

# the Bloomingdale gazette

Complimentary

Official Publication of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association • www.bha-online.com Volume XXI, Number 10



GOD BLESS AMERICA

## “They are all heroes”

-Shari Tolbert



Former Bloomingdale resident Vince Tolbert, 38 year old father of three, was killed in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack at the Pentagon. See page 5

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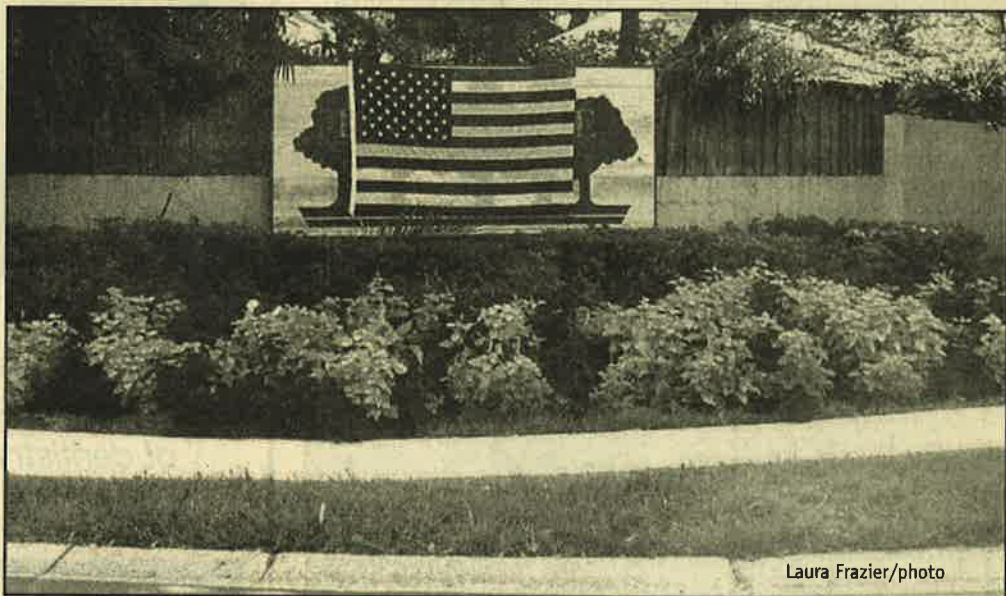
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Laura Frazier/photo

#### Community shows U.S. support

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks suffered by our country on September 11, 2001, American flags were displayed at all Bloomingdale entryways. Upon the suggestion of Bloomingdale residents Mike and Mary Bosler, the flags were purchased and installed in cooperation with the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Bloomingdale Special Taxing District and Gazette staff.

**Library Site:  
sound decision,  
family legacy**

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Task force aims to reduce local drug use, see page 6



**Your Inside Connections**

**The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.**  
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**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**  
 First Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.  
**Special Taxing District Meetings**  
 Second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

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**LETTERS**

Please send letters to The Bloomingdale Gazette, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594 or e-mail to frazier1@tampabay.rr.com.

**Bloomingdale Ridge Traffic**  
 "This is an open letter to Bloomingdale residents....Over the past year, there has been a lot of discussion regarding the Bloomingdale Ridge traffic problems that are centered in the area of Highlander, Northridge and Hickory Ridge. Many opinions have been heard regarding convenience, dangerous conditions, disbelief that there is a problem or placement of blame on the school traffic.

Three separate and objective traffic studies were conducted by the county to gauge the volume and speeds of traffic in the community. The results of these studies establish as fact that there is an extreme traffic problem in the neighborhood. During the school year, the volume is approximately 800 cars per day. During the summer, volume peaks at approximately 650 cars per day. The traffic studies also highlighted a significant speed problem in the community, with a number of vehicles traveling in excess of 55 mph on residential streets.

It is clear that the school drop-off change had a negative impact on the community. However, it is also clear that there is a volume problem independent of the school issue. County officials have repeatedly stated that these residential streets were built with the expectations of 200 cars per day. The volume during the summer months when school is not in session is three times the normal expected volume on these streets.

A number of residents have expressed concern that the traffic diversions proposed by the traffic calming hearing master will "split" the community of Bloomingdale Ridge. In my opinion,

physically connected streets do not make or break a community. A community is defined by the behavior of its residents and their concern for each other, not by the path of connected streets.

If the residents of Bloomingdale Ridge want to be a community in the true sense of the word, then all residents will be committed to identifying a solution that will resolve these issues, making a conscious choice to work together as mature and compassionate adults. It is my fervent belief that choosing to do nothing or choosing to expend energy to defeat a solution will, in fact, result in splitting the neighborhoods. The split might not be physical, but it will prevent us from becoming a true community.

I ask that the each resident of Bloomingdale Ridge look at the situation from various perspectives and honestly consider the two solutions that have been put on the table: gating the community or installing diversions recommended by the county.

Personally, I support the option of gating the community because travel within Bloomingdale Ridge would not be restricted, and the volume problem would be resolved. I believe that we can then better police ourselves to control any speeding problems that remain.

Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion as to which option is best, but we must come together as a mature and compassionate community to select one of the two proposed options. Cost or convenience is not the priority...safety and quality of life is."

- Beth Kalicki, Bloomingdale Ridge resident

See LETTERS on page 18  
 Also see related story CLOSE CALL on page 7

**"I ONLY TAKE MY PET TO ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER**



**ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER**

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Like the famous boxer this pup is a real fighter. This 70lb. eleven month old white Boxer pup is recovering nicely after being struck by a hit-and-run driver last month. That's when Dr. Antunano and his staff came into action. They saved our sweet Doo Doo's life. Doo Doo as he is affectionately called by the ones who know him, has a heart of gold. He loves everyone especially kids and baby animals. Just about every weekend this dog can be seen at Karen's Paws and Claws Pet Store greeting customers with sniffs and licks. This dog's love also extends to protecting the family and home, with a bark that can be mistaken for a small earthquake, there is no denying that this dog means business. Dr. Antunano, sporting a great tan, came off vacation to save Doo Doo. We will forever be grateful to him and his staff for treating our baby as one of their own. Doo Doo would like to thank everyone for their gift baskets, love and support. There will never be enough said about the great staff at Animal Medical Center. This is one lucky dog.  
 Thank you,

Doo Doo  
 Karen Caban & family

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## New school boundaries to be set this month

The Hillsborough County School Board this month will announce proposed attendance boundaries for the new Bloomingdale East elementary school slated to open for the 2002-2003 school year.

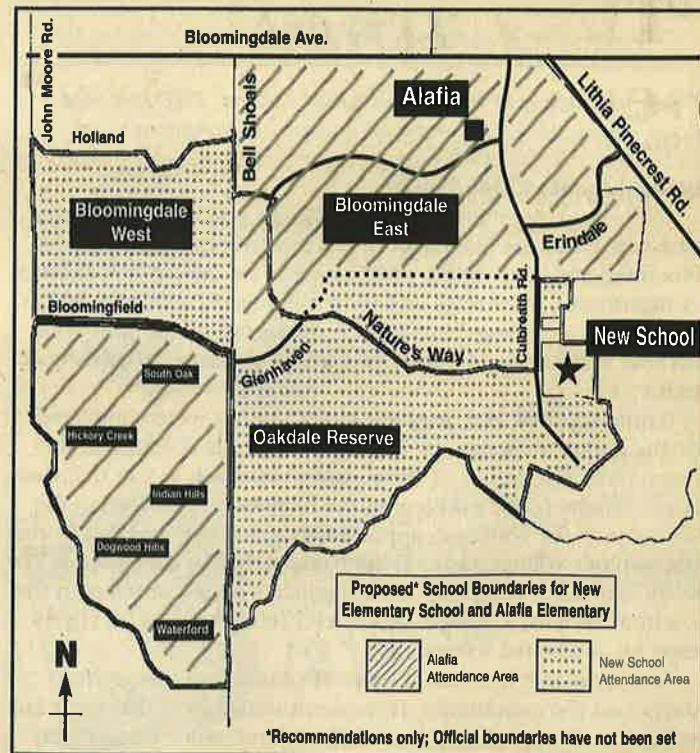
Parents will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed boundaries at public meetings to be scheduled in October.

If the plan scheduled to go before the public is approved, about 500 students presently attending Alafia Elementary, and 200 presently attending Lithia Springs Elementary (including Oakdale Reserve off Bell Shoals Road) would be assigned to the new school.

Under the recommended plan, Bloomingdale West students would attend the new school. Those students living south of Bloomingdale Ave. off of John Moore Rd. would be reassigned to Alafia.

Comments or questions can be sent to the school board's director of pupil assignment, Bill Person, at (813) 272-4091 or e-mail [williamperson@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:williamperson@sdhc.k12.fl.us).

Public meeting dates and times will be announced on [BloomingdaleOnline.com](http://BloomingdaleOnline.com).



### Volunteers Give BSHA A Boost

Bloomingdale Senior High School Athletic Booster Club volunteers Phyllis Chew and Mitch Collins peddled with pride a slew of BSHA memorabilia offered for sale at the school's open house held last month.



**BHA-Online.org**

## Llamas and Learning

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## "They are all heroes, every day"

- Shari Tolbert

By Laura Frazier

Former Bloomingdale resident Vince Tolbert, 38 year old father of three, was killed in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack at the Pentagon.

Otis Vincent Tolbert was stationed at MacDill Air Force Base from 1996 to 2000. The Tolbert family lived in the Bristol Green section of Bloomingdale East for four years.

When Tolbert was promoted and assigned last year to the Pentagon as a lieutenant commander in the Naval Intelligence Agency, the family relocated to Virginia. The couple rented out their Bloomingdale home, with plans to return to the community upon Vince's retirement.

The Tolbert's former neighbors and close friends, Kerry and Dean Chalk of Bloomingdale, drove to Washington D.C. last week to be with Shari, Vince's wife of 12 years, and the couple's three young children, nine year old Amanda, seven year old Brittany and 18 month old Anthony.

"Shari is holding up remarkably well. She is a pillar of strength," said Dean Chalk.

Chalk said Shari asked to relay a message to the community about the hero status being bestowed upon her late husband and his fellow military members who died in the attacks.

"Shari is grateful and proud to have Vince and the other military members who died in the attacks referred to as heroes. But



Shari Tolbert, wife of the late Otis Vincent Tolbert, is left to care for the couple's three children, from the left, Brittany, Amanda and Anthony.

her hope now is that we will acknowledge that they (our military forces) are all heroes, every day, every time they put on that uniform and walk onto a military base. They are protecting us every day," Chalk said.

He added, "Vince was one of the finest family men I have ever known. He was a true military man who also took his down time with his family very seriously. I've always had the highest respect for Vince and his leadership. He died doing what he wanted to do, which was defending his country."

Shari Tolbert said, "My husband was a man of utmost integrity who loved his family and his country." Friends and former neighbors can contact the Tolbert family through Kerry and Dean Chalk at (813) 654-9573 or [dchalk@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:dchalk@tampabay.rr.com).

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## Task Force Aims To Reduce Drug Demand

By Laura Frazier

A group of local residents and professionals hope to set in motion this year a "Drug Task Force" to reduce the destructive influence of substance abuse in our communities.

Bloomingdale resident Ellen Gates spearheaded the organization. The group held several preliminary meetings this summer to begin formulating goals, objectives and a plan to reduce the local demand for both legal and illegal drugs.

The meetings have attracted an impressive assembly of educators, parent and youth groups, law enforcement, church leaders, the medical community, neighborhood associations, government officials, and representatives of local libraries and the YMCA. Gates says the task force is committed to addressing the challenge head-on.

"Substance abuse is a big problem all across the nation that is wreaking havoc on our children, our families and our communities," said Gates.

"We want our message to be that our community cares for and believes in the positive potential of our youth. Research shows that parents are the first and most effective defense against drug use among our youth. We want to help raise awareness and involvement for parents and improve family communication."

Gates said the task force aims to reduce the demand for drugs by offering aggressive intervention programs to reach out to children and families.

"There are so many things going on in the world right now that we really have no control over. We can do something about this (substance abuse) problem."

Gates referred to recent news articles about a new breed of commonly used recreational drugs. Experts say the availability of the substances, also referred to as club drugs, is increasing rapidly as demand for the drugs grows.

"The task force is working with the belief that we can best stop the supply by intervening with the users and potential users, thereby reducing the demand for the drugs," said Gates.

Gates referred parents to a USA Today Online article and interactive presentation about "club drugs." The article can be found at [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com) under [/news/nation/2001/08/28/club-drugs](http://news/nation/2001/08/28/club-drugs).

"The drugs that are on the street today are much more potent and addictive than what parents may have been exposed to during their teen years. Many of these drugs are very dangerous and have the potential to cause brain damage and/or be lethal."

Gates added, "The reality is that club drugs, like any illegal substance, can be had anywhere in Hillsborough County in a matter of minutes. We need to reduce the demand in order to stop the availability of these drugs."

For more information about the drug task force, call Ellen Gates at (813) 681-9591.

## Close Call In Fox Run

By Laura Frazier

Bloomingdale Ridge residents say a near-miss traffic incident on Hickory Ridge Drive last month was only the latest mishap in a string of close calls.

Witnesses and law enforcement officials said last week's incident involved a Bloomingdale Ridge resident who was driving below the posted 25 mph speed limit. The driver reportedly braked just in time to avoid hitting a 10-year old boy who witnesses say dashed into the street between two parked cars. The driver and the child were shaken but uninjured.

Some frustrated residents have taken it upon themselves to document traffic incidents and repeat offenders, and have passed the records along to county and law enforcement officials. By resident Brenda Johnson's count, "There have been no less than 70 traffic-related incidents in Fox Run over the past year."

"My concrete mailbox has been demolished twice, and I've had to jump onto the grass to avoid speeding cars while I'm out trying to retrieve my mail," Johnson said.

Dozens of parked cars lined Hickory Ridge Drive on the day of the latest incident. Many residents routinely park their cars on both sides of the street in an effort to slow and reduce traffic.

But some Bloomingdale Ridge homeowners disapprove of the curbside parking practice, saying it adds to the existing traffic and safety hazards.

Bloomingdale area Sheriff's Deputy Pete Maurer said, "It's certainly legal for anyone to park their car on the street in front of



Residents say school traffic in and around Bloomingdale Ridge is only part of the larger traffic volume and speeding problem the neighborhood is experiencing.

their own home. Everyone understands (the residents') frustration; it's a very aggravating and dangerous situation. But by blocking or obstructing the road, you're potentially impeding emergency vehicle access. You're also reducing driver and pedestrian visibility on a very narrow road."

But some Ridge residents said police patrols of their neighborhood have been sporadic and have not resulted in citations for dozens of regular daily offenders.

Deputy Maurer said limited manpower does not allow daily

See CLOSE CALL on page 11



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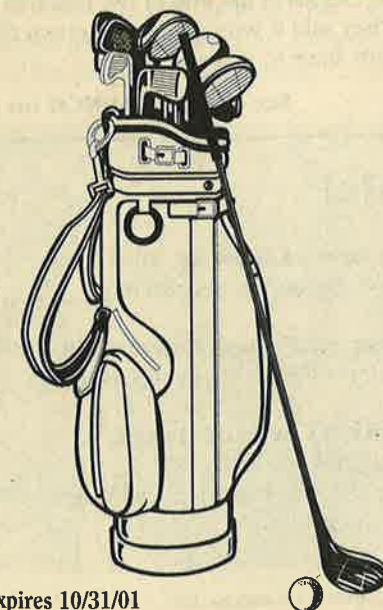
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## Library To Be Built On Bloomingdale Avenue

By Laura Frazier

It's official! The Hillsborough County Commission on Wednesday, September 5, voted unanimously to build the new South Brandon library on Bloomingdale Avenue, just east of Bloomingdale Senior High School.

The Hillsborough County Library Advisory Board, at an August 30 public meeting, reversed their previous recommendation to build the library on Lithia Pinecrest Road.

When the library board this summer announced their initial support of the Lithia Pinecrest site, BHA board members and Bloomingdale residents participated in public meetings and phone, fax and e-mail campaigns. Those efforts helped bring the community's viewpoints, and a long list of facts favoring the Bloomingdale site, to the forefront of discussions.

Library board members said several advantages to the Bloomingdale site influenced their decision, including property acquisition and construction cost estimates, site visibility and a more centralized location for the South Brandon neighborhoods the library was primarily designed to serve.

The majority of Bloomingdale residents participating in public meetings and community polls indicated a preference for the Bloomingdale location. The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association actively supported the chosen site.



BHA President Ted Grable

BHA president Ted Grable said, "I am very pleased that the commission accepted the library board's recommendation and approved the Bloomingdale Avenue library site. We are very fortunate to have county officials who are determined to look at all the facts before making a final decision."

"The Bloomingdale Avenue site represents both the best value for the tax dollar and the best location for a library. I have no doubt that, driven by this high visibility location, the new South Brandon library will quickly become one of the most used libraries in the county." Grable added, "I am always proud of the commitment and

involvement that our residents display when important civic issues arise. This strong sense of community is what makes Bloomingdale such a great place to live."

Construction of the \$3.5 million library is scheduled to begin in June 2003. The 10,000 square foot facility will eventually be expanded to 25,000 square feet. The library is slated to open in the fall of 2004.

## New South Brandon Library Volunteers Sought

Barbara Atteberry, coordinator of the Brandon Regional Library Friends of the Library volunteer group, says it's not too early to start organizing community support for the new South Brandon library slated to open in 2003.

Friends of the Library groups across Hillsborough County support their local libraries by hosting special programs and classes for children, families and seniors, holding book sales and fundraisers and working with library personnel to improve and expand library services.

Bloomingdale area residents who are interested in helping to form a Friends chapter for the new library are invited to call Barbara Atteberry at (813) 689-2884.

## No Funding, No Canoe Launch

By Mack Austin

After many long meetings and lots of waiting, the issue of the proposed canoe launch on the Alafia River, on south Bell Shoals Road, has met its match - no funding.

This project has been debated for over two years. It finally came down to a parks department request to fund \$67,500 annually to employ two rangers to patrol the Alafia from Bell Shoals Road to Alderman's Ford. Also included in the funding request were \$10,000 in start-up costs and \$30,000 in parking area construction and gate installation costs.

Many canoeists and the county parks department's advisory board supported the project, seeing it as a way to have a place to land and load their canoes at the end of the trail that begins at Alderman's Ford. They said it would have cut down the very long trip they currently have to make.

See CANOE LAUNCH on page 15

## Welcome to Bloomingdale!

Cameron Blake Roush, August 13, 2001  
Parents Amber Lindberg and Brian Roush

Kayla Ashlie Jenkins, August 6, 2001  
Parents Kirstin Benoit and Andrew Jenkins, Jr.

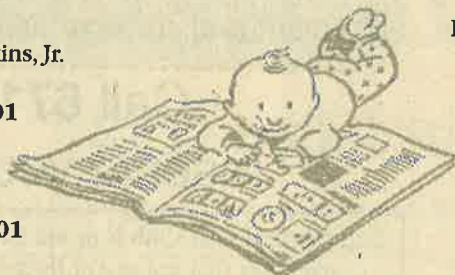
Richard Joseph Martin, August 15, 2001  
Parents Shari Bowers and Kevin Martin

Daniel Jackson Violette, August 31, 2001  
Parents Stephanie and Daniel Violette

Dylan Parker Brett, August 28, 2001  
Parents Debra and Robert Brett

Kaycee Faith Cunha, August 28, 2001  
Parents Nicole Pitts and Casey Cunha

Cierra Cheyenne James,  
August 14, 2001  
Danielle Marcellin and Antonio James



Site five on Bloomingdale Avenue was selected to be the site of the new South Brandon Library. Construction will begin in June 2003 with completion in the fall of 2004.

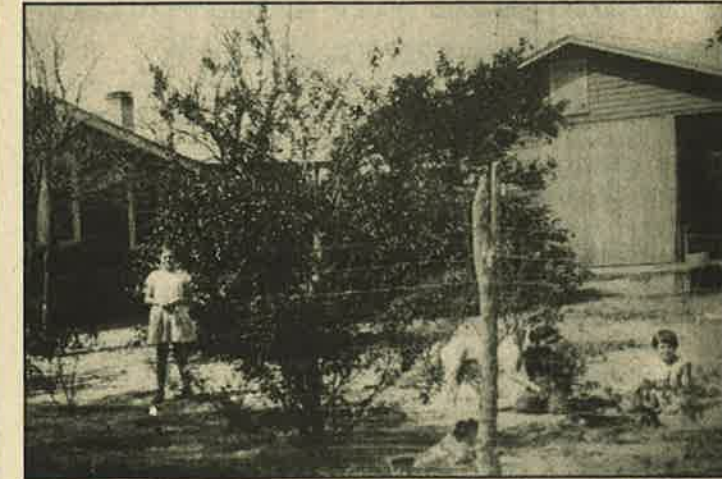
## Site Selection Ends With Sound Decision, Family Legacy

By Mack Austin

The final public meeting held last month to present the Library Board's choice of a site for the new South Brandon library was to say the least emotional. This is understandable when you consider how many years greater Bloomingdale area residents have waited for a library conveniently located to serve South Brandon and Valrico.

The final decision by the library board came down to the consideration of basic facts in favor of the Bloomingdale Avenue site, including the opportunity to purchase within 60 days a 7.3-acre site - well below the appraised value - at a cost of \$265,000. The site was determined to have necessary zoning in place and unrestricted space for parking. Library board members and the county commission said these factors and others, including high visibility and a location close to other community activities, made site five the best choice for the library.

Best known as site five, the land chosen is located on the east side of Bloomingdale High School. To most of our residents,



This home was built on the north side of Bloomingdale Road in the early 1990s. Photos courtesy of Candi Martin.

it is just another pasture or large open acreage soon to be developed.

Candi Martin, a member of the family who owns the selected property, was among those local residents attending the meeting last month.

The site selection was certainly a business deal for Martin and her family, but she said, "This long process has been very emotional for all of us."

Martin added, "Several members of our family settled here (on the site five property) over 120 years ago. We would like to leave a legacy to them. Having a library on this land would definitely be a legacy to them."

"My great grandfather, John Noel McLean (1880) and my grandfather, Jesse McLean (1916) worked and farmed this land. Having a library built on it would be something that families and generations to come would use to further their learning, to enjoy reading, and to be involved in special community projects."

The site selection process ended last month with a sound decision for South Brandon and Valrico residents, and a wonderful legacy for one of our community's earliest homesteading families.



Jesse and Jennie McLean, left, began working and farming the land next to Bloomingdale High School in the early 1900's.



Standing in the middle of this photo are Mr. and Mrs. John Noel McLean, the great-grandparents of the current property owners.



## Bloomingdale Fire Department Open House On October 6

By Fire Chief Jeffrey Hazzard

In an effort to promote fire safety awareness and family escape planning, the Bloomingdale Volunteer Fire Department will hold an Open House on Saturday, October 6, 2001, to coincide with National Fire Prevention Week. BVFD Station 27 is located east of Lithia Pinecrest Rd. at 4705 East Bloomingdale Ave.

We plan to have a lot of fun during this year's event, complete with station tours, games for the children, complimentary food and drinks, educational displays and materials, the Blood Mobile, and equipment and extrication demonstrations.

The BVFD has been protecting the Bloomingdale and Valrico communities since 1973. In that time, the department has moved three times and has always been respected and loyally supported by its neighbors in the community. The department responds to over 1,000 emergency calls each year, as part of the Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Service.

The BVFD is strictly a volunteer organization, and is chiefly supported by the generosity of local organizations and individuals to provide the



funds necessary to keep the department operating at its current level of service.

The coordinator of this year's event is Firefighter Ron Campbell, who can be reached at (813) 310-7599.

## Support The BHA

Annual dues notices were mailed last month to each resident in the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association membership area.

The BHA represents over 40 Bloomingdale neighborhoods and 4,500 homeowners. Our voice speaks loudly to county government, schools and developers. Your continued support ensures that, as a Bloomingdale resident, your voice will be heard.

The annual \$20 voluntary dues provide the sole financial support of the association's efforts.

Over the course of the next year, the association will continue to support deed restriction enforcement through the development of neighborhood teams. In addition, we will increase cooperative efforts with Hillsborough County government officials to insure that Bloomingdale remains a great place to live. For more information, or if you have not received your dues notice, call the BHA at (813) 681-2051 or visit BloomingdaleOnline.com.

## October 27 Is National Make A Difference Day

By Mack Austin

After the recent tragic events that ripped at all of us, America needs those who care to show they care.

On Saturday, October 27, 2001 thousands of Americans will dedicate a day to help their neighbors, spruce up their neighborhoods, clean up their environments, read stories to the lonely, care for the neglected and, in doing so, make a difference in the lives of others.

Make a Difference Day is a unique program that inspires and rewards volunteers. Volunteers coordinate special projects and enter them in competition for national and local awards and cash donations to charitable causes. The program is sponsored by USA Weekend magazine and INKINDEX, an online inventory exchange business.

Mary Ann Hunsberger, a Bloomingdale resident and Tampa police officer, is planning another award winning program like the one she organized last year to help a Bloomingdale family with thirteen kids get settled into their new home. The success of the program proved that teamwork makes the difference.

For more information on how to get involved and help make a difference, call (813) 276-3341.



CLOSE CALL from page 7

patrols of any area. In addition, a catch-22 situation occurs when deputies are stationed in the neighborhood.

"In the presence of uniformed officers and marked vehicles, traffic slows down and everyone behaves themselves. It's a universal occurrence that as soon as we leave, (the offending drivers) resume their reckless driving habits."

The Bloomingdale Ridge Homeowners Association met with county officials last month to discuss possible traffic calming measures. The group agreed to apply for the construction of traffic diversions near at least two problem intersections.

The circular or triangular diversions consist of raised islands that create a partial roadblock and restricted turns. Association president Steve Williams said the group hopes to have the filing process completed by the end of this year. If the petition is approved by the county and by 75% of the homeowners residing on the affected streets, construction of the diversions could take an additional six to eight months.

The association is considering hiring an off-duty deputy to monitor and direct traffic on Hickory Ridge Drive until permanent traffic control measures are completed. Homeowners Valerie and Chip Larson are among those residents who park their cars in the street to restrict speeding.

Valerie Larson said, "We don't want to inconvenience anyone, but this is a major safety issue. Something needs to be done now, not six months from now." The Larson's walk their 8-year-old son Ryan around the block to Alafia Elementary School each day.

Chip Larson takes the traffic situation very personally. When he was Ryan's age, he was hit by a car with a reckless driver at the wheel. He nearly lost a leg. "I don't want Ryan, or any other child, to go through the pain and anguish that I did," Larson said.



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## PROPERTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Report for the month of August 2001  
By DPMI Property Management, Inc.  
President Al Devney, (813) 684-6617

**Irrigation:** Thunder Irrigation relocated 13 spray heads in the Allwood system and added several rotors to the Erindale system. Brandon Irrigation moved a valve on the John Moore system, located and repaired a valve on the Natures Way system, replaced a defective valve and repaired three main line leaks on the Erindale system, replaced defective timers on the John Moore and Gotham systems and replaced 10 defective rain sensors. DPMI replaced 41 spray heads and 4 rotors and repaired 9 risers, 2 zone lines and 2 solenoids and replaced 26 light bulbs.

**Landscaping:** Neighborhood Pest Control treated the 41 acres of grass with Lesko 24-12-11 with Talstar and the bushes with Lesko 14-2-11. Greenturf finished the palm tree trimming. Camarra Landscaping removed some old and dead landscaping on Lithia Pinecrest and installed pittosporum, crepe myrtles and yellow lantana. Communities of America and Davidson Landscaping removed the old landscaping at the Tyndale and Gotham entrances and installed burford hollies, Indian hawthorns, liriope and yellow lantana and trimmed the Ligustrum trees.

**Other:** Russell Electric repaired the lights at the John Moore and Garnet entrances. DPMI installed new liners in the trash receptacles, painted all the well heads and removed the defaced builders signs from the directory on Culbreath, and contacted several vendors for prices on Poinsettias, Christmas bows and holiday lighting. Verizon was requested to remove the utility

pole on Culbreath and Allwood and TECO to repair the damage caused when they installed a new pole on Bell Shoals. Communities of America cleaned the wall on Garnet, Canoga Park and Rosemead of dirt, mildew and iron stains.

**Eat, Drink and Pitch Out The Window:** Mr. Devney picked up 19 bags of litter, a traffic cone, a tablespoon, a fork, a knife, two socks, a towel and 37 cents. The beverages of choice were Coke for soft drinks, Miller Genuine Draft for beer and Bacardi Rum for distilled spirits.



DPMI President Al Devney

### Brandon League of Fine Arts Third Annual Golf Tournament

The Brandon League of Fine Arts Third Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, October 25, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. at Buckhorn Springs Golf and Country Club, 2721 South Miller Road in Valrico.

All proceeds from the tournament will fund the Fine Arts Scholarship program established for Brandon area high school seniors who plan to continue their education in the arts.

Cost is \$65 per player and includes greens fees, cart, range balls and a buffet dinner. "Dinner only" tickets are available for \$20. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. A social hour will be held at 5:30 p.m. followed by a 6:30 p.m. dinner.

For information, contact Henry Kendrick at (813) 754-8656 or Pat Harbison at (813) 754-9777.

## Gun Buy-Back Program Aims For Safety

By Mack Austin

Many Bloomingdale area residents showed their concern for safety last month by exchanging their unwanted firearms for store coupons during the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department "Cease Fire 2001" gun buy-back program.



Deputy Maurer and Deputy Alexander examine a rifle turned in at the Cease Fire 2001 program.

The purpose of the program is to remove firearms that could present possible dangers to children and others. All firearms that were collected will be destroyed.

Volunteers who collected unwanted firearms last month included Sheriff's Deputies, Firearms Instructors, Community Service Officers, Evidence Officers and Bloomingdale Area Community Council members.

The program's sponsors - Winn-Dixie and Beall's department store - provided coupons that were exchanged for guns. Food and beverages for the staff members working the program were provided



Mack Austin/photos

Officers Jackie Johnson of Progress Village, left, and Sandy Capitano of Bloomingdale examine a rifle with Bloomingdale Area Community Council member Paul Hooper.

courtesy of Beef O'Brady's, Villa Rina, Subway, Wal-Mart, Rainbow Food and residents Dennis and Marsha Hall.

A single mom participating in the program at the Bloomingdale Community Station said, "I just wanted to get these guns out of the house, away from my three young kids."

A young father commented, "My boys are too important to me to take the chance of something happening."

A Granddad was very serious, saying, "My grandkids come over a lot and I don't want these guns where they can get to them."

## Financial Workshop for Individual Investors

A 3 week course is being offered to assist individuals in setting financial and investment goals. This class also will provide a summary of the most common investments used by individuals in reaching their objectives. Classes meet one night per week.

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**Time:** Thursday from 6-7:30 pm

**Place:** Bloomingdale/Valrico Edward Jones office

Call (813) 681-1462 to reserve a seat. Seating is limited and will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Some of the topics this course will cover include: Cash Management, IRA's and Business Retirement Plans, Portfolio Asset Allocation, Setting Realistic Financial Goals



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## Wheels in motion for new bike park

By Laura Frazier

A group of Brandon and Riverview BMX enthusiasts hope to unite county, private and corporate interests to create a world-class bicycle racing park in southeastern Hillsborough County.

Hundreds of children and young adults participate in local BMX competitions. The cross-country bicycle races are held on specially designed courses with rough terrain and challenging obstacles.

But the biggest obstacle for families of local racers is the travel distance to official BMX tracks. The closest course available for riders to practice and compete is over 20 miles away at Lake Park in North Tampa. Tina Russo, Hillsborough County Parks Department Trail Manager, is working with members of the local BMX circuit to bring the sport closer to the south county area.

"Bicycle Motocross is a great sport for kids. It's a very physical activity that the kids love and the families get very involved in," said Russo.

"But it's tough when you have to load up the kids and the bikes and spend two hours on the road just getting to and from the track."

The parks department has identified a possible site for the bike park that Russo said looks almost too good to be true.

"We're looking at five acres on the north end of the Balm/Boyette scrub area in Lithia. The land is county-owned and wide open."

Even though the site is remote enough to avoid zoning conflicts near existing residential neighborhoods, Russo said potentially expensive utilities are already in place. In addition, the land has an

existing buffer around it, and some old building foundations on the property might be salvageable, all factors that could save the BMX group thousands of dollars in start-up costs.

Preliminary costs to build the basic facilities and a practice track are estimated at just over \$20,000.

If approved by county commissioners, the facility would operate similarly to a little league field. The land would remain the property of Hillsborough County, and the BMX organization would be responsible for construction, operations, maintenance and insurance.

The American Bicycle Association last month pledged to support the new facility if it is approved. The BMX group hopes to break ground on the bike park this fall. Additional support in the form of grants, donations and volunteers is still needed.

"We'd like to partner with other compatible groups to pool our funding resources," said Russo.

Lake Park in Tampa, in addition to BMX racing, offers a radio-control car track, an archery range and an equestrian center for handicapped riders. Maintenance and operations costs of the park are shared by the various organizations that use it.

An avid cyclist and member of the Florida 2012 Olympics advisory committee, Russo is excited to help lay the tracks for what she hopes will be a popular multi-use facility of Olympic proportions.

In addition to the new BMX course, Russo said the site would be ideal for a velodrome, an oval track with banked sides used in Olympic bicycle racing events.

"The site we're looking at would be ideal for a velodrome, inline skating, bicycle safety programs, and the list goes on. The possibilities are endless."

For information about the local BMX group or racing, call Mike Gottesman at (813) 685-2453.

## Web Site Welcomes Local Business Sponsors

By Rodney Biddle



BloomingdaleOnline.com is opening the doors to business sponsors to help fund the expansion of Bloomingdale's official community web site.

A timely, reliable source for news specific to our area, BloomingdaleOnline.com brings community issues to the forefront of discussion. Special features on our site make it simple for residents to become proactive on local issues that affect their homes, children, neighborhoods and lives.

With nearly 700 Bloomingdale residents on our broadcast list, we are able to reach the community quickly and effectively.

Our goal is to expand the website into an internet welcome center for Bloomingdale, offering information on the community, realtors and businesses in the area. The site has been sponsored and maintained, largely unfunded, by CyberRails.com since 1999.

We are currently seeking sponsors to allow us to bring new content to the site, and to list the site on major internet search engines.

A sponsorship example can be found in the "Area Restaurants" section, sponsored by TampaBayMenus.com, which provides easy access to Bloomingdale area restaurants and their menus. Similar sections could be set up for realtors to list their properties by MLS numbers or refer readers to their own web

site. We also plan to introduce a new section containing special product or service offers from Bloomingdale area businesses and restaurants.

Sponsorships range from as little as \$25/Month. For more information on becoming a sponsoring business with Bloomingdale Online, contact Rodney or Deborah Biddle at CyberRails.com by phone at 813-661-8860 or by e-mail at Info@CyberRails.com.

### CANOE LAUNCH from page 8

However, many residents who live along the river voiced concerns about security and increased traffic around the proposed site. A similar area was closed because of vandalism and unsecured activity along the river. And with the tremendous growth taking place in FishHawk, and future plans for construction on Bell Shoals, any increase in traffic would cause another point of congestion.

For now residents can breathe a sigh of relief and canoeists can plan their next step. Meanwhile, the Alafia continues to quietly flow.



This proposed canoe launch access was turned down last month due to a lack of funding.

## How 'Bout That! Non-surgical cancer screening

### Why not go to dental school?

I almost always dedicate this article to some aspect of dentistry that my patients have told me about. Today, I'm going to depart from that approach and base my discussion on dentistry as a rewarding profession.

I believe that more young people would find the field of dentistry fascinating if they knew more about it. Associating the practice of dentistry only with "looking in someone's mouth all day" or "having to give shots" is no consideration at all.

I cannot do justice to this topic in the few words I must limit myself to here. But just consider these ideas.

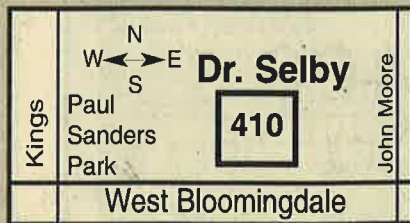
1. A dental education is no more difficult than that involved in becoming an engineer, a physician, an attorney or a myriad of other professions.
2. It costs about the same as other professions.
3. Depending on post-graduate studies, it requires about the same number of years.
4. You could own your own business.
5. You could be your own boss.
6. Dentistry as a profession can be both emotionally and financially rewarding.
7. There are many specialties that allow you to tailor your profession to your personal interests.
8. Dental technology is rapidly advancing. We can do things today unheard of 30 years ago.

We have hard and soft tissue lasers, special materials for cosmetics, special techniques and medicaments for prevention, implants, and all kinds of computer applications in treatment.

I hope I've tweaked some interest in a young woman or man out there who might be searching for a great future to check out. The picture in dentistry has never been brighter.

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## BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY SUBSTATION NOTES – OCTOBER, 2001

The Bloomingdale Community Substation is located at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenhaven Drive, in the Village Center Plaza. Station hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Deputy Maurer can be reached at (813) 635-8040.



By Deputy Pete Maurer and Officer Sandy Capitano

### Unnecessary Tragedy

Last month the Bloomingdale Community suffered the tragic loss of a mother and son due to the selfish actions of an irresponsible driver. Speeding and running a red light were more important than taking the few moments to wait at the traffic light. There is absolutely no explanation that justifies this type of driving. We ask that everyone driving in and around our community take the time to drive responsibly and carefully. For the innocent, there are no second chances.

### Truancy Patrols

Many incidents of students skipping school have been reported. Hillsborough County Sheriff's deputies have been assigned special duty to patrol the Bloomingdale area, escort the offenders to school and call their parents. Deputies are patrolling the usual hangouts like shopping centers and fast food businesses. Other favorite hangout areas are being identified and will receive special attention, including Crosswalk Church and Cade Lane, both located across the street from the high school.

### Special Landscaping Project

A special meeting of Bloomingdale residents with an interest in the landscaping plans for the area around the new park west deputy's residence was held last month. Jeff Mauch, Parks Maintenance Unit II supervisor, presented drawings of the current plans. Residents now have an opportunity to be actively involved in this project. The drawings are available for viewing at the Culbertson Recreation Center.

### Halloween Safety

Parents, please be sure that your children are prepared for their Trick or Treating activities. Make sure they are escorted, have flashlights, wear light colored or reflective costumes and have their treats checked before eating them. Many groups are offering alternative fun programs. Check them out too. Make it a safe Halloween! Deputies will be patrolling for any "trickers".

### Child Seat Check At Alafia On October 12

By Mack Austin

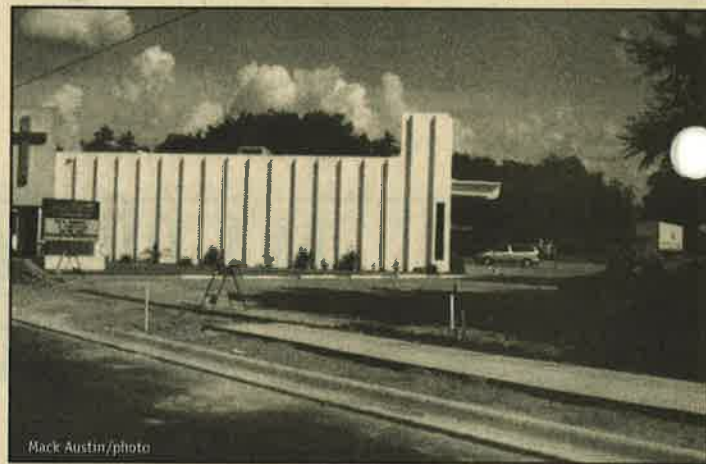
National Childhood Injury Prevention Week is observed this month, but childhood safety must be an every day priority. Your children depend on you to keep them safe. It's true that you can't watch them every minute, but you can secure them in a correctly installed child seat and set the right example by using your own seat belt.

The Tampa Police Department and members of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office will provide free child car seat installation checks at Alafia Elementary's school fair on Friday, October 12 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. The fair is open to the community.

Mary Ann Hunsberger, a Bloomingdale resident and Tampa police officer, works with specially trained volunteers in helping parents select and properly install child safety seats.



These flowers serve as a sad reminder of what happens when drivers get in a hurry and put the lives of others in danger. No amount of time is worth this price. Everyone must slow down.



Patrols are being increased at several Bloomingdale area hangout spots popular with students skipping school, including Crosswalk Church and Cade Lane, across the street from the high school. Parking is no longer allowed at the church.

Hunsberger said the number one killer of children under the age of ten is motor vehicle crashes. The sad fact is that up to 71% of these deaths could be prevented if the children were riding in correctly installed child seats.

In addition to checking seats for proper installation, professionals at the fair will provide free information and literature on selecting child seats and booster seats. For information or to volunteer to help with the program, please call (813) 276-3341.

### Child Car Seat Weight Limits

Infants should be in rear-facing seats until at least 20 pounds and one year old. Children over the age of one and between 20 and 40 pounds can be in forward-facing seats or in rear-facing convertible seats if the child has not reached 20 pounds. Children ages four to eight (about 40 to 80 pounds) should be in a booster seat and restrained with lap and shoulder belts every time they ride. All children under 12 should ride in the back seat.

## New Alafia Crosswalk

Deputy Pete Maurer would like to remind both pedestrians and drivers to pay special attention to the newly enhanced crosswalk just west of Alafia Elementary. Pedestrians and bikers, please watch carefully for cars, and cross only at the crosswalk. Drivers, the speed limit at this crosswalk is twenty miles per hour. Watch out for children walking and biking in this area. It is on a curve so SLOW DOWN!

## County planning future transportation projects

### Special Bloomingdale Meeting On October 16

Hillsborough County's Metropolitan Planning Organization recently received the results of their countywide survey regarding our area's future transportation needs. Members of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council were among over 60 community groups who took part in the survey.

The MPO is now seeking public input on the choice of transportation projects to fund. A special community meeting will be held for residents of the greater Bloomingdale area on Tuesday, October 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Culbertson Recreation Center in Bloomingdale West. This is our opportunity to take part in planning the future transportation projects funded by Hillsborough County.

A public hearing is scheduled for November 13, 2001.



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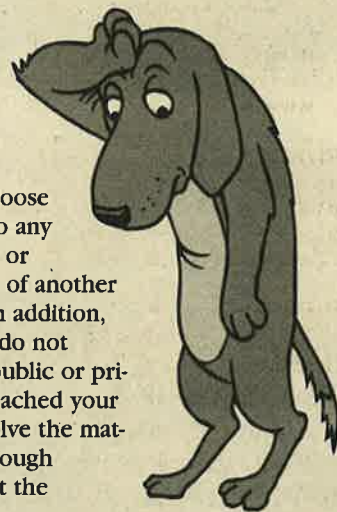


LETTERS from page 3

Trespassing Pets

"My neighbor's dogs are constantly loose on my property, and they often leave calling cards behind. Can the homeowners association do anything about this?" - A Bloomingdale West resident

County ordinances prohibit loose dogs and cats from straying onto any public property, street, sidewalk or park, or on the private property of another person without their consent. In addition, there are fines for owners who do not remove their pet's waste from public or private property. If you have approached your neighbor and are unable to resolve the matter amicably, please call Hillsborough County Animal Control to report the problem at (813) 744-5660.



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