

FEATURE STORY



Elizabeth Welcome is a member of the Silver Sneakers exercise group at the Campo Family YMCA in Bloomingdale.

Bloomingdale newcomer Elizabeth Welcome inspires Dawn Zamanis to check out the YMCA's Silver Sneakers program for seniors.

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TAXES

Bloomingdale residents who voted in the Sept. 5 Primary Election narrowly approved a \$30 annual assessment increase for all homes in the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District area.

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Homeowners Association's 2006 Membership Drive Under Way

BHA AREA INCLUDES 5,117 HOMES

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc., in mid-September, launched its 2006 Annual Membership Drive. More than 5,000 letters asking residents to join and support the association were mailed to all homes in Bloomingdale East, Bloomingdale West and Bloomingdale Oaks. Hickory Creek, Dogwood Hills, Hickory Ridge and Butler Road — neighboring areas whose residents routinely support and participate in BHA activities and programs — are also included in the association's membership area.

The BHA, a non-profit, all-volunteer organization, is the only home-

owners association representing the entire Bloomingdale community.

Annual membership dues are \$25 per residence.

A handful of neighborhood sections within Bloomingdale are represented by smaller, individual homeowner associations. The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association is a unifying, umbrella organization which serves homeowners in all 40 sections of the community.

The principal objectives of the BHA are:

- To promote a spirit of neighborly relations and cooperation among the community's residents and property owners.

- To promote, coordinate and obtain improved utilities, governmental serv-

ices and other beneficial improvements for the community.

- To maintain high standards in the community and vigorously oppose any encroachment or conduct of any kind which may tend to lower the standards of the community.

- To promote physical improvements to the community for the common good of its property owners and residents, and to oppose any act which may tend to depreciate the property values in the community.

Programs and activities of the BHA are:

Neighborhood Improvement Program: BHA volunteers continually strive to promote and enforce compliance with each section's deed restric-

See BHA, Page 19



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Residents Cleaned Up At Sept. 9 BHA Event

BHA board members, parks department employees and neighborhood volunteers greeted participants, directed traffic and helped residents unload their cars at the BHA's Community Cleanup Day Sept. 9. See story and more pictures on page 4.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS ♦ PAGE 3

Boyette Springs Wants To Divert Funds Earmarked For Bloomingdale Roads

BHA: BELL SHOALS MUST BE IMPROVED

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BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Boyette Springs Wants To Divert Funds Earmarked For Bloomingdale Roads

BHA: BELL SHOALS MUST BE IMPROVED

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Pulte Homes, as part of its Lake Hutto development agreement with Hillsborough County, has offered to fund the four-lane widening of Bell Shoals Road (from Boyette Road to Bloomingdale Avenue) and Lithia-Pinecrest Road (from Bloomingdale to Adelaide Avenue).

However, in its review of Pulte's proposal, the Board of County Commissioners has taken a detour. The commission is considering a request by the Boyette Springs Homeowners Association to divert funds Pulte offered up for Bell Shoals Road to instead pay for the six-laning of Boyette Road.

Boyette is currently undergoing a

\$10.5 million county-funded, four-lane improvement project set for completion in 2007.

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board of directors objects to the diversion of any funds earmarked for improvements to Bell Shoals and Lithia-Pinecrest Road. Most notably, board members said last week: there are no county funds or any other options available in the foreseeable future to widen congested, two-lane, unimproved Bell Shoals.

Pulte wants to construct its Lake Hutto project, with 3,110 single-family homes, condos and duplexes plus commercial and office space, on a 710-acre parcel at the southeast corner of the Bell Shoals Road/Boyette Road intersection. The land is currently zoned for agricultural and lower-density residential development.

In a recent letter to county commissioners, BHA president Ted Grable wrote, "It is our understanding that if (improvements to Bell Shoals and Lithia-Pinecrest roads) were to be funded by the county, the costs would exceed \$200 million."

If Bell Shoals and Lithia-Pinecrest are not paid for by one large developer with a project of major impact to the area, BHA board members said, the opportunity to fund road improvements in one fell swoop any time in the foreseeable future would be lost.

Piecemeal improvements, BHA board members said, cannot offer effective, widespread traffic relief on Bell Shoals and Lithia-Pinecrest. If Pulte's large-scale development is given the green light without requiring improvements to Bell Shoals, the board said, existing traffic and accident problems

on the unimproved road would be greatly compounded, with no end in sight.

Residents who wish to voice their opinion on the proposed project and the associated proposed road improvements can e-mail the Board of County Commissioners through its Web site, www.hillsboroughcounty.org/bocc, or call (813) 272-5660.

Bloomingdale residents are also invited to comment on the issue for publication in the November issue of the Gazette; send letters to info@bloomingtondalegazette.com.

The Lake Hutto public hearing is set for 6 p.m. Nov. 15 in the second floor commissioners' boardroom at County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Boulevard, Tampa.

D'Ann White contributed to this report.

BHA Board Holds Monthly Meetings

ALL RESIDENTS WELCOMED

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. volunteer board of directors meets 7 p.m. on the first Monday each month (unless rescheduled due to holidays) at the Bloomingdale com-

munity office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. All meetings are open to the public. Bloomingdale residents are invited to observe the proceedings or address the board with their questions and concerns.

Meeting dates for 2007 and the remainder of 2006 are as follows. To receive e-mail notifications about

changes or additions to the schedule, along with more Bloomingdale news and events, please join the BHA's confidential e-mail list at www.bloomingtondalegazette.com. For more information, e-mail info@bloomingtondalegazette.com or call (813) 681-2051.

- Monday, November 6, 2006
- Monday, December 4, 2006
- Thursday, January 4, 2007 (Due to

- New Year's Holiday)
- Monday, February 5, 2007
- Monday, March 5, 2007
- Monday, April 2, 2007
- Monday, May 7, 2007
- Monday, June 4, 2007
- Monday, July 2, 2007
- Monday, August 6, 2007
- Thursday, September 6, 2007 (Due to Labor Day)

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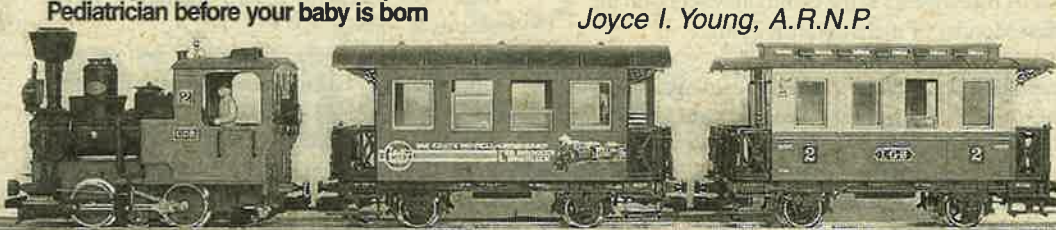
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Residents Cleaned Up At Sept. 9 Community Event

UNLOADED 150-CUBIC YARDS OF JUNK

A Gazette Report

Bloomington residents unloaded an estimated 150 cubic yards of household junk and discards at the Bloomington Homeowners Association's Sept. 9 Community Cleanup Day.

BHA board members and other volunteers welcomed neighbors and directed traffic through the drop-off site, on the grounds of the parks maintenance facility on Natures Way. More than a dozen volunteers helped residents unload and dispose of an assortment of household junk including mattresses, furniture, appliances and more.

BHA board member Lydia Harrod, who co-chairs cleanup days along with board member Steve Heckel, said traffic flow was smooth at the Sept. 9 event. In addition, there were enough Dumpsters at the site to collect all drop-offs until the site closed at 1 p.m.

After the site closed, volunteers conducted about a dozen pick-ups for senior citizens and disabled residents who called to

ask for help.

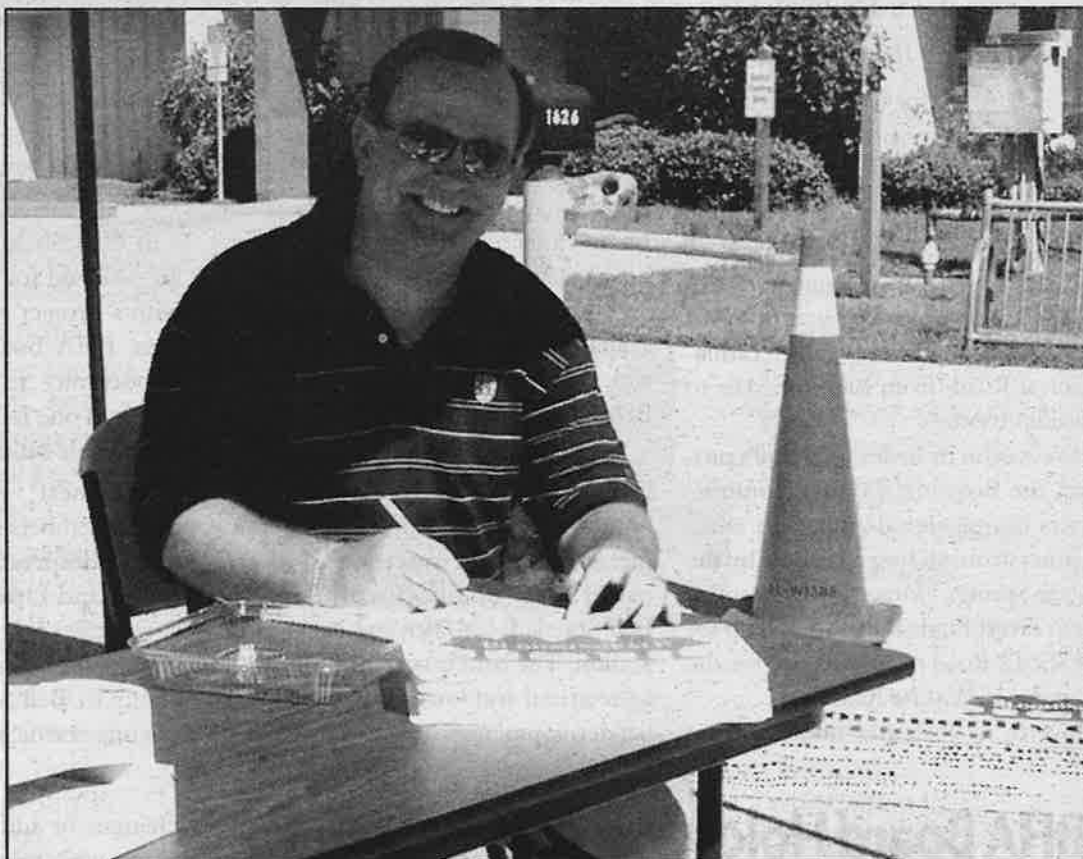
Community Cleanup Days are made possible by neighborhood volunteers, a grant from the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations, residents' annual BHA membership dues, and the Hillsborough County Parks Department.

Harrod said the twice-annual event is a win-win situation for the homeowners association, residents, volunteers and Hillsborough County.

"Our residents have a safe, convenient place close to home to drop off unwanted junk that is not picked up during regular garbage collections. And in most cases, it's an improvement to the home and may inspire additional work around the house," Harrod said.

"We also get to meet the folks in our community and continue to maintain the good will and pleasant surroundings we've come to appreciate in Bloomington. It was a very successful event."

The next cleanup day will be held in spring 2007. Dates and details will be published in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtongazette.com.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photos

BHA board member George May manned the welcome tent at the Sept. 9 cleanup. Below right, BHA board member Stan Lee, center, helps Bloomington residents Dave Bechtel and Andy Alexandre dispose of an old hot water heater. Below left, BHA president Ted Grable, left, surveys the collection site with BHA board member Dale Kahn.



Free Household Junk Disposal At County Collection Centers

YARD WASTE, CHEMICALS TOO

A Gazette Report

All Hillsborough County residents can dispose of miscellaneous junk, old appliances, residential yard

waste, household garbage, paint, batteries and more for free at one of five County Collection Centers open weekdays and Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

To gain free access to collection centers, residents

must present a copy of their property tax bill and photo ID.

Two collection sites convenient to the Bloomington area — and the items they accept, which vary at

See JUNK, Page 18

Your Inside Connections

The Bloomington Homeowners Association Inc.

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
 Phone: 681-2051 Fax: 684-2358
 E-mail: Bloomington.Homeowners@Verizon.net
 Web Site: www.bloomingtongazette.com
 BHA meetings are at the community office on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

President: Ted Grable **Vice President:** Joe Hickle
Treasurer: Pam Liguori **Director:** Lydia Harrod
Director: Steve Heckel **Director:** Dale Kahn
Director: George May **Director:** Tim Shuman
Director: Myron Magedanz **Director:** Sheila Harris
Director: Stanley Lee

Bloomington Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594
 Phone: 684-6667
 BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

President: Thom Snelling
Vice President: Russell Jones
Treasurer: David West
Recording Secretary: Michael Buday
Trustee: David Steck

Trustee: Joe Harless
Property Manager: Al Devney

Bloomington Community Security Program

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

Coordinator/Equipment Manager:

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Treasurer: Paul Kelmer
Patrol Member: Steven Heckel
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Bloomington Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132
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Treasurer: Fred Englehart

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Please Keep Cars Off The Grass, Boats Tucked Away

REQUIRED BY MOST DEED RESTRICTIONS

A Gazette Report

Bloomingtondale residents who park cars on the grass or store their boats in areas visible from the street might assume their neighbors don't mind.

However, dozens of complaints recently received by the Bloomingtondale Homeowners Association clearly indicate

that's not the case. The most frequently received deed restriction violation complaints deal with cars, boats, trailers and RV's parked in inappropriate places.

If you park a car on your lawn or store your boat anywhere visible from the street, chances are your neighbors aren't happy about it. You may also be in violation of neighborhood deed restriction covenants and Hillsborough

County codes.

Each neighborhood section in Bloomingtondale has its own unique set of deed restrictions. Most sections expressly prohibit residents from parking cars in their yards or on the public right of way (the grass between the sidewalk and the street).

A majority of sections also prohibit residents from parking boats and trailers in areas visible from the street or other

homes.

Volunteers with Bloomingtondale's Neighborhood Improvement Program remind residents cars may be parked in the driveway, the garage or on the street in front of your own home.

Boat owners are asked to move their vessels to an area out of sight from the street and neighbor's homes.

All deed restrictions can be

viewed on the community Website. Log on to www.bloomingtondalegazette.com and click on the "Deed Restrictions" button at the top of the page. Restrictions are listed alphabetically by street and section names.

To request a copy of your deed restrictions by mail, or for more information, call the Bloomingtondale community office, (813) 681-2051 or e-mail info@bloomingtondalegazette.com.

Life Is Short; Have Dessert First

GIRL SCOUTS HOST ANNUAL EVENT

By KELLY LYNN
Girl Scouts of Suncoast Council Inc.

Do you have a sweet tooth? Then we have just the thing for you!

Join the Girl Scouts of Suncoast Council for the third annual Dessert First Dinner and Auction 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 17 at the Westin Tampa Harbour Island, 725 South Harbour

Island Blvd.

Ten of the area's top chefs will present scrumptious desserts made with one of the best ingredients known to mankind: Girl Scout Cookies. Tasty Thin Mints, delicious Do-si-dos, and sweet Samoas will be combined with other ingredients to make dessert masterpieces.

Guests can sample all of the desserts before dinner, while bidding in a silent auction with items for every taste and

budget. Then they'll enjoy an elegant dinner and a live auction featuring fantastic items such as a ride on the Outback Blimp (complete with dinner at Outback), a vacation in a beautiful North Carolina mountain home, tickets to sporting events and dining packages at area restaurants.

The emcee for the live auction is Jack Harris, local television and radio personality.

The 2005 Dessert First Dinner and Auction drew 175 people and raised \$36,500 for Girl Scouts of Suncoast Council.

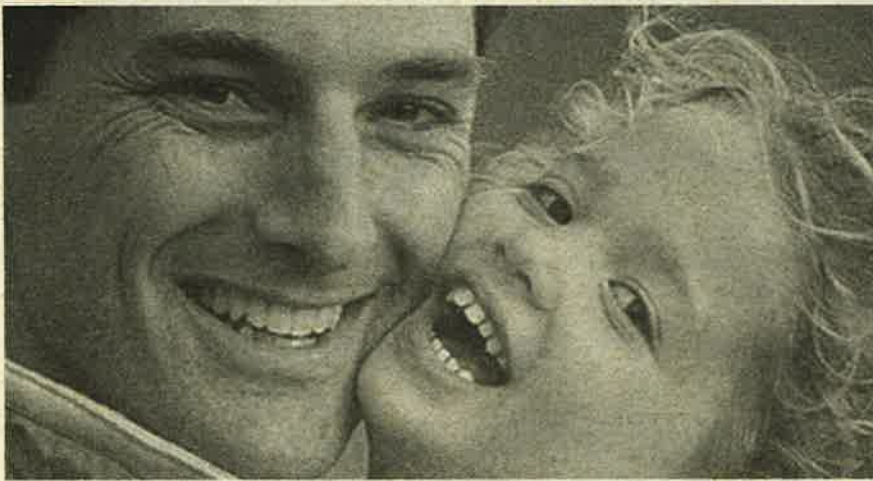
Tickets are \$150 per person. A number of sponsorship levels are also available.

For information about tickets or sponsorship opportunities, call Terri Costello, (813) 262-1688. All proceeds will benefit the Girl Scouts of Suncoast Council.

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BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Amenities recently added to the Culbreath Rd. bus stop include a large parking pad with two spaces for handicapped commuters.

HART Ramps Up Efforts To Improve Bus Stops Countywide

UPGRADES BENEFIT RIDERS OF ALL ABILITIES

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Extensive upgrades to a public bus stop in Valrico primarily designed to meet guidelines set forth by the American Disabilities Act of 1990 will benefit bus riders of all abilities.

At a September 19 ribbon-cutting ceremony, Ray Miller, executive director of the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority, christened the revamped stop, in the parking lot of the Campo Family YMCA on Culbreath Rd. in Bloomingdale.

The 27X route stop, with express service to and from downtown Tampa, was established in January this year. Before recent improvements, the "park and ride" stop, with about 25 commuter parking spaces, did not have a shelter to shield riders from the elements.

In addition, pedestrian access between the YMCA parking lot and the bus stop

(across the street on busy two-lane Culbreath Rd.) was hindered by the steep slope of the lot and a lack of sidewalks.

Two parking spaces for handicapped riders and a wheelchair-accessible ramp were recently added to the stop. A switchback or "zig-zag" style ramp with a gradual incline and handrails was used to connect new sidewalks and the relatively steep parking lot grade.

A palladium style shelter was also added.

Arizona Jenkins, a volunteer member of the authority's ADA task force, helped Miller cut the ribbon at the ramp entrance, then smoothly negotiated his wheelchair down the slope.

Jenkins, widely known as an advocate for disabled citizens seeking better access to public transportation and facilities, has a number of physical disabilities. He uses the authority's HART-Access service (see sidebar) to get around the Tampa Bay area on a regular basis.

See HART, Page 15

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Silver Sneakers Shine In Bloomingdale

GEARED TOWARD ACTIVE SENIORS

By DAWN ZAMANIS
Correspondent

I first spotted Elizabeth Welcome walking along Culbreath Road during my daily morning drive to Alafia Elementary School. She caught my attention, and I wondered where she was going. She seemed to have a distinct purpose; a clear destination.

Every morning, I saw her trekking toward the Campo Family YMCA. On my way back home, I'd spot her again, carrying a water bottle, hiking up the steep slope into the parking lot of the Y.

I recently stopped at the YMCA to inquire about the woman I had seen walking.

YMCA member service representative Kavita Marballi knew in an instant it was Elizabeth Welcome.

Marballi said Welcome, a spunky, pretty, energetic 79-years-young Bloomingdale resident, is well known and adored by the entire YMCA staff and members of the facility's "Silver Sneakers" group.

Silver Sneakers, sponsored by Humana Insurance Company, is a group exercise program designed specially for senior citizens.

Marballi said a wide range of activities are available at the Y, but for many seniors, it's not all about exercising.

The YMCA hosts "Brunch and Learn" the second Tuesday each month.



Silver Sneakers members meet daily for classes and other activities at the Campo Family YMCA on Culbreath Road.

DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

"Each member brings a meal or an appetizer to share. We also invite speakers to talk to the seniors about nutrition, safety, and stress management. The Silver Sneaker members and the regular senior members are always eager to volunteer for these events, from set up to cleanup," Marballi said.

"Seniors love to volunteer, and we really need their help."

Silver Sneakers exercise classes are

See YMCA, Page 10

Seniors Helped YMCA Reach Exercise Goal

TRIBUTE TO SEPT. 11 VICTIMS

A Gazette Report

On Sept. 11, 2006, the Campo Family YMCA paid tribute to the people who perished in the World Trade Center attack with a special event dubbed "Minutes In Memory." Two classes

combined to form one group of 50 seniors who, all combined, exercised for 3,000 minutes in honor of those who perished. The seniors wore red, white and blue as a symbol of patriotism. With the group's help, the YMCA exceeded their facility-wide goal of 45,000 minutes total.

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COMMENTARY

Note To Kids: Go Play In The Street!

By DAWN ZAMANIS
Correspondent

One recent Friday afternoon, I honestly wondered for a few daunting moments whether I was still living in the United States of America, or if I had been hurtled into some totalitarian regime.

A Hillsborough County sheriff's deputy knocked on my door and declared that it was against the law for kids to play in the street in front of my home. The deputy showed up after a neighbor called the police (again) to complain about a mob of young boys skateboarding and riding bicycles in the street.

Mind you, my street in Bloomingdale is comparable to a cul-de-sac, with negligible traffic flow. It is nestled in a remote area buffered on both sides by parallel streets.

The deputy's words hung mid-air as he proclaimed, "It is against the law for children to play in the street, M'am. The only reason a child is allowed in the street is to cross to the other side."

"There is no law in Hillsborough County preventing children from safely playing in the street in front of their home."

Office of Cpl. Mark Clark,
HCSO District IV

This is America and our civil liberties, I thought, were being yanked out from under us right before my eyes. I was lost in thought as I stood near the curb surrounded by an army of little boys ages ten through thirteen, whose anxious eyes looked to me for defense of their simple freedom.

"We just wanna skate," said one ten-year old kid. "We don't want to cause any trouble. We'll move out of the way if a car needs to get through like we always do."

"Skateboarding is our life," said another boy, age twelve. We wake up in the morning and that's the first thing we think of that makes us look

See COMMENT, Page 19



DAWN ZAMANIS/Photo

Collection Recalls Campaigns From G.W. To G.W. Bush

Bill Jones and his wife, Carol, displayed their extensive collection of presidential campaign memorabilia at the Bloomingdale library last month. On display were hundreds of campaign collectables and tokens dating back to the first presidential campaign. Campaign buttons on display featured presidents McKinley, Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy and Lincoln. Jones and his wife, Carol, have lived in Brandon for three years.

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*Kenst Report, 2nd Quarter 2006. All District Six MLS areas for Greater Tampa companies and offices.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Chadd's Ford Neighbors Admire Landscaping Makeover

YARD OF THE MONTH

A Gazette Report

Tunis and Catherine Morrow grabbed the attention and appreciation of their Chadd's Ford neighbors with the complete yard makeover accomplished this summer.

The Morrow's home, at 1237 Rainbrook Circle, is the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association's Yard of the Month.

To nominate a neighbor for the award, e-mail info@bloomingtondalegazette.com or call (813) 681-2051. Winners receive a \$25 Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale gift card, courtesy of the BHA.

YMCA

Continued From Page 8

led by Carol Adam, who received rave reviews from group members, and Corinne Schramm, another Silver Sneakers instructor praised to the skies by the group.

Maria Cuevas and her husband Juan Casano talked about how Silver Sneakers has made a huge impact in their lives.

"It makes me feel energized," said Cuevas, who has been involved in the program for about a year.

"I've made many friends, and it's the most wonderful place to be. I love to exercise and do the Yoga. We also do weight training and body sculpting."

Cuevas said the YMCA staff treats her and all the seniors extra-special.

"The staff is the best. They are just wonderful," she said.

When I met Elizabeth Welcome, the woman who inspired me to write this story, she

emerged from an exercise class with a sparkle about her. That's what I noticed when I spotted her during her morning walks.

She was wearing a pretty floral-print top and matching shorts. She was smart, interesting and full of life.

Welcome recently moved to Bloomingdale from Massachusetts to live with her daughter, Linda. She also has two sons and two grandchildren. Welcome said she wasn't able to connect with many seniors in her new neighborhood. On the advice of her children, she joined the YMCA.

"It's the best decision I ever made," she said. "I'm so happy I did it."

The energetic grandmother walks nearly two miles to the YMCA three days a week.

"I've always loved walking. I used to walk everywhere before I moved."

Although she walks two

miles to the Y every other day, she does get a ride home from a good friend she met at one of her classes.

Welcome has had joint replacement surgeries on two knees and one hip, but that hasn't stopped her from marching miles each day. At 79, she looks happy, healthy, and a lot younger than her age. She has gentleness about her, and her positive outlook is as inspiring as her vigor.

As a senior member of the Y, Elizabeth participates in all of the Silver Sneakers classes and events, which include everything from exercise and body sculpting to birthday parties and field trips.

"I am happy to be here with my friends," Elizabeth said.

For information about Silver Sneakers and other programs offered at the Campo Family YMCA, call (813) 684-1371.

Singles Group Hosts Halloween Party

FRIDAY, OCT. 27

A Gazette Report

The Brandon Singles Group and Fraternal Order of Police will host a Halloween costume party for Tampa Bay area singles 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. on Friday, October 27 at the Fraternal Order of Police Hall, 9001 Taylor Road in Seffner. Tickets are \$20 for Brandon Singles group mem-

bers, \$25 for non-members.

There will be a DJ, appetizer buffet, cash bar and awards for costumes. The group invites all single adults to come meet new people, dance the night away and have a great time.

Tickets and information: Call Debi, (813) 516-1999, or e-mail debi.halloweenparty@yahoo.com.

Learn Calligraphy To Address Cards, Invites

CLASS AT LIBRARY

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Friends of the Library will sponsor a one-day calligraphy class this month at the library.

Participants will learn about calligraphy equipment, writing preparations, margins and lines, ruler technique, scripts and

styles, practical hints, spacing, hyphenation and flourish. The class, taught by Minnie Webster, will be held 10 a.m. to noon in the McLean Community Room at the library on Saturday, Oct. 14.

To sign up for the class or for more information contact F. Boody, pwboody@tecoeng.com or (813) 275-3642.

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The Gazette is delivered free to Bloomingdale residents along with The Tampa Tribune on the first Saturday of each month.

LETTERS

Residents Want
Fair, Efficient
Customer ServiceTAKE ISSUE WITH
TECO, CITGO STATION

To submit a letter for publication in the Gazette e-mail info@bloomingtondalegazette.com or mail to Gazette Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594. All letters are subject to editing for clarity and length.

TECO Should Report
Incidental Findings

My friend Hal, who lives in Seffner, had his electricity cut off Aug. 19 when a tree fell on power lines. This effectively cut off Hal's electricity, cable and telephone. TECO was called and electricity was restored to his home that evening. However, the power lines for both cable and telephone remained disconnected.

When Hal discovered his cable and phone service were out, he called me for assistance. I told him it seemed to me that when the TECO worker found three wires down and fixed the one he was responsible for, he should have had the common sense and decency to contact Bright House and Verizon to make them aware that their wires were down.

I realize I may be asking for more than any service company of any sort has ever trained their people to do, but after spending upwards of two hours in service to my friend, I thought some good might come out of my experience.

—Howard Raymond

Do Gas Stations Use "Bait
and Fill" Tactics?

On Aug. 6, I was driving north on Bell Shoals Road looking for the gas station with the best price. The Citgo station on Bell Shoals at Starwood advertised a price on their large sign of \$2.93&9/10, so I pulled into the station to make a purchase. To my surprise and dismay, I discovered the actual price on the pump was \$2.97&9/10. I feel this is a deliberate attempt to deceive the consumer — since you have already stopped and gotten out of your car, you might as well fill up anyway. I did not fill up, even though I was very low on gas. I think this deceptive practice should be looked into.

—Geoffrey Gibbons



Photo Courtesy Brandon Kiwanis Club

Brandon Kiwanis Club Installs New Officers

The Kiwanis Club of Greater Brandon recently installed new officers for the 2006-07 membership year. Pictured at the installation ceremony last month are treasurer Christie Best, president-elect Susan Salmeron, secretary James Powell, and president Dustie Amatangelo.

Bloomingtondale Ridge Fed Up With Mail Mix-Up

CALL POST OFFICE
TO REPORT PROBLEMS

A Gazette Report

Several residents in Bloomingtondale Ridge, which includes Fox Run and The Greens, recently reported longtime, ongoing U. S. mail delivery problems in their neighborhood sections of Bloomingtondale East.

Residents report mail routinely delivered to the right house number on the wrong street blocks away; no attempt by carriers to bring packages to the door before leaving a "pick up" notice in the mailbox; and a lack of response about the problems from the letter carriers and Valrico Post Office staff.

One homeowner said, "We've lived in the same house for over 12 yrs. I could

understand a mistake here and there but (the problems) happen frequently."

To report a mail delivery problem in Bloomingtondale East, contact the Valrico Post Office, 2406 E State Road 60, Valrico, 33594, (813) 657-0495.

To report problems in Bloomingtondale West, contact the Brandon Post Office, 1315 Oakfield Dr, Brandon, FL 33511, (813) 661-6896.

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BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

Voters Approve \$30 Annual Tax Increase

NEW CAP: \$130 PER HOME

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Bloomingtondale residents who voted in the Sept. 5 Primary Election narrowly approved a \$30 annual assessment increase for all homes in the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District area.

The referendum to raise each homeowner's annual assessment from \$100 to \$130 passed by a very close margin: 50.66 percent (995 voters) voted "yes"

to approve the increase, and 49.34 percent (969 voters) voted "no."

A simple majority was required for the referendum to pass. The increase affects all homeowners in the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District area. There are about 4,800 homes in the district.

Special taxing district funds pay for community maintenance and improvements.

Bloomingtondale's district includes most homes in Bloomingtondale East and West,

with the exception of River Crossing Estates and Bloomingtondale Oaks. Homeowners in those sections have established their own taxing districts, separate from Bloomingtondale's district.

Bloomingtondale Oaks' taxing district president, Bill Grace, reports homeowners in that district also approved an annual increase Sept. 5. Bloomingtondale Oaks, with 184 homes, has two entryways off Bloomingtondale Avenue, across from Bloomingtondale High.

"Our (Oaks) residents voted to raise

our cap from \$80 to \$120. The vote was 52 voters in favor of the increase (57.78%) to 38 opposed (42.22%)," Grace said.

To view more Primary Election results, log on to www.votehillsborough.org. For information about the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District, log on to www.bloomingtondalegazette.com or call (813) 684-6667.

For information about the Bloomingtondale Oaks district, call Grace, (813) 685-2817.

Snipe Signs Are Illegal, Potentially Dangerous Eyesores

COUNTY PROHIBITS ROADSIDE ADS

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Hillsborough County codes define "snipe signs" as "any sign made of paper or other non-durable material which is attached in any way to a utility, tree, fence post or any other similar object on public property... (including) utility poles, public benches, street lights or on any public right of way."

Many Bloomingtondale residents simply

describe the rogue signs as eyesores and nuisances.

David Steck, a volunteer member of the Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District's board of trustees, said last week Bloomingtondale residents are clamoring for more aggressive enforcement of laws prohibiting the use of the signs.

"Illegal snipe signs are posted just about everywhere throughout Hillsborough County," Steck said.

"In our area, there is a particular problem along Bloomingtondale Avenue, Bell Shoals Road and Lithia-Pinecrest

Road."

In addition to being illegal and unsightly, Steck said the flimsy, staked variety of the roadside ads present serious personal, property and equipment damage hazards.

"Aside from being in violation of Hillsborough County codes, business owners who post snipe signs are taking an unnecessary risk and opening themselves up to additional liabilities," Steck said.

"When one of the signs becomes entangled in our contractors' lawn

maintenance equipment, or if a child falls on one of the upended stakes, there would be a very litigious matter to adjudicate."

In addition, law enforcement officials say snipe signs are a visual distraction to drivers that also become dangerous obstacles when blown into the street.

To report businesses or individuals posting snipe signs, call Hillsborough County Housing and Community Code Enforcement, (813) 274-6600, or fill out a complaint form online at www.hillsboroughcounty.org/hcce.

Property Manager Seeing Pink Pigs, Flags

21 BAGS OF LITTER PICKED UP

A Gazette Report

Bloomingtondale Special Taxing District property manager Al Devney picked up 21 bags of trash in his travels around the community last month.

In addition to the glut of roadside litter, Devney reports, "In the land of eat, drink

and pitch out the window, there were 286 pink flags on Bell Shoals Road, a rubber ball, a case of note books, a pink china pig and \$.06 cents. The beverages of choice were slim this month; Coke for soft drinks, Heineken for beer and no distilled spirits."

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

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Nativity Catholic Celebrates 45th Anniversary

Nativity Catholic School celebrated its 45th anniversary Sept. 5. Pictured, teachers Andrea Kennedy, Jo Hanna Hohman and Linda Plesko, with 4-year-old students from the early childhood class, proudly pose in front of a 50-ft. long mural painted by more than 700 students enrolled at the school. Dr. Bernadette Kunnen, school principal, kicked off the celebration by unrolling an anniversary banner, then students and faculty assembled in the parking lot and stood together to form the number forty-five. Nativity pastor, the Rev. Arthur Proulx, led a prayer service and benediction in the church. The celebration ended with a picnic lunch for the entire school on the Novemberfest field.



Photo Courtesy Nativity Catholic School

Church, School Raises Funds For Breast Cancer Research

3-DAY WALK ON NATURES WAY

A Gazette Report

After attending the second memorial service of the mother of a St. Stephen Catholic School student who died of breast cancer, Amy Meany of Lithia felt compelled to do something.

The close-knit 5-year-old Riverview school of 350 students first mourned the death of Rosana Bryant to breast cancer three years ago. Cheryl Nance

died just two years later. Meany was friends with both women, whose children were all in the same class. Then, over the summer, the school bid a sad farewell to Cathie Stuart, the wife of music and art teacher Harry Stuart, also a victim of breast cancer.

Feeling the loss of so many young women, Meany and several other mothers decided to take action. Their efforts have grown into a parishwide effort to fight breast cancer called Project Cure.

Modeled after the Three-Day Breast Cancer Walk, the group plans to walk 20 miles a day for three days, a total of 60 miles, raising a minimum of \$2,200 each, Oct. 13-15 for the Don and Erika Wallace Comprehensive Breast Cancer Program at the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute.

This is the same program that the Lightning Foundation of the Tampa Bay Lightning, which Project Cure has joined forces with, has been raising

funds for through its Pink Hat fundraiser. The researchers at Moffitt have been doing groundbreaking genome research that could lead to targeted therapy for breast cancer.

The Rev. Bill Swengros, pastor of St. Stephen, suggested getting the children involved.

"When I talked to Father Bill about our plans to do our own three-day walk and asked for his support, the ideas

See **CANCER**, Page 17

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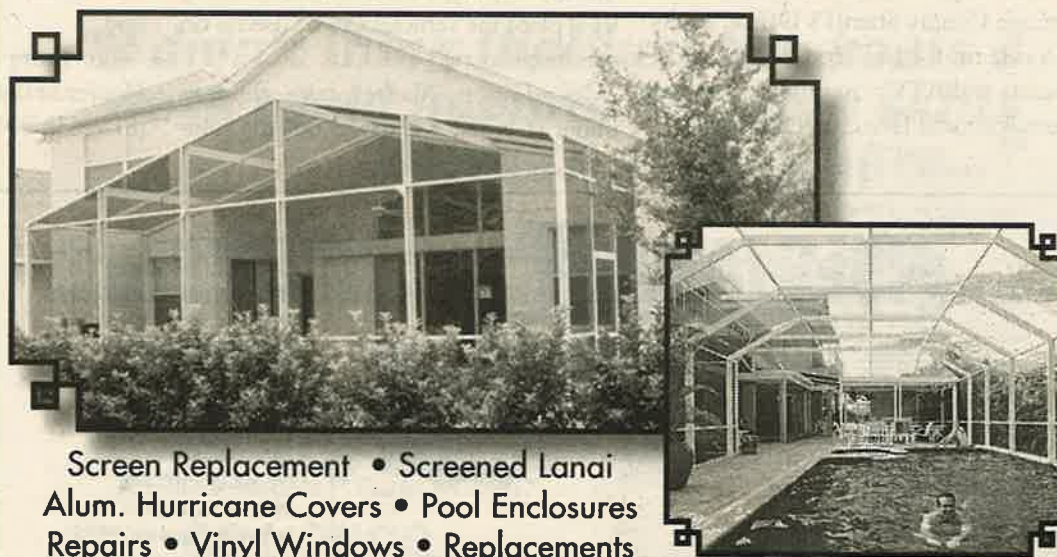
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Have Fun, Be Smart This Halloween

SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS, KIDS

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
Bloomington Community Resource Deputy

Unfortunately, Halloween is not the always the safe, fun time many of us adults remember from our childhoods. Some have turned it into a dangerous "trick or treat" event.

If the proper precautions are taken, it can still be time of fun and games and real treats for kids simply looking to

have a good time.

Parents, please ensure your young children are safe by going trick-or-treating with them.

Make sure all of you have flashlights and light colored clothing or costumes, and only stop at homes with the front porch lights on.

Cross only at intersections or clear areas and not between parked cars. If you're out driving around, require every-

one to wear their seat belt.

Check all treats before your kids eat them. When in doubt throw them away.

Make sure your pets are kept under control.

Lastly, there are many alternatives to trick-or-treating offered in the Bloomington area. Many churches and schools hold organized, fun activities.

Let's all have fun, but stay safe — and smart — this Halloween.

Sheriff's Office Seeks Donated Items For Migrant Outreach Program

DROP OFF AT
BLOOMINGDALE
SUBSTATION

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
Bloomington Community
Resource Deputy

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office District IV is sponsoring a Migrant Outreach Program to be held 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 4 at the district office in Ruskin.

This project was a tremendous success last year. We expect to host more than 1,000 people at this year's event.

We are seeking donations of various items, listed below. Please drop off items at the Bloomington substation, near Beef O'Brady's in the Village Center, corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenhaven Drive. To arrange a pick-up for large quantities of donated items call (813) 635-8040.

Hygiene Products: Shampoo, deodorant, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, combs/brushes, washcloths, lotion, sunscreen.

Non-Perishable Foods: Canned items (soups, fruits, beans, sauces, etc.), dry goods (rice, crackers, pancake mix, potato flakes, noodles, mixes, etc.).

Clothing: Jackets and coats only, no other clothing please! All sizes are needed, infant to adult. New or used jackets are acceptable.

Baby Supplies: Diapers, baby wipes, formula, baby food.

Blankets: Preferably new in package, clean used blankets are okay. If anyone knows of a source that sells quantities of blankets at an economical rate, please let us know. We have some grant money available for purchase.

Nature's Way Parks Facility 'Cleaned Out'

SOME SUSPECT ORGANIZED CRIME RING

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

An early morning break-in last month at a Hillsborough County parks maintenance facility in Bloomington prompted law enforcement officials and county employees to consider the possibility of an organized crime ring heist.

Police said the break-in, which occurred between 1:30 and 5:00 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 19, resulted in the theft of tens of thousands of dollars worth of county-owned vehicles, equipment and tools.

Parks department maintenance units provide building and ground maintenance for county-owned parks, playground areas, boat ramps and athletic complexes. The south county unit, at 1626 Nature's Way, serves areas south

of Interstate 4.

Among the items stolen from the site: a white Ford F-350 pickup truck, a box truck containing air conditioning repair tools, a utility trailer, one silver Dixie Chopper and one Toro lawnmower, welding and painting equipment, blowers and chainsaws. A large inventory of construction and repair tools was also stolen.

"They absolutely cleaned us out," said a parks staff member, who asked not to be identified.

Employees arriving at work around 6:00 a.m. Tuesday discovered heavy duty commercial locks and chains securing the site's entryway gate and storage outbuilding had been cut.

There were no cameras or advanced security measures installed at the site, set in a residential area just west of Alafia Elementary School. Equipment and vehicles stored at the site are not

visible from the road. The relatively remote north end of the property is surrounded by wooded areas on three sides.

As Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office detectives continued their investigation and stolen property inventory last week, police, parks staff and Bloomington residents speculated on the nature of the crime.

Recent reports of similar heists in Pinellas County led some to suspect an organized crime operation with elaborate, quickly executed plans to swipe, ship and sell the expensive goods.

According to the National Equipment Register database, millions of dollars worth of construction and maintenance equipment are stolen each year nationwide.

The equipment registry was developed to record heavy equipment own-

See CLEAN, Page 15

Motorized 'Toys' Not Allowed On Public Streets, Sidewalks

PARENTS COULD FACE CHILD NEGLIGENCE CHARGES

A Gazette Report

According to officials with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, adults who ride motorized scooters, mopeds, go-carts and ATV's on public streets or sidewalks could face criminal charges.

And adults who allow children to ride motorized vehicles on public property could also face charges of child neglect if injuries occur.

According to Bloomington's community deputy, Pete Maurer, the only legal place the vehicles can be used is on private property.

In addition, Maurer said, children under 16 years of age who ride the vehi-

cles off-road on private property are required by law to wear a helmet.

"The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office is receiving more complaints about this serious violation of statutes, and citations are being issued," Maurer said.

For more information, call Deputy Maurer at the Bloomington substation, (813) 635-8040.



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CLEAN

Continued From Page 14

ership and theft information, to increase the recovery rate of stolen equipment

Police said last week organized crime rings often move stolen property quickly to local shipping ports. The goods are commonly smuggled into outgoing freight containers and shipped overseas to pre-arranged black market buyers. Some items have an overseas street value up to three times that in the U.S., police said.

Parks staff said last week plans are "obviously, absolutely" underway to increase security at the facility. Distressed and angered by the theft, employees at the Nature's way facility said they would welcome the installation of hidden infrared cameras and a security guard posted overnight at the site, as soon as possible.

Late last week, police said there were no breaks in the case. Most stolen construction and repair equipment, according to the National Equipment Register Web site, is never recovered.

Anyone with information is asked to call HCSO property crimes Detective Danny Johnson, (813) 247-8200.

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HART Has Designs On Glenhaven Shelter

CONSTRUCTION TO START BY YEAR-END

A Gazette Report

Bloomington residents who catch the bus at the corner of Glenhaven Drive and Bell Shoals Road will soon have shelter from the sun and rain while they wait for their morning ride to work.

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority spokesperson Kathy Karalekas said HART officially approved the construction of the Glenhaven shelter — and nine others at bus stops throughout the south county area — in mid-September.

Karalekas said design price

quotes were due in last week. Authority engineers said the permit drawing process would take another four weeks. Permit review and approval by Hillsborough County is expected to take an additional four weeks, with construction estimated to begin sometime in December.

Barring any unforeseen conflicts, engineers said, installation of the Glenhaven shelter should take place in early 2007.

The bus stop improvements will be paid for with Hillsborough County impact fees. HART estimates each shelter costs \$20,000 to \$30,000 to install.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

HART executive director Ray Miller accompanies Arizona Jenkins on a trip down a new wheelchair-accessible ramp recently installed at a park-and-ride bus stop on Culbreath Rd. in Bloomington.

HART

Continued From Page 7

Jenkins praised HART staff at the ceremony last week for their commitment to installing access improvements and shelters at bus stops countywide.

"You did a good job here and I appreciate everything you do," Jenkins said.

"Keep up the good work."

Miller said, "When people from the community like Arizona become so involved in the process, we are committed to the challenge of meeting their needs."

HART spokesperson Jill Cappadoro said the authority is in the process of evaluating all bus stops countywide to identify sites requiring upgrades to meet both ADA requirements and the safety and convenience needs of the general public.

Advancements in project coordination between county, city and transit authority staff have resulted in a more streamlined funding and construction

process, Cappadoro said.

But with 4,800 bus stops countywide, widespread improvements won't be made overnight. HART staff said the Culbreath Rd. stop improvements took nine months to accomplish.

"It's a long-term commitment, but we are going to look at all of (the stops) and identify ways to ensure accessibility," Cappadoro said.

Shelters and access improvements are needed at several more bus stops in the Bloomington area, including the 25X stop at Bell Shoals Rd. and Glenhaven Dr., with express service to MacDill Airforce Base (see sidebar).

The \$75,000 Culbreath Rd. stop improvement project, funded by Hillsborough County impact fees, is the most extensive bus stop enhancement done countywide to date, Cappadoro said.

HART Offers Special Services For Disabled Riders

WILL PICK UP, MAKE SPECIAL STOPS

A Gazette Report

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority offers a number of public transportation services for disabled citizens, in accordance with the American Disabilities Act of 1990.

HART-Access offers specially equipped van service to people whose disabilities prevent them from getting to a bus stop or using standard

public buses.

HART-Link is designed for those who are able to ride a standard public bus but can't get to a bus stop due to their disability or geographical barriers.

HART-Flex allows riders who cannot get to a bus stop to arrange for special stops within a three-quarter-mile radius of existing route stops.

For route, schedule and fare information, call (813) 254-4278 or visit www.hart-line.org.

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BLOOMINGDALE LAW ENFORCEMENT



Photo Courtesy of the Marchetti Family

About 100 of Katie Marchetti's friends and their parents from Durant, Bloomingdale, Newsome, Riverview and Plant City high schools traveled to Tallahassee this spring to bring attention to a proposed seat belt safety law they support. The group gathered at Bloomingdale Square at dawn on March 26, the day designated by Hillsborough's Board of County Commissioners as "Click It For Katie Day."

Family Publishes New Web Site, 'Promise' In Daughter's Memory

ENCOURAGES TEENS TO BUCKLE UP

By LAURA FRAZIER
 Editor

Aug. 3, 2006, would have been Katie Marchetti's first day as a senior at Durant High School. Katie, who would have turned 17 last month, died in a car crash March 4 this year. Law enforcement officers at the scene of the accident said Katie, who was unrestrained and thrown from the passenger seat of the vehicle, would have survived the accident if she had been wearing a seat belt.

Many of the popular teen's friends from Durant, Bloomingdale and Newsome High schools marked their second day of classes in August by wearing "Cross Your Heart" t-shirts the group created in honor of their friend. The teens plan to continue to wear the shirts to school on the fourth of each month to raise awareness of the importance of buckling up every time they get in a car.

"These kids have been so amazing," Katie's

mother, Laura Marchetti, said last week.

The Marchetti family recently created a new Web site honor their daughter and to help further their cause to promote tougher seat belt laws for drivers of all ages. The site is at www.katiesstory.com.

"We are going to come back strong after this year with the importance of seat belt safety, as well as working with the current legislators in Tallahassee to pass the Dori Slosberg Safety Belt Law in 2007," Marchetti said.

The proposed law would allow police to pull over motorists of any age primarily for not wearing a seat belt. Although Florida law requires all drivers and front-seat passengers to buckle up, officers are not permitted to detain a vehicle solely because its occupants are unrestrained — unless the driver appears to be under the age of 18.

The bill is named for State Rep. Irving Slosberg's late daughter, who also was not wearing a seat belt when she died in a 1996 car accident at age 15 in Boca Raton.

Community Council, Substation Plan Senior Citizen Program

WHAT KIND OF HELP, INFO DO SENIORS NEED?

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
 Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy

The Bloomingdale Area Community Council, in cooperation with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, is organizing an educational and informational program for Bloomingdale's senior residents. The program will provide information and assistance to senior citizens, their families, caregivers, private duty health care workers, friends and neighbors.

The group plans to assemble representatives from a wide variety of agencies to introduce their areas of expertise and resources available

to assist senior citizens.

We are surveying our residents to help put this program together by asking, "What questions and concerns regarding senior citizen issues would you like to see addressed?"

A list of potential topics appears below. Please take a moment to review the list and let us know which items you believe our senior citizen residents need more information on. Please also feel free to suggest additional topics of interest.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping educate and inform our senior residents.

Survey

Bloomingdale Area Community Council,
 See SENIOR, Page 18



Photo Courtesy of Project Cure

Among those training every weekend for the Project Cure 60-mile walk on Natures Way this month are, from left, Amy Meany, Ivette Wagner, Mary Owens, Lisa Huetteman and Jean Weber.

CANCER

Continued From Page 13

started to fly," said Mary Owens, one of Project Cure's organizers. "He really thought it was important to involve the children in our parish because they have been personally impacted by breast cancer."

Owens contacted St. Stephen principal Therese Jackson and religious education director Nancy Slade, who both jumped on board. As a result, the annual parish picnic Oct. 1 from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the school on Boyette Road featured a children's fundraising walk as well as game booths created by the religious education and school classes to raise funds for Project Cure. Students will also be asked to collect donations in exchange for

walking laps later this month.

Starting at 6 a.m. Oct. 13-15, adult parishioners are invited to walk all or part of the three-day walk, which will begin at Bloomingdale East Park and wind around Natures Way and Culbreath Road. Each lap equals four miles. A team of volunteer nurses from St. Stephen will be on hand to provide for any medical needs.

"Those who are intimidated by the 60-mile goal can join us and walk four miles, eight miles, 12 miles, 16 miles or 20 miles on one, two or three days," said Meany. "Because we have chosen to walk laps around Natures Way in Bloomingdale East (5 laps equals 20 miles), we are able

to accommodate everyone who wants to be involved."

Even non-walkers can get involved by purchasing one of the Lightning Foundation's "pink hats" for \$20, with proceeds going to the breast cancer program, or by sponsoring a walker.

In all, St. Stephen Parish hopes to raise \$25,000 for breast cancer research in honor of those mothers.

Anyone interested in participating in the fundraiser, purchasing a pink hat or sponsoring a walker can contact Mary Owens, (813) 654-0748, maryowens@tampabay.rr.com or visit www.ststephencatholic.org and click on the Project Cure icon.

Web Site Tool Plots Sex Offender's Addresses

A Gazette Report

A message from Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Detective Danny Johnson:

"Go to www.familywatchdog.com and enter your street address. It will show a "house" in the middle of the map ... that's your house. All the colored boxes around it are the homes of registered sex offenders. Click on the indicated houses and you get a name, address and picture of the person, along with a description of their crime. This system clearly shows where registered sex offenders live in proximity to your home and local schools."

Community Council Lobbied For Glenhaven Traffic Signal

NEXT UP: BELL SHOALS, GARNET CORNER

A Gazette Report

The need for a traffic signal on Bell Shoals Road at Glenhaven Drive was originally suggested more than two years ago at a Bloomingdale Area Community Council meeting.

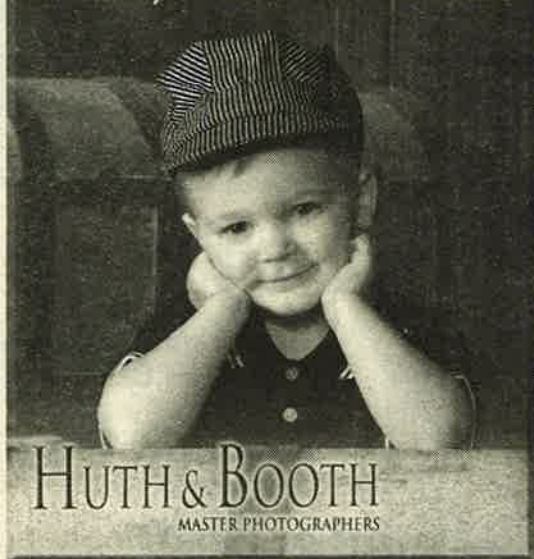
Council members and Bloomingdale's Community Resource Deputy, Pete Maurer, repeatedly appealed to county officials and staff to install the traffic control device at one of the community's

See SIGNAL, Page 18

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SIGNAL

Continued From Page 17

busiest intersections. The council recognized the intersection was becoming more and more dangerous, with ever-increasing traffic.

Earlier this year, county officials said the installation of the signal could be held off until spring of 2008.

Council volunteers made calls and sent e-mails seeking the assistance of various county officials.

In the end, persistence paid off and the signal was approved and installed.

The county's traffic division staff, in response to pleas from the community council, residents, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association and the office of County Commissioner Ronda Storms, expedited the project for completion last month.

Deputy Maurer thanked county officials and staff instrumental in moving the project forward.

"In light of the ever-increasing traffic and ongoing residential construction in the FishHawk area — including the imminent widening of Boyette Road — more and more traffic will be routed onto Bell Shoals," Maurer said.

With the Glenhaven intersection light now complete, the council has turned its attention to the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Garnet Drive.

"The northbound left-turn lane on Bell Shoals at Garnet is the site of numerous accidents and property damage," Maurer said.

"Unfortunately, according to the public works department, improvements to the intersection seem to have hit a snag."

Public works reported in September the design study for left-turn lane improvements may not be completed until 2007, and construction is not scheduled until 2008.

Maurer said the community council would continue to rally for the Garnet turn lane and more improvements on Bell Shoals.

The Bloomingdale Area Community Council meets 7 p.m. on the third Thursday each month at the Bloomingdale community substation on Bell Shoals Road.

"Bloomingdale residents, bring your concerns to the next meeting and let's rack up some more good results," Maurer said.

For more information call the Bloomingdale substation, (813) 635-8040. Residents are also invited to submit comments to the council by e-mail to info@bloomingtongazette.com.

JUNK

Continued From Page 4

each location — are listed below.

For more information about Hillsborough County Collection Centers, log on to www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste, or call (813) 272-5680.

Alderman Ford Collection Center

Address: 9402 S.R. 39, Lithia. Info/Directions: (813) 757-3820.

Accepts: Miscellaneous junk and discards, scrap metal, tires, lead acid

batteries, regular household trash.

South County Collection Center

Address: 13000 U.S. 41, Riverview. Info/Directions: (813) 671-7611.

Accepts: Miscellaneous junk and discards, yard waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil, lead acid batteries, regular household trash.

On the second Saturday of each month, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. only, hazardous chemicals and electronics are accepted at South County.

SENIOR

Continued From Page 16

Sheriff's Office Substation

Senior Citizen Info, Assistance Initiative

"What questions and concerns regarding senior citizen issues would you like to see addressed?"

- Personal Security
- Personal Safety
- First Aid, /CPR
- Disaster Preparedness, Home and Personal

- Protecting Your Finances; Frauds, Scams
- Driving Safely, New Laws, Etc.
- Medical Issues, Alerts, Fitness
- Legal Issues, Wills
- Community Programs for Seniors
- County Programs for Seniors

Please respond to this survey by E-mail to info@bloomingtongazette.com, or call the substation, (813) 635-8040, open weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



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| <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Open (20-49) | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's Open (20-49) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Masters' (50 and over) | <input type="checkbox"/> Masters' Men (50 and over) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed crew (man-woman team) | <input type="checkbox"/> Masters' Women (50 and over) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent-sibling (5-15) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tandem Kayak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elite Canoe (see requirements) | <input type="checkbox"/> Elite Racer (see requirements) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Elite Tandem Kayak (see requirements) |

Registration fees: (check one)

- \$30 - 2 person team w/own canoe
- \$25 - Single w/own kayak
- \$30 - Tandem team w/own kayak
- \$40 - 2 person team w/rental canoe & equipment
- \$40 - Single w/rental kayak & equipment
- \$40 - Tandem team w/rental kayak & equipment
- \$30 - 1 or 2 person Elite w/own canoe

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Rental canoes are available as well as a limited number of kayaks, for reduced rates with registration.

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BHA

Continued From Page 1

tions and Hillsborough County codes and ordinances. Residents can report potential violations on the community Web site or by calling the community office to request a complaint form.

The Bloomingdale Gazette: The official newspaper of the BHA since 1980, the Gazette provides vital local information to residents. It is delivered to all homes in the BHA membership area on the first Saturday each month, along with The Tampa Tribune.

Bloomingdale Web Site: Initially launched in January 2000, www.bloomingtondalegazette.com provides timely news, information and event listings. Residents can join the community's free, confidential e-mail list to receive "BHA News Alerts" about late-breaking or urgent information.

Bloomingdale High School: The BHA supports the education and extracurricular activities of our community's high school students with an annual endowment.

B. J. Stelter Bloomingdale Community Scholarship: Established in 2006, the scholarship is awarded annually to one or more Bloomingdale High School seniors. Scholarship applications are available year-round at the school and on the community Web site.

Bloomingdale Community Office:

The BHA shares the Bloomingdale community office and staff with the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District. Hours are 8:00 a.m. to noon Monday — Thursday.

Neighborhood Pride Program: Introduced in 2002 to promote a sense of pride in ownership and community by encouraging neighbors to clean up and improve their homes, yards, and streets. The BHA supports the efforts of Neighborhood PRIDE teams in each section.

Neighborhood Name And Sign Program: Ten of Bloomingdale's 40 neighborhood sections were not officially named by the original developer. The BHA introduced this program to allow homeowners in those sections to choose a name and have entryway signs installed. Currently, nine of those ten sections are officially named; six received new entryway signs.

Community Cleanup Days: The BHA, with a grant from Hillsborough County and the assistance of the Parks & Recreation Dept., conducts annual Community Cleanup Days to allow residents to dispose of household junk for free at a convenient Natures Way location (see story in this issue). The next Cleanup Day, set for spring 2007, will be announced in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtondalegazette.com.

Bloomingdale Area Community Council: The BHA supports the efforts of the all-volunteer council and the

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to help keep Bloomingdale safe. The council meets 7 p.m. on the third Thursday each month at the Bloomingdale substation on Bell Shoals Road. Residents with questions or concerns about law enforcement issues are encouraged to attend (see story in this issue). For information call Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer, (813) 635-8040.

Bloomingdale Regional Public Library: The BHA actively petitioned for a new library planned for south Brandon to be located on Bloomingdale Avenue. The BHA became the first corporate level sponsor of the Friends of the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library.

Traffic/Roadway Improvements: The BHA works with Hillsborough County officials and staff to implement traffic and roadway improvements in and around the Bloomingdale community. BHA volunteers joined the community council's drive for a new traffic signal recently installed on Bell Shoals Rd. at Glenhaven Dr.; a northbound left turn lane installed on Bell Shoals Rd. at Garnet; and a traffic light at the corner of Lithia-Pinecrest Rd. and Erindale Drive. The BHA recently asked Hillsborough County commissioners considering Pulte Homes' request to build a large development near the intersection of Bell Shoals Rd. and FishHawk Blvd. to require the developer to pay for

improvements to Lithia-Pinecrest Rd. and Bell Shoals Road (see story in this issue).

Santa & Mrs. Claus: The BHA sponsors an annual visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus and a canned food drive to benefit charitable organizations, held at the community office each December.

Fourth Of July Parade: The BHA invites all Bloomingdale residents to participate in Brandon's Fourth of July parade in the association's golf cart caravan.

Chamber Of Commerce, Roundtable Charities

The BHA is a supporting member of the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce and Brandon Roundtable Charities.

BHA board meetings, held 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday each month at the community office, are open to the public. All Bloomingdale residents are invited to observe the proceedings or address the board with their questions and concerns.

Community volunteer opportunities are always available for residents in the BHA area, from Scouts and high school students to singles, families and senior citizens.

For more information about the BHA or membership drive, please log on to www.bloomingtondalegazette.com, e-mail bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net or call (813) 681-2051.

COMMENT

Continued From Page 9

forward to getting up."

"I look forward to going to school," said one boy whose eyes resembled big blue marbles. "I like getting good grades because I know if my grades are good, my parents will take me to the skate park."

As the crowd dispersed and the neighbors expressed a glut of satisfaction, believing the deputy's declaration of the law was indisputable, I contemplated what would become of our youth if they were not permitted to be kids, content to skate and run and be free in our communities.

What if kids were not allowed to play outside of their homes? What if children were banned from riding bicycles

and playing hopscotch in the street? What if tossing a football meant imprisonment? The "what if's" consumed my mind.

Imagine we were required to keep our kids indoors, confined for hours, playing video games and lying around like couch potatoes. Like caged animals, if you will.

Every child expert in America will attest to the fact that kids need outlets, especially boys, where they can exercise, inhale fresh air and play sports, work out their inherent anger and aggressions, and get those endorphins flowing.

Do these people truly believe that playing in the street is an act of malice? That it is unacceptable behavior among

ten or twelve year olds to ride a bicycle on a quiet, family street? Do they believe that kids of every ethnicity amicably playing a game of street tag is an intolerable and indecent act? Do they despise the joyful noise of children laughing and playing?

As it turns out, the deputy — who had warned that if another complaint came in about my kids playing in the street, law enforcement measures would be taken — was absolutely incorrect.

Cpl. Mark Clark, traffic coordinator for the sheriff's office district IV, set the record straight without hesitation. Clark said there is no such law in Hillsborough County preventing children from safely playing in the street in front of their

home.

I was told by his office that the deputy on call that day would be made aware of his erroneous enforcement of a law that did not exist.

As parents, we must fight the good fights, not only for our own kids, but for any child who we witness being unfairly treated, harassed, verbally or physically abused, or otherwise mistreated.

I sincerely hope the parents of children who play joyfully in the street front of their homes band together and stop this outrageous assault on our children and on our quality of life.

This is America. The kids are here to stay, and they're not going anywhere. Plus, after all, the law is the law.



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4BD/3BA \$284,900
MOVE-IN CONDITION! Granite counters, wood cabinets, almost everything updated.



4BD/2.5BA POOL HOME! \$279,900 Family room w/fireplace and fenced backyard. Bloomingdale schools.



3BD/2BA PLUS DEN \$269,900
Overlooking Lush Conservation Area in Fishhawk Ranch.



4BD/2BA SCREENED POOL \$259,900
Seller to pay 3% of Closing Costs. 2,206 Sq. Ft. on 1/3 Acre. No Deed Restrictions.



3BD/2BA NON SUBDIVISION \$248,500
Huge bonus room, nearly 1/2 acre, fenced yard and room for RV or boat.



3BD/2BA \$247,900
Immediate occupancy "Inland" built home with huge enc. patio new paint & carpet in easy access location!



4BD/2BA FURNISHED MODEL HOME! \$239,900
Professionally decorated & loaded with upgrades.



4BD/2BA AWESOME HOME \$239,900
Well maintained, great room with fireplace and lush manicured lot in Bloomingdale School District.



3BD/2BA POOL & POND \$232,900
Wow, what a value! Fish from your backyard. Family room & formal rooms.



3BR/2BA \$219,900
Model-like beauty with Xerioscape landscaping, tranquil rock gardens & Oakcrest location.

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