively support the homeowners association's mission to ensure the community remains a great place in which to live. Invitees include volunteers serving the BHA, Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District, along with local elected officials and county staff who work closely with the BHA and taxing district.

Santa Claus Is Coming To Bloomingdale

BRING FOOD DONATION FOR FREE VISIT, PHOTO

A Gazette Report

Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 17th annual visit to Bloomingdale this year to hear children's wish lists and to help collect food donations for local charities.

All children are invited to visit with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Bloomingdale community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Sun Trust Bank/Citgo station plaza.

In exchange for a donation of one or more non-perishable food items, each child can visit personally with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and will have their photo taken for free. Santa's elves will serve complimentary juice and cookies.

Bloomingdale residents can bring food donations to the community office through Dec. 11. The office is open Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to noon.

The annual event is sponsored by The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. For more information, call 681-2051 or e-mail bloomingtondale.homeowners@verizon.net.

Wanted: Santa's Helpers!

STUDENTS EARN SERVICE CREDITS

Santa and Mrs. Claus are looking for a few good elves to help them visit with children at the community office Dec. 9 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. High school students who help with this project will receive community service hour credits. Elves greet children at the door, serve cookies and punch, collect canned food donations and take Polaroid pictures of visitors. Elf costumes, snacks and refreshments are provided. To help, call (813) 681-2051 or E-mail info@bloomingtondalegazette.com.

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BLOOMINGDALE BUSINESS

VOLLEYBALL

Continued From Page 8

maintenance supervisor Jeff Mauch with their idea for a new volleyball court and lights.

Mauch said last week he didn't think it would be a problem to install a volleyball court on the old tennis court that was converted to a seldom-used skate hockey surface a few years ago.

"If a consensus was made by the community to play volleyball on the existing skate hockey court, I think it would be okay after our director approves it," Mauch said.

Installing lights at the park is not out of the question, Mauch said, but would be more complicated and take more time than constructing the volleyball court.

"The lights are a capital project, so (the parks dept.) would need to have a public meeting first, as well as a budget planning meeting. The process can take some time."

Mauch said parks department staff would appreciate hearing from more Bloomingdale residents about the request for the volleyball court and lights.

Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board members said last week residents' concerns about the installation of lights at Bloomingdale West Park several years ago were carefully considered and successfully addressed by the parks department. The lights were positioned and set on timers so as to be minimally intrusive to nearby homes.

Mathew and his neighbors hope Bloomingdale residents will respond in favor of the park upgrades and that the project can move forward as soon as possible.

"With the fall time change, it may not even be practical for us to meet at the park because it will already be dark when we get home from work."

Bloomingdale residents who wish to comment on the issue can e-mail bloomingtondale.homeowners@verizon.net or call (813) 681-2051. Comments received will be forwarded to the Hillsborough County Parks Dept. staff and the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board of directors for review.



DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

Steffani Fields graduated from college and worked in the Peace Corps in Haiti for two years before returning to the family business, Fields Art and Framing, in 2002.

Family-Owned Shop Frames Memories Of All Shapes, Sizes

BUSINESS CELEBRATES SWEET 16

By DAWN ZAMANIS
Correspondent

Steffani Fields graduated from college and worked in the Peace Corps in Haiti for two years before realizing something was missing in her life. She missed her family and her home life.

Four years ago, after returning to the states and taking some time to evaluate her circumstances, Fields decided her passion was her family's picture framing business. She's been working there ever since.

Fields Art & Framing opened in 1990, a year after Steffani's father, Jerry Fields, retired after serving 26 years in the army. Jerry had many hobbies including water-color painting, woodworking, pen and ink drawing and recording the family's travels around the world. He decided to turn his fervent hobby into a business, and Fields Art & Framing was born.

"We pride ourselves on being one of the few 'mom and pop' businesses left in the Valrico area," said Stef-

fani Fields, who has now taken over her father's business full-time.

"We have two great employees, Deborah Serrano and Christopher Ferlita, our wonderful framer who has been with us for twelve years."

The family-owned business has become quite creative over the past 16 years, framing almost anything imaginable.

They continue to design frames in every shape and size, and have even preserved an open American flag for a customer in a four-ft. by eight-ft. frame.

"We've framed a lot of World War II memorabilia for customers, and American flags that were draped over the coffins of U.S. soldiers who perished in Iraq."

Fields' framers preserve cherished items in a way that brings joy and enduring memories to the family.

"A mother once came in with a shred of her daughter's infant baby blanket that she wanted to preserve," Fields said.

See FRAMES, Page 22

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Property Manager Is In Political Sign Removal Business

20 ROADSIDE ADS PICKED UP

A Gazette Report

Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District property manager Al Devney plucked 20 political signs from the roadside in his travels around the community last month.

In addition, Devney reports, "In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, there were 19 bags of litter, a window screen, a concrete block, two cushions and 11 cents. The beverages of choice were Coke for soft drinks, Bud Light for beer and Old Grand Dad for distilled spirits.

To report a property maintenance concern, call Devney at (813) 684-6667.

CURE

Continued From Page 19

and energy drinks; Lynn Reith who provided Mary Kay foot-pampering products for the core team walkers; Mary Stablein who put up a banner on the Natures Way wall behind her house and provided water and fresh orange slices for the walkers; Marilyn Martin who videotaped the event for posterity and possible embarrassment; St. Stephen Catholic School Principal Therese Jackson and the entire school staff who provided gifts for the core team and came out the first day of the walk to encourage the walkers; the Rev. Bill Swengros who encouraged the effort and then kicked off the walk with a prayer and blessing and joined the team for the first 12 miles; Moe's Southwest Grill, which provided Saturday's lunch feast; the Meany family, which provided the breast cancer ribbon congratulatory cake; the St. Stephen Craft Group, which made pink ribbons for all the walkers; Crystal Water and Maureen Montalvo of Aqua-Vibe, which donated water for the thirsty walkers; massage therapists Bernadette Dunn and Judy Leibesbach and the Salon and Spa, which donated their massage services for aching feet, backs and shoulders; Nancy Shirina who greeted the core team at the end of the walk with a champagne toast; everyone who contributed to Project Cure, helping to reach the \$25,000 goal; Capt. John Marsicano and his deputies who kept an eye on the core team during their early-morning training sessions; the county parks depart-

ment and Bloomingtondale Golfers Club, which made sure the walkers had clean facilities; all the residents who put out banners, pink ribbons and honked and cheered the walkers on; and God for blessing the walkers with perfect weather.

The Oct. 13-15 walk culminated a monthlong fundraising effort that included the distribution of breast cancer information by the parish nurse ministry and a parish picnic and children's walk Oct. 1 with food provided by the St. Stephen Men's Club and games provided by the St. Stephen Catholic School and Religious Education classes. While the children in the parish collected contributions and participated in their own walk along a course marked out by the St. Stephen Boy Scouts, Brandon magician and balloon artist Robert Horning and face painter Heather Walton entertained picknickers, the St. Stephen Life Teen group washed cars, raising \$300 for Project Cure, and jewelry makers Joyce Levine and Deidre Young sold sterling and crystal jewelry with all proceeds going to Project Cure.

"This is an amazing effort that no one individual could have ever accomplished," said Owens. "It is truly a sign of how incredible our church and community are. Everyone at St. Stephen should feel great pride in what was accomplished."

"What an amazing experience," seconded Wagner. "What a beautiful thing to come together like we did. I thank God for the opportunity to be surrounded by such great women and our wonderful, caring community."

FRAMES

Continued From Page 21

"There was only a small piece of the blanket left. The mother went out and bought the same blanket and we framed it with her daughter's photo and mounted the original piece of her blanket in it."

"Framing is more than just placing a photo in a frame," Fields said. "We can frame so many things in a variety of shapes and sizes, which allows us to do more with unique items."

They've even framed the bases from a baseball field up north, which the customer had purchased on eBay. He cherished them so much, he wanted to be able to display them for all to see and admire.

With the holidays approaching, the dedicated employees at Fields will be working hard to fulfill the requests of their customers and inviting new clients to come see their work on exhibit at the store. They even have a "frequent framer" program which allows loyal patrons to earn points toward store discounts.

Fields Art & Framing is at 3407 Lithia-Pinecrest Road in Valrico. Info: (813) 654-8616, www.jerryfieldsart.com.

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CRIME

Continued From Page 16

for helping us keep ahead of crime," he said.

Whether the issue is vandalism, theft, assault or domestic violence, Bloomingtondale residents are looking out for each other and making an effort to resolve potential problems before a crime is committed, Maurer said.

Calls requiring immediate police assistance should always be made to 911 or the sheriff's office main number, Maurer said. Security and safety concerns of an ongoing nature can, and should, be reported to the substation.

"If there is graffiti in your neighborhood, if your car has been vandalized or your golf clubs are stolen ... even if you don't want to file a police report for some reason, we need to know what's going on in order to prevent the problem from escalating," Maurer said.

The substation is open weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Bloomingtondale Area Community Council meets at the station at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday each month. Info: (813) 635-8040.

COMMENT

Continued From Page 17

signs: "We Love U, Tyler" and "RIP Tyler Clark." My heart ached for the family and friends of the Bloomington High School student who was so vibrant at midnight, Oct. 7, and then inconceivably lifeless 20 minutes later inside a crumpled Jeep Sahara resting against a tree in front of The Green Boutique on Bloomington Avenue.

I never had any deep discussions with Tyler and his friends — just casual remarks about cars, school and the version of Black Sabbath's "War Pigs" the garage band was pounding out across the street.

Tyler and his friends were always polite, friendly and at least outwardly tolerant of me.

Whether he was working on a car or just hanging out in his front yard, Tyler Clark seemed typical of most 17-year-olds. After spending a day trapped in the classroom, he was eager to get together with friends who shared his interests and forget about the pressures of grades and papers and tests for a while.

I could name a dozen Tyler Clarks of my generation. In fact, I wasn't all that different from Tyler.

Despite the fact that classmates perished in car accidents every year, there was always a certain percentage of us who persisted in believing we were invincible.

Occasionally, we took risks to show off or simply because we were having too much fun to be careful. We drove too fast, didn't wear our seat belts, allowed ourselves to be distracted while we were driving, you name it.

My father's generation, the James Dean era, wasn't any better. One wrong turn of the steer-

ing wheel during his youthful drag-racing exploits and I never would have been born.


Looking back on my own youthful carelessness, I wonder if teens are any more capable of handling the awesome responsibility of driving than they are of drinking. There was a good reason the country passed the National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984, raising the legal drinking age to 21. Teens were deemed too immature to know their limitations.

Unfortunately, when a tragedy such as this occurs, our natural tendency is to cast blame. Blame the contractor who put in the median. Blame the teens for their irresponsible behavior. However, that only exacerbates the pain.

A more healthy reaction is that of Valrico residents Laura and Vin Marchetti, the parents of Durant High School student Katie Marchetti who was killed in a car accident in March because she wasn't wearing a seat belt. The Marchettis are lobbying for new legislation that would allow law enforcement to pull over and ticket drivers and passengers for not wearing seat belts. Currently, law enforcement can only cite drivers and passengers for not wearing seat belts if they've been pulled over for other traffic violations. Other states with such a law have seen a marked increase in seat belt usage.

You can't change human nature. As they transition from the complete parental supervision of childhood to the overwhelming freedom of adulthood, and adjust to the responsibility and maturity that goes along with it, teens occasionally will act carelessly. All parents can do is continue to stress safety, strike some fear in their teen and do a whole lot of praying.

D'Ann White is editor of The Brandon News.



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