



D'ANN WHITE/Photos

Flanked by fellow members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board, President Ted Grable accepts the 2003 Neighborhood Recognition Award for Best Beautification Program.

Bloomingdale Receives, Gives Kudos

By D'ANN WHITE

It may have been the members of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board who accepted the 2003 Hillsborough County Neighborhood Recognition Award for Best Beautification Program.

But the credit, said BHA President Ted Grable, goes to the hundreds of residents who embraced Bloomingdale's new cleanup program with an enthusiasm none of them imagined.

Members of the BHA

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From left, Shelley Blood of the Office of Neighborhood Relations and Jeff Mauch and Clayton Weaver of the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department's Maintenance II Unit accept Bloomingdale's first Good Neighbor awards.



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Resident earns honors in Middle East

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National miniature golf tournament comes to town see page 16

Bloomington Steps Up Enforcement Program

By D'ANN WHITE

On the heels of winning Hillsborough County's 2003 Neighborhood Beautification Award, the Bloomington Homeowners Association board of directors is stepping up efforts to clean up and improve the 5,000-home community.

At the September homeowners association meeting, director Cheryl Kehrmeyer announced that the PRIDE committee is now meeting on the third Monday of each month and has invited county code enforcement officers to speak on what constitutes code violations at the Oct. 20 meeting at 7 p.m.

As part of the effort to maintain the community, Bloomington volunteer inspectors are being trained to recognize county code violations and deed restriction violations, and then fill out the appropriate paperwork. Bloomington's various neighborhoods have 35 different sets of deed restrictions, said Kehrmeyer. There are currently five volunteer inspectors and the BHA is looking for additional volunteers.

The effort is part of a countywide program called the Neighborhood Involvement Program. Bloomington has actually had the program in place for years and is currently the only community in the county successfully carrying out the NIP program, according to BHA President Ted Grable. For that reason, Grable was asked to speak on the program at the Florida Association of Neighborhoods conference in Sarasota last month.

Complaints about code enforcement violations are sent to the BHA office. The complainant remains anonymous. A volunteer then visits the property and, if a violation is determined, the property owner is sent a letter. When the property owner hasn't responded after three letters, the BHA reports the violation to the county's code enforcement department. The BHA has only had to call on that last resort a handful of times this year.

Most of the residents, said Grable, are willing to comply. Some, he said, weren't even aware they were in violation. In hardship cases, he said the BHA is willing to work with the property owner to get them help. The BHA is looking into getting involved in the Paint Your Heart Out program to help paint the homes of elderly residents on fixed incomes. In addition to training volunteers, the BHA is sending letters to all owners of rental property in Bloomington educating them about the PRIDE program and the need to keep their rental properties well maintained. The BHA has identified 170 possible rental properties in the community.

"We're just informing them that we're setting the bar, and we have expectations for the upkeep of their properties," said Kehrmeyer. The PRIDE committee is also making plans for its next community cleanup Nov. 15. "The last cleanup in September went great," said Kehrmeyer, noting that residents filled three Dumpsters with discarded household and lawn items. "And I think we'll even get more support now that we've won this beautification award." "We had a constant flow of people coming to throw stuff away," said BHA Vice President Joe Hickle. "And everybody who came said they really appreciate what we're doing. By the end of the year, we want every house in Bloomington to have had the opportunity to participate."

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Bloomington Area Community Council Report

By MACK AUSTIN

The Bloomington Area Community Council is made up of residents from homeowners associations in the Bloomington area who work directly with Bloomington Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer, Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano and other local government representatives to coordinate the resolution of community issues and concerns.

The BACC meets monthly (the third Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Sheriff's Community Substation on Bell Shoals Road) to discuss issues that have been brought to the attention of a council member, Maurer or Capitano.

Participation and input from residents is needed to improve the quality, safety and security in Bloomington's neighborhoods.

At the September BACC meeting, members discussed the following projects:

Illegal parking at Alafia Elementary School — Parents are asked to help insure safety around the school by obeying the "No Parking" signs.

Speeding in neighborhoods - Residents from several neighborhoods are working with the county's Traffic Calming Program to reduce speeding traffic.

The Bloomington Little League, the YMCA and the county are working together to address the need for an enhanced crosswalk at Bloomington Avenue and Culbreath Road.

The BACC is also looking into the installation of a three-way stop at Culbreath Road and Natures.

Growth and Construction

The BACC is keeping an eye on proposed development at John Moore Road and Bloomington Avenue as well as two projects under way on John Moore.

It is also monitoring plans for a residential/business village proposed for the property east of Bloomington High School as well as development at Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bloomington Avenue, including the relocation of Bloomington Medical

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MACK AUSTIN/Photos

The project to construct a sewer line to FishHawk Ranch is in full swing. The project begins near Stein Mart on Lithia-Pinecrest Road and moves down Erindale Drive, turns south on Culbreath Road and then goes under the Alafia River. To accommodate the project, the southbound lane of Culbreath Road from Bloomington Avenue to Timber Grove Drive and the westbound lane of Erindale Drive from Lithia-Pinecrest Road to Culbreath Road will experience road closures through Dec. 12.

Traffic safety

The sheriff's office has increased patrols for drivers running red lights. Special new "white lights" have been installed at intersections like Bell Shoals Road and Bloomington Avenue to help catch speeders.



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Hillsborough County Sheriff's Deputy Patti Morris, left, and Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano accept donations for the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office's Car Seat Safety Program from Bloomington Wal-Mart's manager, Ul Carreas.

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 E-mail: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@Verizon.net
 Web Site: www.BloomingdaleGazette.com
 BHA meetings are at the community office on the 1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

- President — Ted Grable
- Vice President — Joe Hickie
- Treasurer — Pam Liguori
- Director — Tony Diolosa
- Director — Steve Heckel
- Director — Cheryl Kehrmeyer
- Director — Michele Caballer
- Director — Billy Hightower
- Director — Jane Lee
- Director — Stanley Lee
- Director — Lydia Harrod

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594
 (813) 684-6667
 BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

President — Thom Snelling

- Vice President — Russell Jones
- Treasurer — Dale Kahn
- Recording Secretary — Alice Burleson
- Correspondence Secretary — David West
- Trustee — Myron Magedanz
- Trustee — Michael Buday
- Property Manager — Al Devney

Bloomingdale Mobile Watch Coordinator/Equipment Manager —

- Tony Diolosa, 681-1146
- Treasurer — Paul Kelmer, 681-9701
- Patrol Member — Steven Heckel, 654-4266
- Patrol Member — Brad Scharp, 643-5000
- Patrol Member — Paul Warr, 685-7883



Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132. (813) 685-2817
 BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

- President — Bill Grace
- Treasurer — Fred Englehart

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Meet Your Neighbors

Lydia and Layne Harrod

By D'ANN WHITE

It's not as if Lydia Harrod didn't have enough to do.

When the single mom isn't working full time as a paralegal, she's chauffeuring her 14-year-old daughter, Layne, to soccer games, school functions and Navy Sea Cadets activities.

In between, she teaches religion classes at St. Stephen Catholic Church, helps Metropolitan Ministries feed the hungry on holidays and volunteers for the American Heart Association.

An avid gardener in whatever spare time she can squeeze in (she says gardening relaxes her), Harrod has been raising money for the heart association's Nov. 1 Heart Walk by selling roses

from her garden to businesses around her workplace.

So it's not really surprising that she hesitated a bit when Bloomingdale Homeowners President Ted Grable approached her to become a BHA director. She didn't really need to add another duty to her busy schedule.

But her hesitation was short-lived.

Interested in the welfare of the community she has called home for 13 years, the Sandy Creek Drive resident has attended numerous homeowners association meetings. She said she was both impressed by the work the association does and the commitment of its members.

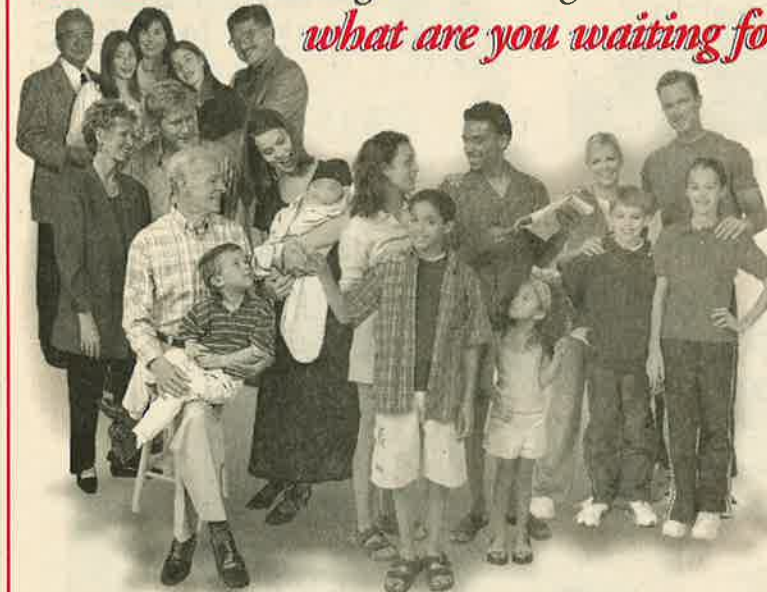
"The BHA is so strong and does such good things," said Harrod. "I have a very high regard for the BHA and taxing district board, and Al Devney (Bloomingdale's property manager)."

See NEIGHBOR, Page 22



Mother and daughter Lydia and Layne Harrod share a love of animals. In addition to their two dogs, Wally, on the floor, and Gabby, on the ottoman, they have two cats and a parakeet.

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Bloomingtondale Community Substation Notes

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER AND OFFICER SANDY CAPITANO

Truancy patrols

Several incidents of students skipping school have already been reported to the Sheriff's Office. Hillsborough County sheriff's deputies have been assigned special duty to patrol the Bloomingtondale area, pick up these truants, take them to school and call their parents. These deputies know the usual hangouts like the shopping centers and fast-food businesses. Other "favorite hangout areas" are being identified and will receive special attention and patrols. Two of these are near Bloomingtondale High School. One is the church across from the school, out front and in back, and also Cade Lane, just past the red light by the entrance to the school.

Students, just go to school. You need the education.



MACK AUSTIN/Photos

Several "hangout spots" for students playing hooky from school have been identified in the Bloomingtondale area. One is the Crosswalk Christian Community Church where parking is no longer allowed. Another is Cade Lane, just across from the school. These and other hangouts are receiving additional patrols.

Halloween safety — just treats, not tricks

Parents, please take the

time to discuss the importance of being safe during Halloween.

What used to be a day and evening of fun activities has become dangerous and requires special caution. Insure your children are prepared for their trick or treat-

ing activities.

Follow these safety tips:

1. Make sure your children are escorted.
2. Have them wear light colored or reflective costumes that are flame-resistant.

See STATION, Page 21



Florencio A. Nadal, M.D., F.A.A.P.
Mark Kanarek, M.D., F.A.A.P.
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The new "white lights" help deputies monitor dangerous intersections like Bell Shoals Road and Bloomingtondale Avenue.

Yard Of The Month

If Kathy Bussell's home at 25 River Close Blvd. in Bloomingtondale East seems to attract more than its fair share of colorful, fluttering creatures, there's a reason.

A nature lover, Bussell has intentionally designed her landscape with hummingbirds and butterflies in mind.

Since moving to Florida from Ohio in March 2002, Bussell, whose husband, Ken, is director of credit operations for Rooms To Go, has planted butterfly favorites like pentas, Mexican petunias and lantana along with plants with red flowers designed to attract hummingbirds — shrimp plant, firecracker bush, red salvia, firebush, cigar plants and jatropha.

Bussell said she became interested in hummingbirds while like in Corpus Christi, Texas, America's hummingbird capital. There she learned to create a brew of sugar water and place it in



Photo by Kathy Bussell

Hummingbirds flock to Kathy Bussell's East Bloomingtondale home where she has installed feeders and cultivated plants specifically to attract the miniscule birds.

hummingbird feeders to attract the tiny birds. Although Florida isn't directly in the path of the hummingbird migration like Cor-

pus Christi, she has found the concoction works equally well in her Bloomingtondale yard where several hummingbirds can be spotted flit-



In the year she has lived on River Close Boulevard, Kathy Bussell has filled her yard with a variety of native perennials designed to tempt butterflies and hummingbirds.

ting from pentas to the feeders she has set up throughout her yard.

The key, said Bussell, is to regularly clean the feeders and replace the sugar water. Otherwise, in Florida's humid climate, the feeders will attract black fungus and can make the birds sick.

"It's a commitment if you're going to create a hummingbird habitat," she said.

If you would like to nominate someone for Yard of the Month, contact D'Ann White at dwhite2@mediageneral.com.

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Fire Rescue Officials Report On Ammonia Leak

By MACK AUSTIN

Homeland Security is a very real concern in this day and time. Major news networks continue to report biological or chemical threats. And residents recently discovered there are some very real chemical threats in their own communities.

When an anhydrous ammonia pipeline near Fish Hawk was breached in May by a thief trying to steal the ammonia, many residents realized for the first time that they have a potentially deadly chemical running through their own neighborhoods.

To both educate residents on the presence of the pipelines, the dangers associated with them and, most importantly, the measures in place to handle any emergency, representatives of Hillsborough County Fire Rescue and other agencies met with residents at New-



Capt. Ron Rogers, Hillsborough County special operations chief, third from right, was on hand with professionals from Hillsborough County Fire Rescue special units including Station 9's Hazardous Incident Team (HIT-9) and Station 11's Heavy Rescue Team.

some High School.

Capt. Ron Rogers, special operations chief, and Chief Wade DeHate from Hillsborough County Fire Rescue briefed those in attendance on the details of the May incident.

DeHate and Rogers, along with representatives from the Emergency Planning Committee and Tampa Bay Pipeline Co. covered what steps have been taken since the incident. Representatives from the Hillsborough County School Safety Office and Fire Rescue explained measures in place for handling future emergencies. The representatives from the School Safety Office and Steve Porter from Hillsborough County's Emergency Management gave details on the current status of using schools as shelters in emergencies.

DeHate noted that May's incident was the largest release of anhydrous ammonia in the history of Hillsborough County - 60 tons. Hillsborough County Fire Rescue personnel and Sheriff's Office deputies remained on scene for more than 34 hours and used more than 600,000 gallons of water to contain the breach. Tampa Bay Pipeline, which maintains the ammonia line, did reimburse Hillsborough County for expenses incurred during the incident.

DeHate also presented information on the pipeline. It is one of two owned and operated by Tampa Bay Pipeline. It is 6 inches in diameter, approximately 30 miles long and carries liquid anhydrous ammonia from a

storage facility in Port Sutton to chemical manufacturing facilities in Hillsborough and Polk counties.

He noted that using the pipeline is much safer than having trucks carry the chemical on roads throughout the county. Nevertheless, new measures have been taken to improve security along the pipeline.

Of special interest to residents including Bloomingdale residents is the fact that the pipeline runs along Lithia-Pinecrest Road, Fish Hawk Boulevard and Boyette Road, and along Bloomingdale Avenue to U.S. 301, then west to the holding tanks on Hillsborough Bay.

But DeHate said Hillsborough County's Fire Rescue personnel are well trained, well equipped and prepared to respond quickly to emergencies involving the pipeline.

Residents should also become educated on what steps they should take in an emergency. Information on "How to Shelter in Place" can be found in Verizon phone books. Professionals from the Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) are available to speak to groups such as schools, churches, civic organizations and homeowners associations. Call the EOC at 272-6900.

Zoning Hearing Master To Review Proposal Oct. 7

By D'ANN WHITE

The Bloomingdale Avenue property that was once targeted for a Target store is going before the Hillsborough County zoning hearing master once again.

But this time, said Bloomingdale Homeowners Association President Ted Grable, the developer has a proposal that's much more palatable.

GBT Realty Corp. is requesting a Traditional Neighborhood Development overlay on a 43-acre parcel on the north side of Bloomingdale Avenue east of Bloomingdale High School, next to where the county is constructing the South Brandon Regional Library.

The property currently is designated on the county's future land use plan for four residential units per acre.

GBT Realty, based in Nashville, Tenn., previously wanted to build a Target on the property but the area is not designated in the county's land use plan for so-called big box developments.

Instead, the company is proposing a kind of town village similar to what is being constructed by Brandon attorney John Sullivan at Winthrop on Bloomingdale Avenue and Providence Road.

The development would include shops and a mix of residential in a village square type of setting with the library integrated into the site plan.

Grable said the BHA, which fought the construction of a Target, feels this downscaled development is more in keeping with other development in the Bloom-

ingdale area.

County project manager for architectural services Israel Grajales, who has been working on plans for the South Brandon library, said he's been in touch with the developers to make sure that their two projects are compatible.

Grajales said the developer plans to construct an entrance on Lithia-Pinecrest Road, which will give library patrons additional access.

The hearing master is scheduled to hear the proposal Oct. 7 and then the rezoning request is scheduled to go before the county commission Nov. 18.

In the meantime, residents living along John Moore Road are keeping a close eye on plans to develop the woods on the southwest corner of John Moore and Blooming-

dale Avenue.

Residents have successfully fought development on that 35-acre parcel twice before, citing concerns about traffic and compatibility.

This time, land use attorney Vin Marchetti has filed a request for an 11,000-square-foot drug store, 12,000 square feet of retail, 12,775 square feet of office space along Bloomingdale Avenue and 50 homes on John Moore Road.

Resident Jeanette Figari, who was active in the fight against the other rezoning proposals on the property, said she believes the request is still too dense.

"That will still generate a lot of traffic at that intersection that's already too dangerous," she said.

The proposal is scheduled to go before the zoning hearing master Dec. 15.

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Bloomingtondale Plans Next PRIDE Cleanup

By CHERYL KEHRMEYER
BHA Director

Have you noticed that Bloomingtondale's neighborhoods are improving each day? Do you have questions about your neighborhoods deed restrictions? Do you want to be a part of Bloomingtondale's Neighborhood PRIDE Program (People of Bloomingtondale Revitalizing, Improving, Developing and Enjoying our great community)?

Please join us for our next monthly Neighborhood PRIDE meeting Monday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m., and continuing on the third Monday of each month. You can bring your questions or comments on this new neighborhood-improvement program — and any concern related to deed restrictions and code enforcement — to the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association community office. (The

Monthly Meeting of Bloomingtondale Neighborhood PRIDE

Monday, Oct. 20 from 7 to 8 p.m.

Everyone is welcome!

Bloomingtondale Communitywide Cleanup Day

Saturday, November 15th, 9 am - 3 pm

office is located at 3509 Bell Shoals Road, behind SunTrust Bank.)

This month, we will have a speaker from the Hillsborough County Code Enforcement Office to discuss code enforcement in the Bloomingtondale community. (Note: the monthly board of directors meeting of the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association is held the first Monday of each month.)

If you missed our last com-

PRIDE Good Neighbor Tip

Please support the BHA and the many community services it provides by paying your annual dues. The 2003 dues drive is going on now. Help us continue to help our Bloomingtondale community.

communitywide cleanup day Aug. 16, be sure to mark your calendar for our next one Saturday, Nov. 15. We will have a disposal site at the Hillsborough County Parks Department Maintenance Unit II on Natures Way (just west of Alafia Elementary School). Volunteers from the PRIDE Program and Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department employees will assist you in getting unwanted items into the bins.

We also will implement the Neighborhood PRIDE Program in six more neighborhoods. These sections are: BB (River Crossing), FF, L (Fairway Manor), M, O, and W (Augusta Village). The streets for these sections are as follows:

Section BB - River Crossing
Alafia Oaks Drive
Dumont Drive (1606 to 2018)
Oak Arbor Lane
Oak River Circle
River Crossing Drive
River Meadow Court
River Park Court

Section FF:
Cameo Crest Lane
Elm Grove Lane
Spring Way Circle

Section L - Fairway Manor:
Clarion Drive
Hanover Hill Drive
Holleman Drive
Nittany Court
Polumbo Drive
Scovill Drive

Section M:
Bell Grande (3801 to 4038)
Braun Way
Callista Avenue
Dunaire Drive
Haney Court
Holleman Drive
Kristin Place
Letona Lane
Santee Way
Turnbury (3901 to 3907)

Section O:
Carrie Wood Drive
Ellenville Place
Havenstone Way
Lornewood Drive
Monte Lake Drive
Section W - Augusta Village:
Arley Place
Buckner Road
Dumont Drive (1401 to 1604)
Elba Place
Elton Place
Lukow Place
Midoneck Court
Monte Lake Drive
Oak Arbor Lane
Queensbury Avenue

Through this Neighborhood PRIDE Program, the BHA's goal is to have volunteers in each neighborhood helping the BHA to implement the program in all Bloomingtondale's 40 sections by the end of 2003. We invite you to attend our monthly Neighborhood PRIDE meetings so you can see how the BHA and you can work together to help your neighborhood. (We will provide volunteers with a PRIDE Resource Manual that includes tips and ideas on forming a neighborhood team, organizing volunteers and implementing neighborhood-based community improvement projects. Additionally, we will talk about being good neighbors, deed restrictions and county code compliance.

Volunteers are still needed. For more information on the Neighborhood PRIDE Program, including upcoming meetings and how you can help, call the BHA office at 681-2051 (or send e-mails to Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net Attention: PRIDE Coordinator). We look forward to hearing from you, and helping you improve your neighborhood.

Property Manager's Report

By AL DEVNEY

Irrigation

Brandon Irrigation replaced a damaged timer for the Rosemead system and repaired a broken valve and two spray heads in the Bloomingtondale Village system.

Thunder Irrigation repaired a leaking main line at the Rivercrossing entrance.

During the monthly maintenance inspection, there were two rotors and 20 spray heads replaced and 10 risers repaired. Additionally, there were 42 floodlights replaced.

Landscaping

DPMI installed 60 jasmine

plants to fill in the gaps along Springvale, removed a vandalized crape myrtle tree at Oak River and hosted the lawn maintenance pre-bid meeting (14 contractors were eligible to bid on the new lawn maintenance contract).

Planscape Inc. installed 27 live oak trees along Natures Way.

Greenturf has fluffed all of the beds and installed new mulch as required by the contract.

Other

DPMI sealed and painted a section of wall on Greenholow to cover the graffiti, called Hillsborough County to have a sign installed at Orangecrest and Greenholow, called to have a malfunctioning school signal at Hickory Ridge repaired and called to have a large hole on Canoga Park filled in.

I completed the inventory of landscaping in the east and west. The area is 6 square miles with 43 acres of mowed grass that is 17.2 miles in length and has 619 oak trees, 255 crape myrtle trees, 405 palm trees, 3.1 miles of creeping fig and 122,848 feet of landscape beds.

Russell Electric replaced a defective light sensor at the Big Pine entrance.

Another expensive dog is missing in the area. (an English bulldog was swiped from the back yard of a Bloomingtondale home). This is the second stolen dog within a month. Please notify the

sheriff's office is your pet disappears.

There was a car versus palm tree at Erindale and Gotham. The tree won.

In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, I picked up 20 bags of litter, a 3-gallon water bottle, a yellow ball, a small yellow duck, a blouse, a towel, two 10-foot fluorescent bulbs, two tennis balls, a golf ball and 4 1/2 cents. The beverages of choice were Diet Coke for soft drinks, Budweiser for beer and Old Grand Dad for distilled spirits.

Al Devney is Bloomingtondale's property manager and president of Devney Property Management. He can be reached at 684-6667.

What's your next move?

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Tuesday, October 14, 2003

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During this free program, we'll also discuss:

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- The value in dividend-paying investments; and
- How capital gains changes may affect your decisions.

To reserve a seat for you and a relative or friend, please call or stop by. If you are unable to attend this free video program, please contact our office for other viewing opportunities.

Tuesday, October 14, 2003
11:30 AM



Dan Sammons, CLU
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Bloomingtondale Plans Next PRIDE Cleanup

By CHERYL KEHRMEYER
BHA Director

Have you noticed that Bloomingtondale's neighborhoods are improving each day? Do you have questions about your neighborhoods deed restrictions? Do you want to be a part of Bloomingtondale's Neighborhood PRIDE Program (People of Bloomingtondale Revitalizing, Improving, Developing and Enjoying our great community)?

Please join us for our next monthly Neighborhood PRIDE meeting Monday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m., and continuing on the third Monday of each month. You can bring your questions or comments on this new neighborhood-improvement program — and any concern related to deed restrictions and code enforcement — to the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association community office. (The

Monthly Meeting of Bloomingtondale Neighborhood PRIDE

Monday, Oct. 20 from 7 to 8 p.m.

Everyone is welcome!

Bloomingtondale Communitywide Cleanup Day

Saturday, November 15th, 9 am - 3 pm

office is located at 3509 Bell Shoals Road, behind SunTrust Bank.)

This month, we will have a speaker from the Hillsborough County Code Enforcement Office to discuss code enforcement in the Bloomingtondale community. (Note: the monthly board of directors meeting of the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association is held the first Monday of each month.)

If you missed our last com-

PRIDE Good Neighbor Tip

Please support the BHA and the many community services it provides by paying your annual dues. The 2003 dues drive is going on now. Help us continue to help our Bloomingtondale community.

communitywide cleanup day Aug. 16, be sure to mark your calendar for our next one Saturday, Nov. 15. We will have a disposal site at the Hillsborough County Parks Department Maintenance Unit II on Natures Way (just west of Alafia Elementary School). Volunteers from the PRIDE Program and Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department employees will assist you in getting unwanted items into the bins.

We also will implement the Neighborhood PRIDE Program in six more neighborhoods. These sections are: BB (River Crossing), FF, L (Fairway Manor), M, O, and W (Augusta Village). The streets for these sections are as follows:

Section BB - River Crossing
Alafia Oaks Drive
Dumont Drive (1606 to 2018)
Oak Arbor Lane
Oak River Circle
River Crossing Drive
River Meadow Court
River Park Court

Section FF:
Cameo Crest Lane
Elm Grove Lane
Spring Way Circle

Section L - Fairway Manor:
Clarion Drive
Hanover Hill Drive
Holleman Drive
Nittany Court
Polumbo Drive
Scovill Drive

Section M:
Bell Grande (3801 to 4038)
Braun Way
Callista Avenue
Dunaire Drive
Haney Court
Holleman Drive
Kristin Place
Letona Lane
Santee Way
Turnbury (3901 to 3907)

Section O:
Carrie Wood Drive
Ellenville Place
Havenstone Way
Lornewood Drive
Monte Lake Drive
Section W - Augusta Village:
Arley Place
Buckner Road
Dumont Drive (1401 to 1604)
Elba Place
Elton Place
Lukow Place
Midoneck Court
Monte Lake Drive
Oak Arbor Lane
Queensbury Avenue

Through this Neighborhood PRIDE Program, the BHA's goal is to have volunteers in each neighborhood helping the BHA to implement the program in all Bloomingtondale's 40 sections by the end of 2003. We invite you to attend our monthly Neighborhood PRIDE meetings so you can see how the BHA and you can work together to help your neighborhood. (We will provide volunteers with a PRIDE Resource Manual that includes tips and ideas on forming a neighborhood team, organizing volunteers and implementing neighborhood-based community improvement projects. Additionally, we will talk about being good neighbors, deed restrictions and county code compliance.

Volunteers are still needed. For more information on the Neighborhood PRIDE Program, including upcoming meetings and how you can help, call the BHA office at 681-2051 (or send e-mails to Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net Attention: PRIDE Coordinator). We look forward to hearing from you, and helping you improve your neighborhood.

Property Manager's Report

By AL DEVNEY

Irrigation

Brandon Irrigation replaced a damaged timer for the Rosemead system and repaired a broken valve and two spray heads in the Bloomingtondale Village system.

Thunder Irrigation repaired a leaking main line at the Rivercrossing entrance.

During the monthly maintenance inspection, there were two rotors and 20 spray heads replaced and 10 risers repaired. Additionally, there were 42 floodlights replaced.

Landscaping

DPMI installed 60 jasmine

plants to fill in the gaps along Springvale, removed a vandalized crape myrtle tree at Oak River and hosted the lawn maintenance pre-bid meeting (14 contractors were eligible to bid on the new lawn maintenance contract).

Planscape Inc. installed 27 live oak trees along Natures Way.

Greenturf has fluffed all of the beds and installed new mulch as required by the contract.

Other

DPMI sealed and painted a section of wall on Greenhollo to cover the graffiti, called Hillsborough County to have a sign installed at Orangecrest and Greenhollo, called to have a malfunctioning school signal at Hickory Ridge repaired and called to have a large hole on Canoga Park filled in.

I completed the inventory of landscaping in the east and west. The area is 6 square miles with 43 acres of mowed grass that is 17.2 miles in length and has 619 oak trees, 255 crape myrtle trees, 405 palm trees, 3.1 miles of creeping fig and 122,848 feet of landscape beds.

Russell Electric replaced a defective light sensor at the Big Pine entrance.

Another expensive dog is missing in the area. (an English bulldog was swiped from the back yard of a Bloomingtondale home). This is the second stolen dog within a month. Please notify the

sheriff's office is your pet disappears.

There was a car versus palm tree at Erindale and Gotham. The tree won.

In the land of eat, drink and pitch out the window, I picked up 20 bags of litter, a 3-gallon water bottle, a yellow ball, a small yellow duck, a blouse, a towel, two 10-foot fluorescent bulbs, two tennis balls, a golf ball and 4 1/2 cents. The beverages of choice were Diet Coke for soft drinks, Budweiser for beer and Old Grand Dad for distilled spirits.

Al Devney is Bloomingtondale's property manager and president of Devney Property Management. He can be reached at 684-6667.

What's your next move?

You're Invited..
Tuesday, October 14, 2003

Are you taking a "wait and see" approach to investing? If so, please join us as we discuss the potential cost of waiting and examine how many investors are moving carefully back into the market.

During this free program, we'll also discuss:

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- The value in dividend-paying investments; and
- How capital gains changes may affect your decisions.

To reserve a seat for you and a relative or friend, please call or stop by. If you are unable to attend this free video program, please contact our office for other viewing opportunities.

Tuesday, October 14, 2003
11:30 AM



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Bloomingtondale Park Improvements In the Works

By D'ANN WHITE

Working with the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association, the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department has taken its first steps to spruce up the Bloomingtondale East Park at 3902 Natures Way.

The park is among four county parks targeted for improvements in an effort to make the county's non-programmed parks more user-friendly, according to John Brill, parks spokesman.

BHA director Lydia Harrod has agreed to chair the BHA's parks and recreation committee, serving as a liaison between the residents and the county. She said she's been surveying residents and parks staff to get input on what measures can be taken to improve not only Bloomingtondale East Park but also the Bloomingtondale West Park,

What improvements would you like to see the county make to Bloomingtondale East and West parks?

Send your comments to the BHA, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, 33594, or e-mail Bloomingtondale.Homeowners@Verizon.net.

which is a programmed park, meaning it has county staff and programmed activities.

"Bloomingtondale East is one of four county parks that will be getting special attention during the next year," she said.

"This is our chance to tell the county what kind of park we'd like to have. We could use improvements at both parks, but Bloomingtondale East, I think, is a really needy park."

She said complaints about the park range from a lack of shade to pervasive fireant hills.

"The fencing's in poor condition, it needs shrubs and plantings, the parking lot is

unkempt, the fencing is in poor condition and the color of the handball courts is depressing," said Harrod.

BHA President Ted Grable said he'd like to see improvements at both East and West parks.

"Both are completely inadequate for a 5,000-home community," he said. "Both parks are in bad shape but East is abysmal."

BHA volunteer Joe Liguori said a complaint he's heard about East Park is that it isn't child friendly. There are no walkways for strollers to reach the play area. And the play apparatus is insufficient.

Last month, Liguori met with Jeff Mauch and David Fountain of the parks staff to discuss the BHA's concerns.

"We agreed that we wanted to concentrate on Park East," he said. He said the

county plans to paint the handball courts, repair the parking lot and fences, replace the picnic tables and build a new shelter, add wheelchair- and stroller-accessible sidewalks, upgrade the children's play apparatus and the restrooms, add an electrically cooled water fountain and install new landscaping and grass.

In addition, the county plans to hook into the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District's irrigation wells and install a sprinkler system at the park, so landscaping can be maintained. Liguori said that work already is under way.

Once the improvements are made to Park East, Harrod said the BHA will concentrate on upgrading Park West.

Items on the wish list for that park include replacing the tennis court fencing, lighting for the basketball, tennis and racquetball courts, more clay and better grading on the softball field to prevent flooding, adding picnic shelters with grills and designating a dog walk area.

Santa To Visit With Bloomingtondale Children

News Report

Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their 15th annual visit to Bloomingtondale to meet with the community's children and hear Christmas wish lists.

The jolly couple will be at the Bloomingtondale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Dec. 13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Last year, more than 100 residents met with Santa and Mrs. Claus, bringing with them hundreds of cans of food earmarked for local charities.

In exchange for a donation of canned goods, children were treated to a free photo with Santa, courtesy of the Bloomingtondale Homeowners



Association. Santa and Mrs. Claus are currently seeking volunteer elves to help with the effort. Any teenagers interested in obtaining community service hours can contact the BHA at 681-2051.

Government Conducts Raccoon Study In Bloomingtondale

A Gazette Report

A United States Department of Agriculture wildlife services team consisting of wildlife biologist Heike McConnell and wildlife technician and Bloomingtondale resident Daniel McMahan conducted a raccoon density study in Bloomingtondale East Oct. 1-10.

The study site encompassed a 1.14-square-mile area bordered by Bell Shoals Road to the west, Bloomingtondale Avenue to the north, Blowing Oaks Street to the east and the northern quarter of the Bloomingtondale Golfers Club to the south.

A total of 50 live cage traps were used at 25 locations.

The purpose of the study, according to McMahan, was

to determine the raccoon population within a suburban ecosystem to better distribute Raccoon Oral Rabies Vaccine (ORV) baits in February. Also included in the study was the collection of blood and a primary 1 molar from each raccoon to determine whether the animal has been exposed to the rabies virus during its lifetime.

These samples do not determine if the raccoon has rabies but only if there has been a previous exposure to the virus.

The samples will be sent to and analyzed at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta.

Other data taken was hair for genetic studies, weight, sex and whether the raccoon was mature or a juvenile.

Each raccoon was then tagged with two numbered metal ear tags.

There were 62 raccoons captured along with several gray fox and opossum. All were released at point of capture without any harm.

McMahan said the study is important because the cost of rabies in America is growing, exceeding \$300 million per year.

"Rabies is one of the oldest known viral diseases yet today it remains a significant wildlife management and public health challenge," said McMahan. The CDC reports that wildlife currently accounts for more than 90 percent of the reported cases of rabies in the United States.

To address the problem, the Florida Department of

Health and other state, federal and local partners initiated the program to vaccinate wild raccoons in the central western region of Florida, which has proven successful in Pinellas County.

ORV baits are distributed over a large area in February using fixed and rotor wing aircraft and ground crews. The study conducted by the USDA officials in Bloomingtondale will help determine where to drop the bait, said McMahan.

"A special thanks to all the homeowners who participated in the study and especially the Bloomingtondale Golfers Club staff which provided the team access to the golf course and a shady location to gather data from captured raccoons," said McMahan.

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Athlete Reaches New Heights

By MACK AUSTIN

Chelo Canino, a 2000 graduate of Bloomingdale High School, is a state of champion athlete in the pole vault. Now in her senior year at Princeton University, she hopes to inspire all athletes, male and female, to reach their goals and become even better athletes.

Question: When did you start your track career?

Answer: I started running track as an eighth-grader at Burns Junior High. I ran the 300-meter race. I then ran cross-country as a freshman-junior at Bloomingdale High. I first pole-vaulted in my sophomore year.

Question: Why pole-vaulting?

Answer: As a cross-country/distance runner I was mediocre. I was tired of running and, every time I ran around the track, I passed the pole vault pit and kept

noticing how much fun the pole vaulters were having. As a freshman I begged the coaches to let me try, but they kept saying "No." So, that summer I went to a pole vault camp at the University of Florida. I had found my goal and dream.

Question: Who coached you?

Answer: With no coaches for pole vault at the school, I went from one pole vault camp to another, trying to get better.

At the end of my sophomore year, I was very fortunate to meet Mike Lawryk, a coach with the Vertical Assault Pole Vaulting Club in Vero Beach, and I kept traveling there to train. Another coach at Vertical Assault, Dave Watson, also helped me. He now coaches in Brandon/Valrico and I highly recommend him. He can be contacted at david.watson@sdhc.k12.fl.us



Parents Chelo and Luis Canino display the poster of their daughter, Chelo, pole-vaulting at the National Pennsylvania Track Relays.

Question: How many other girls pole-vaulted on the team with you?

Answer: At Bloomingdale, there were three female pole-vaulters. One was Katie Morgan who is now at the University of Florida. She got me started in the sport and was a great source of support.

Question: When did you first start feeling confident about pole vaulting?

Answer: The summer between my sophomore and junior years I really worked hard. I trained all summer and got very focused, which is a very key factor in vaulting. I went to a meet in December of my junior year feeling very confident but nervous and only jumped 10 feet. But then at the next meet in Reno, Nev., I got over the nerves and hit 11 feet 4 inches, winning the Pole vault Summit.

Question: Do you get discouraged? How do you handle it?

Answer: Sure I did. It's a very rough sport. I would train and train and prepare and then not do so well. When you don't perform well, you start re-evaluating your goals and abilities. I'd wallow in self-pity for a short time and then get on with training. I knew I could do better.

Question: What are your future goals?

Answer: Obviously, to reach new heights and jump as high as I can for my abilities. You do have to be realistic in this sport. I know I can't

vault forever and so I'm also looking at going on to business or law school.

Question: What advice would you give young athletes and particularly female athletes who would like to or are vaulting?

Answer: You can do anything you set your mind to do so long as you believe in yourself, work very hard, learn all that you can from others and your day will come.

Question: Where do you get your motivation?

Answer: Everywhere, from other people, songs, books, magazines, anything that will either put or keep me in the right frame of mind. You can find a way to make it motivating in some way. I think that motivation is one of, if not the, most important parts of sports. If you're not motivated, it's very difficult to pole-vault.

Question: Any final comments?

Answer: Yes, thanks. I have been very fortunate in life. I have wonderful parents and siblings who support me no matter what. I have truly great friends who each helped me along the way. I have had very knowledgeable coaches. I have been blessed with a body that has stayed healthy. There will always be a special place in my heart for my hometown of Valrico, my high school, and the people in the Bloomingdale community. I wish all of the athletes the greatest of successes.

Mystery Unfolds In Bloomingdale East

By D'ANN WHITE

Normally, getting booted is nothing to brag about. But residents living along Lornewood and Carrie Wood drives in Bloomingdale East not only enjoy it, they look forward to it.

A mysterious tradition that began last year has been spreading through the neighborhood this Halloween season.

Carrie Wood resident Sharrie Whelan said she didn't know what to think when a pumpkin bucket filled with treats appeared on her doorstep with a spooky poem and instructions. She'd been "booted."

And as the recipient of the "boo," she was instructed to place a "boo" sign on her front door and then place buckets of treats on the doorsteps of

two more neighbors.

"I didn't know what it was at first," said Whelan, who received her bucket a week before Halloween. "But after I read the poem and instructions, I couldn't wait until I could boo other neighbors."

Since then, residents throughout the neighborhood have been sneaking into one another's yards at night to "boo" them. The buckets, she said, contain everything from candy to packages of cider and popcorn.

"It's a lot of fun," said Whelan. "It's a great way to spread the Halloween spirit and bring your neighborhood closer together. You see people out walking at night looking at front doors to see who has and hasn't been booted."

Lornewood resident Nancy

See MYSTERY, Page 18



The Whelan family proudly displays their "Boo" sign on the front door of their Carrie Wood Drive home.

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CALENDAR

From page 10

Alafia daughters

The Alafia River Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution will meet at First Baptist Church of Brandon Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. The speaker will be Derek Maul, writer and educator, whose topic will be "How Coming to America Has Made Me a Lifetime Learner." Call: Linda Soloski, 681-9024.

Sisterhood

The Campo Family YMCA will present Divine Secrets of the Well Women's Sisterhood each Tuesday and Thursday from 6 to 7 p.m. Nov. 4 to Dec. 16. The cost is \$35. This is a motivational fitness class for small groups of women who want to workout and see results. Call 684-1371.

MYSTERY

From page 17

Pursino, also a boo victim, said she has no idea who began the tradition. "Nobody's supposed to know who booted who," she said. "That's part of the fun. It's a mystery." "Some people, who didn't put their boo signs on their door right away, have even gotten double booted," said

Whelan. Whelan liked the idea so much, she took the idea to work at the sheriff's office where they've begun placing secret boos on each other's desks. "I can't wait until next year," she said. "I'd love to see it spread to other neighborhoods."

Hanging out

The Campo Family YMCA will present Middle School Madness Nov. 8 and Dec. 13 from 7 to 10 p.m. This is a chance for middle school students to head to the YMCA for a night of dancing, cosmic rock climbing and just hanging out. The cost is \$4 for facility members and \$6 for guests.

Red Kettle bells

St. Andrew's United Methodist Church members will once again ring the bell and collect donations at the Bloomingdale Publix Nov. 14 to Dec. 24 for the Salvation Army and the Red Kettle program. St. Andrew's is also partnering with Grace Community United Methodist Church (FishHawk) to ring the bell at the new Publix on Lithia-Pinecrest Road south of Bloomingdale Avenue. Call: Sean McHale, 643-5157.

PRIDE

From page 12

Cameo Crest Lane
Elm Grove Lane
Spring Way Circle

Section L - Fairway Manor:
Clarion Drive
Hanover Hill Drive
Holleman Drive
Nittany Court
Pulmo Drive
Scovill Drive

Section M:
Bell Grande (3801 to 4038)
Braun Way
Callista Avenue
Dunaire Drive
Haney Court
Holleman Drive
Kristin Place
Letona Lane
Santee Way
Turnbury (3901 to 3907)

Section O:
Carrie Wood Drive
Ellenville Place
Havenstone Way
Lornewood Drive
Monte Lake Drive

Section W - Augusta Village:
Arley Place
Buckner Road
Dumont Drive (1401 to 1604)
Elba Place
Elton Place
Lukow Place
Midoneck Court
Monte Lake Drive
Oak Arbor Lane
Queensbury Avenue

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WASTE

From page 12

East County Collection Site
County Road 579, quarter mile north of Interstate 4, Exit 10
Third Saturday of each month

Household electronics collections (no household chemicals will be accepted)
Limit: five items

East County Collection Site
County Road 579, quarter mile north of Interstate 4, Exit 10

Acceptable materials include: televisions, VCRs, computers (CPUs, laptops, monitors, keyboards, hard drives, printers), microwaves, cell phones, power supplies, other small household appliances.

For more information, call the county at 272-5680 or visit the Hillsborough County Web site at www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/c www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/cesqg.html for commercial/business hazardous waste collections.

Green Boutique Plans Expansion

By D'ANN WHITE

Following the rezoning of their property on Bloomingdale Avenue in September, the Creager family, owners of The Green Boutique, are now negotiating with restaurants that might be interested in relocating to Bloomingdale.

The Creagers received approval to build up to 52,000 square feet of commercial on their 6.6-acre property east of Bell Shoals Road.

Roz Creager said they had no difficulty getting approval for the planned development since it is actually less intense than what it was originally zoned.

"Since this is a down zoning from a gas station and car wash, they (county staff) are very happy about the proposed changes and less intense use in the area," said Roz Creager.

Creager said they plan to



Photo courtesy the Creager family
Roz Creager accepts the Brandon/South Hillsborough Unit of the American Cancer Society's Volunteer of the Year award at a recent banquet.

construct a new 5,000-square-foot Green Boutique and antique shop featuring a special section for Brighton accessories, one of the more

popular lines she sells at the boutique.

In addition, Creager would like to have a restaurant and a salon and spa on the prop-

erty. She plans to have 15,000 square feet available for lease.

The Creagers have owned the property for 26 years, beginning their business with The Green Boutique Nursery and later expanding to home accessories, collectibles and antiques.

Longtime residents, the Creagers are active members of the community. Cimino Elementary School is named for Roz Creager's father, Dick Cimino, also a longtime community activist. And Creager herself was recently named the Brandon/South Hillsborough Unit of the American Cancer Society's Volunteer of the Year. She's president-elect of the unit, active in the society's Relay for Life and raised more than \$17,000 for the unit during her June race for honorary mayor of Brandon.

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Orchid Business Is Blooming

By MACK AUSTIN

Everyone's heard the phrase, "Take time to stop and smell the roses."

But there's another fragrant flower people might want to take time to smell: the orchid.

Bloomingtondale now has its own orchid shop, Angie's Orchid Barn, 3322 Lithia-Pinecrest Road, Suite 3. Its owner, Angie Irwin, is a knowledgeable orchid lover whose enthusiasm for this flower is contagious.

Irwin first became interested in orchids as a young girl in Thailand.

"I watched my mother grow many different types of flowers," she said. "The one I remembered as being one of the most beautiful with the sweetest fragrance was the orchid. I bought my first orchid back in 1970.

Irwin said she decided to open her own shop after her children were nearly grown.

"I love to watch things grow and take care of them, so I decided to take my love and passion for orchids and do something I really enjoy. Watching others getting excited about their orchids blooming is really nice."

Since opening her shop at the northwest corner of Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bloomingtondale Avenue, Irwin said she's seen interest in orchids grow among residents. "Interest is definitely growing," she said. "As more folks find out about orchids and how to grow them, they keep coming back and bringing friends."

Contrary to popular belief, said Irwin, orchids aren't difficult to care for.

"If you can grow houseplants, you can grow orchids," she said. "Just like any other plant, they need the right conditions to grow. They are amazingly sturdy and resilient. Having the right information is important, too.



Angie Irwin, owner of Angie's Orchid Barn in Bloomingtondale, admires the delicate beauty of the many orchids she carefully cares for at her shop.

There are numerous sources, including books, Web sites and orchid groups like mine, The Tampa Orchid Club, for obtaining information."

But with literally thousands of varieties to choose from, Irwin said picking the right flower could be a challenge.

"I can usually match a variety with a person's needs, home environment and personal color or shape prefer-

ence," she said.

In addition to having fragrances that are used in perfumes, she said orchids are also used in medicines and teas.

In addition to specializing in orchids, Irwin carries several varieties of bamboo that she used to complement the orchids.

Shop hours are Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call: 833-4890.

TAXING

From page 8

pany to be careful about trimming around the trees on Callista Avenue and Glenhaven Drive. She said the trees, which cost \$400 to \$450 each, have begun to die because the roots are being exposed.

The trustees also decided that the district will not take over maintenance of the entrance to Eagle Point on Erindale Drive. Devney recently helped repair a damaged electrical system at the entrance. Eagle Point has 38 homesites but only 23 are occupied.

The district decided that it would wait until 75 percent of the homes are occupied before accepting responsibility for the entry and it will only do so if the builder replaces the bahia grass with St. Augustine.

"They'll need to meet our conditions and then they can reapply to us," said West.

In other business, the district continues to work with a resident who drove into a wall, causing \$1,612 in damages. The resident has agreed to make \$50 monthly payments.

The district also confirmed the \$123,276 contract with Raymow Landscape for maintenance of Bloomingtondale's common area after receiving confirmation of Raymow's Hillsborough County occupational license.

NEIGHBOR

From page 5

ty for 12 years, the house wasn't in the best of shape.

"It been really neglected," said Anthony. But the Pursinos said they didn't mind renovating it. "We like to think we helped improve the neighborhood," he said.

With their common commitment to community service, it didn't take the Pursinos long to become active volunteers in Cub Scouts, church, parent-teacher associations, booster clubs and community organizations.

In New York, Nancy had been president of her school's special education PTA because Joey is an exceptional education student.

There was no so-called Special Education PTA (nicknamed SEPTA) in Hillsborough County. So Nancy decided to create special education positions on every PTA board she served on starting with Alafia Elementary School and later at Burns Middle School. She felt there was a need for such a position to help parents of special education students navigate the red tape that comes with getting special education services.

She went on to serve as president of the PTA at Burns.

Kaity is now a senior at Bloomingtondale High School and Joey is a freshman. Nancy is president of the PTSA there and continues her involvement working with parents of special needs students.

"She's really become an advocate for special education students and their par-

ents," said her husband. In the meantime, Anthony has his own community service agenda. He's been a Cub Scout leader, leads a prayer group at Citibank, is on the Bloomingtondale School Advisory Council and regularly spends weekends building homes for Habitat for Humanity.

But he discovered one of his favorite projects by accident.

Kaity was a member of the freshman orchestra at Bloomingtondale High School three years ago when she told her father that the orchestra was going to participate in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life and was going to spend the night at Riverview High School walking around the track in support of cancer patients.

"We decided to check it out," recalled Anthony. "It was amazing. When we arrived, there was this giant party going on. I couldn't believe we didn't know about this before. It was terrific."

The event, which includes the lighting of luminarias for cancer victims and survivors, held special meaning for Anthony.

His mother died of cancer when she was just 44 years old. Seven members of Nancy's family also have been diagnosed with cancer.

"When I saw all the luminarias, I was hooked," said Nancy. "It was such an emotional moment. And when I saw all the teenagers participating and spelling out the word 'hope' with balloons, it just blew me away."

The next year, he called the local ACS office to see when the relay would take place

again and was invited to an organizational meeting. "The next thing I knew, I was signed up as a team captain," he said.

But on the day of last year's relay, there was a major lightning storm. The teams were perfectly willing to walk in the rain but the sheriff's office shut them down, telling them it wasn't safe.

Afterward, Anthony wrote a letter to the ACS office, making an analogy between cancer and storms.

"Planning an event like this is like having cancer," he said. "No matter how much planning you do, you can get washed away by a storm in the same way that no matter how well you plan your life, it can all be changed by cancer."

The letter ended up circulating to ACS offices around the country, and Anthony found himself being asked to chair this year's South Brandon Relay for Life scheduled next spring at Bloomingtondale High School. More than 1,800 people are expected to walk

around the track at the high school throughout the night while various teams will sell food, drinks and other items to raise money for the cancer society.

"It's not just about raising money for cancer survivors," he said. "It's about honoring the survivors, bringing long-time and new survivors together and showing them that there's hope."

Although the Pursinos' calendar is always overflowing and they sometimes don't know if they're coming or going, they say they wouldn't have it any other way.

"I know people who've lived here forever and have never gotten involved," said Anthony. "I don't understand that. From the day we moved here, we found it so easy to get involved. I've never seen a volunteer organization that has all the people it needs. Our general outlook is that life is not a spectator's sport. If you see something that needs to be done, you do it. You can't make a difference sitting at home in a chair."

Overall rating based on 5 stars

Food ★★ ★ 1/2
Service ★★ ★ 1/2
Ambience ★★ ★ 1/2
Overall ★★ ★

REVIEW

From page 13

If you have room for dessert (and we didn't), they have Peanut Butter Ice Cream Pie, Apple Walnut Crisps, Cinnamon Apple Puff Pastry and Raspberry/White Chocolate Cheese Cake.

Our total without the tip is only \$30, including the beverage. It is actually very moder-

ately priced. In the final analysis, we found ourselves highly recommending this fine restaurant.

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STATION

From page 6

Also on hand was an important training tool - the demo house in which adults and children experienced first-hand what it is like to be in a fire.

They learned how to "drop and crawl" to escape from the burning house.

Each member of the team has to go through intensive, demanding training to be able to do his or her jobs. And this is all done as volunteers, not full-time county employees.

Yet, they all must have the same teamwork, professional skills, dedication to duty and concern for others that career firefighters have.

In addition, Hillsborough County Community Service Officers offered free children's fingerprinting.

Hazzard said he was pleased with the turnout.

"It's really great for the kids and families. They get to see firemen up close, climb on the engines and have a good time. We enjoy having families visit our station and get to know us. Working together as a team with the sheriff's CSOs, we were able to provide important information and to our communities families."

Hillsborough County furnishes the fire station, the firefighting equipment and maintenance on the building and equipment. But the



All eyes are on the firefighters demonstrating how to properly put out a stove fire. In the background is the special house used to demonstrate the proper way to escape a burning house. MACK AUSTIN/Photo

BVVFD has to provide the chief's truck and the volunteers.

"We currently need 14 more volunteers," said Hazzard. "We need at least 35 to 39 to maintain the best operational capability."

Volunteers can be male or female, in good physical condition, with no criminal

record.

"Flexibility with schedules is a must since we are manned 24/7/365," he said. "This type of work is a great first step for a young man or woman looking to become a fireman, EMT or paramedic. Volunteers who complete their training are reimbursed."

All of the firefighters agreed that the personal satisfaction that comes with protecting and saving others is something they can't put a price on.

For more information, call Hazzard at 744-5906, visit the station at 4705 E. Bloomingdale Ave. or visit the Web site at www.engine27.com.

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CODE

From page 3

g setbacks and other common complaints.

"We're going through a phase now where rental units have begun to appear and, with them, pride of ownership is going out the door," said Grable.

In addition, as the community ages, so does its residents. Some residents, he noted, are no longer physically or economically able to maintain their properties. Grable is investigating the possibility of starting a Paint Your Heart Out Program, similar to the city of Tampa's, in which volunteers help fix up the homes of economically disadvantaged residents.

As for the codes themselves, they're not always black and white, said Ellington. For instance, although deed restrictions in the neighborhoods may say otherwise, the county does permit boats and recreational vehicles in yards. If they're more than 20 feet long, they have to be in a side or rear yard.

County codes also say homeowners can let their lawns grow up to 18 inches long, but he said county officers generally react before it gets to that point. And the codes don't address aesthetics at all. If a neighbor decides to let his yard turn to dirt, there isn't anything the county can do.

As for cars, Ellington said residents can have two untagged vehicles on their

property. But they must be in operating order. Cars with flat tires or sitting on blocks are considered inoperable.

Rusted swing sets, broken bikes and construction debris in yards is considered a violation, he said.

As for commercial vehicles parked in driveways, a complaint that has cropped up several times in Bloomingdale, Ellington said no commercial truck in excess of one ton is permitted. But this doesn't extend to smaller commercial vans or utility trailers.

"We know there are hundreds of people doing business from their homes in Bloomingdale," he said.

Grable said there are ways beyond code enforcement residents can use to maintain their neighborhoods. One is asking the county to pass an ordinance creating an overlay district in Bloomingdale. This would mean that the community could set certain aesthetic and architectural standards.

In addition, he said the Florida Legislature has opened the door for a special ordinance that would allow more restrictive codes and force landlords to comply. The county is now in the process of establishing a code enforcement court, which will force violators to make improvements or face liens on their properties.

"I have a strong feeling things are going to change

YARD

From page 7

palms that grow with two or three trunks.

Lascola also took advantage of the fact that they back up to a wooded conservation area, installing landscape lighting, trees and bushes at the boundary to accent the natural woods.

The landscaping tasks, which take two to three hours a week, are made a bit easier with the help of a brush rock and concrete being around the gardens.

"My parents had this curbing at their house in Sun City

Center, and I told myself that I'd get the same thing if I ever moved down here," he said. "It makes edging easier and looks a lot neater."

The Lascolas will display the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Yard of the Month sign through November and will receive a \$25 gift certificate from Wal-Mart.

If you would like to nominate someone for yard of the month, contact the BHA office at 681-2051 or e-mail nominations to dwhite2@mediageneral.com.

rapidly," said Ellington. "Inspections will be required before you can rent. That's huge for us. We're already staffing those positions."

Nevertheless, Grable said few code violations in Bloomingdale reach the county enforcement level.

"About 70 percent comply when we send them letters," he said. "But the most recalcitrant people out there won't improve voluntarily."

Ellington said he will provide forms for the BHA to use to report violations.

"But don't flood us with frivolous items. You need an independent assessment from people who will drive through neighborhoods and make reports so we can start taking care of the worst of the worst," he said.

At the Nov. 17 meeting, BHA attorney Rick Kosan will be on hand to discuss deed restrictions. With the different neighborhoods and developers in Bloomingdale,

there are currently 40 different sets of deed restrictions on file.

Recent complaints to the BHA office have included people trimming trees and shrubs and putting the debris on the curb days before pickup.

Office manager Joni Hickie noted that the county requires tree branches to be cut in 3-foot lengths for disposal and the debris should be put out the night before pickup. Trash cans should be placed on the curb after dusk the night before pickup and removed by dusk the day of pickup. She added that trash cans should be stored out of sight from the street and neighbors.

The BHA also has received complaints about violations of the county's "pooper scooper" and leash laws.

All dogs outside a fenced property must be on leashes and dog owners are required to clean up after their pets.

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