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**BLOOMINGTONDALE
POST OFFICE
UNDERWAY**

*(See story on
page 3)*

"No Parking!"

School parking jam solution not so elementary

By Laura Frazier, Editor

It's 6:00 pm. Mom and Dad rush home from work and errands in an effort to be on time for Open House night at Alafia Elementary School. They gather the kids, jump in the minivan and cruise down Nature's Way towards the school, right on time. But their child is just 1 of over 1,175 students enrolled in the neighborhood elementary school this year. Hundreds of vehicles arrive on school grounds during special events, quickly filling up the limited parking lot. Faced with the prospect of circling the lot waiting for a vacancy, the otherwise law abiding Bloomingtondale residents opt to park on the roadsides amidst the many "no parking"

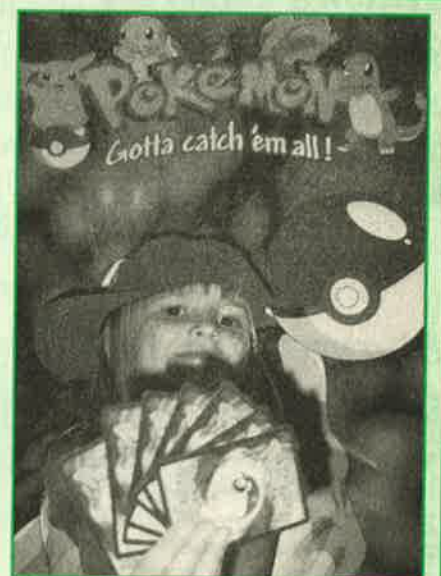
signs. Once one parent crosses the line, others follow suit. Soon the streets are lined with illegally parked vehicles and the dangerous specter of adults with children in tow dashing across busy streets. Parents cringe at the thought of having parked illegally but after all, what other options do they have?

"Our number one priority is safety," says Alafia Elementary School Principal Tanly Cabrera. "Special events at the school draw hundreds of parents and children. That (large turnout) is a big part of what makes Alafia an outstanding school. We are an "A+" school with a continually growing enrollment and an exceptional number of very involved parents and volunteers," she says. The Principal has addressed the issue of the "no parking" zones along Culbreath

(continued on page 4)

Pokemon Runs Wild in Bloomingtondale

(See story on page 8)



Your Inside Connections

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Rd. • Valrico, FL 33594
(813) 681-2051 • E-mail: BHA@CyberRails.com

Web site: www.CyberRails.com/BHA/

President Ted Grable
Treasurer Pam Liguori
Directors Patricia Radel
..... LaWayne Wyatt
..... Ann Underwood
..... Rodney Biddle
..... Len Jaszczak



Bloomingdale Mobile Watch Core Committee

Coordinator/Scheduler
LaWayne Wyatt, 685-2072
Treasurer, Paul Kelmer 681-9701
Equipment Manager, Tony Diolosa 681-1146
Membership Chairman, Steven Heckel .. 654-4266
David Guy 681-5943
Paul Warr 685-7883



Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132
President Bill Grace, 685-2817
Treasurer Fred Englehart
Meetings .. Second Tuesday each month at 7:30 pm,
3419 Cade Lane, Bloomingdale Oaks



Share your news with the community!

Write to Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594
Phone (813) 681-2051
E-mail LauraFrazier@Prodigy.net
Fax (813) 651-1129

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District

..... 684-6667
President, Thom Snelling 681-9186
Vice President, Tom Mackiewicz 653-4145
Treasurer, Don Cassels 681-8855
Corresponding Secretary, R. Dickey 689-2177
Recording Secretary, Alice Burleson 685-1076
Trustee, Tim Golden 653-1337
Trustee, Paul Almeida 661-2018
Property Manager, DPMI 684-6617



Meetings

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

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

Special Taxing District Meetings
Second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.



the *B*loomingtondale gazette

The official publication of the BHA
3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
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Restaurant Critic Elton Dumont

Published by Manatee Media, Inc.

P.O. Box 271880 Tampa, FL 33688-1880
Phone: (813) 964-1919 Fax: (813) 963-5876
Advertising Director Diane Mathes
Publisher Mark Mathes
Advertising Sales Kathy Tidler
Advertising Sales Arlene Jacobs
Managing Editor Anissa Camp
Design & Production Publisher's Support
..... Candy Patgorski

Bloomingdale Post Office gets stamp of approval

By Mack Austin

The U.S. Postal Service has selected a site for a branch office in the Bloomingdale area. A long-term lease has been signed on a 6,800 square foot office in the Kings Row Shopping Center at the corner Kings and Bloomingdale Avenues.

The new branch will provide retail windows for walk-in customers and office space for carriers. Post Office officials anticipate completion and opening in the Spring of 2000. ©

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REAL ESTATE UPDATE

By Luana Russell

Price of Overpricing

QUESTION: What is the most important factor in the home-selling process?

ANSWER: Without a doubt, it is the selling price. The way you use your price-setting power will determine how quickly the house will sell, how difficult it will be to find a qualified buyer and how much profit you stand to gain.

What happens if you set the price to high? If there are three houses available in the area and the other two carry more realistic price tags, will that potential buyer even take the time to view yours?

It's unhealthy for a home to sit unsold for a long period of time. Initial exposure is considered "prime time." Don't lose this valuable opportunity.

Disclosing Defects

QUESTION: Is it important for home sellers to disclose any and all material defects that could affect the value or livability of a home?

ANSWER: The days of closing the sale and letting the buyers discover problems about the home for themselves are long gone. Most sellers need to go to great lengths to inform potential buyers about important facts concerning the home.

The intent of the disclosure laws is that all of the facts need to be put on the table - with nothing hidden - so that all parties can then negotiate in good faith with full knowledge of the condition of the home. Many states have mandatory disclosure rules. Soon, all will.

Luana RUSSELL

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(continued from page 1)

and Nature's Way at recent PTA meetings and in the school's newsletter. In a concerted effort to accommodate Alafia's growing number of students, the school has begun staggering special event days and times by grade level.

As for the daily traffic and parking crunch, "Each year we have a number of students new to the school and new to the area. It takes some time for everyone to become familiar with the (traffic, safety and parking) procedures," says Cabrera. School officials implemented a snaking drop-off/pick-up line as a way to expedite the daily traffic flow around the school and eliminate the need for parents to park their cars. "We encourage parents to utilize the drop-off/pick-up line and to walk, bike or carpool whenever possible." If parents have business at the school and must park, they may wish to consider that the arrival and dismissal periods are not the best times to do so.

Bloomingdale's Deputy Pete Maurer echoes Ms. Cabrera's suggestion that parents and children walk, bike or carpool whenever possible. "Arrive early for special events and be patient; there is usually a steady flow of cars coming and going and you will find a legal parking spot," says Deputy Maurer. "This is a critical safety issue. We cannot have cars illegally parked along the roads at any time, including during special events," he says. The "no parking" zones on both Culbreath and Nature's Way have recently been expanded, and fines are currently \$30.

Members of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council have expressed an interest in coordinating with Bloomingdale Little League and the (under construction) Campo Family YMCA for the use of those facilities as overflow parking during special events. Any arrangements made would require the approval of the School Board's Traffic and Safety Department. YMCA representative Dave Hollowell indicates that although there have been no formal discussions to date, "Certainly the YMCA would be willing to work with any community groups that we can help." Until other arrangements can be made, perhaps the best outlook we can have as we patiently circle the parking lot is that of Principal Cabrera; "This is a growing, thriving school. Families continue to flock to Bloomingdale because they want their children enrolled in Alafia Elementary. We have a large and active student body, incredibly involved parents and an impressive number of dedicated volunteers. If we are patient, keep the safety of the children as our top priority and obey the traffic laws, this is a good problem to have!"

Bloomingdale Golfers Club harts a new course

By Laura Frazier, Editor

Since its grand opening in 1983, Bloomingdale Golfers Club remains the sprawling yet inconspicuous centerpiece of Bloomingdale East. The 200-acre course features 100 acres of protected wetlands. Wide-open spaces, lush foliage and abounding wildlife provide a pristine setting for the challenging Ron Garl designed course.

Evergreen Alliance Golf Limited (EAGL) purchased the club in May of this year from Sungreene, Inc. EAGL, a golf course management and development company headquartered in Irving, Texas, operates 48 golf courses in fourteen states across the country. Tampa resident Carl James stepped up to the tee this year as the club's new manager.

He is enthusiastic about the improvements being made. While groundskeepers continue to maintain and preserve the natural beauty of the course, the clubhouse and restaurant are undergoing a series of renovations.



Bloomingdale Golfers Club Manager Carl James.

"The clubhouse and Legends

Grill (restaurant and lounge) have been totally redecorated, from a fresh coat of paint and wallpaper to sparkling new dishes and silverware," says James. "We are also in the process of resurfacing the cart paths and parking lot and installing new walls around the perimeter of the lakes. We intend to uphold the quality, upscale image of Bloomingdale Golfers Club and bring it up to date with a fresh, new look."

Bloomingdale Golfers Club is open to new members and currently offers a three-month trial membership at a special rate of \$170 per month. Reduced resident initiation fees, greens fees and other special incentives are on the drawing board. Plans are also in the works to hold special "theme" events at the club. "We are planning a number of fun and unique club get-togethers to offer our members," says James. Legends Grill offers a Sunday Brunch from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and is open to the public 7 days a week for breakfast and lunch. "We invite residents to come check us out

and discover the quality, upscale club and challenging course that is just around the corner, in the heart of Bloomingdale."

For more information, visit Bloomingdale Golfers Club at 4113 Great Golfers Place (just off Nature's Way south of Glenhaven) or call 655-GOLF.

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The Bloomingtondale West Recreation Center is located at 3919 Canoga Park Drive. For more information, please call Donna Clouse, Recreation Director, at 744-5907 or stop by the Center 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm weekdays. ☺

BLOOMINGDALE

Welcome to Bloomingtondale

The Bloomingtondale Gazette and Brandon Regional Hospital are pleased to announce the following new arrival to our community:

Luke Dustin Mulcahy

Born August 31, 1999 to Mary Lou and William Mulcahy

Congratulations from the staff and friends of The Bloomingtondale Gazette!

Do you know of a "new addition" to our community? Please call The Gazette at 681-2051, e-mail LauraFrazier@prodigy.net or write to Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. We would be pleased to publish your birth announcement! ☺

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Pokemon runs wild in Bloomingdale!

By Laura Frazier, Editor

Move over Beanie Babies. See you later Furby. Make way for the latest multimedia kid's craze to hit the nation; Pokemon! As the popularity of Pokemon has grown, so too has the confusion of Pokemon-challenged adults. We offer here a basic overview of the world of Pokemon (po'-kay-mahn) in an effort to enlighten the bewildered parents of Bloomingdale's Pokemon-obsessed children.

Japan's Nintendo Corporation introduced the wildly popular line of games and merchandise to the U.S. in 1998. Initially released as a Game-Boy (electronic hand-held gaming system) game, the growing phenomenon now includes Pokemon Snap (a Nintendo-64 game), a top rated television show, a trading card game and a multitude of toys, clothing and other paraphernalia. The enterprise's reach will extend to the big screen with the scheduled November 1999 Warner Brothers release of "Pokemon The Movie: Mewtwo Strikes Back."

The setting for the mythical world of Pokemon is "Pokemon Island". Pikachu, Bulbasaur and Vileplume are just a few of over 150 different species of creatures called Pokemon (Japanese translation: "pocket monsters") inhabiting the island. In the Game-Boy game, players assume the role of "Pokemon Trainer", searching the virtual island for the shy and elusive Pokemon. The object is to capture as many different species of Pokemon as possible by throwing a "Poke Ball" at them. Upon capture, the creatures can be tamed and trained to acquire special powers and abilities. Some species can even evolve into different breeds. Players use their own captive creatures to ward off or snare wild Pokemon. Two players can link their Game-Boys together with a special cable (sold separately!), allowing the trainers to engage in battle or trade their Pokemon.

In the Pokemon trading card game, each game represents a battle between two trainers. Both players require a complete deck of cards, each card representing Pokemon with individual powers. Players can start with a 2-player starter set and expand their collection with "booster packs" (miscellaneous packs of 10 extra cards) or "theme decks" (full decks of 60 cards). Trading has become a popular way

for players to obtain the various cards they need to complete their decks. Jim Daney, Sales Associate at Smart Start Toys and Collectibles in Valrico Square fields daily calls from both kids and parents looking for the cards. "It has been a challenge to keep them in stock," said Daney one particularly busy day. "One customer just came in and bought several booster packs as rewards for her child's spelling tests. Last week the starter sets we got in barely had time to sit on the shelf before they were snapped up."



Pokemon Snap, a Nintendo-64 game, is the latest incarnation of Pokemon to hit Bloomingdale. In the video game, players again act as trainers exploring Pokemon Island in search of the creatures. The object of the game is to take "photographs" of as many of the creatures as possible. Players submit their best snapshots to the game's virtual judge, who rates them and assigns points. Blockbuster Video stores feature special Pokemon Snap Stations. The computerized stations allow players to download their own Pokemon snapshots (right from their game cartridge) into the Station and print out stickers of their favorite photos. Sticker trading has become a natural extension of the Snap game.

Pokemon games have a very low violence factor. There are battles and power struggles resulting in lost powers or levels, but not one drop of virtual blood is shed. The linking capability of the hand-held game and the trading aspect of the card game encourage cooperation and interaction between the players. Appealing to girls and boys alike, Pokemon is one of very few video and card games to cross the gender barrier. Perhaps with a little patience and a lot of imagination, Pokemon can cross the generation gap too. Now, are there any takers out there for two Furbys and seven Tamogatchis, batteries included? ☺

Pokemon Trading Cards

Local Retailers:
Smart Start Toys and Collectibles, Valrico Square, 661-5399
LaClair's Sports Card World, Highway 60, 661-3679
Toys-R-Us, Brandon Town Center, 661-2606

Nintendo Web Site: www.pokemon.com

Letters to the Gazette

A Bloomingdale East resident writes (via E-mail):

"As a resident of this community for the past 10 years, I have witnessed a tremendous amount of growth. The number of children at (Alafia Elementary and Burns Middle School) bus stops has more than doubled. I feel that it is extremely dangerous to have the busses pick up and drop off on Natures Way. Could the bus stops possibly be relocated to interior Bloomingdale streets? This is a heavily traveled road and I have witnessed many impatient drivers passing a stopped bus. Is anything being done about this potentially disastrous problem?"

Editor's Reply:

We spoke with the Alafia/Burns School Bus Route Coordinator, Sandi Katvala, who acknowledges that the Natures Way route is very full. "Safety is our number one priority," says Katvala. "We have had some calls from this area and feel that the route is being operated in a safe, time-efficient manner. However, we will always look at individual concerns and requests." Katvala points out that moving the stops to interior streets would necessitate busses negotiating through residential neighborhoods, creating additional safety hazards and a literally impossible time crunch for drivers already on very tight schedules. Recent attempts to move one Natures Way stop to an interior street sparked a barrage of loitering and vandalism complaints from homeowners that resulted in the stop being moved back to the main road.

Hillsborough County Schools provides parents with a "Request to Add a Bus Stop" form that is available at Bloomingdale area schools. You may wish to submit this request to your child's school along with a letter outlining your specific concerns. The school forwards bus stop change

request forms to the Route Coordinator, who then schedules an inspection with District Safety Office personnel.

Sandi Katvala can be reached 744-8632. If you require further assistance, Lamar Hammer, Director of Safety and Training Specialists can be reached at 987-6994. In the meantime, school officials recommend continuous reinforcement of safety rules with children and adult supervision or monitoring at all bus stops whenever possible. In addition, residents can call 1-888-786-7474 to report motorists illegally passing school busses.

Bloomingdale residents, the Gazette welcomes your questions, comments and suggestions on community issues. Letters should include the writer's name, address, phone number and e-mail address, and will be published anonymously if so requested. Please write to: The Bloomingdale Gazette, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594, Fax: (813) 651-1129, E-Mail: LauraFrazier@prodigy.net.

All letters are subject to editing for clarity and length. Due to space limitations not all letters can be printed or acknowledged, but our staff will make every effort to respond to all letters received.



**For Advertising Information
call Kathy Tidler at 661-6641**

The Bloomingdale Buzz

By Mason Meehan

We took a random survey of five Bloomingdale residents, asking the following question, "The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District will take on several major maintenance and renovation projects this fiscal year*. Which project do you look forward to seeing completed?"

Ona Barnes, Augusta Village
 "I am very much in favor of a project to bring reclaimed water into Bloomingdale and hopefully to the homeowners. We are running out of water in Florida, and Bloomingdale is no exception. Aside from the possibility of lowering water costs, I think it will be a major conservation issue for Floridians."



Rick Eisenhart, The Links
 "I'd like to see the new entryway project for all of Bloomingdale. New signage would enhance the overall aesthetics and 'curb appeal' of Bloomingdale."

Vicki Verble, Somerset
 "I'd like to see reclaimed water brought into Bloomingdale, even if the cost is slightly more than the current rate. The conservation factor is the major issue for me."



Ray Tate, Chadd's Ford
 "I'm a longtime Bloomingdale resident and I would be interested in what the cost would be to bring reclaimed water into Bloomingdale. Although conservation is important, I would have to rethink it if the cost was much more than

current water charges. I also like the entryway project."



George Gross, Bloomingdale West
 "Even though I have a well on my property, I would still like to see reclaimed water brought to Bloomingdale. I think it would be less expensive in the long run when you consider irrigation costs."

* The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District's 5-Year Plan and information about specific plans, including the reclaimed water and entryway projects, will be published in a future edition of The Gazette (see the related STD story in this issue). For more information, call the STD at 684-6667. ©

Plan now for business emergencies

By Mack Austin

We all witnessed the ominous power and destructive potential of a hurricane when "Floyd" stormed past the coast of Florida a few short weeks ago. Now is the time for anyone with a small business and especially a home business to prepare for the worst. There is no time after the storm approaches to start putting a business disaster/emergency plan together. There is no time to prepare for other emergencies after they have disrupted your business and cost you time and money.

Some of the most common emergencies to plan for include water pipe breaks, employee medical emergency, electricity outage and fire alarms. Business owners must ask themselves several questions to determine if they are really ready for these emergencies, including: Do my employees know how to properly handle these emergencies, especially if I am gone? Do I have an organized system for contacting employees if I need their assistance, especially when they are not working? Do my employees and I have a list of key personnel to call for emergency assistance? Do we have code words to use in emergencies? Have we rehearsed various emergency situations?

Now is the time to plan and prepare. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail! ©



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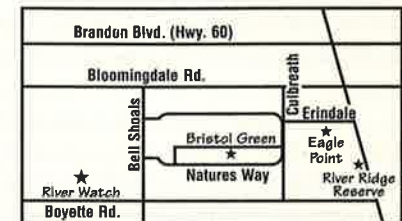
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Bloomingdale Yard of the Month

Sponsored by Southern Lawn and Turf

By Paul Almeida

The attractive, manicured yard of Dave and Denise Dittfield of Bloomingdale East caught our attention this month. The Dittfield residence, 2212 Allwood Avenue in the Somerset subdivision, is a perfect example of how a little planning and attention to detail can result in a beautiful landscape.

Dave admits to spending many hours each week working on "his" yard. While most Bloomingdale gardeners have retreated indoors to air-conditioned comfort by noon, Dave can often be found outside trimming, planting and mowing in the midday heat. He is obviously very meticulous and exacting when it comes to yard work; note the almost disturbingly straight mower lines he painstakingly carves into the lawn!

An assortment of palms dots the front and side yards of the corner home. Sabal, Queen and Christmas palms are accompanied by neat, attractive groupings of hibiscus, Indian Hawthorne and dwarf azaleas. Dave's most recent project, a beautiful bed of mums, adds a burst of color.

A stone duck serves as sentry on the front walk, dressed in one of 17 different costumes Denise has collected over the years in her hometown of Ohio. The Dittfield duck is currently decked out in a fall harvest selection. "We have people come by the house and comment they just wanted to see what the duck was wearing," Dave laughs.

We congratulate Dave and Denise (and the duck) on being selected as our October Yard of the Month, and thank them for helping to make Bloomingdale beautiful. (ES)

Residents are invited to contact Paul Almeida at 661-2018 or e-mail LauraFrazier@prodigy.net with their nominations for the Yard of the Month feature.



Citizens voice concerns at "Town Hall" meeting

By Mack Austin

A group of eastern Hillsborough County residents presented their concerns to the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners at a recent Town Hall meeting held in Brandon. Staff members from county departments including Public Works, the Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation were present to field questions. The event was televised and residents were invited to phone in their questions.

Residents in attendance expressed serious concern over problems common throughout the county including "uncontrolled" growth, traffic congestion, flooding, truck routes, rezoning, new construction and overcrowded schools. Many of the questions posed required additional research by county staff members and will be answered by

mail, along with those inquires received by telephone.

Officials were able to provide some immediate answers: Question: "Why doesn't Brandon have cleaner streets?" Answer, "Four street sweepers have been purchased to improve the appearance of the streets." Question: "What is being done to improve Fire and Law Enforcement?" Answer, "Both the Fire and Sheriff's Department have been funded for additional personnel."

It has been quite some time since a meeting was held to cover the issues of concern specifically to the residents of Bloomingdale. Attempts to schedule a meeting at Bloomingdale area schools proved unsuccessful due to school scheduling conflicts, but Bloomingdale residents will have an opportunity to voice their concerns. Plans are in the works to hold a Town Hall meeting in the Bloomingdale area. These meetings provide an important opportunity for residents to work directly with our County Commissioners on improving our community and our quality of life. Details will be announced as they become available. (ES)

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**Bloomingdale Community
Substation Notes**

By Deputy Pete Maurer

**STOP for School Busses
on Bloomingdale Avenue**

Traffic on Bloomingdale Avenue can get very congested, especially when you come upon a school bus. Even though Bloomingdale is a four-lane road, it does not have "islands" dividing the traffic flow. It is therefore essential (and required by our traffic laws) that cars driving in BOTH directions stop when a school bus stops. Plan ahead for these delays. Drive with care when approaching a school bus. Be especially careful after the bus pulls away and the children disperse. Anyone observing motorists illegally passing school busses can call 1-888-786-7454 to report these dangerous drivers.

School Crosswalk Removed

Thanks to coordination and cooperation between Hillsborough County School Safety representative Ann Anderson and County Public Works representatives, a dangerous crosswalk located just west of Alafia Elementary School has been removed. The crosswalk was installed when the school was built but has been unmanned for several years.



Cease Fire 99

Special thanks to the volunteers who assisted in collecting the guns turned in at the Cease Fire 99 program, and to the many residents who took the time and effort to turn in weapons. Each weapon turned in represents one that is no longer a danger to innocent children or others.

Increased Traffic Enforcement

Natures Way and other main roads in the Bloomingdale Community frequently resemble speedways. Calls and letters to our Substation and County Commissioner Ronda Storms have resulted in increased speeding enforcement by Deputies in the Bloomingdale Community. Two motorcycle officers are concentrating on the Bloomingdale High School and Natures Way areas.

Mailbox Destruction

Federal Post Office officials have confirmed that anyone destroying a mailbox will face a fine of \$1000 and up to three years in prison. This is a federal offence.

The Bloomingdale Community Substation works with the Bloomingdale Area Community Council to address issues of importance to our residents such as traffic problems, environmental protection, home security and crime prevention. Residents are encouraged to contact Deputy Maurer at

the Substation to express any concerns they may have issues they would like to see addressed in this column. The Substation is located in the Village Center Plaza at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenbaven. Hours of operation are 8:00 am - 5:00 pm weekdays, phone 635-8040.

Speed Monitor Project Fund Drive

Progress continues with the fund drive to purchase a speed monitor to be used by Deputies patrolling the Bloomingdale community. A total of \$3,000 is needed to purchase the equipment; contributions currently total \$1,700. Anyone interested in contributing to this project can send donations to: C.B. Richard Ellis Attn: Tom Karpenske 201 East Kennedy Blvd. Suite 1121, Tampa, FL 33602 Checks should be made out to "Mailboxes, Etc., F.B.O. Radar Display." ©



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Thom Snelling, Bloomingdale Special Taxing District President

By Laura Frazier, Editor

Meet Thom Snelling, President of the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District. Tom and his family relocated from Fort Myers to Bloomingdale West in 1994. He has served on the STD Board of Trustees for the past 4 years and accepted the position of STD President in November of 1998. Thom is enthusiastic about the future of our community. We asked him to share his personal viewpoints and the slated priorities and plans of the STD with the residents of our community.

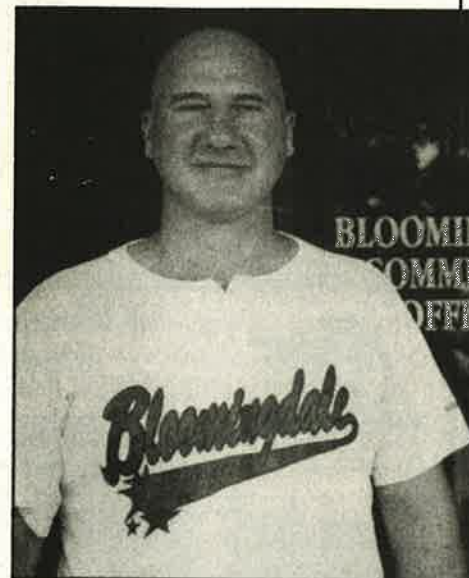
Q: How did you get involved with the STD?

A: (laughing)... "Shortly after relocating to Bloomingdale, I received a note from the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association informing me that my trash cans, which were stowed on the side

of our house, needed to be stored "in a closed environment." I stopped by the next BHA meeting with questions about deed restrictions. I work with a number of community associations in my position with the City of Tampa (as Manager of Land Development Coordination since 1992) and the Bloomingdale groups peaked my interest. I attended an STD meeting shortly thereafter and was pleasantly surprised to find a few friends and neighbors at the meeting who encouraged me to come on board. The rest, as they say, is history."

Q: What has been your biggest challenge in your first year as President of the STD?

A: "The first order of business was to get comfortable with the position, assuming the management position and making day to day decisions. The process has been more time consuming than I had imagined but we seem to be running pretty smoothly now. Another immediate priority has been to maintain an active and participating board; I believe we have that now. In January of this year we opened our community office. It has been a great advantage to have a professional home base for our community and the BHA, STD and The Bloomingdale Gazette."



STD President Thom Snelling

Q: The County is expected to approve the proposed STD budget of \$419,518. Is the \$80 annual assessment adequate to cover the general maintenance and projects planned for this year?

A: "We are well funded to provide the everyday maintenance of our common areas which includes the repair, maintenance and painting of our perimeter walls, mowing the 12 miles of grass and landscaping in our common areas, installation and maintenance of our irrigation systems and the maintenance and installation of landscaping, trees and sod in our common areas. We have set the wheels in motion to bring reclaimed water into Bloomingdale. The STD is also in a good position to take

on some major beautification projects this fiscal year. We are in the process of implementing a 5-year plan outlining and prioritizing several proposed projects. As new communities open all around us, touting all the latest bells and whistles, it becomes increasingly important for us to maintain Bloomingdale's status as an upscale, great place to live. We must continue to maintain and improve our common areas. Plans are in

the works to update our major entryways and minor (sub-division) entryways with new signage and landscaping. We are exploring the possibility of installing fountains and decorative, wrought iron fencing around some of our larger ponds. These are just a few examples of how we can, and must, maintain Bloomingdale's long-standing reputation as a premier community.

Q: What is the largest general maintenance expense the STD incurs?

A: "\$40,000 of our STD dollars are spent on painting the perimeter walls to combat damage, the elements and vandalism. Graffiti is a pet peeve of mine. In fact, I keep a couple cans of white spray paint in my car at all times! This is a quick fix until I can get hold of Al."

Q: Who is Al?

A: "Al Devney, our property manager. Mr. Devney is the "Groundskeeper of Bloomingdale" in the noblest sense. He manages and coordinates the (20 to 25) contractors and subcontractors a month working in Bloomingdale, from painting companies to landscapers and exterminators. Since the members of the STD are volunteers with



full time jobs, we depend on Al to hold down the fort. He reports any items requiring attention, oversees the jobs, inspects the work done and signs off on the work orders."

Q: Is Al the guy in the little green truck we see picking up litter every Monday?

A: "That's Al. And litter retrieval is not in his job description! Al started cleaning up Bloomingdale on his own time, in addition to the full time responsibilities of his job. It is not unusual for him to pick up 30 bags of trash each month. We are thrilled with the job he does."

Q: What can we as residents of Bloomingdale do to help protect our property values and improve our community?

A: "We encourage all residents to become involved. The monthly STD meetings are open to the public. If residents cannot attend the meetings, we urge them to contact us in writing or by phone to share their concerns and hopes for our community." ☺

Note: The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District's 5-Year Plan will be published in a future edition of The Bloomingdale Gazette. The STD meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at our community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, and can be reached at 684-6667.

Household tips from Tim the Toolman

Does your screen door slam shut or close too slowly? On the end of the air cylinder attached to the door you will find a cross-point or phillips screw. Turn the screw counter clockwise and the door should close faster. Turning the screw clockwise will help the door close slower. It will take a few tries to get it adjusted properly. While you're at it, a little WD-40 or silicon spray will help the latch work better. ☺



Tim Lovejoy, owner of "Tim the Toolman Home Repairs, Inc." has lived in Bloomingdale for over 15 years. He can be reached at 689-1856.

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Committee of 99 Update

By Mack Austin

The Committee of 99 is a special task force created by the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners to give citizens an opportunity to help frame and study transportation and funding issues. The committee is now entering its last month of research and reviews. Three final meetings will be held for the committee to review Hillsborough County residents' inputs and to make their recommendations to the BOCC as to which transportation programs and projects are priorities and how the issues should be presented to the public for vote.

Committee meetings began in July of this year. The amount of information available and the number of sources was staggering. But well organized meetings, straightforward questions and hours of research to provide answers allowed committee members to dive head first into this very complex issue. Four public meetings were held in September one in each of the Senatorial Districts. Many

formed, concerned residents voiced their opinions on how to solve the transportation and funding issues faced by Hillsborough County.



The Board of County Commissioners will consider the committee's recommendations and make their decisions. Whatever the outcome, this procedure proved one very important point. In order to improve our community and our quality of life, it takes a cooperative effort between the residents of Hillsborough County and our County Commissioners and their staff. The most important effort left is for the residents of Hillsborough County to "get out and vote" on this and other issues that affect the future of our community. ©

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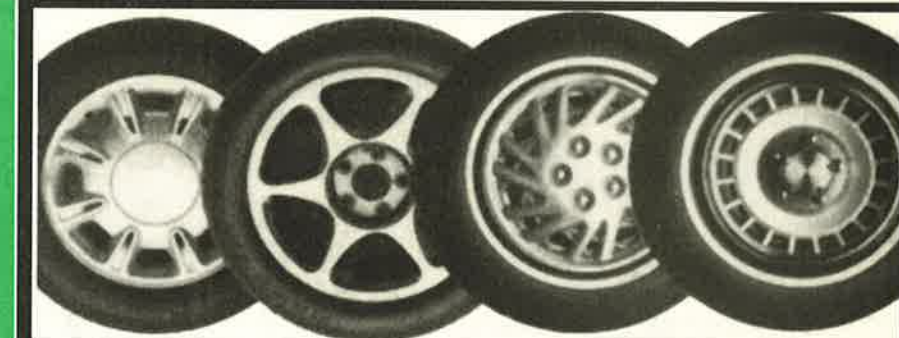
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Bloomingdale Senior High School News

By Kathy Steed, PTSA Committee Chairperson

P TSA "Safe School Community" Program On Thursday, October 21 our PTSA will host a special program entitled "Providing a Safer School Community." Education, law enforcement and community services representatives will be available to present information on measures we can all take to provide a safer school environment. The meeting will be held in the school auditorium from 7:30 until 8:30. Special booths with related information for parents and students will be open from 6:30 until 7:30. This timely presentation will cover many issues of importance to everyone. Spread the word and plan to attend.

PTSA Committee News

A special "welcome" to the following new members of the BSHS PTSA committee for the 1999-2000 School Year: Judy Rice - Hospitality, Ellen Gates - Health, Safety, Charnell Williams - Treasurer, Jo Fickes - Scholarships/Awards, and Tamara Volpi-Zanoni - 2nd VP, Membership.

A special "thanks" to the following returning members for their hard work last year and their continued interest this year: Ted Grable - Ways and Means, Linda Applegate - Recording Secretary, Sara Davis - BSHS Assistant Principal, Kathy Steed - Volunteers, and Lee Mayer - Corresponding Secretary.

The following positions are currently open for parents and students interested in taking an active part in making ours a great school: 1st Vice President - Programs (coordinates special meetings, committees, seminars, College Night), Student Liason (BHS student), Public Relations (coordinates publicity), Legislation (monitors laws affecting education) and Newsletter Editor. To become an active part of our Parent-Teacher-Student Association and make a positive difference, please call the PTSA voice mail at 744-8018, extension 563.

Reading Tutor Program

The Reading Tutor program has been extended to assist students taking classes at BSHS in the evening. Additional volunteers are needed to help students improve their reading skills. Assistance is primarily listening and caring given in one-hour sessions. All volunteers are welcome; you need not have a



BSHS Girl's Cross Country Team begins their new season. Photo by Mack Austin

student at BSHS to become a part of this very special program. Please call Kathy Steed at 744-8018, extension 563.

Magazines are always needed for the program and can be dropped off at the Bloomingdale Community Substation in the Village Center (corner of Bell Shoals and Glenhaven) or the Brandon YMCA. ☺

Rajun' Bull Band seeks sponsors

Bloomingdale Senior High School's Rajun' Bulls, Hillsborough County's largest band, is seeking sponsors to help support its 1999 - 2000 music program. Sponsorship contributions will help with the funding of music scholarships, repair and replacement of antiquated instruments, uniforms, transportation, etc. Four levels of sponsorship (\$25 Bronze, \$50 Silver, \$75 Gold, \$100 Benefactor) feature various sponsor benefits including business listings in concert programs.

If you would like to sponsor The Rajun' Bull Band, please mail your check made payable to "Bloomingdale Band Boosters" to Bloomingdale Senior High School, 1700 East Bloomingdale Avenue, Valrico, FL 33594, Attention: Band Boosters. For more information, please call Band Booster President Lisa Rodriguez at 685-5472. ☺

Fifty-one Acres



The future of fifty-one acres on Bloomingdale Avenue adjacent to Bloomingdale Senior High School has yet to be decided. Can you envision a new community library and park complete with walking trails and picnic facilities? Developers continue to eye the site as a potential retail/shopping center. To date, rezoning requests have been denied, but more are sure to follow. Let our County Commissioner know what you would like to see next to our High School. Write to County Commission Ronda Storms at Hillsborough County Center, 2nd Floor, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL 33602 or phone 272-5660. Photo by Mack Austin. ☺

BHA web site up and running

BHA Web Site: www.CyberRails.com/BHA/
BHA E-Mail: BHA@CyberRails.com
Phone: (813) 681-2051

Bloomingdale residents are now able to access information about deed restrictions and county codes, the Bloomingdale Mobile Watch, BHA membership and other related information through the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association's new web site.

Residents are invited to visit the web site to access up to date community information, communicate via e-mail with the BHA and register to receive free e-mail updates about important issues affecting our community. We are continually adding new information to the site and hope to soon provide all deed restrictions available and archives of past Bloomingdale Gazette articles. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. ☺

Bloomingdale's Campo Family YMCA Update

By Mack Austin

Membership

YMCA personnel have received several calls about membership opportunities at Bloomingdale's Campo Family YMCA, currently under construction at the corner of Bloomingdale Avenue and Culbreath Road. A formal membership drive will be held as the construction progresses. Final stages of construction are expected to commence in the fall of 2000. YMCA Memberships are transferable. Current or new members of other YMCA facilities (including Brandon YMCA) can request a membership transfer to the new YMCA. For more information, call the YMCA at 685-5402.

YMCA Benefit Event

The annual Bloomingdale "Run and One Mile Fun Walk" to benefit area YMCA facilities will be held on Saturday, October 2, 1999 at Alafia Elementary School. Registration is at 7:00 am, the event begins at 8:00 am. The YMCA invites Bloomingdale residents to get a group together and come out for this fun event. For more information, call the YMCA at 685-5402. ☺

BHA establishes "Schools & Education Committee"

By Ted Grable, Bloomingdale Homeowners Association President

As residents of Bloomingdale, we are extremely fortunate to have our children attending outstanding schools. Committed administrators and teachers deserve much of the credit, but there is no doubt that parental involvement is key to the success of our schools and our children.

It is important that we become involved in our children's education by supporting and becoming active in our school's PTA or PTSA. The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association is prepared to help. Last year the BHA granted \$1,000 to support the charter year activities of Bloomingdale Senior High School's PTSA under the leadership of Diane Mosley.

The BHA is establishing a new "Schools & Education Committee" to work in cooperation with our schools on critical issues such as school boundaries, crowded classrooms and proposed block scheduling. Bloomingdale residents interested in participating on this committee are invited to call our voice mail at 681-2051 or e-mail BHA@CyberRails.com. ☺

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