

Bloomingdale Commuters Vault Into Vanpools

In this issue...

- 2 BHA
Directory
- 6 Solving The
Speed Problem
- 8 Home and
Garden
- 10 River Hills
Rapids
- 11 Parenting
- 12 Wine-Tasting
Extravaganza
- 13 Tips to Ease
Anxiety

Bloomingdale residents enjoy the quiet, suburban lifestyle of living far from the maddening crowd. But, to work outside of this cozy community, commuters pay the personal price of battling rush-hour traffic on bumper-to-bumper congested roadways with "road rage" fueling aggressive drivers in the next lane. You've become stressed-out even before clocking in.

According to census officials, the average commuter spends nearly 44 minutes on the highways and predicts driving time will increase dramatically by the year 2010. Traffic on Florida's highways increased 45 percent from 1985 to 1995, while the population increased 25 percent. In the Tampa bay area, three out of four commuters drive alone to work and the highway needs exceed available funding to a ludicrous degree. It would take \$4.5 billion over the next 20 years to build all the necessary roads. Transportation officials say highway congestion in Florida will get worse as traffic doubles during that time. What's a commuter to do?

Ross Ayer, a Bloomingdale (Erin Arbor) resident who works in northwest Tampa has the answer. Vanpool! As a participant in the Bay Area Vanpool program offered by Bay Area Commuter Services (BACS), a

Continued on page 4



Commuters can register with Bay Area Commuter Services and ride to work in luxury vans instead of struggling with the hassles of commuting.

Your inside connections

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

3240 Lithia Pincrest Road, Suite 103
Valrico, FL 33594

Voice Mail: 681-2051

E-mail: bloomingdale@juno.com

BHA Web Site: <http://members.aol.com/bhainc/>

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Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District
PO Box 3132
Brandon, FL 33509-3132

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Fred Englehart, Treasurer 685-3638

Meetings

All meetings take place at the Bloomingdale Community Office. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District
Second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

BHA Board of Directors
Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District
Second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.
at 3419 Cade Lane, Bloomingdale Oaks

Mobile Watch & Neighborhood Watch
meetings are held when special concerns arise

the Bloomingdale gazette
The Official Publication of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association



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Commuters Vault Into Vanpools

Continued from page 1

regional transportation agency funded by the Florida Department of Transportation to promote commute alternatives to the single-occupant driver, Ayer found vanpooling to be a convenient, pleasant experience, "You meet nice people and develop long-term friendships, plus the convenience of door-to-door service without the hassle of finding a parking space is great!"

BACS provides vans for customized routes composed of 8 to 15 people that live and work in the same general area, sharing a ride to work together while enjoying the comfort of a luxury van, complete with overhead lights, climate control and much more, plus the commitment is only a month at a time. If you choose to be a driver, you drive for free and you have personal use of the van after work hours and on the weekends. Your spouse could also qualify to drive the van. A full van keeps expenses down. Riders split a monthly fee and divide gasoline costs by the number of passengers. The insurance and maintenance are fully covered at no expense to the driver or riders.

Carmen Vega works in Westshore and signed up for the vanpool program 2 years ago after moving to Brandon. "Being new to the Brandon area I was able to meet new friends in the vanpool who made it very easy for me to acclimate to the area. And I don't enjoy driving so this was very good for me. You get to work stress-free with nice conversation along the way, plus I save money."

BACS provides a computerized match list of people that live and work near each other and have similar work hours. There is currently over 1,200 commuters registered waiting to be matched with a vanpool, including 293 commuters in Brandon, Valrico and Bloomingdale. The more people that are in the database, the better chance for a match.

Jack Hampson, a former vanpool participant from Bloomingdale who works in Westshore had to drop out of his vanpool due a change in his work hours. "I'm very sad that I don't get to ride the van anymore. I really enjoyed the chance to read, sleep or have that extra hour to plan my day. Or on the ride home — an extra hour to de-stress."

There are several East Hillsborough vanpools looking for additional riders including Brandon to downtown St. Petersburg (2 riders), Plant City to Westshore (4 riders) and Valrico to downtown Tampa (4 riders) all with 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work hours. Or start your own vanpool.

For more information or to register call BACS at 1-800-998-RIDE (7433) for more information and registration.

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Solving The Speed Problem

The following is a letter dated July 17, 1998 to Commissioner Dottie Berger from Mack Austin of the Bloomingdale Area community council and a reply to that letter from Bernardo Garcia, Director of Public Works.

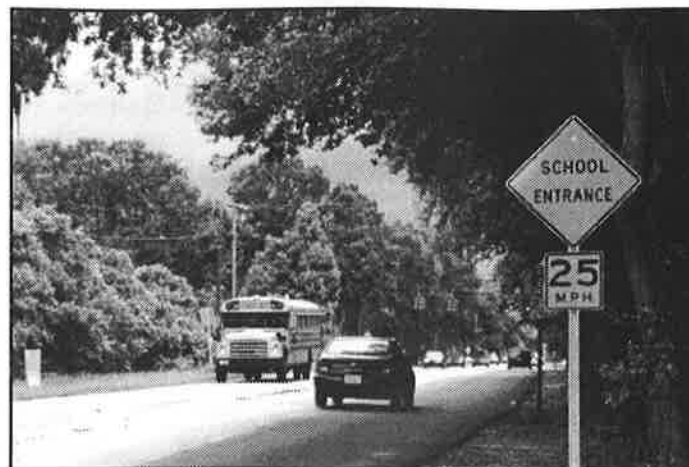
Commissioner Berger:

We as members of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Bloomingdale Area Community Council would like to first thank you for your timely response to our project concerning the speed problem on Bloomingdale Avenue and particularly in front of Bloomingdale Senior High School. We also recently received a reply from Mr. Bernardo Garcia, Director of Public Works.

Reference the attached copy of the reply from Public Works (printed in the August Gazette). While we do appreciate the timely reply, we did find the traffic analysis very limited. It only covered the statistics for one year, while ours covered five years and clearly showed the alarming increase in traffic accidents - 380 percent, with 570 percent more people involved at a cost increase of 280 percent. Also, no mention was made regarding the most important issue - the fact that this is a school zone with over 2,200 student drivers. Also not factored into the analysis for consideration is the tremendous growth occurring along this area of Bloomingdale Avenue, especially the plans to build a YMCA at one of the most dangerous intersections.

We recognize that statistics are important factors in considering plans, but that in situations where the human factor is put at significant risk, that all factors must be considered, not just numbers. We again request that the area in front of Bloomingdale Senior High School be treated as what it is, a school zone, and the appropriate measures be taken to identify it as such and the proper speed limits be posted and enforced. Also, a more in-depth study of the complete traffic history of this area be conducted, with specific consideration given to future growth, i.e., the YMCA and the new businesses opening along this area.

Attached is a recent copy of one of our community newspapers, "The Bloomingdale Gazette," which contains articles regarding our concerns. Bloomingdale is a very pro-active community and its residents believe in getting involved, especially in issues that



The county erected these signs near Bloomingdale Senior High School to warn drivers of the school entrance but there is still a problem with speeding in the area.

involve the safety and protection of our most valuable asset - our children.

We are aware of this plans to four-lane this area of Bloomingdale Avenue. We also recognize that widening will bring its own set of problems. Again we emphasize that with single sessions at Bloomingdale Senior High School, the traffic problem will be even more congested and dangerous.

Commissioner Berger, again we thank you for your concern. Our first and most sincere concern is for the safety and protections of everyone using this very busy and dangerous road in our community. Your assistance in helping provide this protection is sincerely appreciated.

Respectfully,
Mack Austin
B.A.C.C. Project Coordinator

The following is a response letter to Mack Austin.

Dear Mr. Austin:

This is in response to your July 17, 1998, letter to Commissioner Dottie Berger concerning your continuing concern for more school related speed limit signs.

Our Traffic Section performed their vehicle spot speed following the guidelines promulgated by the Florida Department of Transportation. Hillsborough

Continued on page 8

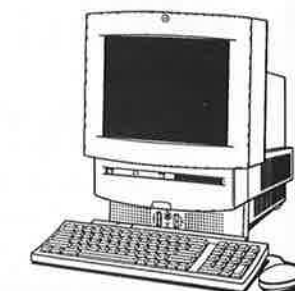
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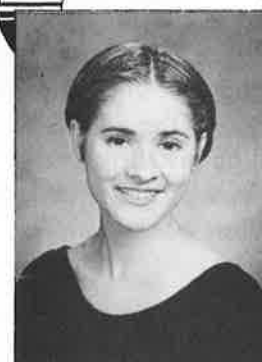
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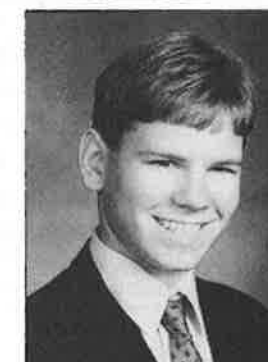
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Redwood Garden Shelters Add Beauty, Privacy, Value

You can keep cool under a shady redwood trellis on your deck or patio.

(NU) - During the dog days of summer, your first impulse might be to run inside and get cool.

But in the good old days before air conditioning, folks knew other ways of staying cool — such as finding shelter under a shady trellis.

Sounds good, right? Adding a redwood trellis to a deck or patio for shelter can help you beat the heat and make those afternoon barbecue parties a hit.

A trellis provides all of the cool shade you need to shelter yourself from the hot summer sun. And, in addition to shade, a trellis adds privacy and value to your home.

Most garden shelters are of post-and-beam design. But the design can vary from a lattice trellis to the elaborate angles of a pagoda- or gazebo-style shelter. A trellis also can be built for different uses, effects and climates.

Redwood is a natural choice for a trellis because its inherent stability helps keep posts, beams and joists from twisting or splitting. It also keeps other elements

such as lattice and louvers from warping. Do-it-yourselfers like to work with redwood because it is easy to handle, saw and nail.

Experts recommend the application of a quality water-repellent finish to all redwood outdoor projects. Redwood takes and holds finishes better than other woods.

A sheltering overhead trellis will make your yard more enjoyable year-round.

The California Redwood Association offers a package which includes a plan for a simple trellis and a 12-page color booklet, "Redwood Landscape Architecture," showing a variety of trellises, decks, fences and other outdoor projects.

Send \$1 to California Redwood Association, Dept. TR8, 405 Enfrente Drive, Suite 200, Novato, CA 94949. For general redwood information, check out the California Redwood Association Web site at www.calredwood.org.

Speed Problem

Continued from page 6

County is mandated by Florida Statutes to follow these guidelines. Therefore, we cannot alter our recommendation to keep Bloomingdale Avenue, between Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bell Shoals Road, posted at 45 miles per hour.

Our study included the review of all reported crash reports for the most recent full year. This data would be typical of conditions that presently exist on the subject section of Bloomingdale Avenue. Data older than this would include the influence of the Bloomingdale Avenue road widening construction period.

The five-year review your Council performed was based on the Sheriff's Office Traffic Accident Reporting System (T.A.R.S.). This report is only a summary of reported crashes and is very general. We cannot base our recommendations on a summary report. That is why our staff reviewed each individual crash report to learn all details such as vehicle speeds and types of crashes.

In reference to your request for a School Zone in

front of Bloomingdale High School, please be advised that School Zones are not used in conjunction with high schools. Bloomingdale Senior High has a traffic signal to assist students crossing Bloomingdale Avenue, as well as entering or exiting the school.

School entrance signs will be installed on Bloomingdale Avenue, in advance of the school, to emphasize the driveway locations connection to Bloomingdale Avenue.

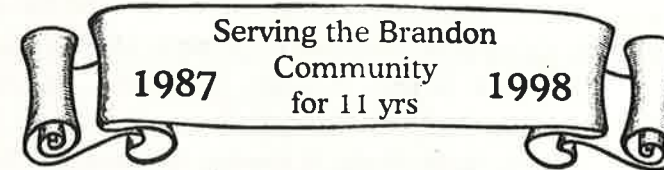
Sincerely,
Bernardo Garcia, Director
Public Works Department

Do you have any comments to air about traffic or other concerns in the Bloomingdale area? If so, send your letters to the Bloomingdale Gazette; attn: Anissa Camp; 220 W. Brandon Blvd.; Suite 102; Brandon, FL 33511 by Sept. 19 for the October edition of the Bloomingdale Gazette.

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River Hills Rapids Grab The Gold

The River Hills Rapids have once again captured the Area Championship! The 1998 Area Championship meet was held on August 1 at Imperial Lakes in Lakeland. River Hills won with a total point score of 482, and Imperial Lakes finished with a total point score of 382. This is the Rapids' third consecutive year winning the championship trophy.

The 1998 award winners are as follows:

High Point Award Winners:

- Brie Walton girls 6 and under
- Garth Walton boys 6 and under
- Jessica Cincotta girls 7-8
- Kevin Nicholas boys 7-8
- Nicole Nicholas girls 9-10
- Devan Smith boys 9-10
- Regan Neimann girls 11-12
- Alex Hammel boys 11-12
- Anna Newgard girls 13+
- Ryan Kunz boys 13+
- Chris Mook Sang boys 13+
- Andrew Somen boys 7-8
- Amy Suralis girls 11-12
- Kelly Swindell girls 11-12



Some of the 1998 River Hills Rapids swim team members proudly display the 1998 Area Championship trophy after their August 1 victory in Lakeland.

Sarah Tate girls 11-12
Solid Gold Awards (swimmers who entered four personal bests in one meet):

K. Asaro, J. Bentson, W. Bergen, A. Caby, M. Cardenas, T. Carter, K. Coulter, A. Davis, C. Ferguson, Amber Force, Avery Force, M. Gustom, M. Hammack, B. Hammel, K. Hammel, E. Hendrix, M. Hindman, A. Holden, K. Kishel, H. Molin, N. Molin, C. Mook Sang, N. Nicholas, M. O'Brien, K. Pentaudi, R. Polo, A. Satterfield, M. Skole, E. Snyder, A. Somen, A. Suralis, R. Swindell, and K. Thall.

Team Captains (voted for their dedication and spirit): Nick Molin, Amber Force, Allie Davis, Avery Force, Travis Vogt, Amanda Engstrom, and Kelsey Hammel.

All-Meet All-Stars (swimmers who attended every meet this season): Devan Smith, Alex Hammel, Kelsey Hammel, And Bridget Hammel.

Time Busters (swimmers who took the most time off a particular stroke): Alison Wade girls 5-6, Amanda Engstrom girls 7-8, Chelsea Ferguson girls 7-8, Madison Hammel girls 9-10, Jimmy Joyce boys 9-10

Individual Award Winners:

Most Dedicated: Lauren Valentine and Erin Kline; **Best Attitude:** Megan Valentine and Katherine Valentine; **Most Improved:** Danielle Joyce and Stoddard Pickrell; and **The Coaches Award** (for exemplary dedication and spirit): Allie Davis.



How to Be a Good Father

(NU) - Too often, men are led to believe that their only value to the family is as the breadwinner and that fatherhood begins when their children are old enough for soccer practice.

Not true.

"Certainly, bringing home a paycheck is an important part of being a good father," says Wade F. Horn, president of the National Fatherhood Initiative and former U.S. Commissioner of Children, Youth and Families. "But to our kids, the most important thing good dads invest in is not stocks, bonds or mutual funds — but them."

That statement is the foundation of Dr. Horn's new book, "Better Homes and Gardens® New Father Book" (\$9.95), co-authored with Jeffrey Rosenberg, M.S.W.

"All the father books up to now have been about how dads should try to be more like moms," says Horn. "Fathering is different than mothering in many ways."

Fathers tend to be more encouraging of independence and risk-taking, the authors say, whereas mothers tend to urge caution and emphasize safety. Fathers are often stronger disciplinarian figures with their children; moms tend to be seen as more comforting. But both parenting styles are needed to ensure that children grow up healthy, happy and secure.

The book explores the unique parental role fathers play in the lives of their children and offers practical tips on everything from what to expect from a new baby and how to deal with round-the-clock feedings, to showing love and providing discipline to older children.

There also are suggestions on how to help your wife through pregnancy; how to function as a single dad or stepdad; and how to help children with health or emotional problems.

Here are some suggestions from the book on carving time from your schedule to spend with your children.

*Sacrifice one leisure activity. Instead of perfecting your tennis serve, perfect the art of burping (your baby).

*Trade one solitary activity for one family activity. Replace golf with family hikes in the park.

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River Hills Rapids Hosts a Wine Tasting

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- Anna Newgard girls 13+
- Ryan Kunz boys 13+
- Chris Mook Sang boys 13+
- Andrew Somen boys 7-8
- Amy Suralis girls 11-12

necessities every week. Some of them are on the scene daily to prepare for the Thursday distribution; others are involved in administrations and the actual distribution.

Hopefully, with broad community-based support, provided by charitable events such as Global Beverages' wine tasting benefit, the Nativity Food Pantry's breadth of service will expand even more in the future.

Global Beverages is located on the corner of Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bloomingdale Ave.

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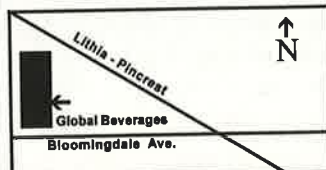
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Tips to Ease Anxiety

By Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D. For News USA.

(NU) - Anxious? Stressed? Have difficulty calming yourself into a deep, natural sleep? You're not alone.

Over 65 million Americans suffer annually from anxiety, chronic stress and insomnia. Until recently, the only option for many was prescription drugs and their unwanted side effects.


Now, there are natural ways to deal with stress and insomnia, as I describe in my new book "Healing Anxiety With Herbs" (HarperCollins Publishers, May 1998). Here are 7 tips to help:

1. Exercise regularly. Research indicates that the happiest, healthiest people — of any age — are those who exercise regularly.
 2. Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet: fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, low-fat or nonfat dairy products, and limited amounts of nuts, seeds, eggs, fish, lean poultry and little if any beef or pork.
 3. Laugh! Humorous thoughts and mirthful laughter work wonders by initially arousing and distracting the mind and then leaving us feeling more relaxed.
 4. Dietary supplementation with Kava. Research shows that Kava can relieve mild to moderate anxiety without the side effects of prescription drugs known as benzodiazepines (such as Xanax, Valium and Klonopin). I recommend the standardized Kava-30 or Kava-55 from Enzymatic Therapy, available in health food stores.
 5. Reduce caffeine intake. Too much caffeine can trigger panic attacks, heart palpitations and generalized anxiety disorder.
 6. If you smoke, quit. Nicotine's stimulant effect on the nervous system can contribute to anxiety in smokers as well as in users of snuff or chewing tobacco.
 7. Meditate. Studies on the effects of transcendental meditation confirm that it can be of immense benefit to your health and total well-being.
- Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D., a Yale-trained psychiatrist and best-selling author, has a private practice in Del Mar, Calif. His newest book is "Healing Anxiety with Herbs" (HarperCollins Publishers, May 1998).

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