

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXVI
Number 10

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FEATURE STORY

Next BHA Meeting Is Monday, Oct. 3

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BUSINESS

Hillsborough Home Theater owner, Bloomingdale resident Rob DeLuca, helps home electronics consumers get plugged in.

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COMMUNITY REACHES OUT TO HURRICANE KATRINA SURVIVORS



The giving spirit that prevailed last month at six-year-old Kaylin Chastain's lemonade sale to benefit the survivors of Hurricane Katrina echoed throughout the Bloomingdale community. See story, page 2.

Photo courtesy of Irene Buggy

Dispose of Household, Garage Junk For Free

PRIDE CLEANUP DAY IS OCT. 8

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. will hold a PRIDE Community Cleanup Day on Saturday, Oct. 8 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The collection site is on Natures Way, at the Hillsborough County Parks maintenance facility just west of Alafia Elementary School. There is no charge for this service. Identification is not required; residents will only be asked to sign in their name and address.

The project was made possible by

Bloomingdale residents' annual membership dues and a grant from the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations.

Acceptable Items

Appliances, mattresses, water heaters, televisions, steel and other metals, glass, furniture, non-commercial construction debris and tires will be accepted.

Used computer components (printers, faxes, monitors, etc.) will be accepted. A private recycling company will

provide a certificate of hard disk obliteration upon request.

Some Items Cannot Be Accepted

Yard waste will not be accepted. In addition, hazardous materials including paint, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals and waste from commercial activities cannot be accepted.

Hillsborough County residents can dispose of hazardous materials for free on the second Saturday of each month from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the South

See TRASH, Page 6

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS ♦ PAGE 5

New Committee To Address Homeowner Disputes, Special Problems

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718 CALIENTE DR	249,900
1215 CALLISTA AVE	255,000
1521 DUMONT DR	275,900
1421 MONTE LAKE DR	285,000
3604 WARMSRING WY	289,900
4603 DAVENTRY PL	299,900
1406 CLARION DR	335,000
2015 RIVER CROSSING DR	349,500
2112 GOLF MANOR BV	365,900
2120 GOLF MANOR BV	382,900
4528 RIVER CLOSE BV	395,000
1311 HOLLEMAN DR	399,000
3933 NORTHRIDGE DR	409,900
2539 CENTENNIAL FALCON DR	413,900
2224 EAGLE BLUFF DR	435,000

CONTRACT PENDING

526 SANDY CREEK DR	168,000
2824 SHILO CT	178,500
514 SWEETLEAF DR	211,140
2317 NEEDHAM DR	217,000
2522 GOTHAM WY	219,900
761 ISLETON DR	229,700
1201 BRIARPARK WY	239,900
4628 PRESTON WOODS DR	245,000
2011 RIVER CROSSING DR	254,760

3723 GREENFORD ST 258,000

CONTRACT PENDING (cont'd)

1927 RIVER CROSSING DR	258,520
1219 CARRIE WOOD DR	269,000
4304 ARLEY PL	269,900
3910 DUNAIRE DR	270,000
1915 ALAFIA OAKS DR	276,900
3713 ORANGECREST STREET	279,900
2629 BROOKVILLE DR	279,900
1509 HOLLEMAN DR	289,900
3812 HOLLOW WOOD DR	295,000
3815 POLUMBO DR	297,500
1226 LORNEWOOD DRIVE	299,900
4428 WINDING RIVER DRIVE	309,900
3702 KITMORE PLACE	309,900
2011 TIMBERFALL LN	310,000
3611 COLD CREEK DR	315,000
2603 BROOKVILLE DR	315,000
3916 DUNAIRE DR	319,000
3521 SPRINGVILLE DR	320,000
2321 LONGMORE CIR	380,000
3809 HANOVER HILL DR	389,000
4004 ASPEN LEAF WY	395,000
4629 RIVER CLOSE BLVD	410,000
2523 CENTENNIAL FALCON DR	412,900
2207 HICKORY RIDGE DR	559,900
5104 BELL SHOALS RD	885,000
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HOMES RECENTLY SOLD

4111 QUAIL BRIAR DR 180,000

4021 FONTANA PL	185,000
2606 WRENCREST CR	185,900
3923 CASABA LP	198,000
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3901 PENROD LN	200,000
2634 WRENCREST CR	205,000
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709 ISLETON DR	225,000
501 CEDAR GROVE DR	230,000
4304 ELLENVILLE PL	247,000
3925 DUNAIRE DR	255,500
3723 HOLLOW WOOD DR	257,000
3612 ELK RIDGE LN	260,000
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1408 QUEENSBURY AV	321,500
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1409 CROOKED STICK DR	388,000
4408 MAREN TRACE LN	391,000
2216 EAGLE BLUFF DR	407,000
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Bloomingtondale Reaches Out To Hurricane Katrina Survivors

FAMILIES, SCHOOLS HELD FUNDRAISERS

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

Hurricane Katrina left massive devastation throughout New Orleans, Alabama and Mississippi. It also left an indelible impression on the hearts and minds of many Bloomingtondale residents, including 6-year-old Kaylin Chastain.

After a class discussion in Mrs. Green's kindergarten class at Cimino Elementary School, Chastain came home and watched news footage of Katrina's wrath. Then she asked her mom if she could hold a lemonade sale to help raise money.

"Kaylin's always been a nurturer," said her mother, Karen Chastain.

"She has a huge heart for the people who were hit by Katrina."

Karen Chastain sees the emotional response to the catastrophic storm as a huge life lesson for children.

"Kaylin felt horrible for those people who lost their homes and loved ones. She wanted me to pull out her loose tooth so she could get money from the tooth fairy and give it to those people," she said.

One Saturday about a week after Katrina hit, the Chastains and their friend, Christy Fisher, set up shop at the entrance to Cimino for three hours. Kaylin's little sister, Jordan, lent a hand by delivering lemonade to customers who pulled up at the curb to help.

The Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association helped get the word out about the impromptu fundraiser by sending e-mail notices to more than 700 residents registered to receive BHA News Alerts from its web site, www.bloomingtondalegazette.com.

"Oooh, another customer," said Kaylin, realizing that every car that stopped put her closer to the \$1,000 goal she set.

One father stopped by with his four-year-old son and asked the child if he wanted to go buy a new toy or give the money to the people who



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Bloomingtondale resident Susan Bistolfi drops by Kaylin's lemonade stand to make a donation on her way to a little league game. "I've been watching all morning and it's just heartbreaking," she said.

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

President: Ted Grable **Vice President:** Joe Hickle
Treasurer: Pam Liguori **Director:** Tony Diolosa
Director: Lydia Harrod **Director:** Steve Heckel
Director: Dale Kahn **Director:** Jane Lee
Director: Stanley Lee **Director:** Myron Magedanz
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Bloomiingdale Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
Phone: 684-6667
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Treasurer: David West
Correspondence Secretary: Paul Sims
Recording Secretary: Michael Buday

Trustee: David Steck
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Bloomiingdale Community Security Program

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

Coordinator/Equipment Manager:

Tony Diolosa, 681-1146

Treasurer: Paul Kelmer

Patrol Member: Steven

Heckel

Patrol Member: Brad Scharp

Patrol Member: Paul Warr

Bloomiingdale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132

Phone: 685-2817

BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

President: Bill Grace

Treasurer: Fred Englehart



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New BHA Committee Aims To Help Neighbors In Need

FREE HELP FOR NEIGHBOR DISPUTES, SPECIAL NEEDS

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

A new Bloomingdale Homeowners Association committee chaired by volunteer board member Dale Kahn aims to help Bloomingdale neighbors in need of various types of specialized assistance.

Kahn, a Bloomingdale resident since 2001, is an IT data specialist with Verizon. His first objective in forming the new committee was to create an electronic database to record and track neighbors who need special assistance and the respective county, state and federal resources available to help them.

The idea for the program, Kahn said, originated with BHA president Ted

Grable.

"There are a lot of neighborhood issues and disputes that come up which (often due to legal limitations) the BHA board can't resolve," Kahn said.



Dale Kahn

"Instead of just throwing out random ideas at our meetings, we wanted to formalize a program to take the issues that we don't know how to (or can't legally) handle, to help our neighbors."

Kahn said some examples of problem issues the board routinely faces involve feuding neighbors, houses in serious need of repair, neglect of rental homes and property by absentee own-

ers, and neighbors with health or disability problems — and those on fixed incomes — who are willing but unable to properly maintain or repair their homes.

Kahn did some research and created a referral database of various agencies to match up with neighbors in need.

"There are lots of groups and organizations out there to help that people aren't even aware of."

The committee will also seek assistance from local civic organizations, schools, clubs and neighborhood volunteers to help with the project.

A representative of Hillsborough County's neighborhood mediation program will attend the BHA's Oct. 3 meeting to discuss its role in the resolution of disputes between disgruntled neighbors, the homeowners association and

residents, and landlords and tenants.

The committee expects the source of needs to come from BHA board members and residents attending meetings or calling potential needs in to the BHA office.

A portion of BHA membership dues may be used to subsidize efforts to help qualified elderly and disabled neighbors to maintain their homes and yards.

Kahn said, "If you or your neighbor has a potential need for help from this committee, we encourage you to come to a BHA meeting or call us for assistance. All applicants and participants in the program will remain completely anonymous."

Contact Kahn through the BHA at 681-2051 or e-mail bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net.

Next Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Meeting Set For Oct. 3

REP FROM MEDIATION PROGRAM TO ATTEND

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

The next meeting of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board of directors will be held 7 p.m. on Monday,

Oct. 3 at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. All meetings are open to the public.

The BHA welcomes new Bloomingdale residents to stop by with any neighborhood questions or concerns they may have, and to pick up a free Bloomingdale logo license plate.

For more information about the BHA, call 681-2051 or visit www.bloomingtongazette.com.

Mediation Program Rep To Attend October Meeting

A representative of Hillsborough County's neighborhood justice media-

tion program is scheduled to attend the October meeting. The program offers citizens of Hillsborough County an alternative to the court system — and its associated high costs — to help resolve disputes between neighbors, homeowners associations and residents,

See BHA, Page 16

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Federation Of The Blind Fundraiser Helps The Sighted See

FLASHLIGHTS NEED NO BATTERIES, BULBS

A Gazette Report

The East Hillsborough Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind is selling a unique flashlight to help raise funds to continue its valuable service to the community.

The flashlights produce a bright light without batteries or a bulb.

Using an innovative recharging technology known as Farady's Principle of Electro Magnetic Induction, the light is shaken for 20 seconds and provides 30 minutes of light.

"I shook it for 60 seconds and it stayed lit for four hours," said Donna Hackney, who presented her NFB chapter with the idea.

The manufacturer claims an unlimited recharging capability. The flashlight uses a light emitting diode (LED) rather than a bulb. The result is a flashlight that never needs batteries or bulbs and should last for years. The flashlight is highly efficient, illuminating a 6-foot radius at a distance of 30 feet. The beam is visible for one mile. In addition, the flashlight

Service Enables Blind People To Read Newspapers

PROGRAM AT BLOOMINGDALE LIBRARY OCT. 6

A Gazette Report

In the not-too-distant past, blind people could only obtain information from radio or television news, but the in-depth reporting available in newspapers was not available to them.

Now, through the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind, the blind can access 200 local, regional and national newspapers, including the New York Times, Chicago

See READ, Page 18

is completely waterproof.

"I submerged the light in a sink of water," said Merry Schoch, NFB chapter vice president, "and it stayed lit!"

The irony of the blind selling flashlights is not lost on

NFB members.

Chapter president Marion Gwizdala said, "When we first considered this product as a fundraiser, we chuckled at the idea of it."

Because the flashlights are waterproof, they are well-suited for hurricane survival kits, boaters, fishermen, and campers. The cost for each flashlight is \$15. They are not available in stores, and sell for \$5.00 more on television.

To order a flashlight, send a check or money order for \$15.00 plus \$2 shipping and handling made payable to "NFB" (with the word "flashlights" in the memo) to East Hillsborough Chapter, National Federation of the Blind, c/o Merry Schoch, 712 River Point Drive, Tampa, FL 33619. Please allow two to three weeks for delivery.

Quantity purchases and/or pick up arrangements are available, and retailers or other businesses are welcome to support the federation by becoming an outlet for the items.

All contributions to the National Federation of the Blind are tax-deductible as a

See SEE, Page 18

Call For Free Pick-Up Of Reusable, Salable Items

ITEMS WILL NOT BE COLLECTED AT OCT. 8 BHA EVENT

A Gazette Report

Reusable items for charitable donation will not be collected during Bloomingdale's October 8 PRIDE Cleanup Day, but a number of local organizations make it easy for people to salvage salable items in good condition.

Goodwill Industries: Call for free pickup, 689-6279, or drop off at Bloomingdale Wal-Mart site, or at 1106 E. Brandon Blvd. (next to Super Wal-Mart) Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Lighthouse For The Blind: Call for free pickup, 251-2407.

Purple Heart Services: Call for free pickup, 899-2780.

Salvation Army: Call for free pickup, 621-6425, or drop off at 9926 E. Adamo Drive, between US 301 and Falkenberg Road, Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

High School Students Can Earn Community Service Hours

MORE HELP NEEDED AT OCT. 8 CLEANUP

A Gazette Report

Bloomingdale's PRIDE Cleanup Days offer a great opportunity for high school students to lend a hand in their neighborhood — and to rack up the 20 or more community service hours required to qualify for many college scholarships, including the Florida Bright Futures program.

More volunteers are needed at the Oct. 8 cleanup to help residents unload small items from their vehicles, direct traffic and hand out fliers. Volunteers of all ages are needed throughout the event, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Shift help is welcome, from 9 a.m. to noon, or from noon to 3 p.m. The BHA will provide refreshments and snacks for volunteers. The event will be at the parks maintenance facility on Natures Way, near Alafia Elementary School.

To sign up for a shift, or the whole day, please call 643-2990 and leave a message with your name, phone number and the hours you are available to help, or e-mail laurafrazier@tam-pabay.rr.com.

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TRASH

Continued From Page 1

County Facility, 13000 U.S. 41, north of Big Bend Road, Phone 671-7611; (accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, yard waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil and lead acid batteries). To gain access to the county collection site, residents must show a copy of their property tax bill and photo identification. For more information, call 272-5680 or visit hillsboroughcounty.org/solid-waste.

Help For Elderly, Disabled Residents

BHA volunteers offer to

assist elderly or disabled residents who need help hauling items on cleanup day. To schedule a pick-up, call the BHA office, 681-2051, before 11 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 6.

More Volunteers Needed

The BHA is a nonprofit, all volunteer organization. More volunteers are needed on cleanup days to staff the site and help residents unload their cars. To help, call 643-2990 or e-mail laurafrazier@tam-pabay.rr.com. High school students and scouts can earn community service hour credits for helping with this project.

Say you saw it in the The Bloomingdale Gazette



Photo Courtesy of Nobert Gobin

Military and civilian workers commuting to MacDill Air Force Base face limited bus stop parking, long boarding lines and crowded buses.

Traffic, Gas Prices Drive Base Commuters To Board The Bus

MORE BUSES, BETTER SCHEDULE NEEDED

A Gazette Report

Many military and civilian workers commuting each day between the Bloomingdale area and MacDill Air Force Base stand in long lines for their ride, and then — due to crowded buses — ride standing up again for the 45-minute drive to and from the base.

Increased traffic and skyrocketing gas prices have driven even more MacDill commuters to ride the bus to work.

Hartline is working to resolve route problems and crowded

buses throughout Hillsborough County, including express routes between MacDill and the Bloomingdale area.

According to Hartline officials, changes to the express network of bus services will be implemented in January 2006, including one new route between the base and the Fish-Hawk area. Additional changes to improve express route travel times may take place following a staff study of bus stop and parking locations along all routes.

For more information, or to voice your opinion about Hartline services, visit www.hartline.org or call 254-4278.

LeaderBoard Tampa Helps Brandon, South Shore Charities A Chance To Raise Money

ORGANIZES PRO GOLF TOURNEYS

By D'ANN WHITE
Correspondent

LeaderBoard Tampa, which organizes professional golf tournaments in the Tampa Bay area, is offering Brandon and

South Shore charities a chance to raise funds.

Bloomington East resident Bob Gaudreau, president and owner of LeaderBoard, is in the process of bringing the 25th anniversary "Futures" tour to Summerfield Golf Club in Riverview. The second largest golf tour in the world,

Futures will attract more than 200 LPGA minor league golfers to the area March 13-19, 2006.

To get the community involved, LeaderBoard is offering 501c3-registered charities a chance raise funds by selling tickets to family night, slots in the pro-am tournament or pro-

viding volunteer help.

Among the charities already on board are Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute and the Hillsborough County School District's Volunteers in Education program.

"We want to be able to help as many charities as possible. Charities don't have time to

fundraise," said Gaudreau. "We're providing an opportunity for them to raise money without going to a lot of effort."

Any charities interested in learning more about the opportunity can contact Gaudreau at 685-1509.

LETTERS

Send letters to Editor, **The Bloomingdale Gazette**, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594 or e-mail to laurafrazier@tampabay.rr.com. Letters are published on a space-available basis and are subject to editing.

Walker Issues Challenge To "Natures Speedway" Drivers

It's hard to believe that I could be risking my life walking along a 30-mph road on a bright, sunny morning. But most of the walkers and bike-riders who do their daily exercise around Natures Way will attest to the perils of our well-used route.

It is a rare occasion to witness a motorist actually traveling at the posted speed limit. Most drivers clip along at well above the limit. The few law-abiding citizens commuting along Natures Way are left in the dust as these speeders rush past them, sometimes even passing them to the right.

Surprisingly, many of the speeding vehicles have business names and phone numbers displayed on their doors. It makes me wonder what would happen if that business

began receiving phone calls about its drivers. And if the driver is the owner of that company, then shame on them.

I have an advantage over the hundreds of kids walking and biking to school because I am constantly aware of the traffic, and I know the consequences. Many of our kids, unfortunately, do not. They impulsively run across the street because they see a friend on the other side, or perhaps because another friend is chasing them in a harmless game of tag on the way to school. When this happens, will the driver be able to stop? Will the motorist see the child at all when he or she is in the road, in the blink of an eye?

I have a challenge for all the drivers on Natures Way and Culbreath Road, where our two elementary schools are located. Next time you travel along these roads, take note of your speedometer. See if you can actually do the speed limit. I actually set my cruise control to 30, just to be sure. Try it!

Heike House,
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Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Library members, from left, Carol Jones and April Lehoullier unpack the boxes of bibs and bags being sold to raise funds for library programs.



D'ANN WHITE/Photo

Friends Offer Bibs And Bags To Promote Reading

ITEMS AVAILABLE AT BLOOMINGDALE LIBRARY

D'ANN WHITE
Correspondent

They may not be old enough to read, but they're certainly old enough to promote reading. At least that's the belief of

the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library.

To raise funds for library programs for children and adults as well as for equipment and other library extras, the Friends are selling bibs bearing the words "Read to Me," along with book bags with "Bloomingdale Regional Library" written on the pocket.

This is just the latest in a series of fundraising efforts the active Friends group has undertaken since the library on Bloomingdale Avenue opened in February this year.

With 71 members to help the Friends now have a thriving bookstore off the library lobby that brings in \$1,000 to \$1,200 a month. They've sold art-glass hearts with donor tags to decorate the library corridor and they've held used book sales.

With that money, the Friends outfitted the library staff break room with a microwave, coffee pot and refrigerator. They purchased an activity center for the children's library and financed three popular children's programs over the summer. The programs were so popular, in fact, that the library ran out of free tickets for them in a matter of minutes.

As a result, the Friends had to come up with another fundraising idea to pay for more programs.

"We'd like to offer monthly programs starting this fall," said Jones. "We're also sponsoring the refreshments for the author series and book discussion groups."

"We thought the bibs and bags were ideal," said Friends corresponding secretary April Lehoullier. "The bibs are cute and the bags are useful, and they both promote reading."

The white and mint green bibs sell for \$5 and the polyester nylon heavy-weight, soil and water-resistant bags, which come in blue, red and green, sell for \$10. They are available at the front desk; however, staff cannot make change so purchases must be exact change or checks.

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Congregation Is All Jazzed Up

BENEFIT AUCTION
SET FOR NOV. 5

A Gazette Report

Congregation Beth Shalom will hold an evening of art and auctions Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. at the Winthrop Barn on Bloomingdale Avenue. The community is invited to attend the annual event.

Many items will be offered for auction, including art, jewelry, furniture, a personal chef service, golf packages, and gift certificates.

There will be hors d'oeuvres, wine and beer, a cash bar, and jazz music. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door.

A portion of all ticket sales will benefit the Brandon Unit of the American Cancer Society.

For tickets and information call 681-6547 or e-mail alljazzedupauction@yahoo.com.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Yard of the Month Graces Sandy Creek Manors

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. Yard of the Month for October 2005 was awarded to the Talley family who reside at 703 Curran Ct. in the Sandy Creek Manors section. The Talleys received a \$25 Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale gift card, courtesy of the BHA. Send Yard of the Month nominations to info@bloomingtondalegazette.com or call 681-2051.

visit www.BloomingtondaleGazette.com The official web site of The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc.

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Residents Urged To Prepare Families, Homes For Deadly Storms

BE READY FOR POWER OUTAGES, EVACUATION

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
Bloomington Community Resource Officer

All of us in the Bloomington community have watched in horror and amazement as the infinite stories of loss and death unfold along the Gulf Coast. We can consider ourselves very fortunate after the record number of enormous hurricanes that have come so close but missed us.

Hopefully, after seeing the destructive power of these storms, we've all taken the time to better prepare for the storms because yes, there will be more hurricanes. Simply put, you're either ready or you're not.

We all saw how many residents caught in the path of Katrina stated that having to leave their homes was one of the hardest things to do. Everything you've worked for and leave behind is not only at the mercy of the storm, but also those who would seek to profit from the storms.

Fortunately, most of our residents are not in flood zones and will probably not

have to evacuate. But we could very well face several emergency situations such as power outages and the inability to leave for several days until power is restored and the streets are clear.

Those who have to evacuate should take their valuables with them or secure them as best as possible. Insure all doors and windows are locked. Secure any

vehicles you leave behind. Put away bicycles or tools or anything lying around outside.

Unfortunately, homes that are damaged are also subject to being vandalized or looted. Let friends who live nearby that do not have to evacuate know you will be away. They can check on your property after the storm.

In addition, make plans and arrangements now for taking care of your pets. Pets are not allowed in most shelters.

The first step for a safe and effective recovery begins with each and every resident. Work together with your families, your coworkers and your neighbors to get prepared now.

Assault Suspect Apprehended In Bloomington East

BHA SENT E-MAIL ALERT TO RESIDENTS

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Dozens of residents called or e-mailed the Gazette for information about a Sheriff's Office helicopter they reported seeing circling around Bloomington East Park at about 2 a.m. on Tuesday, September 20.

According to the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, a 33-year old woman was jogging Tuesday at 1 a.m. in the vicinity of Orangecrest Street and Greenhollow Lane when she was sexually assaulted.

The suspect reportedly grabbed the woman by the arm and forced her to nearby Bloomington East Park, where he sexually assaulted the victim.

The suspect, 26-year-old Gustavo Rivera of 204 Beverly Blvd., Apt. A in Brandon, fled the scene and was apprehended shortly thereafter by a Sheriff's Office K9 unit.

Reports that the suspect followed the woman home from her late night job could not be confirmed, and no further information was available at Gazette press time.

On Wednesday, September 21 at 10:20 a.m., The Bloomington Gazette sent out a BHA News Alert about the incident to more than 700 residents registered on the community Web site.

To register for BHA News alerts, log on to www.bloomingtongazette.com. The service is free and no personal information is required to sign up.

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Traffic Blitzes Hone In On Careless, Dangerous Drivers

CITATIONS ISSUED IN
ONE DAY: \$13,000-PLUS

By MACK AUSTIN
Correspondent

The BACC, Bloomingdale Area Community Council, is made up of residents from various homeowners associations in our community. The council works with law enforcement, county and state government representatives to help improve safety, security and the quality of life in the greater Bloomingdale area.

The group meets on the third Thursday of each month, 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale substation on Bell Shoals Road. All interested residents are invited to attend. For information, call 635-8040.

At the council's September 2005 meeting, Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer announced that traffic blitzes will continue to be held on a regular basis throughout Bloomingdale.

The purpose of the program is to stop and cite those drivers whom, by breaking traffic laws, endanger other drivers and pedestrians. More than \$13,000.00 in citations were issued during one recent blitz. It's very simple — if you break the law, you will pay for it.

Other business discussed at the council's August meeting is as follows:

Gang Unit Officers To Attend Oct. 20 Meeting

Deputy Maurer briefed council members on violent gang activity and graffiti incidents that recently occurred in Bloomingdale. The Sheriff's special Gang Unit is receiving full cooperation from all local law enforcement officers in our area, including the FBI. Arrests

Hillsborough County Puts The Brakes On Fatalities

116 PEOPLE DIE EACH DAY ON NATION'S ROADWAYS

A Gazette Report

An average of 116 people die in tragic accidents on our nation's roadways each day. This leads to more than 42,000 traffic fatalities a year.

In an effort to reduce these startling statistics, Hillsborough County is naming Monday, Oct. 10 as "Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day."

"Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day" was initiated by the National Society of Professional Engineers. The purpose of the national movement is to reduce traffic fatalities and address the need for improvements to our roadways, vehicles and basic driver behavior.

Safer driving behaviors such as using of seat belts, not drinking and driving, and obeying traffic laws will dramatically reduce the number of traffic-related injuries and deaths.

Hillsborough County Commissioners will make this dedication by presenting a proclamation at their regular board meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 5, at 9 a.m.

The BOCC calls upon everyone to help save lives by spreading these important messages throughout our community.

have and will continue to be made. Residents who observe unusual activities or graffiti should contact the Sheriff's Office at www.hcso.tampa.fl.us. Gang Unit officers will make a special presentation at the council's next meeting on Thursday, October 20.

Special Migrant Program

A special program to collect clothes for migrant workers in our area is being coordinated. Residents can call Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano at the Bloomingdale substation for details.

Operation Patriot

The Sheriff's Office is joining other agencies in supporting Operation Patriot, a program to provide assistance to 115 local veterans currently staying at the Baldomero Lopez Veterans Nursing Home. The veterans are from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Gulf War. Those who wish to participate are asked to bring personal items such as toiletries, large print books, CDs, packages of cookies, DVDs or Wal-Mart Gift cards to the Bloomingdale substation. Your assistance to these great folks is very much appreciated.

Parking At St. Stephens Church

Council member Norbert Gobin briefed members on programs to improve traffic flow near the church. The Florida Highway Patrol will provide traffic control on Sundays due to the high volume of traffic on Bell Shoals Rd. and the difficulty of making a left turn out of the church parking lot.

New Sign at Bloomingdale, Bell Shoals

Deputy Maurer briefed members on the new sign at the intersection of Bloomingdale Ave and Bell Shoals Road. It reads "Right Turn On Red After Stop". He explained that many drivers ticketed for not coming to a complete stop before turning stated they were unaware they were required to do so.

MacDill Buses Overcrowded

The council was briefed on programs currently in place to help alleviate the very dangerous overcrowding of buses transporting military and civilian workers to MacDill Air Force Base (see story in this issue).

Land Acquisition Projects

Members were briefed on several important land acquisition issues that are being coordinated through the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association and Hillsborough County. County officials intend to designate a 10-acre parcel and a 13-acre parcel within Bloomingdale East as ELAPP (Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program) properties. The BHA is working with county real estate department officials to move forward with the ELAPP program.

Have A Safe Halloween

WATCH TRAFFIC, STAY VISIBLE

The costumes and masks and candy are already on the store shelves. Halloween in Bloomingdale is a time of fun and excitement.

But — parents, please be sure that you and your children take the important steps necessary to have a safe, happy Halloween.

Begin by talking to your kids about being very careful if they go out trick-or-treating in groups. Go along with them, and make sure everyone watches out for traffic. There will be other parents out driving their children around very conscientiously, but there will also be other individuals out partying and

drinking and driving recklessly.

Make sure the costumes you select are non-flammable and that the masks do not block their vision. Watch out for dogs and other hazards too. Be sure to take good flashlights and be very visible at all times. And don't forget — have a safe and happy Halloween.

— Deputy Pete Maurer

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

Hillsborough School District A Finalist For National Award

TOP THREE OUT OF 106 DISTRICTS

A Gazette Report

The School District of Hillsborough County is one of three finalists for the National School Boards Association's award for Urban School Board Excel-

lence. The Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) award is presented to the school district that best demonstrates excellence in four core areas: board governance, closing the achievement gap, academic achievement and community engagement.

The other two finalists are the Norfolk Public Schools in Virginia and the San Antonio Independent School District in Texas. The winning district was set to be announced Sept. 29 at the CUBE annual conference in Las Vegas. The award, supported by McGraw-Hill Education, will be presented to school district officials at a ceremony Oct. 1. The winning district receives a

\$5,000 contribution to their student scholarship fund. The Council of Urban Boards of Education is the urban arm of the National School Boards Association. CUBE has 106 member districts with an enrollment of more than eight million students.

Hillsborough Schools Get \$200,000 Grant To Accelerate Planning

PROGRAM AIMS TO SPEED UP SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough County Public Schools have been chosen to participate in a pilot program designed to help the district plan and build schools faster.

The school district is one of six state communities chosen for the pilot to accelerate planning for public schools.

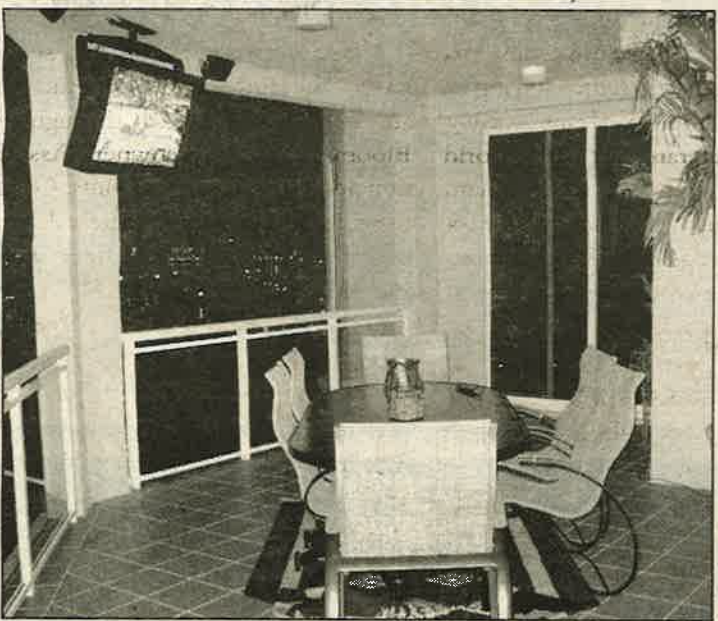
The district will receive a \$200,000 grant from the Florida Department of Community Affairs and will work with the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, as well as representatives from the four local governments, to develop a comprehensive

plan. "The grant will enable the school district to accelerate the construction of new schools in the coming years," said Hillsborough Schools Superintendent MaryEllen Elia.

"We are anxious to get started, and anticipate having the resources to begin the research, documentation and development of the (plan) by mid October."

In August, Gov. Jeb Bush announced a schedule for adopting growth management reforms for public schools, a key element of the 2005 growth management legislation. The new policies are designed to ensure that Florida has enough classroom space to keep up with growth.

B L O O M I N G D A L E B U S I N E S S



Company Offers High-Quality Installation Of Big-Ticket Electronics

OWNER IS 20-YEAR BLOOMINGDALE RESIDENT

By LESLIE WHITE Correspondent

Shortly after Bloomingdale resident Rob DeLuca started out writing software to develop consumer electronic devices, he quickly realized there was a need for him to take his career one step further.

"I kept developing the devices, but I couldn't really sell them without offering installation, so I branched out."

DeLuca recently opened his new business, Hillsborough Home Theatre.

He specializes in high-definition video, big screens, flat


screens and equipment centralization — hiding the component and de-cluttering the room. He will design and install anything from small TV rooms to luxurious cinemas for both residential and commercial customers. He also offers set up of site-wide wireless computer networks and entertainment systems, including pre-wiring during construction.

The array of today's ultra high-tech toys often calls for professional installation and design, DeLuca said. Many consumers find themselves overwhelmed with the "how's" of quality installation.

"The average person is just

See THEATER, Page 16

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By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

Bloomington resident Mike Laquerre and his brother, Craig Laquerre, along with broker J. M. Henderson, recently opened Multiple Choice Realty on Lumsden Road.

True to its name, the company offers three different kinds of services to meet the needs of home buyers and sellers.

"What we offer is one-stop shopping. It's a pretty unique concept," said Mike Laquerre.

The first service the company offers is multiple listing only, which suits the needs of real estate investors, for a flat fee of \$300. The service includes a listing and photo on the Multiple Listing Service.

The second service, for a flat fee of \$2,499, assures that the home is shown only to pre-approved potential buyers. In addition, all negotiations and paperwork are handled for the sellers by the Laquerres.

"There are no preliminary issues that waste the seller's time," said Laquerre's brother, Craig, who is the owner of Nationwide Mortgage & Investment Corp., and shareholder for Multiple Choice Realty.

Homes are listed on the company website, as part

of a strong-based internet presence. All signing and advertising is handled by Multiple Choice Realty.

The last service is a 4 percent full-service listing, which the Laquerres said offers all the same benefits provided by other real estate companies that charge the standard 6 percent to 7 percent.

"Our customers are saving a lot in equity," said Mike Laquerre.

One hopeful homebuyer, Debbie Crawford, chose Multiple Choice Realty to help walk her through this first-time process.

"It's been really reassuring to work with them. Mike's made this process less intimidating. It really is one-stop shopping, and they picked up on what I was looking for right away," Crawford said.

Multiple Choice Realty charges their agents a transaction fee, based on the commission amount, with agents keeping 100 percent of their commission.

"Our concept is that we want to recruit good agents and keep them happy," said Laquerre. The brothers are also willing to guide new agents through the process.

Multiple Choice Realty is at 677 W. Lumsden Road. For more information call 413-8501 or 1-800-920-9914, or visit their Web site at www.multiplechoicerealty.net.



LESLE WHITE/Photo
Bloomington resident Mike Laquerre and his brother, Craig Laquerre recently opened Multiple Choice Realty on Lumsden Road.



HomeWorks owner Leslie Newman

Free Help, Referrals For Home Improvement Projects

Bloomington resident Leslie Newman recently started a new business, "HomeWorks."

Her company helps homeowners find the right specialists to take care of all types of home improvement projects, indoors and out, including painting, plumbing, tree service, tile installation, electrical repairs and more.

HomeWorks makes an appointment for the homeowner with the appropriate, pre-screened contractor.

After the contractor has been hired, Newman is then available to answer questions, address concerns, and to ensure that the job is completed to the homeowner's satisfaction.

There is no charge to homeowners for the HomeWorks referral service. Each home improvement professional in the network pays a commission on all new business secured through HomeWorks.

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Winn-Dixie Closes; Bob Says Goodbye

LAST MAN STANDING FROM ORIGINAL CREW

By LINDA CHION KENNEY
Correspondent

The newspaper announcement read that three Winn-Dixie stores were to close for the last time.

In this particular account, it took about 125 words to detail the facts behind the closing of stores on West Lumsden Road in Brandon, State Road 60 in Valrico and Lithia-Pinecrest Road in Valrico. In a concise report, the announcement talked about the company's Chapter 11 reorganization plan, which prompted the Jacksonville-based company to sell or close 326 of its 913 stores.

Behind the facts, though, comes the realization that the store that marked the coming of age of Bloomingdale will exist no longer, and that the three-supermarket intersection will now sport two: Albertsons and Publix.

Bob Wagner can tell you the exact date he walked into the Winn-Dixie at the Royal Oaks shopping center at Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road for the first time. It was Jan. 20, 1990, the day the store opened, he said, and Wagner was to begin what would become a 15-year-plus post retirement part-time job.

"I'm the only one left," he said about the store's opening crew. "It seems like yesterday, when you think about it."

Wagner moved to Valrico in 1987, after his retirement from a chemical plant in Chicago. He was drawn to the weather and to a daughter who lived



LINDA CHION KENNEY/Staff photo

The Winn-Dixie Marketplace in the Royal Oaks shopping center at Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road announced its closing with huge signs and deep discounts.

nearby.

"I wanted to get away from those winters," he said.

Wagner said he's not sure why he ended up working at the Winn-Dixie for so long.

"You know what, I couldn't even tell you," he said. "I enjoyed it, met a lot of nice people, and I had something to look forward to every day."

Wagner said Friday, the day after the store closed for the last time, with Maalox and Kool-Aid on sale for 95 percent off, that he had heard about the store's closing like everybody else who worked and shopped there.

"They didn't tell us," he said. "We saw the manager came out, and he put up notices on the door that they were going out of business. It's been a couple weeks ago they did that."

The initial signs announced items were selling for 30 percent to 50 percent off, and the shelves started clearing quickly.

"I was a little shocked," Wagner said. "I never thought they'd close that store. But those are the things that happen."

Wagner reflected back on what the store had meant to the area when it first opened.

"I think it meant a lot at the time," he said, "because everybody used to go to it and it was a good store. The people were friendly."

With the area's growth came a boom in retail.

"I think it was ridiculous, all the supermarkets opening," he said. "I've never seen anything like that, where you see three or four in a row. I had friends

come down from Georgia and they said, 'My gosh, I can't believe you have stores like this all over the place. All these food stores!'"

Left at the corner are Albertsons across the street and Publix adjacent to that. Down the road in FishHawk is the Kash n' Karry, which soon will be facing competition from a nearby Publix. Driving down Bloomingdale, you hit a Kash n' Karry not far from a Publix, and go down a bit further and you'll hit another Winn-Dixie and another Publix and Albertsons. And that's all before you hit U.S. 301, where Bloomingdale turns into Progress Boulevard.

Still, no other location had sported three supermarkets on one corner.

"I guess," Wagner said, "there wasn't enough business for everybody."

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BHA

Continued From Page 5

landlords and tenants, and the recovery of monetary or property claims disagreements.

The BHA's Neighbors In Need committee (see story in this issue) will gather information about the services provided by the mediation program to see if it could be used to help resolve neighbor disputes and serious, ongoing deed restriction/county code violation issues.

Three Sections Vote To Retain "Bloomingdale West" Designation

Hundreds of homeowners in six neighborhood sections submitted petitions last month to name their neighborhoods and have new entryway signs installed. The BHA's PRIDE committee intends to schedule each section for signs and naming, one at a time, as funds become available.

The Neighborhood Name and Sign program is being funded by a series of Hillsborough County minigrants and may be subsidized by a portion of BHA membership dues.

The first area to receive new signs is a combination of three sections: E, C and H, all off Canoga Park Drive and Bloomingfield Drive. Four residents representing those sections attended BHA meetings and went door to door

Let's Talk Trash

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc., in a Sept. 24 letter to the Hillsborough County Commission, Solid Waste Department and Liberty Waste, outlined the following complaints about trash and recycling pick-up it routinely receives from residents:

- Selective/arbitrary pick up of the type, size and volume of regular trash and yard waste.
- Pick-up of only (for example) four or six bags of yard clippings, when the contract calls for Liberty to pick up a maximum of 12 bags per residence.
- Trash spillage (trash falling out of cans and/or truck); trash and debris left behind.
- Throwing of garbage cans, sometimes resulting in broken cans that cannot be fixed; frequently leaving the cans in the street.
- Garbage truck regularly blocking the entire street unnecessarily, with no regard to residential traffic flow.
- A recent failure to pick up yard waste for up to two weeks in a row in some Bloomingdale neighborhood sections.

To comment about solid waste services in Bloomingdale, please attend the Nov. 7 BHA meeting, or e-mail comments to info@bloomingtongazette.com.

to collect 187 signatures. An overwhelming majority voted to retain the name "Bloomingdale West" rather than dividing up into separate sections. Therefore, the PRIDE committee will install new Bloomingdale West signs at several entryways near those sections.

Section F, off Natures Way in the area of Spring Lake Circle, will be the next section to receive new signs. Homeowner Norbert Gobin attended two BHA

meetings and submitted 48 votes (about half the number of homes in the section) in favor of the name "Spring Lake."

The third and fourth areas to be named are, respectively, O (in the area of Lornewood Drive off Natures Way) and B (in the area of Orangefield in Bloomingdale East).

Section O voted for the name "Bloomingdale Trace." Section B voted

for "Pine Oaks of Bloomingdale."

Once the six sections are named and signs are installed, only two remaining areas of the community, A and M, will remain unnamed.

A timetable for installation of the signs — and information about where they will be placed — will be announced in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtongazette.com. To find out which section your home is in, call 681-2051 or log onto the "Deed Restrictions" section of the Web site.

Liberty Waste Rep To Address Residents' Trash, Recycling Service Complaints

Next month, a representative of Liberty Waste Services is scheduled to attend the BHA's Nov. 7 meeting.

The BHA board in September sent a letter to the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners, Solid Waste Department and Liberty Waste outlining residents' concerns about trash and recycling services (see sidebar).

All Bloomingdale homeowners are invited to attend the November meeting to express any service concerns they may have. In addition, comments and questions e-mailed to info@bloomingtongazette.com or phoned in to the BHA office, 681-2051, will be discussed at the meeting.

THEATER

Continued From Page 13

trying to have what everybody else has. It doesn't have to be very advanced — big screen, surround sound," said DeLuca.

Aside from the intricacies of running wires behind walls or down through the attic, many consumers don't quite know what they really need for installation. Many end up purchasing unnecessary accessories and spending as much on the wires as they do on the TV, which doesn't necessarily provide any extra benefits, DeLuca said.

"It's hard for somebody to learn about all of what's out there without experience."

DeLuca helps his customers find

what they need, at a factory direct price. He installs the purchase to suit the look the customer wants to achieve, with the added benefit of secure installation.

He has two of his men hang from the installed TV bracket to insure its stability.

"That's one of our standard things — if it can hold two men, it can hold the TV."

Some systems are really advanced and require DeLuca to build components and come up with unique solutions.

One of his jobs involved a TV in a mirror that disappears when it's turned off. Another involved building an outdoor, custom, weather-proof enclosure

to house a 45" LCD TV with speakers — on an open-air porch.

What's the craziest place he's ever mounted a TV? On the ceiling in a master bedroom.

He even integrated the computer with a wireless mouse and keyboard to the TV, allowing his customer to lie in bed and either watch TV or view his computer screen.

"Ultimately, it comes down to how easy it is to use - no matter how good it looks."

Hillsborough Home Theater offers free, detailed estimates. DeLuca also offers advice on cable versus satellite, the right size TV and choosing the cor-

rect speakers.

"A lot of times people don't realize what they can have done."

For more information, call (813) 957-1584.

Editor's Note: Rob DeLuca has come full circle with his hometown newspaper, The Bloomingdale Gazette. Twenty years ago, 6-year-old Rob helped his mother, Susan DeLuca, the original publisher of the Gazette, deliver the paper door to door. Susan DeLuca still calls Bloomingdale home, and was delighted — as are we — that Rob decided to run his first business ad in the Gazette.

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Photo courtesy of Bloomingdale Classics

A Classic Victory In Bloomingdale

The Bloomingdale Classics AAU 11-and-under baseball team won the First Pitch Tournament Sept. 2-4 at Ed Radice Park. The Classics won the championship game 9-1, defeating the Silver Knights. The Bloomingdale Classics went through the tournament without a single loss. Manager Richard Martin said, "This was the first championship ever for our 3-year-old organization. The team played good defense and had timely hitting."



Photo Courtesy of Heather Michael

Earl Harris Students Kick Their Way To Orlando

Bobby Michael, a nine-year-old Cimino Elementary School student, took first place in his division's "Traditional Weapons" competition last month at the Kick USA state championships held in Coral Springs. Michael is one of many Earl Harris students who will advance to the Disney Martial Arts Festival in Orlando Oct. 28-29.

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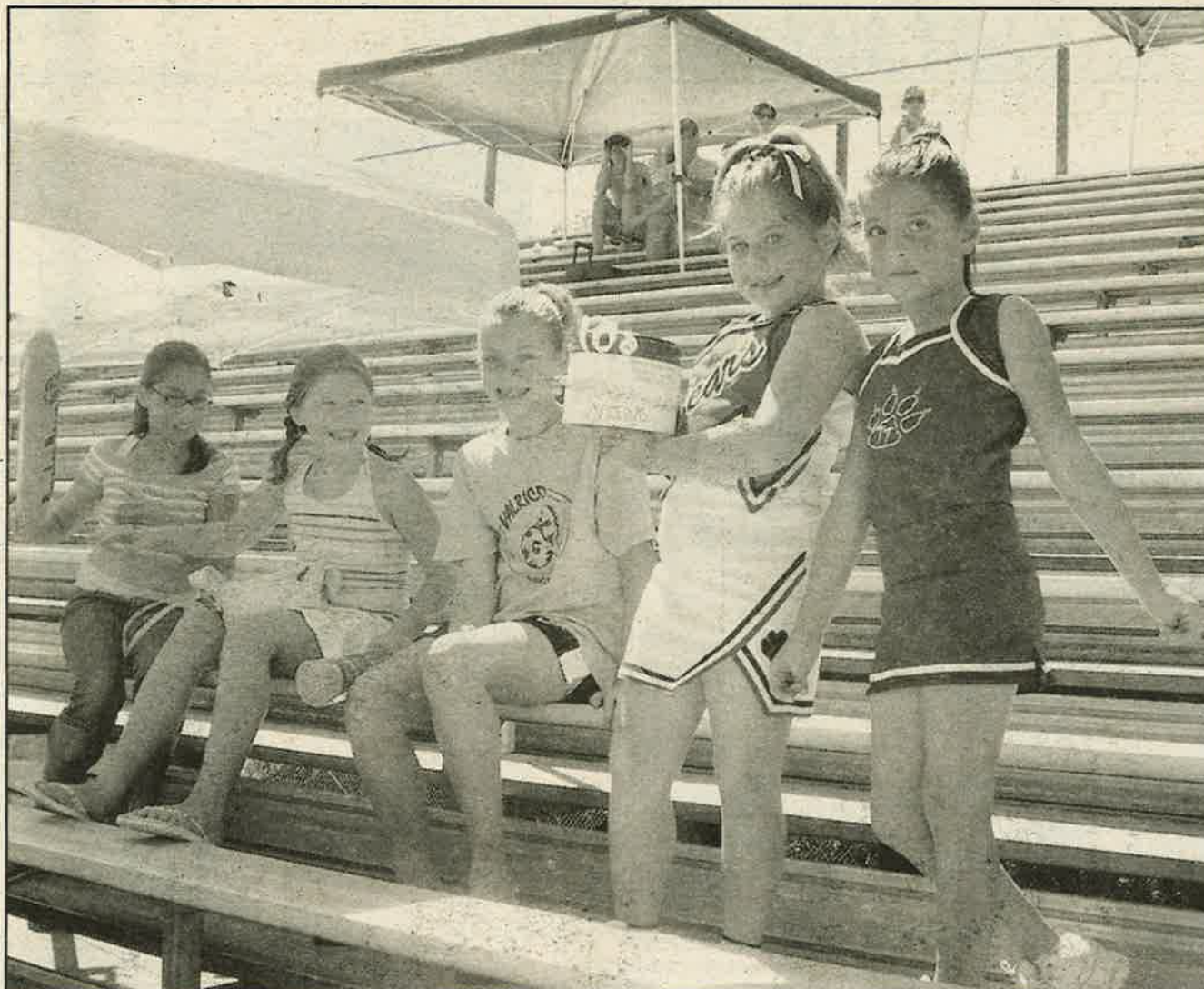
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LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Cheerleaders Ashley Gardner of the Brandon Bears, and Andrea Ontiveros of Temple Terrace, collect money from fans during a home game at Bloomingdale High to benefit the Katrina relief efforts. The teams collected \$420 during half-time.

ASSIST

Continued From Page 3

needed food to eat. The boy told his dad to donate the money, and said they would get a new toy next time.

The lemonade stand netted \$785 for the Red Cross. When her father Alan's employer, Mosaic, heard Kaylin's effort fell just short of her goal, they made up the difference.

The company donated \$215 to push the total to \$1,000. The Chastains decided to send the donations to the Houston Red Cross, since so many victims were displaced to that area.

The giving spirit that prevailed at Kaylin's lemonade stand echoed throughout the Bloomingdale community.

More than 140 students fleeing the devastation were enrolled in Hillsborough County schools just weeks after Katrina hit. Students are still welcoming into their classrooms little faces affected by this deadly storm.

Alafia Elementary School staff, stu-

dents and PTA members, in addition to collecting money, helped displaced families registering students at their school by giving them grocery store gift cards, clothing, food and school supplies, according to PTA President Rhonda McCall.

The lawyers at Holland and Knight Law firm delivered 50 backpacks filled with school supplies for evacuees registering at Hillsborough County Schools.

Cimino Elementary School reported collections of more than \$2,400.

The Trefcer family in Bloomingdale West held a garage sale to benefit Katrina survivors.

Burns Middle School students collected money and essential items like soap, shampoo and toothbrushes to send to affected areas.

Bloomingdale resident Jason Pepe, principal of Brooker Elementary School, reported that the students,

parents and teachers at his school donated more than \$2,100 to the Red Cross.

Pepe's wife, Kerri, also helped organize a St. Andrews church bake sale at Starbucks on Lithia-Pinecrest to benefit relief efforts.

By the last week of September, according to school district spokesperson Linda Cobbe, Hillsborough County students and employees had donated a total of \$98,820.94 for the Red Cross Hurricane Katrina Fund.

As of Sept. 19, donations from around the world to the Red Cross had surpassed the \$1 billion mark. The estimated cost to provide food and shelter, emergency financial aid and physical and mental health services to those affected exceeds \$2 billion.

Gazette editor Laura Frazier contributed to this report

SEE

Continued From Page 6

charitable gift by the IRS.

Editor's Note: Marion Gwizdala, a Bloomingdale resident, is president of the East Hillsborough Chapter of the National Federation for the Blind. The chapter provides a variety of interesting presentations on blindness, Braille literacy, guide dogs, and adaptive technology for the blind to groups of any size. For more information about the activities of the National Federation of the Blind, contact Gwizdala at 813-626-2789 or blind411@verizon.net.

READ

Continued From Page 6

Tribune, Sacramento Bee, USA Today and El Nuevo Herald, the Spanish version of the Miami Herald.

Using the touch pad of their telephones, subscribers access an array of timely news available to the general public, as well as news of special interest to disabled consumers.

In conjunction with the Hillsborough County Talking Book Library, The NFB will hold an interactive presentation of the Newsline service at 11 a.m. Oct. 26 at the Bloomingdale Public Library.

Participants will learn more about NFB Newsline(x), blindness, Braille and other available services. One-on-one tutorials from Newsline coaches will be offered.

Qualified participants will have the opportunity to subscribe to the free service. For more information call (813) 626-4699 or e-mail blind411@verizon.net.

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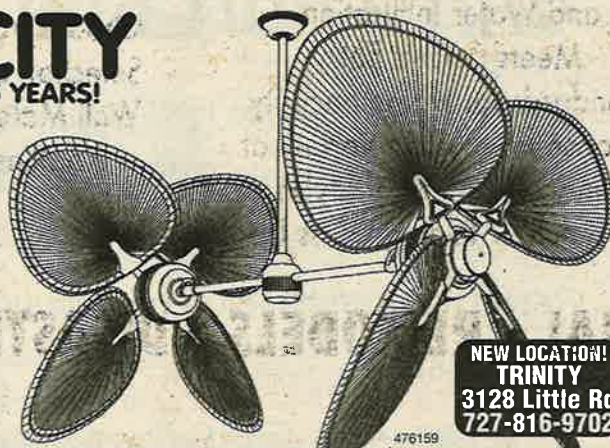
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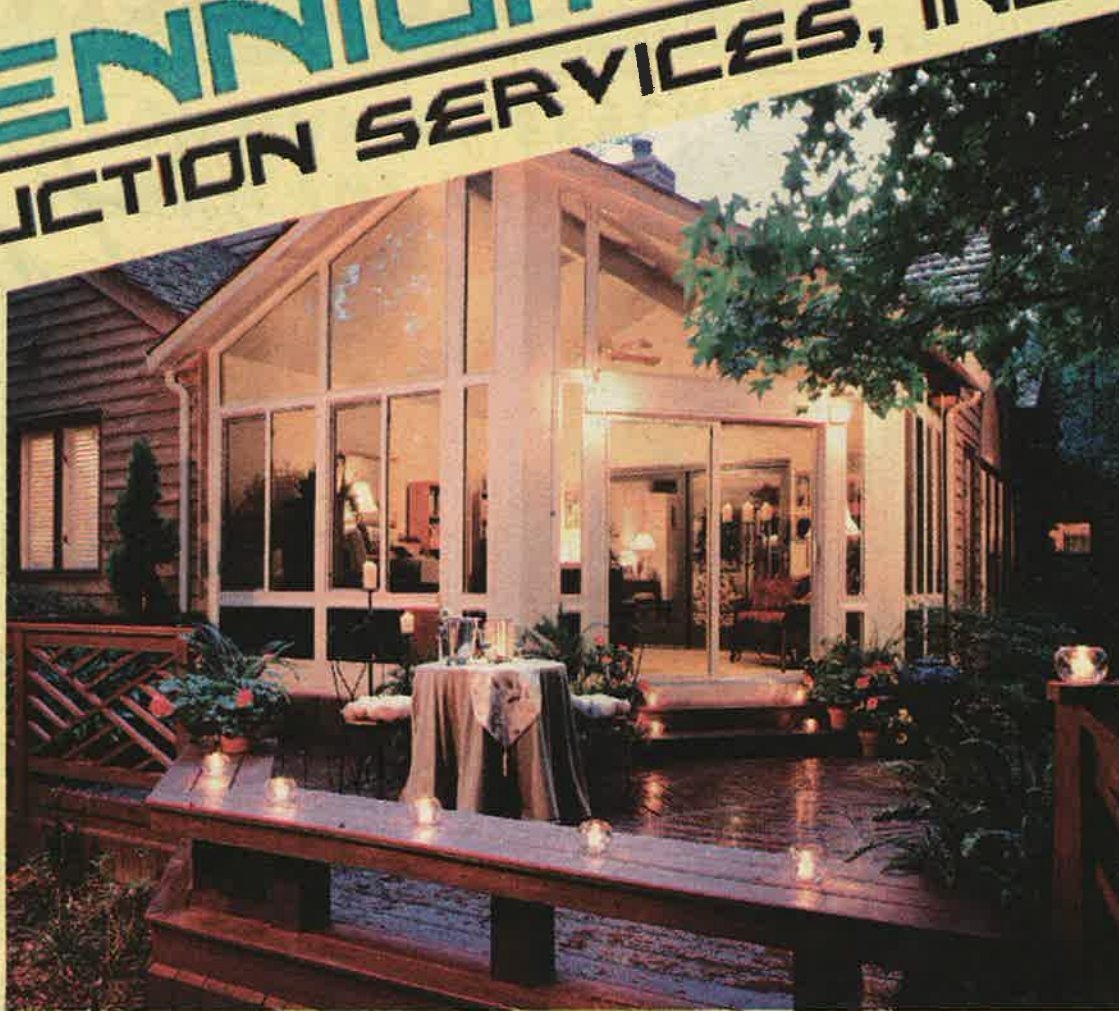
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