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*Two year old Lindsey Yuanchun Cass recently came to Brandon, by way of China, to visit her grandfather Frank Vance. Story on page 17*

**Bloomingdale Ridge Traffic**  
**See page 16**

## BHA Dues Notices Arrive This Month

Annual dues notices will be delivered by mail this month to each homeowner in the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association membership area.

The BHA represents each of Bloomingdale's 40 neighborhoods and 4,500 homes. Our voice speaks loudly to county government, schools and developers. Your continued support ensures that, as a Bloomingdale resident, your voice will be heard.

The annual \$20 voluntary dues provide the sole financial support of the association's efforts. Through the membership support and volunteer efforts of our residents, the BHA accomplishes the following:

- Owns and publishes The Bloomingdale Gazette, our community newspaper.
- Established and maintains BloomingdaleOnline.com, our community web site.
- Funds the Bloomingdale Mobile Watch program.
- Operates the Neighborhood Involvement Program to help Hillsborough

County enforce county codes.

- Provides deed restriction enforcement assistance to residents of Bloomingdale's forty neighborhood sections.
- Provides a community office for all Bloomingdale residents in cooperation with the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District.
- Holds monthly, open Board of Directors meetings.
- Sends e-mail alerts on timely community issues to residents who register for free updates on our community web site.
- Works with Hillsborough County government offices to increase public services.
- Works with our school district to ensure the quality of our local schools.

### Recent accomplishments of the BHA include:

- Regular part-time staffing of the Bloomingdale community office, offering assistance to our residents several mornings each week.
- Supported the addition of Mobile

*See DUES on page 18*

## Homeowners Oppose Rezoning of Conservation Land

By Laura Frazier

The owner of a large parcel of conservation land in Bloomingdale wants to file a rezoning request to allow residential construction on the property.

But before he brings his request to county commissioners, he'd like to have the support of the property's surrounding homeowners.

Residents living near the 11+-acre parcel, south of Bloomingdale Avenue and east of Springvale Avenue in Valrico, say they will oppose the rezoning request. They suspect that the heavily wooded conservation area and large retention pond would be destroyed by residential construction.

Homeowner Dan Buettner said, "This is a very special piece of property, home to many types of wildlife including eagles. There are not many natural areas like this left for us to enjoy."

The property, identified on county plats as "public residential and conservation land"

was supposed to be deeded over to the residents by the neighborhood's original developers. When the developers went out of business and left town in the 1990's, the property was abandoned. During tax default proceedings in March of 2000, the present owner purchased the property for \$2,500. It is currently listed for sale through Christian Home Realty at \$275,000.

The owner, identified only as a private party, local businessman and current resident of Saddlebrook in Tampa, sent a representative to the August meeting of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association. Paul Savich, a Realtor and personal friend of the owner, said the owner's current plans would leave all but a small portion of the property untouched.

"The owner wants to build one 5,000 square foot single-family house and one private access road on the acre or two that's buildable. There's not even room for anything else," Savich said.


*see HOMEOWNERS on page 15*

**Committee Recommends New School Boundaries, see page 5**

**Your Inside Connections**

**The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.**  
 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. • Valrico, FL 33594 • (813) 681-2051  
 E-mail: BHA@CyberRails.com • Web site: www.bha-online.org

- President ..... Ted Grable
- Vice President ..... Len Jaszczak
- Treasurer ..... Pam Liguori
- Director ..... Patricia Radel
- Director ..... Rodney Biddle
- Director ..... Tony Diolosa
- Director ..... Joe Hickle
- Director ..... Taya Newberry

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 Treasurer, Paul Kelmer ..... 681-9701  
 Steven Heckel ..... 654-4266  
 Brad Scharp ..... 643-5000  
 Paul Warr ..... 685-7883

**Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District**  
 P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132  
 President ..... Bill Grace, 685-2817  
 Treasurer ..... Fred Englehart  
 Meetings ..... Second Monday each month at 7:30 pm,  
 3419 Cade Lane, Bloomingdale Oaks

**Share your news with the community!**  
 Write to Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594 Phone: (813) 681-2051 • Fax: (813) 651-1129 • E-mail: frazier1@tampabay.rr.com

**Bloomingdale Special Taxing District** ..... 684-6667  
 President, Thom Snelling ..... 681-9186  
 Treasurer, Don Cassels ..... 681-8855  
 Corresponding Secretary, R. Dickey ..... 689-2177  
 Recording Secretary, Alice Burlison ..... 685-1076  
 Trustee, Tim Golden ..... 653-1337  
 Trustee, Paul Almeida ..... 661-2018  
 Trustee, Dale Kahn ..... 571-0784  
 Trustee, Myron Magedanz ..... 685-5966  
 Property Manager, DPMI ..... 684-6617

**Meetings**  
 All meetings take place at the Community Office at 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. These are monthly public meetings and all Bloomingdale residents are invited.

**BHA Board of Directors Meetings**  
 First Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

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

the Bloomingdale gazette  
**The official publication of the BHA**  
 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594  
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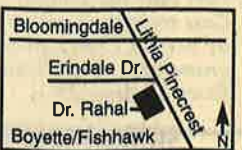
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**BLOOMINGDALE AREA EVENTS**

Please send event announcements and photos to:  
 frazier1@tampabay.rr.com or mail to:  
 gazette, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594.

**St. Stephen Parish Hosts Annual Dinner, Auction**

The parishioners of St. Stephen Catholic Church will host their second annual "Angels Among Us" dinner and auction on Saturday, Sept. 22 at the Radisson Riverwalk Hotel in Tampa. The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a social and silent auction followed by a sit-down dinner at 8 p.m. and the live auction.

Organizers are hoping to top last year's total of \$38,000 raised to benefit the new St. Stephen Catholic School.

A wide array of items will be offered at auctions including a hot-air balloon ride, a sailboat cruise, Bucs and Devil Rays tickets and a Tampa Bay Lightning package including tickets and a Zamboni ride.

The Rev. Paul Pecchi has once again agreed to prepare a home-cooked Italian dinner for the highest bidders. Last year, Pecchi's dinners raised \$4,000.

Ashley Avery Collectibles at Brandon Town Center donated a selection of Lladro angels and Hummel figurines. Deck the Walls contributed a limited-edition Noah's Ark wall sculpture valued at \$400.

St. Stephen Principal Mary Liddy donated a \$500 Waterford vase from the Millennium Collection, and said she's even willing to put her office up for grabs. The highest bidder can give his or her child an opportunity to serve as principal for the day.

Families will also have a chance to bid on a reserved parking spot at church, or to have the school's reading room named in

their honor for a year.

Tickets are \$50 each or \$450 for a table of 10 and can be purchased at the school office, 10424 Saint Stephen Circle, or at the church office, 5049 Bell Shoals Road. Sponsorships are also available. For information, call Jeanne Lewis at 689-5777 or Bridget Wray at 651-5929.

**Women's Association Seeks New Members**

The Brandon Branch of the American Association of University Women will host a membership tea at the home of Barbara Reed on Sunday, September 16, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Membership is open to those with a bachelor's or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution. Undergraduates enrolled in a regionally accredited two-or four-year institution may become student affiliates. Another membership category, "Friends of the Branch" is available to those who lack the academic credentials, but support the mission of AAUW.

The association promotes equity and education for women and girls, lifelong self-development and positive societal change. The Brandon Branch supports the Association's Educational Foundation, which awards and administers fellowships, grants and special projects, the Legal Advocacy Fund, which provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for gender discrimination in higher education, Girls Can!, a program honoring Brandon area eighth- and twelfth-grade girls for excelling in math and science, and Dress for Success Tampa Bay, a program that provides attire for women referred by social service agencies who are seeking employment.

See EVENTS on page 6

**"I ONLY TAKE MY PET TO ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER**

*...because they provide the best care."*

Hi Everyone!!! My name is Sassy. Wespinter's Princess Sassafras to those who know! I am an Italian Greyhound with a story. On July 5th, I did a puppy wiggle and jumped out of dad's arms breaking my leg in the process. Mom and Dad had not found a vet, as they just moved here in October. After a visit to the ER, I found myself in the very capable hands of Dr. A. He put some pins in my little leg and gave me a beautiful splint!! Seriously, Dr. Antunano and the Staff at Animal Medical Center on Bloomingdale Ave., in Valrico showed a level of concern for our new pup that went WAY beyond anything we expected. The Doctor answered our call after hours and performed orthopedic surgery the day before leaving on vacation. He even told us he would make himself available during his vacation if need be. We have definitely found the team we want to care for our animals. Many thanks from Sassy, Michael & Diane to an amazing Doc and Crew.



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Diane, Michael & Sassy

**Don't forget...Every pet needs a vet!**

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## BLOOMINGDALE HIGH PTSA NEWS

By Diane Clare, PTSA President

Greetings from Bloomingdale High PTSA! We are excited about the year ahead of us and look forward to teaming up with our parents, students and school to make a difference at Bloomingdale High.

Many of you may not realize that this is only the fourth year that the association has been in existence. Last year was a banner year as our PTSA won two important awards. First was the President's Program Award, the highest honor given by the Florida PTA. In only our third year, we also won the Local Unit Award given by the Hillsborough County PTA/PTSA!

Communication has always been our major goal. This year, we would like to improve our newsletter circulation and get our website up and running. If you have ideas of what you would like to see in the newsletter or on the website, please let us know. We can be reached through the school office at (813) 744-8018.

Helping out around the school is a great way to get to know the staff and to see firsthand all the good things happening at Bloomingdale High. A list of volunteer opportunities appears below and is also available in the front office. If you haven't already, please let us know where you would like to volunteer. We hope to hear from you soon.

I am honored to serve as president of Bloomingdale High PTSA this year. I look forward to working with a wonderfully dedicated group of folks who have the parents, students and faculty of the school at heart. Let us know how we're doing. We are here for you.

### 2001-2002 Bloomingdale High PTSA Board

President: Diane Clare  
 First VP: Suzy Wiesenhart  
 Second VP: Gini Boles  
 Third VP: Nydia Orozco-Davila  
 Treasurer: Robin Rogovin  
 Corresponding Sec: Judy Rice  
 Recording Sec: Phyllis Brock  
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 Health & Safety Chair: Ellen Gates  
 Newsletter Chair: Edie Rosenthal  
 ESE Parent Liaison: Nancy Pursino

#### Volunteer opportunities

Magazine pickup  
 Clerical assistance in library,  
 guidance office, resource center  
 Mentoring/tutoring program  
 Teacher Appreciation Day  
 Student Incentives  
 Many more!

## Committee Suggests New School Boundaries

Superintendent Lennard will review the recommendations; school board will bring an official proposal to the public this fall.

By Laura Frazier

School Superintendent Earl Lennard invited a group of local school administrators and residents this summer to submit their ideas for attendance boundaries for the new Bloomingdale East elementary school.

The as-yet unnamed school is being built to relieve overcrowding at Alafia Elementary School, which is just two miles north of the new school site, near the southern intersection of Natures Way and Culbreath Road in Bloomingdale East. Construction on the as-yet unnamed school is scheduled to begin this October. It is expected to open for the 2002-2003 school year.

Alafia was built in 1987 to house just over 800 students, and is critically overcrowded with more than 1,300 students enrolled this year. A boundary line must be drawn through the middle of Bloomingdale East to divide over 1,200 students who live in the community and presently attend Alafia.

Taya Newberry represented the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association as a member of the boundary committee. Newberry was careful to point out that the committee's recommended boundaries, "are only suggestions." Newberry said Dr. Lennard would review the committee's ideas, and then work with school board members to draft an official proposal to be introduced to the public in the coming weeks.

Bill Person, Director of Pupil Assignment, said earlier this year,

"We absolutely want to involve the community in setting boundaries for the new school. Once Dr. Lennard and the school board approve an official boundary proposal, a public hearing will be announced. Parents and the community in general will be invited to offer their comments and suggestions through written correspondence and public hearings."

Newberry said the committee worked with projected enrollment figures to ensure that both schools would open in 2002 under capacity with room to grow.

The committee drew the main east/west boundary line in Bloomingdale East through the middle of Bloomingdale Golfer's Club, which is in the center of the community.

"We have 658 students north of the golf course (boundary line) and 561 students to the south. There are 329 students in the Lithia Springs satellite group, which we split between the two schools in order to avoid putting either one way over or under capacity," Newberry said.

The committee has suggested dividing the Lithia Springs satellite group between Alafia and the new school. They recommend assigning all Bloomingdale West students to the new school. Students living south of Bloomingfield Drive between John Moore Road and Bell Shoals (Hickory Creek, Dogwood Hills, SouthOak, Indian Hills and Waterford) would attend Alafia.

Many Bloomingdale East parents and students are reluctant to part company with Alafia Elementary. Hundreds of families have relocated over the years to Bloomingdale specifically for the oppor-



Alafia Principal Sylvia McMillan served on the committee asked to submit suggestions for new school boundaries.

See BOUNDARIES on page 18

## Llamas and Learning

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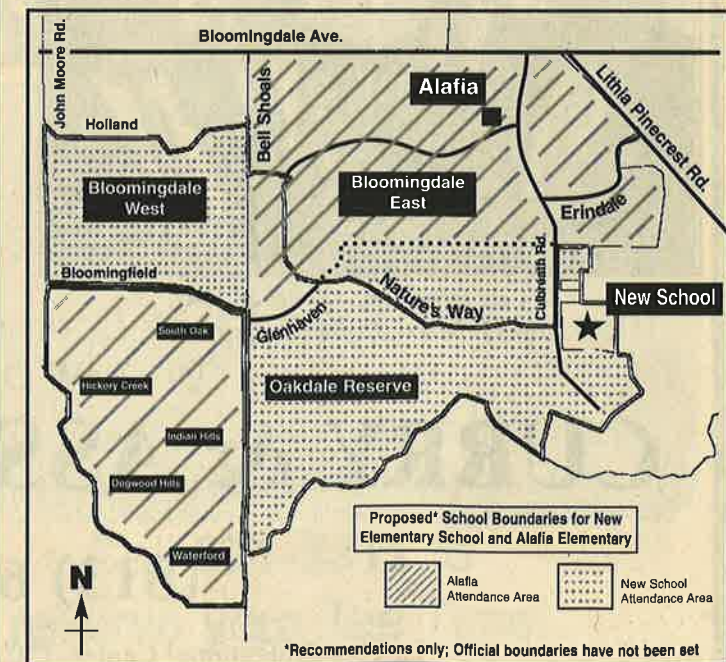
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\*Recommendations only; Official boundaries have not been set  
 This map is not an official boundary proposal. It shows the committee's suggestions as sent to Superintendent Lennard last month. Dr. Lennard and the school board will review the suggested boundaries and bring an official proposal to the public in the coming weeks.

# BRACES

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EVENTS from page 3

The Brandon Branch is selling copies of the popular Entertainment 2002 coupon book to raise funds for its service projects. The book includes discount coupons for dozens of Brandon area establishments including Brandon Brew House, Luna Rossa, Oaks Bar and Grill, Latin Café, The Brunchery, Campbell's Dairyland, Winn Dixie, U-Save, K-Mart, Fantastic Sam's, Bealls and more.

For membership information contact Nancy Hollowell at 757-3137 or Mary Ann Walters at 681-4502. To purchase the Entertainment 2002 book, call Barbara Reed at 671-3078.

**Social Club Hosts Dance For Single "Boomers"**

Activities Unlimited of Brandon, a social club geared toward single men and women of the baby-boomer generation, is hosting a "Meet, Eat and Move Your Feet" social event at 7 p.m. on Saturday, September 15 at Season's Catering, in the shopping plaza at the corner of Highway 60 and Valrico Road in Valrico.



Activities Unlimited of Brandon held their own version of the "Survivor" games during a camping trip in April.

The event features live dance music and hors d'oeuvres. Cost is \$5 for non-members. Soft drinks and set-ups will be provided; BYOB. Single men and women are invited to bring an unattached friend of the opposite sex. Office casual attire is suggested.

Activities Unlimited is a social club and not a matchmaking service.



Helping to organize the second annual Angels Among Us event are, from left, standing, Principal Mary Liddy, Michelle Greene, Jeanne Lewis, the Rev. Paul Pecchi, Bonnie Rose, Anne Feaster, Bridget Wray; seated, Jeanne Marie Treimanis, Kathy Simms, Patt Zumpano, Roxanne Salabarría and Joann Mannix.

Members may choose to participate in any of the group activities scheduled each month including theme parties, camping trips, discussion groups, happy hours, beach outings, golfing, snorkeling, horseback riding, bowling, cycling, canoeing and scuba diving. Open meetings are held at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the Brandon Brew House, corner of Lumsden and Kings in the U-Save plaza. For information call (813) 899-1176 or (813) 236-6282.

**Mindy's Asian Emporium Gifts has new number**

Mindy's Asian Emporium Gifts, a new Asian specialty shop that opened last month in Bloomingdale Square, has a new phone number. The new number is 813-657-7853.



C. Cole Jeffries, Jr., Daniel W. King, Frank J. Nivert, Clifton C. Curry, Jr.

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WRONGFUL DEATH

**RESTAURANT REVIEW**

Circles  
100 W. Azeele St., Tampa  
(813) 879-5228

**RATING**  
(Based on 5 stars):

Food \*\*\*\*\*  
Ambience \*\*\*\*  
Service \*\*\*\* 1/2  
Overall \*\*\*\* 1/2

We drove to the SoHo area of Tampa to dine at Circle's based on a recommendation from my wife's manicurist. She said the food was delicious and reasonably priced with large portions. I wasn't convinced that it was a bona fide lead, but oh boy was I wrong. So let me start by giving three "I'm sorry's" to Mary Ann.

Circles is a top-notch eatery with a staff that really cares about your total dining experience. When you go, ask for Michael. He is the owner and maitre d' and is genuinely happy to chat with you. His wife makes all the desserts and oversees the kitchen. As you read further, keep an eye out for the asterisks (\*). I'll clue you in later.

Circles is a converted residence and the dining rooms are small, airy and cheerful. We were seated quickly, and reviewed the salads and starters from the dinner menu. You can start with fried or poached calamari in hot or medium homemade marinara sauce (\$5.25); Beef Sa-tay, skewers of beef marinated in coconut milk and curry, then charbroiled with peanut butter curry sauce (\$5.25); thin pizza with confetti strips of barbecue duck\*(\$6.25); or Lobster Bisque at \$2.95 a cup. We chose the Fried Wontons, spicy ground chicken in a wonton wrap, served crunchy with a pungent cucumber salad (\$4.95). Still unsure? How about the Seared Peppercorn na with Wasabi soy dip or the Tabouleh Salad with toasted pita?

It took a while to peruse over 30 entrees offered not including daily specials. A very partial list includes Veal spiced demi-glaze with wild mushrooms sautéed in brandy\* (\$14.95); Shrimp Diane with sherry in a Cajun cream sauce (\$11.50); Chicken Florentine sautéed in lemon sauce with spinach (\$10.50); Spice Rubbed Steak marinated with chili paste, garlic, soy sauce and cognac\*(\$18.95); Vegetable Lasagna (\$9.95); or Nut Crusted Florida Grouper with chili beurre blanc rolled in a chopped nut base and pan fried in white wine sauce\*(\$13.95). All entrees come with a fresh salad, homemade dressings and fresh baked breads.

I had the Shrimp Scampi (\$10.50) with lots of butter, garlic and grated Romano cheese over a linguini bed. Wonderful! Mr. B. order the Crab Stuffed Pork Chops special (\$16.95); thick, delicious and cooked to perfection. He said it was one of his all time top-10 favorites. My wife had the Veal Parmigiana (\$13.95) and Mrs. B. chose the Shrimp Parmigiana (\$10.95). Both were excellent with real mozzarella cheese and great marinara sauce.

The desserts change daily according to how Michael's wife feels. We ordered key lime pie and a chocolate frosted cake, both homemade and absolutely great!

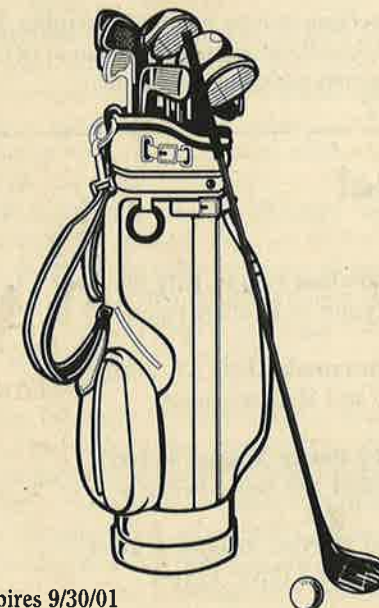
Oh yes; the asterisks. Circles has a decidedly Thai accent and the \*'s indicate Thai dishes. But it is not a Thai restaurant as much as a sample of many countries and regions favorite dishes.

Our bill for four with tax and gratuity was just under \$80 including beverages and dessert. I enthusiastically recommend Circles and we will try it for lunch very soon.

Until we eat again,

*Ellen Duvont*

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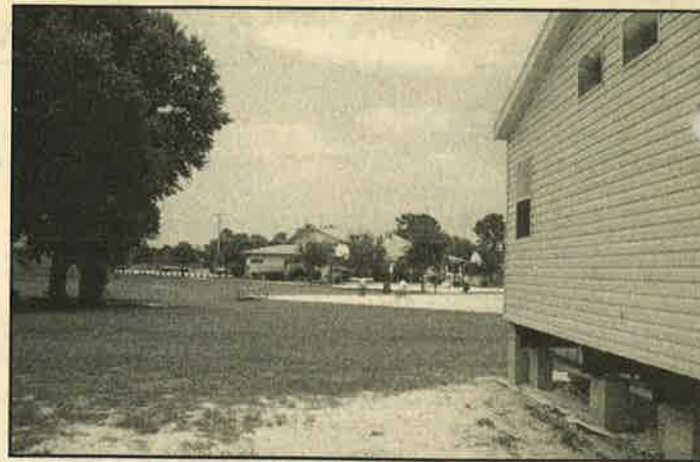
## Bloomingtondale Community Council Update

By Mack Austin

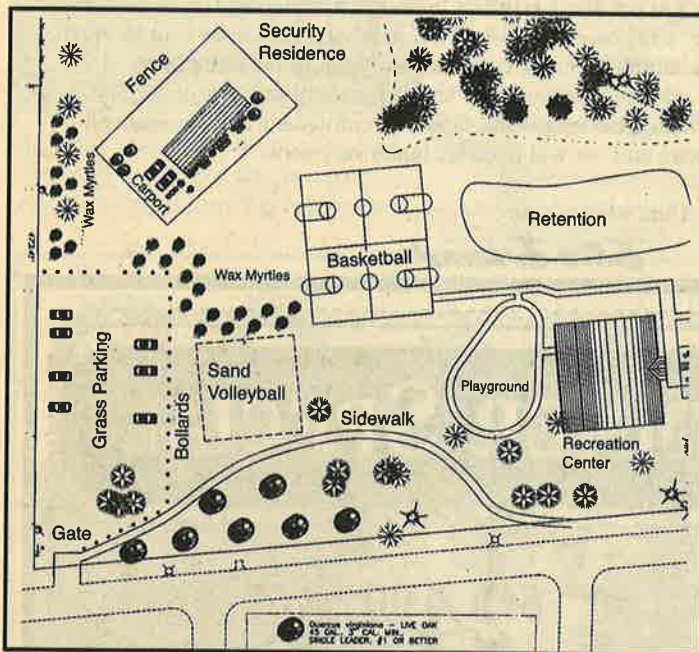
The Bloomingdale Area Community Council met on August 16, 2001 at the Bloomingdale Community Station to discuss the current issues and concerns brought to the attention of the council.

The setup of the new Bloomingdale West Park Deputy's residence is nearing completion. County Parks Maintenance supervisor Jeff Mauch met with residents and representatives of the BHA on August 27 to discuss the use of fencing and landscaping. Mauch said the county is open to suggestions from residents about how to improve the look of the structure without sacrificing any additional recreation area.

Deputy Corley will perform security inspections in the park, provide a visible presence and be active in various community programs. It was made clear that he is not a 24/7 deputy for our community. Residents with personal security problems or emergencies should call 911 or the Sheriff's dispatch at 247-8200.



Residents are invited to submit their suggestions for fencing and enhanced landscaping to be installed around the Bloomingdale West Park Deputy residence. For more information or to submit your suggestions, call the BHA at (813) 681-2051 or Jeff Mauch at (813) 744-5815.



Members were informed about the August 30 meeting on the final site selection for the new library. The BOCC had directed the library board to review more detailed facts about the two sites, especially the significant difference in cost. All members pledged their support and made plans to attend the meeting.

Members were given an update on the county's special program for identifying problem intersections throughout Hillsborough County. The top 150 intersections will be analyzed and proposals will be made for improvements. Information was submitted to the county design and engineering support section on several intersections within Bloomingdale that have shown increased traffic congestion. Some will see improvements as a result of the Bloomingdale Avenue widening project.

Deputy Maurer briefed the council on the Sheriff's upcoming "Cease Fire Tampa Bay" Firearm exchange project scheduled for September 15th. Deputy Maurer briefed members on the proactive plans being coordinated between the Sheriff's Office and the School Board to prepare for emergencies and disasters at our schools.

The next B.A.C.C. meeting will be held in September 2001. Residents are invited to call the community station at (813) 635-8040 to have their concerns added to the agenda.

## Welcome to Bloomingdale!

### Twins!

Teagan James and Abigail Marie Carpenter, July 11, 2001  
Parents Jessica York and Keith Carpenter

Ala'a Ayman Mansour, July 18, 2001  
Parents Ruba and Ayman Mansour

Benjamin John McCarthy July 22, 2001,  
Parents Jean and Doug McCarthy

Vanessa Marie Mullen, July 23, 2001  
Parents Heather and Christopher Mullen

Alexandra Caroline Finch, July 30, 2001  
Parents Michelle and Robert Finch

Jacob Mark Brazinski, July 31, 2001  
Parents Ann and Mark Brazinski

Aaron Bradley Pence August 5, 2001  
Parents Jennifer and David Pence

Bryce Edward Herbst, August 9, 2001  
Parents Jenifer and David Herbst



## Clear Drains Reduce Flooding Damage, Mosquito Threat

By Mack Austin

The disastrous flooding that took place last month and recent warnings of mosquito-borne disease in many Florida counties is a double threat that needs our attention.

We have so far been spared from the extremely heavy rains some states have experienced. But we've had enough rain to provide mosquitoes with breeding spots. We've heard how to help reduce these breeding spots by emptying containers or cutting down areas where water collects.

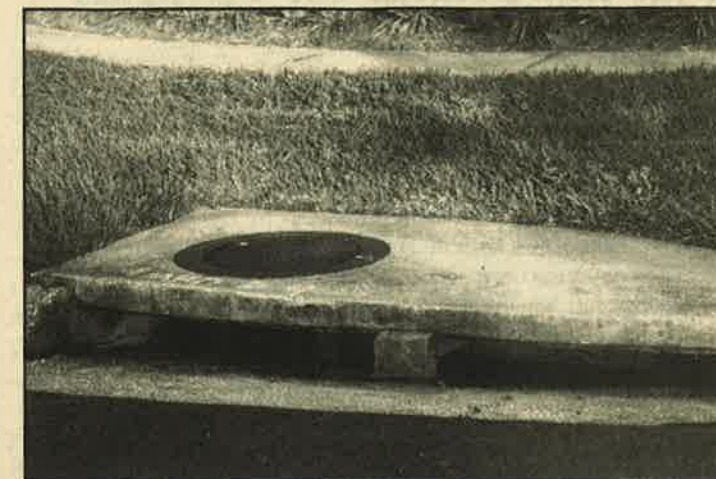
The Hillsborough County Public Works Department significantly improved our area by clearing out drainage ditches during the dry season. They are now seeking our assistance in improving critical breeding spots right in our own neighborhoods; the hundreds of storm water drains located throughout our community.

Most of us just ignore these drains and don't even think about what happens to all of that trash and yard waste we blow out into the streets. Some residents have even used these drains as trash holes, not really realizing what they're doing.

The Public Works South Service Unit located on Big Bend Road is tasked with keeping these drains clear to prevent flooding and also decrease mosquito breeding spots. They recently found bags of yard waste, trash can lids and all kinds of trash in our drains. The drains are put there to protect our property from flood damage. To work properly, they must stay clear. Please retrieve your trashcan lids before they get loose, and don't throw yard waste down the drains.

It only takes one bad storm to do a lot of damage. Let's help

the South Service Unit keep the water flowing and the mosquitoes down by keeping our drains clear.



We can keep the water flowing and the mosquitoes down by keeping yard waste out of our drains.

## One Number For County Service Questions

Hillsborough County offers one central phone number providing information and contact numbers for any county service or office, including commissioners, law enforcement, trash pick-up, taxes, real estate issues, code enforcement, water services, permits and more. The number is (813) 272-5900.

## Students Offer Praise For New School

A Gazette Report

St. Stephen Catholic School opened on August 8, 2001 with just under 200 students in pre-school through fifth grade. We asked students in Ms. Martin's fifth grade class how things are going at the new school.

Steven Heath  
"I really like the school. I had 32 kids in my old (public) school, and I like the smaller classes much better... I think we might have had more computers at our old school, but the computers here have a lot more software on them and we get to use them a lot more... I never had to wear uniforms before, and I don't really like them. I think they're kind of thick and a little hot... I'm in the extended day program, and it's really fun. It's much better than going to day care with all the babies and little kids... I like how the classrooms are all inside the school and you don't have to walk outside between classes when it's hot outside... I also like the principal, Mrs. Liddy. When you look at her, she gives a good impression."

Bailey Simms  
"At first I thought I wouldn't like coming to a new school because I had to leave my friends and I only went to one (private religious) school before now. But I learned that I do like it very much... It has been easy to make new friends here because the classes are so small. It's not as noisy as my old school, so that makes it easier to concentrate on your work better... I really like our principal, Mrs. Liddy. She is sweet and nice, a very nice person."

Olivia Mannix

"I didn't want to change schools at first since I had gone to my old (private religious) school for four years. But now I like the new school a lot and it is easy to make new friends here... I think the uniforms look good but they are too thick and hot... Mrs. Liddy is a very good principal and a nice person... I like how the school looks because it's very colorful."



St. Stephen Catholic School fifth grade students, from left, Steven Heath, Bailey Simms and Olivia Mannix, are adjusting to and enjoying their new school.

## Sheriff's Department Trades Gift Certificates For Firearms

By Mack Austin

Cease Fire is a community effort to give residents the opportunity to safely remove unwanted firearms, old or new, from their homes. The program is neither pro-gun nor anti-gun, and takes no position on gun related legislation.

Proper disposal of unwanted firearms by law enforcement officials has proven to reduce crime and serious injuries, especially to children. Over 5,800 firearms have been collected and disposed of under the program since 1998.

On Saturday, September 15 at the Bloomingdale Community Station, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., complete firearms will be exchanged for \$50 gift certificates redeemable at Winn-Dixie grocery stores, Bealls Department Stores and Bealls outlet Stores. There is a limit of three certificates per person.

Free gunlocks will also be available while quantities last.

Only adults may turn in firearms for disposal. Guns must be unloaded and, whenever possible, placed in a secure container. All weapons collected through the program will be destroyed; none will be sold or used.

Unwanted gun parts, ammunition, pellet and BB guns may be turned in, but certificates will not be exchanged for them.

For additional information call (813) 844-GUN1



Riverview Deputy Susan Shute and Deputy John Hall worked together at the last Cease Fire program.

### CEASE FIRE

Saturday, September 15, 2001, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Bloomingdale Comm. Station  
1512 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico (813) 635-8010



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## Business Support Benefits Community

Mack Austin

Many Bloomingdale residents are fortunate enough to have jobs that allow them to make a positive difference in our community. One such person is Mary Ann Hunsberger, a Tampa Police Department Community Service Officer. Each day on the job, Officer Hunsberger is directly involved in the lives of others. She makes the most of this opportunity and said, "One thing is for sure; I know I can't do it alone."

One of Officer Hunsberger's greatest contributions occurred when her efforts in organizing and planning a project to help a new Bloomingdale family during a "Make a Difference Day" were recognized nationwide. She assembled a long list of volunteers from law enforcement, military, business and professional organizations. She was able to obtain funds to support the project from Wal-Mart. Putting all this together made life and living a whole lot better for the new family.

Hunsberger has completed many projects since then. One thing she said really made the difference was the support of local businesses.

"The residents in our community are what make the difference in just how much a local business succeeds. When the businesses in turn give back, it completes the circle. That is what a community is all about," Hunsberger said.

One of Officer Hunsberger's latest projects is the Tampa Police Department's "Buckle Up Kids" program. After four intense days of training, volunteers are qualified to check and insure that child seats and booster seats are properly installed.

The number of seats they have found improperly installed has usually been an astounding 90% at each scheduled checkpoint.

At the checkpoints, child seats are provided for those in need. Finding a safe place to store the seats presents a big problem. Bloomingdale Air Conditioned Self-Storage, located just north of Bloomingdale Avenue behind Taco Bell, came to the rescue. Manager Danielle Johnson has worked out the details for providing proper storage for the child seats.

Now Officer Hunsberger and her volunteers can schedule more checkpoints, like the next one scheduled for September 11, 2001 at the south Tampa Home Depot near MacDill Air Force Base. The officer said that more checkpoints would also be scheduled in the Bloomingdale and Brandon area.

The partnering of business and professionals makes our community a better place to live.



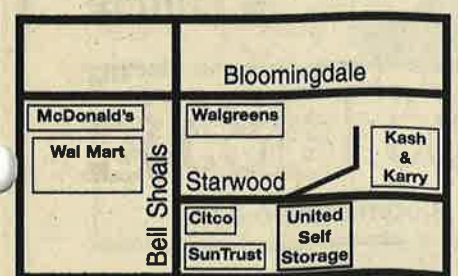
Kjersten Waring, a Bloomingdale Air Conditioned Storage employee, plans to have her son Evan's child seat checked at the Sheriff's Bloomingdale Community Station.

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**PROPERTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

**Report for the Month of July 2001**  
 By DPMI Property Management, Inc.  
 President Al Devney, (813) 684-6617

**Irrigation:** Repaired items included 17 spray heads, four rotors, two solenoids, three risers and two zones. Fourteen lights were replaced.

**Landscaping:** Letters were mailed to Greenturf and Neighborhood Pest Control requesting the status of their contracts.

**Other:** ZK Construction repaired the damaged wall on Natures Way and Lornewood. DPMI met with Hillsborough County sidewalk people and discussed where walks are needed to connect the new sidewalks on John Moore to those on Bloomingfield. DPMI met with Mike Essenwine of ICD Services to revise the irrigation plans for the Springvale irrigation system. DPMI prepared a list of the landscape shortfalls, necessary repairs to the walls and irrigation for the Bloomingdale Cove area. DPMI inventoried the Bloomingdale Cove area and prepared the cost data for the BSTD to assume the maintenance responsibility. There was one crepe myrtle tree destroyed and one badly damaged on Canoga Park. Twenty-four coleus plants were stolen from the median at Garnet and Bell Shoals.

**Eat, Drink and Pitch Out the Window:** Mr. Devney picked up 19 bags of litter, one hockey net, six wash cloths, 13 golf balls, a pillow, a 4x6 foot rug, a 4x4 foot piece of plywood, a hubcap, a large wax myrtle tree, rubble from a gate and \$2.13. The beverages of choice were Coke for soft drinks, Miller Lite for beer and Smirnoff Vodka for distilled spirits.

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**Taxing District Welcomes Two New Trustees**

By Joe Liguori  
 Three Bloomingdale Special Taxing District trustees recently tendered their resignations, as we reported in the August issue of The Gazette. The board last month accepted the resignations of Tom Mackiewicz, Paul Almeida and Tim Golden.

Mr. Almeida cited changing job responsibilities as his reason for leaving. Mr. Golden will be moving out of the Bloomingdale area in the near future, and therefore would not be eligible to serve on the board.

Two of the three open seats were filled at the August board meeting, bringing the current number of trustees up to six. One seat remains open.

Dale Kahn, a Bloomingdale Ridge resident, filled Tom Mackiewicz's seat. Mr. Kahn moved here recently from the Cleveland area to accept an opportunity with Verizon.

Myron Magedanz, a resident of Bloomingdale for 21 years, filled Mr. Golden's seat. The addition to the board of both a longtime resident and newcomer is a great combination that will help the volunteer Board of Trustees continue the excellent work they do for our community.

President Thom Snelling said he is looking forward to working with the new trustees. Mr. Snelling anticipates that the first meeting of fiscal year 2002 next month will be attended by a full board.

If you'd like to learn more about how the taxing district will spend over \$300,000 in the coming year to help keep Bloomingdale an attractive community, please plan to attend the next taxing district board meeting at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the Citgo Plaza. The meeting will be held on Monday, September 10 at 7 p.m. and is open to the public.

And finally, I hope I speak for all the residents of Bloomingdale when I offer a sincere thank you to the departing trustees who gave so much of their time to keep Bloomingdale the well-maintained community that it is

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**YARD OF THE MONTH**

**The Versailles Gardens of Bell Grande Drive**

By Rosie Trellis

Nominations sent in by appreciative neighbors led us this month to the home of Ann and Larry Farkas in Bloomingdale East. The Farkas' friends wrote to tell us about their "serene garden and wildlife refuge." The couple's Bell Grande Drive home is surrounded by winding stone paths, trellises dripping with flowering vines and arbors that welcome visitors to explore the garden.

The back yard is a fairy-tale forest of flourishing plants set in sections bordered by white pebble paths and stepping-stones. Several benches offer visitors a chance to sit and admire the butterflies and hummingbirds that frequent the yard. Bird feeders and garden ornaments hide in every corner.

The Farkas' are very creative and relaxed when it comes to gardening. When a neighbor's heavy jasmine vine encroached on their side of the backyard fence, they didn't claim rights and whack it down or push it back over the fence. Instead they installed an overhang arbor that the vines now cover. Anne says neighbor children love to use the jasmine "lean-to" as a secret hideout.

When the couple recently installed new bathroom mirrors, they hoisted the old ones out to the garden and secured them to the fence, partially obscuring them with foliage; a resourceful idea that gives new meaning to reflecting in a garden!



Pebble paths, stepping stones and arbors welcome visitors to the Farkas' back yard garden.

The Farkas' received a \$20 gift certificate from Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale, courtesy of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association. Send nominations to Yard of the Month, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594, e-mail frazier1@tampabay.rr.com, or call (813) 654-6281.

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**Enrolling Now for 2001-02 School Year**

# Soccer Program Is TOPS For Disabled Children

By Laura Frazier

Mentally and physically disabled boys and girls of all ages are invited to join the free TOPSoccer program. A division of the Brandon Area Youth Soccer League, TOPS - The Outreach Program for Soccer - provides a fun, valuable experience for disabled children and their families, and the able-bodied volunteers who assist them.

The program is offered completely free of cost including registration, uniforms, equipment, balls, cleats, personal assistance and even a post-game lunch.

Volunteer coordinator and co-founder Frank Figari said children with any type of disability are welcomed into the program.

"We have had kids with all levels of physical and mental disabilities, from those with mild disorders to those with profound physical and mental limitations," said Figari.

Figari said while some of the players are incredible athletes, others simply relish putting on their uniform and cleats and cheering for their team. There are no practice sessions and no training routines. The rules of the game are bent to fit the players.

Volunteer children and adults assist players in many creative ways. A blind child might be led by hand or verbally around the field. Volunteers steer wheelchair-bound players towards a spe-

cially designed ball that measures more than three feet in diameter. They even found a way to allow a 12-year-old paraplegic child to play the position of his dreams... goalie.

"The child of course couldn't stand up, so we made a harness to fit around his middle, with straps on the side. We stood behind him and held him upright by the straps, basically moving him in front of the ball when someone took a shot," said Figari.

"He was ecstatic to be in the game, plus it was the first time he had ever been up in a standing position."

Through local and national corporate sponsorships and volunteer efforts, TOPS has evolved into a community-wide project since its inception in 1996. Over 120 boys and girls played on TOPSoccer teams last year.

Players aren't the only ones who benefit from participating in the program.

"While the kids are playing, the parents have a great opportunity to

talk to other families with disabled kids. The able-bodied kids that volunteer interact with the players in such a way that there is no pity or ostracizing going on. Everyone just has a great time," Figari said.

Parents of prospective players, volunteers of all ages and corporate sponsors are invited to call (813) 684-5948 or visit [www.BrandonSoccer.com](http://www.BrandonSoccer.com) for more information.



The crowd goes wild last season at a TOPSoccer game. Photo courtesy of Frank Figari.

HOMEOWNERS from page 1

EPC officials confirmed that a major portion of the property consists of environmentally protected wetlands that cannot be altered or destroyed. The EPC concurred that less than two total acres of land are suitable for construction, regardless of the county zoning designation.

Sketches of the property provided by Hamilton Engineering and Surveying indicate 9,000 square feet of buildable area in the southwest corner of the property.

Resident David Yake said his neighbors stand in firm opposition to any rezoning changes to Bloomingdale's dwindling conservation and recreation areas.

"It is our green space that's up for grabs. Private interests have a lot to gain by rezoning this property. Our community has only so much more green space to lose," he said.

Yake said Bloomingdale's deed restrictions prohibit the rezoning of conservation areas without the neighboring homeowners' consent.

"Our deed restrictions apply to all property owners, including the owner of the property in question."

The residents have considered approaching the county parks department about purchasing the land for use as a public park.

Owner's representative Savich said the parks department is not interested in purchasing any parcels of less than 15 acres.

"Even if they were interested, a public park would put even more of an environmental and quality of life impact on the neighborhood," he said.

"If you put a park there, you'll have parking lots, public restrooms and more traffic. The owner intends to retain the natural setting of 90% of the property surrounding his home. He would like to build his home on the property rather than sell it, but

he'd also like to have the blessing of the homeowners before he proceeds with the rezoning request," Savich said.

Bloomingdale Homeowners Association President Ted Grable said the association would continue to support the homeowners' position.

"We have not officially polled all the residents, but it appears that the vast majority of homeowners continue to oppose any type of development of the property, in accordance with the standing deed restrictions," said Grable.

For more information visit [BloomingdaleOnline.com](http://BloomingdaleOnline.com) or call the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association at (813) 681-2051.

## Personal Watercraft Safety

By Kay Lori

Public Affairs Officer, Flotilla 75 Ruskin

Florida has a mandatory boating educational requirement. Anyone born on or after September 30, 1980 must complete a boating safety course if they are operating a vessel with a motor of 10 hp or more on state or federal waters.

The minimum age requirement for operation of a personal watercraft (Jet-Ski, Sea-Do, etc.) is 14. Youngsters must be 16 years of age to rent a personal watercraft. Personal watercrafts are considered vessels, not toys. The boating education certificate is mandatory for all PWC riders.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is currently taking registrations for boating safety programs scheduled to begin in September.

Anyone interested in learning more about life-saving boating tips programs may call Dottie Engel at (813) 671-4772 for information and schedules.

## How 'Bout That! Non-surgical cancer screening

About eight weeks ago a patient of mine, who after 10 years, has become a friend, came in for his normal six-month checkup and cleaning. After checking his teeth and gums, I did a cancer screening by visualizing and palpating most of the available oral tissue. This takes only a minute, but it is very important.

I noticed, and he had been aware of, an area on his tongue that looked different from his last checkup. I felt he should have it evaluated further and referred him to an oral surgeon for a biopsy. Actually two surgical biopsies were done and a serious cancer identified. He was fortunate. It was caught in the early stages and the second biopsy removed all the cancer without the need for any further tx such as chemotherapy or radiation treatments.

We now have a relatively new product in our office that allows us to do a non-surgical biopsy of any surface lesion that we discover in the mouth. It is called CDX and is a tremendous addition to our services available to you.

You may want to ask your own dentist if he or she has this available. No shots are required, only rubbing against the unusual area to get some cells off the surface. Then off to the lab they go for analysis.

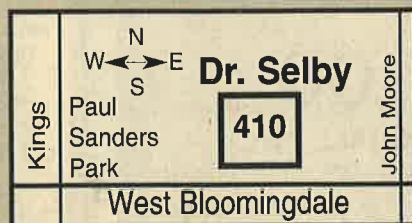
Do not delay to have any unusual area evaluated by your dentist.

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## BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNITY SUBSTATION NOTES

The Bloomingdale Community Substation is located at the corner of Bell Shoals Road and Glenbaven Drive, in the Village Center Plaza. Station hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Deputy Maurer can be reached at (813) 635-8040.

By Deputy Pete Maurer and Officer Sandy Capitano

### Irresponsible Drivers

Schools in our community opened last month with the expected high volume of traffic. Some serious concerns must be addressed, one in particular that cannot be overemphasized. It is a very serious offense for a driver to pass a stopped school bus. One local driver recently passed on the right side of a bus, from which fortunately no kids had started getting off. Another passed on the right and hit a child. This type of behavior is totally unacceptable. It endangers the lives of children and will not be tolerated. A special number has been established to report drivers who violate the traffic laws for school bus traffic.

**Call to report drivers passing school buses  
1-888-786-7454**

### Cease Fire 2001

After the outstanding success of last year's Cease Fire Program, the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office will once again collect unwanted firearms at CEASE-FIRE 2001 on Saturday, September 15 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The nearest Bloomingdale location is the Bloomingdale Community Station on Bell Shoals Road, next to Beef O'Brady's. For additional information see the article in this month's Gazette.

### Calls For Assistance

We have received quite a few calls from residents concerned

## Bloomingdale Ridge Cut-Through Traffic Continues

By Laura Frazier

Homeowners in the Bloomingdale Ridge section of Bloomingdale East say something must be done to reduce the volume of cars cutting through their neighborhoods each day.

Hillsborough County approved the school board's request last year to change traffic patterns around Alafia Elementary School. By all accounts, the new route allows traffic to flow more efficiently around the school during congested arrival and dismissal times.

But Steve Williams, President of the Bloomingdale Ridge Homeowners Association, said since school traffic was re-routed last October, as many as 800 cars a day travel through the neighborhood of just 292 homes, many of them just passing through to avoid going out of their way.

The association is working with Hillsborough County's Residential Traffic Control department to resolve the problem. Williams said homeowners are considering a number of measures including speed bumps, traffic diversions, interior street access changes and gating the community.

"There really is no perfect solution. But the good news is that 60% of our homeowners have attended meetings to offer their support or suggestions. Todd Miller at the county roads department and Commissioner Ronda Storms have been very

about speeding near our schools. Special emphasis has been directed by Sheriff Henderson to be placed on citing drivers who disobey any traffic laws around schools or school buses. There is just no room for warnings. The results of careless or irresponsible driving in these areas are too costly. The radar monitor is being used, and citations are being written.



Deputy Pete Maurer

### No Parking Means No Parking

This may be a sore subject with several residents, usually the ones who have received citations. We do not like to write parking citations, but until the regulations change, the signs mean what they say; no parking. This includes pulling up and dropping off students, stopping, getting out and waiting for students, and especially stopping in front of other residents homes and waiting. We know the parking situation around our schools is very tough, especially Alafia Elementary. Signs have been posted and rules must be followed.

Due to the increased number of problems caused by those abusing this parking courtesy, Crosswalk Community Christian Church, located across from Bloomingdale High School, has been forced to change their policy on allowing students to park in their lot. Parking will no longer be allowed in the church parking lot. Citations will be written and vehicles will be towed.

### New Alafia Crosswalk

Deputy Pete Maurer would like to remind both pedestrians and drivers to pay special attention to the newly enhanced crosswalk just west of Alafia Elementary. Pedestrians and bikers, please watch carefully for cars, and cross only at the crosswalk. Drivers, the speed limit at this crosswalk is twenty miles per hour. Watch out for children walking and biking! It is on a curve so SLOW DOWN!

accommodating in helping us explore our options," said Williams.

Williams said the association hopes to reach a consensus in the coming months. Once the best solution is identified, 75% of the residents must agree to petition the county for action. Williams said he hopes to have a petition filed by the end of this year.

A new elementary school under construction 2 miles south of Bloomingdale Ridge is scheduled to open in 2002. The school was designed to relieve overcrowding at Alafia, and may provide a measure of traffic relief to Bloomingdale Ridge neighborhoods.

But Williams said although traffic increased dramatically after the pattern was changed last year, volume and speeding problems have plagued Ridge streets for many years, and won't be completely resolved by a reduction in Alafia's enrollment.

The association had a baseline traffic study done in the fall of 2000, before the new traffic pattern was implemented. Carl Stickeler, Vice President of the homeowners association, said the county recorded 750 vehicles driving through Fox Run in a 24-hour period. Over 40 vehicles were driving in excess of the 35 mph limit, and twelve were clocked at over 45 mph.

In the meantime, Bloomingdale Community Deputy Pete Maurer has asked residents to avoid using shortcuts around the school at peak traffic times.

"Cutting through the neighborhoods to save a few minutes is inconsiderate. Providing a safe environment for both students and parents requires everyone working together calmly and patiently.

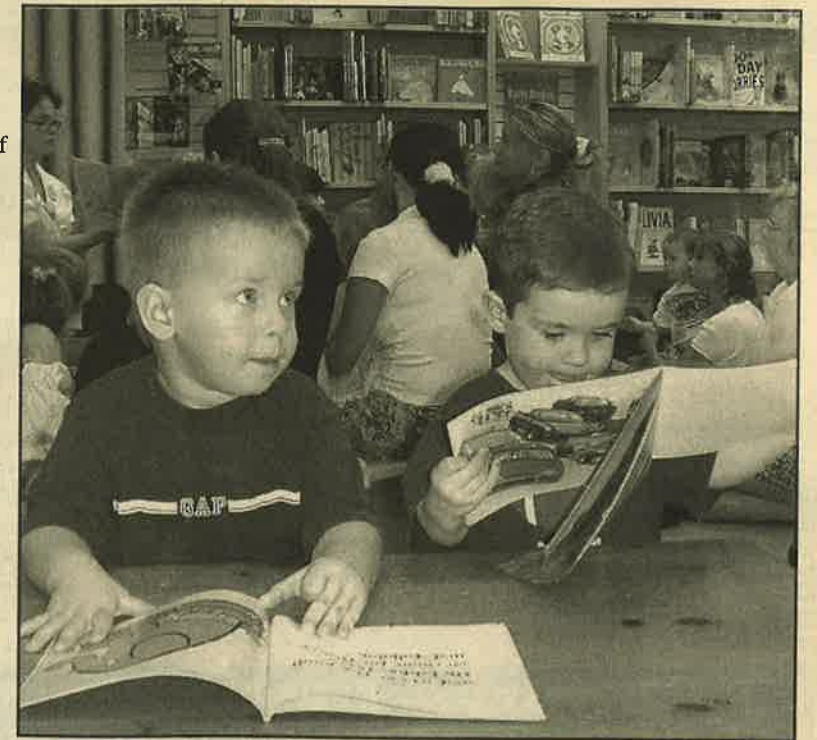
Bloomingdale Ridge residents are invited to contact Steve Williams at (813) 651-1754 or draysfan@aol.com for more information and upcoming meeting dates.

## Grandpa's Girl

Brandon area music teacher Frank Vance recently welcomed to town his two-year old granddaughter Lindsey Anichun Cass. Lindsey's parents, Claudia and Todd Cass of Rye Brook, NY traveled to China last year to bring their adopted daughter home. Lindsey was baptized last month at First Presbyterian Church of Brandon, where family and friends delighted in her attempts to splash around in the baptismal font! Mr. Vance said his one and only grandchild loves the beach and books and is an active, healthy, happy toddler.



Claudia and Todd Cass brought their daughter Lindsey to town to be baptized at First Presbyterian Church of Brandon.



### Tuesdays are Terrific at Barnes and Noble

Tyler Zamoski (left) and Hunter Morgan peruse the reading material in the children's section of Barnes and Noble Booksellers at Brandon Town Center. The bookstore offers a free weekly program for toddlers and their caregivers on Tuesdays at noon. "Terrific Tuesdays" features stories, crafts, activities and treats for preschoolers. Reservations are not required. For more information, call Michelle LaBarge at 661-9883.

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tunity to send their children to the A-rated school.

Alafia Principal Sylvia McMillan, who served on the boundary committee, is confident that the new school will carry on Alafia's track record of excellence.

"The new school will be filled with Alafia students, faculty, staff and volunteers. It will look and feel very similar," McMillan said.

McMillan said she would facilitate communication between Alafia and the new elementary, but that the new principal will make the administrative and instructional decisions for that school.

"The new administrator should come on board in March of 2002," she said. McMillan said Alafia is ready for some relief.

"With less enrollment comes a sense of a smaller community. It will be possible to give more individual attention to the students and the parents," she said.

Referring to the daily logjam of cars, buses, bicycles and feet transporting over 1,300 students to the school each day, McMillan added, "And hopefully we'll have fewer traffic problems."

For more information, contact the Hillsborough County School Board at (813) 272-4000.

Watch's new late-night patrol hours.

- Worked with the Sheriff's Department to provide an on-officer at Bloomingdale West Park.

- Past and continuing work with the county regarding zoning changes in our community and ongoing projects like the South Brandon Library.

- Past and continuing coordination with the county and school board on issues related to the new Bloomingdale elementary school, including safety, construction and attendance boundaries.

- Conducted electronic community polls through our web site to gather broad resident input on community-wide matters.

Over the course of the next year, the association will continue to support deed restriction enforcement through the development of neighborhood teams. In addition, we will increase cooperative efforts with Hillsborough County government officials to insure that Bloomingdale remains a great place to live.

For more information, call the BHA at (813) 681-2051 or visit [BloomingdaleOnline.com](http://BloomingdaleOnline.com).

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