

# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

Volume XXIV  
Number 10

OCTOBER 2007 THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

## Good As Gold

Teen recuperates after undergoing a heart transplant in September

PAGE 13

## Brandon Community Plan

BHA: "Must include Bloomingdale"

PAGE 8

## INDEX

Plaza Bella .....	3
BSHS Fundraiser .....	10
Law Seeks Bike Thief .....	15
Law Enforcement.....	18



Gazette File Photo

Neighbors who want to rid their garages, attics, homes and yards of unwanted junk and debris not normally accepted at the curb can dispose of the stuff for free at the BHA's Community Cleanup Day on Saturday, Oct. 13.

## FREE DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD JUNK

By LAURA FRAZIER

If your garage looks more like a storage unit gone awry than a place to park your cars, here's your chance to unload some of the random junk and make room for the Beemer or the Hyundai.

To help neighbors who want to rid their garages, attics, homes and yards of unwanted junk and debris not normally accepted at the curb, the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc.

will hold a free Community Cleanup Day on Saturday, Oct. 13.

Collection Centers throughout the county accept any manner of trash and junk six days a week, but the Bloomingdale Cleanup Day, a free service made possible by a grant from the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations, BHA membership dues, and the Hillsborough County Parks Department, allows residents to

unload the junk at a convenient neighborhood collection site.

The site, at the Hillsborough County Parks Department maintenance unit on Natures Way, near Alafia Elementary School, will open at 8 a.m. The site will close when all dumpsters are full, or at 3 p.m., whichever comes first.

See CLEAN UP, Page 6



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# Plaza Bella Nine Months Later: Still Growing

By LINDA CHION KENNEY

It's been nine months since the wrecking ball came to render obsolete the pink building with green shutters that Roz and Mark Creager first lived in and then operated as The Green Boutique.

Mark Creager was on site Jan. 8, near the intersection of Bloomingdale Avenue and Bell Shoals Road, as a tractor hoe rendered into a heap of trash the last remains of the couple's business and former home.

"It doesn't take long for them to knock it down," Mark Creager said at the time.

Noted Roz Creager, in an interview late last month: "Some people miss the old store, still. It probably had become a little bit of a landmark for the area."

Today, that "landmark" has given way to the budding Plaza Bella shopping center, a two-

building complex that includes also a standalone Peacock Plume's childcare center and a Hillsboro Bank branch.

The Green Boutique had previously been housed in the green-shuttered storefront along with an adjacent building, which also was demolished.

Now, the store specializing in gifts, home décor, apparel and jewelry, is a 5,000 square-foot presence in Plaza Bella's main 36,000-square-foot building. The store, which also carries Brighton collectibles and the Vera Bradley line, officially reopened for business Dec. 1.

"As much as the old building had its charm, this is just such a pleasure not to have the stresses we had to worry about with the old building," Roz Creager said. "We had definitely outgrown it, and it's so nice now to have

a loading dock! It's like a luxury for us, and we no longer have to worry about flooding."

As October began, Plaza Bella was nearing completion on a 7,000 square-foot building constructed more exactly on the old Green Boutique location.

Creager said leases were pending and some spaces were still available. On board is Joel's Pizza Palace, featuring "pizza like you have never tasted before" and sandwiches and salads.

Creager is the daughter of Dick Cimino, for whom the elementary school off Culbreath Road in Valrico was named posthumously. She remembers Bloomingdale before it became Bloomingdale, when a "huge, pine tree forest" stood where today's Bloomingdale Square shopping center is anchored by Publix and Wal-Mart.



LINDA CHION KENNEY/Photo

The Green Boutique sign stood as a landmark of sorts for the Bloomingdale community for decades. Progress has been noted with the Plaza Bella shopping center marquee that features a greatly expanded Green Boutique and a host of other tenants as well.

"Bloomingdale has been a very, very supportive community for us," Roz Creager said. "People come in to the store like they're your friend. It's nice that people are concerned and want us to do

well. It makes you feel good."

Creager said she also hears from people that they like the mix of businesses in Plaza Bella.

Housed in Plaza Bella are:

See BELLA, Page 4

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# Mayor, Director Helps Judge "Best Scarecrow"

By LINDA CHION KENNEY

This time of the year it's a no-brainer to patch pumpkins into the mix for a popular fall fundraiser.

But that wasn't enough for Roz and Mark Creager, who picked their brains to dig up something different for their Plaza Bella shopping center.

And so the first annual "Scare the Crow" fundraiser is scheduled for Oct. 13 at the shopping center just east of the intersection of Bloomingdale Avenue and Bell Shoals Road.

"We're inviting businesses and schools to build scarecrows, and then offer them up for a silent auction to benefit the charity of their choosing," Roz Creager said. "They can take pictures, we'll take pictures, and there will be some real-life 'scarecrows' on hand as well."

Brandon Honorary Mayor George T. May IV, also a member of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, will serve as a celebrity judge.

"I'm a good judge," said May, who noted that from 2002 through 2006 he helped judge the Brandon Fourth of July Parade. "I can be bribed very easily!"

Awards will be given in three categories, recognizing the "trendiest," "best," and "brainiest" scarecrows. The



Linda Chion Kenney/Photo

Roz Creager, who with her family owns The Green Boutique and Plaza Bella shopping center on Bloomingdale Avenue, said this month's "Scare the Crow" fundraiser will become an annual event.

Crow Award will be given to the "best all-around" scarecrow.

"We're just having fun with this," Creager said. "We want to help raise funds for a good cause, but with a sense of

humor."

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and includes activities for kids, a wine tasting, music, face-painting and door prizes.

Each attendee will receive a

"Scare the Crow" card to take around to Plaza Bella businesses. No purchase is necessary, but a stamped card "buys" a chance for a grand prize drawing, Roz Creager said.

The prize, she added, is "a

very nice gift basket, with gift certificates and items from our tenants."

Creager plans to make Scare the Crow an annual event.

For information contact Creager at (813) 685-9494.

## Realtor Has Record Month

A Gazette Report

Keller Williams Realty of Brandon recently announced Realtor Steve Moran had a record month for August, listing and closing more than \$5 million in real estate for the month. Moran has been recognized as the top agent in the company and finished in the top 200 in the country out of over 72,000 Keller Williams agents. Moran said, "My sellers are starting to price their homes according to the market." He also attributes much of his success to his assistant, Tina Beall. Contact Moran at (813) 661-2476 or [realtormoran@aol.com](mailto:realtormoran@aol.com).



## BELLA

From page 3

Salon Essence Salon & Spa; Vino 100; Planet Beach tanning spa; Bella Granite and Stone; Robeks Juice; Orange, a contemporary gifts and home accessories retailer; Joffrey's Coffee and Ice Cream Café and the upcoming Tussie Mussie's tea room.

The two-story Plaza Bella building also houses the Brandon Area Psychology Group, Core Fitness Studio, MRM Properties, DND Consultants, A&A Mortgage, UBuildIt, Electric Sales, Southern Title and the Bivins & Hemenway law firm.

In their new roles as retail center developers, Roz Creager said she and her husband, along with their son, Matt, will never forget the role the Green Boutique has played in their lives.

"It gave us our start," she said. "We never could have achieved what we achieved without starting, literally, from the very bottom and working over the years with the support of the community."

For Plaza Bella leasing information call (813) 689-0523.

SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE



# Brandon Fresh Market Reopens Today

By LINDA CHION KENNEY  
Homemade and handmade are the conditions necessary to participate in Olga Santamaria's market, where fresh rules the day and commerce comes from the heart.

"The fresh market is a group of people who believe in the idea that the community needs a place to gather and to meet friends," Santamaria said. "It's a farmers' market that gives artisans a place to sell items that are unique, beautiful and artistic."

Lots of fresh produce, too, is on tap for the return of the Brandon Fresh Market at Winthrop Town Centre, just west of

Bloomington off Bloomington Avenue at Providence Road.

Now in its third year, the market opened at Winthrop for the first time last season. Santamaria said some of her vendors in the past have gone on to open their own businesses, and she encourages the entrepreneurial spirit that entices people to the fresh market.

"That's something that makes me feel very, very proud, to give back to the people," she said. "To have a place where people can show and sell their items and have their own businesses."

The market is promoted

to "represent a wide variety of ethnicities and nationalities, contributing to a rich, multicultural experience of food, crafts and music." It runs Saturdays through May, starting Oct. 6, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The cost to vendors is \$25 a day or \$80 a month.

Santamaria said the market welcomes everybody who makes things or grows things.

"We look for anything that is handmade or that you can find in a farmers market. If somebody has a special family

recipe, and no kitchen in which to make it, we can provide a kitchen and get a license," she said.

Santamaria herself will be selling fresh-baked German bread. At the end of September, she was one of a growing list of 21 confirmed vendors. At least eight additional vendors are expected by the market's open.

In addition to plenty of fresh produce, other offerings include plants, fresh-cut flowers, jams, jellies, pickles, crepes, shrimp, antique tools, custom gifts,

inspirational items, gourmet popcorn, photographs, photo tiles, items from Scotland, handmade quilts, silver jewelry, goat cheese, used books, handcrafted tables, Hungarian kifli (walnut cookies) and nutraceutical supplements. Also likely are gift cards, seasonal items, garden designs in clay, mosaics, embroidery, oils, spices and Chinese paintings.

For more information contact Santamaria at (813) 748-0441 or go to [www.brandonfreshmarket.com](http://www.brandonfreshmarket.com).

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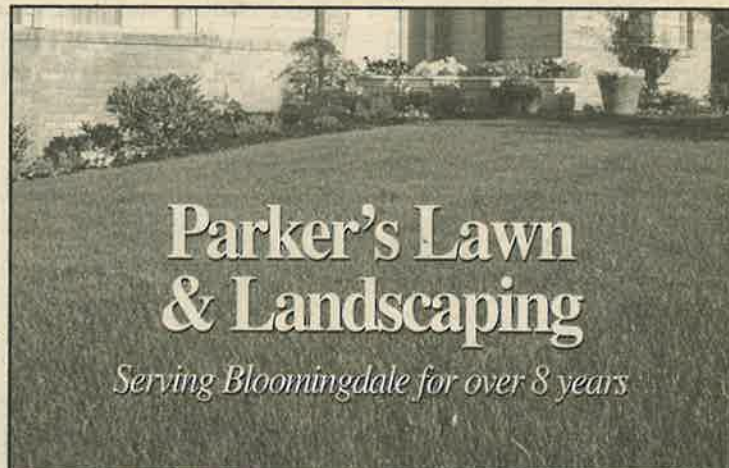


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3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594  
**Phone:** (813) 681-2051  
**Fax:** (813) 684-2358  
**E-mail:** bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net  
**Office hours:** Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
**Meetings:** first Monday each month, 7 p.m.  
**Web site:** www.bloomingdalegazette.com  
**President:** Joe Hickle  
**Vice president:** Stanley Lee; **Treasurer:** Pam Liguori  
**Directors:** Ted Grable, Don Grevart, Shelia Harris, Lydia Harrod; Dale Kahn, George May and Myron Magedanz.

## BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594  
**Phone:** (813) 684-6667  
**Fax:** (813) 684-2358  
**E-mail:** bloomingdale.district@verizon.net  
**Office hours:** Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to noon  
**Meetings:** second Monday each month, 7 p.m.  
**President:** Thom Snelling  
**Vice president:** Russell Jones  
**Treasurer:** David West  
**Corresponding Secretary:** David Steck  
**Property manager:** Al Devney  
**Trustees:** Joe Harless; Joe Liguori and James Laughlin

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The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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



## CLEAN UP

From page 1

Residents are asked to limit drop-offs to one trip per person. In addition, trailers with more than one axle cannot be accommodated, and waste from commercial businesses will not be

accepted.

Acceptable items include appliances, mattresses, water heaters, televisions, steel and other metals, furniture, non-commercial construction debris and tires will be accepted.

Some items cannot be

accepted, including yard waste or regular household trash normally picked up at the curb and hazardous materials including paint, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals, electronics and waste from commercial activities. To dispose of those

items for free, please see the County Collection Center information in this issue.

More neighbors are needed to staff the collection site and help residents unload their cars. To help, e-mail bloomingdale.homeowners@verizon.net or call

(813) 681-2051; please leave a message with your name and phone number and the hours you are available to help. High school students and Scouts can earn community service hour credits for assisting with this project.



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# Station 27 Open House Set For Oct. 13

A Gazette Report

Bloomington Volunteer Fire Department Station 27 will hold its annual Open House on Oct. 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the station, 4705 Bloomington Ave., east of Lithia-Pinecrest Road. The community is invited to meet the firefighters, experience safety, rescue and fire-related demonstrations and enjoy a free lunch of hamburgers, hot dogs, snacks and soda.

Station 27, protecting and serving the Bloomington area since 1973, is staffed entirely by volunteers and is funded primarily by donations. The department responds to nearly 1,500

emergencies each year, as part of the Hillsborough County Fire-Rescue Service.

The department wants a few more volunteers to supplement the men and women currently manning the station. Qualified volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, reasonably physically fit, have no criminal record and must be driven to meet the unique challenges of training and a mission in modern fire service.

For information about the Bloomington Volunteer Fire Department, volunteer opportunities or the open house, call (813) 744-5906 or go to [www.engine27.com](http://www.engine27.com).

# Acting Bug Is All In The Family

Outside the James McCabe Theater, after the Sept. 22 Village Players of Valrico staging of "Moonshine," the Hickies of Bloomington take an impromptu bow. David Hickie and his children, Connor and Shannon, are no strangers to the stage. The trio appeared in last summer's Stagedoor Performing Arts production of "Oliver!" Connor, a Burns Middle School student, recently received the MONTI community theater award for up-and-coming male actor.



LINDA CHION KENNEY/Photo

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# BHA: Community Plan Must Include Bloomingdale

By LINDA CHION KENNEY

Too much, too little, too late is how Brandon's honorary mayor and Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board member George May assesses the county's push to get community plans on the books.

The idea to involve community members in decisions that could affect how their neighborhoods look in years to come is a good one, May said. But involving Brandon so late in the game, and then breaking Bloomingdale and Valrico off into separate timelines, he added, is a concern that should mobilize the greater Brandon community to action.

"We need 50 or more people to show up at the next Brandon Community Plan meeting," May said. The meeting is scheduled for Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 402 E. Lumsden Road, between Bryan Road and Parsons Avenue.

"Brandon is larger than what the county has established with its (community plan) boundaries," May said. "And Seffner will probably have a fit when it sees how far north the Brandon boundaries go."

Seffner's community planning began in September, a month's after Brandon's.

Moreover, May added, 17 community plans -- including those for Riverview and Wimauma -- were developed before Brandon's. And now that Brandon is in play, two of its largest components -- Bloomingdale and Valrico -- won't even be included, May said.

Even worse, he added, Valrico and Bloomingdale will have to wait two years and four years, respectively, for their community planning to begin.

"We would like to see all of the communi-

ties be able to plan together, instead of having Brandon planned now, Valrico two years later and Bloomingdale not until 2011," said Laura Simpson of the Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce. "A lot can happen in that planning time period."

May noted that Bloomingdale's time for planning is already long past, making it even more essential to get the new guidelines on the books fast to address upkeep, upgrades and reconstructions.

"What else is there to do in Bloomingdale?" he said. "You're going to put a plan together after everything is already developed? The cart is before the horse in this situation. There's nothing left to accomplish. But this plan would eliminate discussions over such things as whether we should replace our sidewalks with concrete or asphalt, and how Lithia-Pinecrest Road should look after it is widened through Brandon, Bloomingdale and Valrico."

Hillsborough County officials initiated community plans in 1998, aiming to involve citizens in a planning process for such things as roads, development, signs, sidewalks, and community identity.

"You don't have control over these decisions, but you can voice your opinion on them," Simpson said.

The chamber, too, would like to see a more comprehensive Brandon Community Plan.

"It would be nice to see some continuity driving from Brandon through Bloomingdale and Valrico to FishHawk," Simpson said. "We are a connected community with each area having its own identity, but there should be some continuity."

## BHA Calls On All HOA Reps

Joe Hickle, president of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc., has written a letter to the presidents of every homeowners association in Bloomingdale to implore them to speak up on the community planning process.

"Any such plan that the county may undertake specifically for the Bloomingdale community would not be until 2011," Hickle said. "We at the BHA would like to explore how the Bloomingdale community could be incorporated into this greater Brandon Community Plan at this time, rather than waiting until 2011 to address certain issues in our area."

The cause, he contends, is not yet lost.

"Incorporation of Bloomingdale into the Brandon plan might be possible is a majority of the homeowners associations within Bloomingdale voice their desire to the county."

Already, the cause has a staunch supporter.

"The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce has a large voice with Hillsborough County and they would support the incorporation of Bloomingdale into the overall plan," Hickle noted. "We stand a much better chance of the county listening to us when they know we have the connection and the backing of the chamber."

Homeowners association presidents are asked to send a copy of the letters they write to the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594.

Letters to the county should be addressed to Joseph Incorvia, AICP, Manager, Community Planning & Growth Management Department, P.O. Box 1110, Tampa, FL 33601-1110.

- Linda Chion Kenney



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### FREE POOL!

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# Fundraiser To Benefit Bloomingdale High Student

By LINDA CHION KENNEY  
 The first sign came at age 12, when Brett Reed, now a Bloomingdale High School freshman, started walking on his tip-toes. Tests ensued and he was discovered to have Friedreich's Ataxia, a rare and degenerative disease that rapidly takes away motor and sensory coordination. "We found out through DNA testing that it's a genetic disorder," said Brett's mother, Carol Reed. "It's in both my husband's and my families, but it goes back so many generations we weren't aware of it."  
 "At this point, there's no cure," she added. "It's a very debilitating disease. In three years, Brett is in a wheelchair and he has a low-tone hearing loss and slurred speech. The disease attacks the muscles and the senses."

That's where the Oct. 27 "Be 4 B" fundraiser at the Winthrop Pole Barn comes in. Proceeds from the Family Fun Fall Festival will benefit Brett, 15, and more specifically the aquatic therapy he needs to keep his muscles loose. "It helps him to have his muscles a little looser so he's not so stiff," Carol Reed said. "He's very much affected from the waist down. It doesn't slow him down any, though. He's everywhere in that wheelchair, but we need to keep his muscles as loose as possible."  
 Family friend and fall festival volunteer Joyce Strickland said that is a main reason to help Brett secure therapy. "He's a very typical teenager, except that he has a life-threatening disease," she said. "It

limits him to what he's able to do, but with this aqua therapy it will help maintain the muscle strength that he has for as long as possible."  
 Insurance for this year's therapy has run out and Brett's family and friends hope to raise enough money to secure further therapy at Brandon Sports & Aquatic Center through True Blue Therapy. "Brett's at the point now where it's one of the best therapies for him because his body is able to move in the water, where it can't on land," said family friend and festival volunteer Laura Folin. "You're not fighting gravity in the water and so he's able to exercise his muscles for a longer period of time in the water. We want him to continue exercising in the water on a reg-

ular basis so he doesn't lose the amount of coordination he has right now."  
 Time is of the essence, Folin said. "Without this help, Brett's disease will further take away his ability to maintain independent mobility and that could be devastating," she said. "The time to work on it is now. It's not something you can put on hold for two or three months and pick it up later, when it's convenient or the insurance kicks in. Not with a neurological disease. The community has to come together to be here for this child. I would love to see that."  
 Vendors are invited to join the Family Fun Fall Festival with a \$35 or \$75 registration fee, good for a 10-by-10 or 20-by-20 space, respectively. Ven-

dors are responsible for bringing their own table and for setting up, from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and tearing down.  
 The event runs from 10 a.m. to dusk. Admission is free but tickets will be sold for raffles and such things as pony rides, face-painting, and bouncy-ball participation. Live music, a silent auction, karaoke, arts and crafts and a fresh market are on tap as well. Food, too, will be sold.  
 Contact Laura Folin at 671-0037 or e-mail benefit4b@gmail.com. Contributions payable to Brett Reed should be addressed to: Carol Reed, 3418 Cade Lane, Valrico, FL 33596. The Winthrop Pole Barn is at 11349 Bloomingdale Ave. in Riverview, just west of Bloomingdale and east of Providence Road.

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## Series Open To Community

A Gazette Report

Free Jewish adult education classes taught by Rabbi Betsy Torop are offered this month at Congregation Beth Shalom in Brandon.

"Back To The Sources," held 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesdays Oct. 9, 16, 23 and 30, explores the questions "What is midrash?" and, "Is it really possible to read and understand the Talmud?" The class examines the backgrounds of the texts from the Bible, the Talmud and the Zohar, together.

"Bible and Bagels," a special study session set for Shabbat morning, 10 a.m. to noon on Oct. 13, will offer a lively and participatory look at the weekly Torah portion, and a nosh of course!

Congregation Beth Shalom, a Reform synagogue, is at 706 Bryan Road in Brandon. Information: (813) 681-6547 or go to [www.bethshalom-brandon.org](http://www.bethshalom-brandon.org).

## County Offers Caregivers Seminar

A Gazette Report

The Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services is partnering with the Johnnie B. Byrd, Sr. Alzheimer's Center and Research Institute to present a Financial Preparedness Seminar for Caregivers. The free seminar will cover topics such as legal advice, money management and financial planning.

In evaluating the long-term care needs of loved ones, it is important for caregivers to consider financial options. Long-term financial planning is important for everyone, but it is crucial when you are coping with the expense of chronic illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

The seminar will take place Oct. 6, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Brandon Senior Center, 612 N. Parsons Ave. Lunch will be provided, and respite care is available. To reserve a seat or for more information call (813) 319-4115.

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# New EPC Rules Codify Current Practices

By AL HIGGINBOTHAM  
Hillsborough County Commissioner,  
District IV

The Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission has been in the headlines a lot lately. For several months, we've been working to strike a delicate balance between governmental fiscal responsibility and strong protection for important natural resources, like wetlands. I serve as the vice-chair of the EPC, and have taken my duties seriously in the last two months to protect our natural resources in a responsible way.

In June, the members of the Board of County Commissioners, sitting as the Environmental Protection Commission, voted four-to-three to do away with local oversight and protections for wetlands. I was joined by two commissioners in opposing that vote, because I believed that if we

worked together to resolve conflicts with and within the EPC, we could come to a solution that would maintain our local oversight and protection while addressing valid concerns about EPC enforcement efforts.

Unfortunately, some cast the four commissioners who voted to do away with the wetlands division of the EPC in a negative light when they were working from similar values to those I hold; they just approached the problem in a different way.

I approached the concerns at the EPC with three goals in mind: 1) eliminating unnecessary government waste, 2) improving customer service, and 3) maintaining the same, strong protections our wetlands enjoy today.

In a unanimous vote on Aug. 16, the EPC board adopted a "hybrid" wetlands program proposed by EPC staff. EPC

executive director, Dr. Rick Garrity, characterized the hybrid by saying, "This is not some theoretical pie-in-the-sky proposal... It's an innovative proposal. It has real process improvements."

Some have mischaracterized the hybrid proposal as a compromise, implying that both sides gave up something and no one is happy. I'd like to assure you the hybrid is not a compromise – it is the marriage of good science with regulatory common-sense. It achieves our goals of eliminating government waste by reducing duplication, improving customer service by providing regulation that is predictable and consistently applied, and it maintains extra protection for Hillsborough's wetlands above that of the state and federal authorities.

Wetlands serve many important purposes for both the economy and the ecology of

Hillsborough County. They serve as natural water carrying and storage systems, preventing flooding that would be costly to fix through artificial means. They filter contaminants out of surface waters, purifying our rivers, streams, and the bay. They provide natural habitat for a host of organisms and animals and the feeding grounds for birds like the American white ibis.

The day after that original vote in June, I met with Dr. Garrity at a sandwich shop close to our downtown offices. We immediately set about the work of addressing the valid concerns my colleagues and I have heard from farmers, developers, and many others who have dealings with the EPC.

The new wetland rules adopted by the EPC do not diminish the strong protections afforded by our local EPC. Instead, they



codify current regulatory practice, putting in black-and-white what we've already been doing. These rules provide transparency and consistency in the regulatory process, taking the guess-work out of how to best protect wetlands. These rules help those who do business with the EPC to be responsible.

Contact Hillsborough County Commissioner Al Higginbotham at (813) 272-5740 or [higginbotham@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:higginbotham@hillsboroughcounty.org).

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## Trick or Treat for UNICEF



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Linda Dehring, manager of Greg's Hallmark in Bloomingdale Square, organizes collection boxes for UNICEF, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. All area Hallmark stores are offering free "Trick or Treat for UNICEF" boxes, while supplies last, for kids who want to collect donations on Halloween night.

## New Heart Is Good As Gold

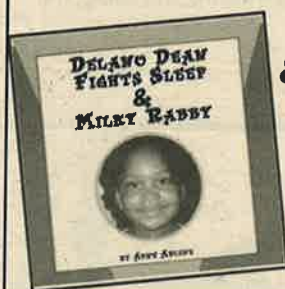


LINDA CHION KENNEY/Photo

Less than three weeks after undergoing heart transplant surgery Sept. 8 at Tampa General Hospital, Stephanie Dye spends a moment with her brother Daniel and parents Judy and Tom at the family's Bloomingdale home. Her scar visible, Stephanie presented a donor quilt in Ybor City on Sept. 26 as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award requirements. Her father received a heart transplant three years ago. A week before the surgery, the 18-year-old said, "Talk to your family and to all your friends about being a donor. It's a person's last act of generosity and kindness." To read more about Stephanie and the Dye family, go to [www.bloomingdalegazette.com](http://www.bloomingdalegazette.com).

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## Property Manager's Report

A Gazette Report

Al Devney, owner of Devney Property Management, Inc., is property manager for the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District. The district is responsible for maintenance of common area property throughout the community, including entryway landscaping, lighting and signage, walls and irrigation.

To report a community property maintenance need contact Devney at (813) 684-6667 or bloomingdale.district@verizon.net.

### September 2007 Activities

Devney reported the following projects and activities in the month of September.

Thunder Irrigation repaired six severed sprinkler wires on Culbreath Road and two severed wires on Garnet Drive. Additionally, a cracked main line and a broken zone line under a newly poured sidewalk were repaired on Garnet Drive.

Davidson Landscaping installed roses and bushes in 35 locations in the east and west sections and replaced 500 4-inch pop-up sprinklers with 6-inch pop-up heads.

Planscape Inc. converted the

Hickory Ridge irrigation system from rotors to spray heads and installed new landscaping at the Glenhaven Drive entrance.

There were two car-versus-palm trees accidents this month, on Natures Way and on Culbreath Road. Both accidents should be covered by insurance.

Four large light fixtures at the Groveway entrance and two at the River Close entrance were vandalized this month. The estimated repair cost is \$480. In addition, 56 of 76 lights replaced were destroyed by vandals.

Native Florida was awarded the 109,000-square foot sod contract. A start date has not yet been scheduled.

Cardinal Landscaping trimmed 420 palm trees, installed annuals at entryways and planted 250 creeping fig plants. They started trimming the creeping fig.

In the land of eat, drink and pitch, there were 20 bags of trash, a small camping stove, a new exhaust system for a car, 24 snipe signs and five cents. The beverages of choice were Diet Coke with Lime for soft drinks, Miller Genuine Draft for beer and Seagram's Extra Dry Gin for distilled spirits.

## Panthers Team Up With Rays To Help Babies



The Brandon Panthers, an AAU travel baseball team, recently completed a fundraiser in conjunction with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. The team contributed to a baby goods drive sponsored by the Devil Rays players' wives. The fundraiser benefited Community Action, Stop Abuse, an organization that provides refuge, crisis intervention and advocacy for women in dangerous home situations. The shelter provides clothing, food and care items for women, babies and children. Panther players pictured are, left to right, Mason Sollie, Michael Rivera, Christian Montesinos and Adam Braxton, and in the back row, the wives of Devil Rays players Joel Guzman and Greg Norton. For information about the Panthers, contact Mike Rivera, (813) 368-1815.



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# Deputies Seek Alafia Bike Theft Suspect

By LESLIE WHITE

Now you see it, now you don't – that was the case with two bikes recently stolen from the Alafia Elementary School campus. Fifth-grader Duncan McCall was the first victim, discovering both his bike and his helmet missing at dismissal on Thursday, Sept. 20. The second victim, a mom who rode with her child and did not wish to be identified, said she parked her bike at the school Friday morning, Sept. 21 for less than five minutes while she walked her child to class. When she returned, she said her bike was gone.

Adults and student safety patrol volunteers are stationed around campus during both arrival and dismissal at both gated bike areas on campus, but no one reported seeing anything out of the ordinary on those two days, according to school principal Ellen Smith.

Bloomingtondale Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano said the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office was notified on both accounts, but they could not comment on the details of the open investigation.

McCall's mother, Rhonda, got a frantic phone call from her very upset son Thursday afternoon.

"Duncan was very scared. Anyone who's ever been stolen from knows that feeling of helplessness, but as adults we have the ability to move into a survival mode. Children don't have that ability. He relied on the people in authority at the school to help him handle it and they did absolutely nothing," McCall said.

According to McCall, student safety patrol volunteers made sure the fifth-grader got to the office and kept check-

ing on him until his parents arrived. Upon McCall's arrival at the school, her son, she said, was inconsolable and was standing alone in the front office.

School staff told McCall the school was not responsible for bicycles stowed in bike racks, so she contacted the Bloomingtondale substation to file a report.

Linda Hawkins from Hillsborough County Schools Security said, "Hillsborough County is not responsible for items stolen from school property." Hawkins encouraged students and parents to lock up their bikes and helmets with individual locks.

Smith said the gated bike rack area is only unlocked during arrival and dismissal, and when a bike rider is signed out for early dismissal. McCall contends the bike rack was unlocked after school had already begun on Sept. 20.

"One of my son's friends said that he had to take the attendance to the office that morning well after school had started and saw somebody inside the bike rack fence," said McCall. The student described the person to McCall as a teenage boy.

One of the stolen bikes has since been recovered. The mother who owned the second stolen bike saw a blond teenage boy riding it down Culbreath Road the morning after the theft. Smith said the mother reported stopping her car in front of him, at which point the young man jumped off the bike, dropped it, and ran.

A description of the young man has been given to the Sheriff's Office and Smith said she issued an alert to parents in the school's newsletter.

"This is a campus incident and we do our own investigation through our own



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Alafia Elementary School principal Ellen Smith said the school's bicycle rack area is always locked during school hours. However, two bikes were stolen from the rack in September. The Sheriff's Office is looking for a blonde teenage boy who ran after being caught with one of the stolen bikes.

school security here," Smith said.

She also said that whenever a report of stolen personal property occurs, Alafia cooperates fully with the Sheriff's Office. Cimino Elementary School was contacted but stated that no bikes have been reported stolen from their campus. Unlike Alafia's bike rack, located in a relatively remote area on the south side of the campus, Cimino's rack is situated directly in front of the school office.

The still missing bike is a yellow "Next" brand BMX bike with black three-spoke mag wheels and pegs on the front and back tires. The black seat had a small tear on the back. The helmet is a black skateboard style with skull and crossbones on the top. If you see the bike or have any information pertaining to the thefts, please contact Officer Capitano at the Bloomingtondale Community Substation, (813) 635-8040.

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# High School Boosters Kick Off Drive With Dinner

**A Gazette Report**

The Bloomingdale Senior High School Athletic Booster Club will kick off its annual membership drive with a spaghetti dinner at the school on Wednesday, Nov. 14 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The club currently supports more than 300 student athletes participating in 22 school sport activities including wrestling, weight lifting, volleyball, trophy accounts, track, tennis, softball, swim and dive, soccer, golf, football, cross country, cheerleading, basketball, and baseball.

The cost of the dinner is \$5 per person and includes dine-in or take-out salad, bread,

a drink and dessert. A variety of club membership levels are available, starting at \$25. Those who join at the \$75 level will enjoy access to all regular season Hillsborough County High School sporting events, plus free parking at all Bloomingdale Bulls home football games.

For information about the dinner, contact Beth Camptomor at (813) 653-1959 or bethcamp@tampabay.rr.com.

To join the Booster Club, contact Trish Gold at (813) 684-4632 or tgold2@verizon.net, or come to the next meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 9 at the school.

## Academic Achievers Are Well Read



Photo from Huntington Learning Center

Huntington Learning Center in Brandon recently rewarded students who met their summer reading goals with a pizza party at the center on Bloomingdale Avenue. Students pictured left to right are Britian Lott, Shelby Schultz, Majed Haron, Ethan Sistrunk, Matthew Lowrance, Kevin Combs and Madison Gray.

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## Future Cheerleaders Can Join Junior Bulls

A Gazette Report

The sixth annual Bloomingdale High School Cheerleading Clinic will be held on Oct. 13, 2007 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the school. Participants will learn cheers, chants and dances from the Bloomingdale Bulls' varsity and junior varsity cheerleaders, Western Conference Championship title holders for the past four years. The Junior Bulls clinic is open to girls and boys in grades kindergarten through eighth grade.

Participants will have their photo taken with the team and will receive a personalized Bulls photo frame. Clinic participants are invited to return to school on Nov. 2, 2007 to help cheer the Bloomingdale Bulls football team on to a Victory against the New-some Wolves. On the night of the game, Junior Bulls will receive a cheer T-shirt, free admission to the game and pom-poms.

The clinic will benefit Bloomingdale's cheer program and will allow the squad to share their enthusiasm with younger members of the community.

There is a \$30 per child fee for the clinic, with reductions offered for each new participant your child brings into the program and for returning clinic participants.

For registration forms or information contact Elaine Zoet at (813) 785-0092 or allysonzoet@aol.com.

## Prayer At The Pole

Students at Burns Middle School on Sept. 26 meet at the flag pole near the school's main entrance for "See You At The Pole" day. Parents and faculty members joined the student-led prayer group, which meets weekly.



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

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# Residents Can Help Prevent Crime Year-Round

By PETE MAURER  
Bloomingdale Community  
Resource Deputy  
and  
SANDY CAPITANO  
Bloomingdale Community  
Service Officer

## Area Sees Drop in Crime

At the September meeting of the Bloomingdale Area Community Council, volunteers discussed the most recent crime statistics for the Bloomingdale area. The good news is that crime has dropped in our area, due to the dedicated efforts of Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office deputies patrolling our community and increased participation and cooperation from residents.

In these days of tight budgets and cutbacks, the need for residents to get involved and help keep our community safe is critical. More budget cuts are coming. To keep our crime levels low, the sheriff's office needs even more residents to be vigilant and keep their eyes out for suspi-

cious activities. Call 247-8200 to report unusual activities.

Concerned residents can call (813) 247-8200 to report unusual activities. There are other ways you can help, too. Help keep our deputies on patrol by obeying traffic laws. When you break the laws and get stopped, you're taking a deputy away from patrolling. Also, keep your homes and vehicles locked and secure. Don't make it easy for criminals.

## Have a Fun, Safe Halloween

Halloween is not just the fun time many of us remember from our childhood. 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 at having a good time. Parents, please consider the following safety steps:

\* Ensure your children's safety by accompanying them while

they trick or treat.

\* Make sure everyone has a flashlight and light colored clothing or costumes.

\* Only stop at homes with the front porch lights on.

\* Cross only at intersections or clear areas and not between parked cars.

\* Check all treats before your kids eat them. When in doubt, throw it out.

\* Consider alternative activities. Many churches and schools have safe, fun activities on Halloween night.

\* Parents, do not drink and drive.

\* Make sure every one wears a seat belt when driving around.

\* Insure your pets are kept under control.

\* Remember that all fireworks are illegal in Florida and can be very, very dangerous.

\* Watch out for kids walking through neighborhoods.

\* Remind teenagers going to Halloween parties to use their



Deputy Pete Maurer

seat belt and don't ride with anyone who has been drinking or using drugs. It's definitely worth a mention that fireworks are illegal and very dangerous. And

one last heads-up for families with teenagers: the penalties and consequences for bad "tricks" can be very costly for both kids and their parents.



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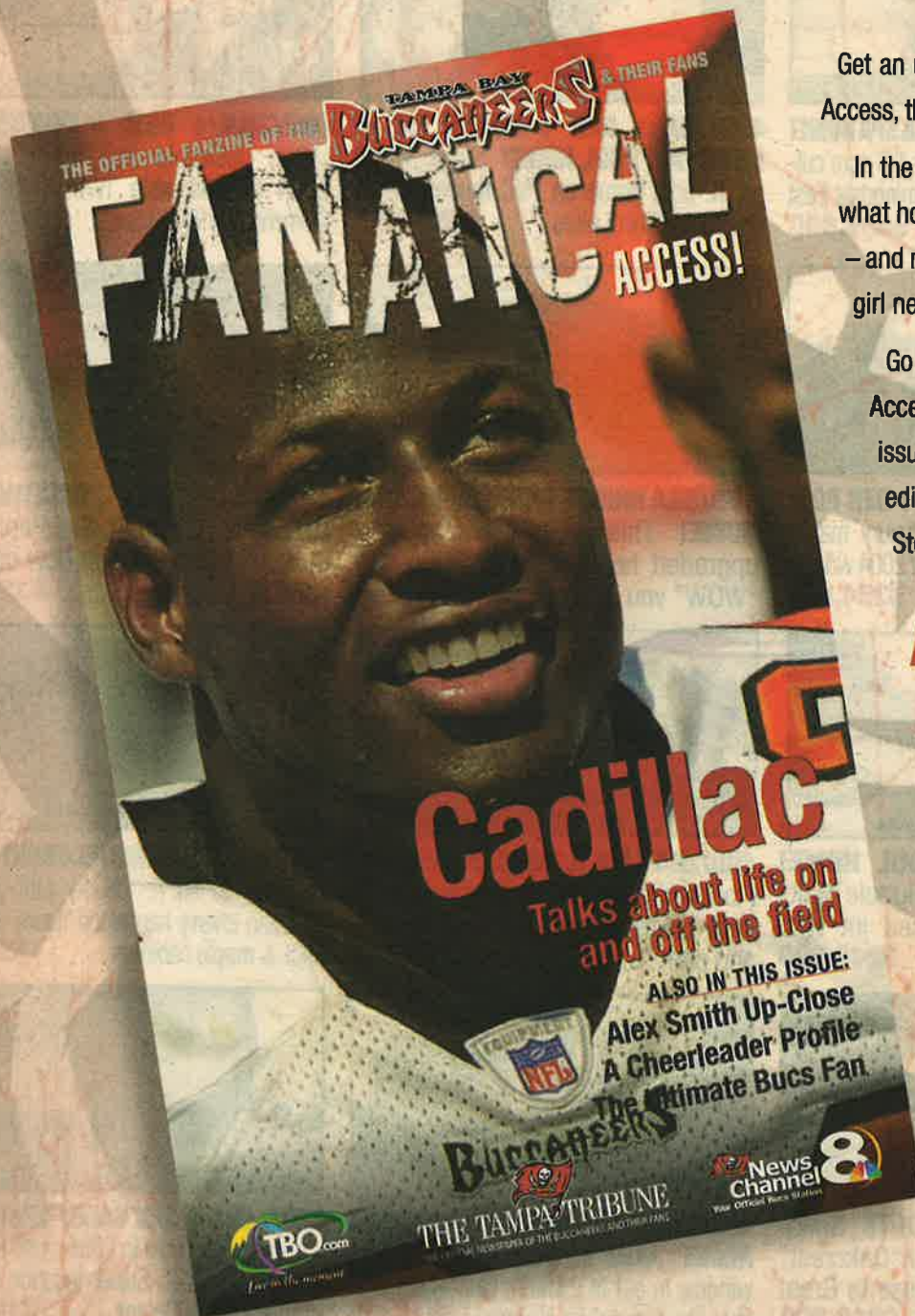
\*At the 2007 Florida Newspaper and Marketing Executives (FNAME) Creative Excellence Awards competition, the Tribune won FIVE BRONZE, NINE SILVER and 12 GOLD awards! As a result, the Tribune was awarded the GRAND AWARD for winning in its newspaper group category (circulation of 125,001 or more). And to top it all off, the Tribune won the BEST OF SHOW AWARD too.

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