

## Taxing District Proposes \$20 Annual Increase

Homeowners Asked To Vote  
 On Sept. 10 Primary Ballot

By LAURA FRAZIER

It's barely enough money to finance a movie and popcorn for two, and it won't even fill most of our gas tanks. But the Bloomington Special Taxing District board of trustees said a modest \$20 per year tax increase would bring major benefits to the community.

An estimated 4,667 homeowners in Bloomington's special taxing district area will have the opportunity to vote on the increase during the Sept. 10 primary election. A majority plus one vote is required for the increase to pass. The taxing district area encompasses all of Bloomington East and West, with the exception of Bloomington Oaks and River Crossing Estates.

Thom Snelling, president of the taxing district board, said the special assessment Bloomington homeowners pay with their property taxes each year has stood at \$80 since the district was formed in 1985.

The taxing district board is composed of unsalaried volunteer residents who live in Bloomington. The board budgets funds collected by the county to pay for common area maintenance and improvements throughout the community. As development continues in Bloomington, Snelling said, the districts' area of responsibilities has increased, along with its associated expenses.

"Since the district was established 17 years ago, the Consumer Price Index has increased approximately 45% while the assessment has remained the same," Snelling said.

Snelling said lawn and tree maintenance account for nearly half the district's \$360,400 budget this year. Other regular expenses include wall repairs, painting and cleaning, irrigation systems and wells, leasing of the community office, landscaping and fertilization, litter and debris removal, annual holiday decorations, and maintenance and upkeep of entryways.

In addition, Snelling said, "Seven of

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## Vote YES on Taxing District's Proposed Increase

By JOE LIGUORI  
 Executive Director  
 The Bloomington  
 Gazette

One of the items on the Sept. 10 primary election ballot is the proposed increase of the Bloomington Special Taxing District's annual assessment from \$80 to \$100 per year.

The assessment has stood at \$80 for the past 17

years without an increase. The taxing district held four public meetings in August to explain why we need the additional revenue, but in case you aren't aware of the reasons, let me give you a little background.

The taxing district's main areas of concern are the miles and miles of irrigation in the common areas, mowing and edging,

pressure washing and painting the walls, maintaining the minor entryways, holiday decorations, and maintenance of the eight major entryways.

I dare say most of you have seen "green truck Al," at work. Al Devney is the president of Devney Property Management Inc., the company charged with overseeing all of Bloomington's

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## Featured Story:

### Big Turnout To Talk Trucks

see page 5

BHA Backs Backflow Issue Concerns, see page 6



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SEE OUR SPECIALS ON PAGE 7



# 9.11.01 — One Year Later

**Time To Remember,  
Respect, Respond**

By MACK AUSTIN

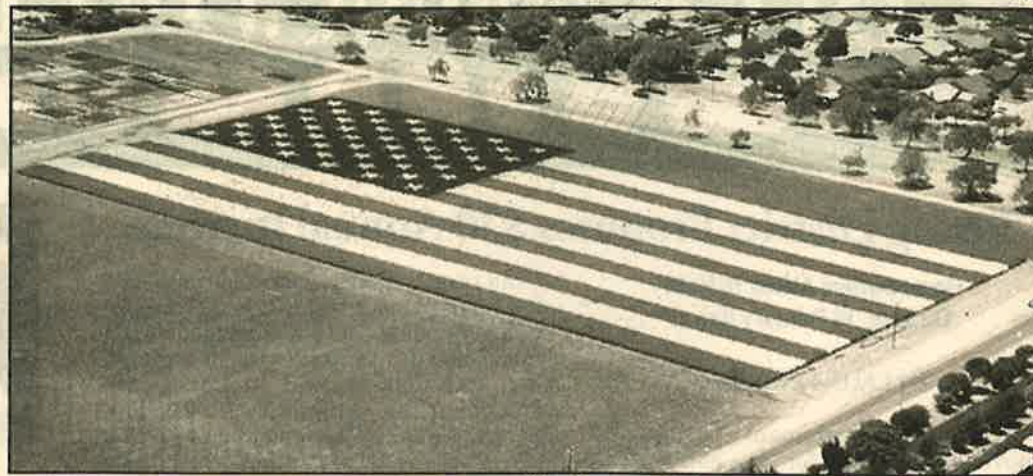
It is unbelievable that a year has passed since the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

We will each remember that day in our own way, from how the events of the day affected our lives to what we were doing that day.

We should all pause from our busy schedules and take time to pay respect to those who died at the hands of terrorists, and TO those who sacrificed their lives saving others on that day and the days that followed.

We should show the world our response to actions against our nation by flying American flags through out our communities in a display of patriotic pride.

We must continue to fly



In a dazzling display of patriotic pride, citizens in the community of Lompoc, Calif., on the Pacific Ocean near Vandenberg Air Force Base, planted this American flag floral display. The 6.65-acre flag was created using more than 400,000 larkspur plants. It is 740 feet long and 390 feet wide. Each stripe is 30 feet wide.

those precious colors as a show of support for the men and women throughout our nation and the world who continue to wage the war against those that would terrorize and harm us and threaten our freedom.

We must provide comfort,

support and hope to the families and friends of those who lost loved ones.

We must provide support, encouragement and assistance to our nation and to our leaders as we continue the battles, one day at a time, each one of us doing our part

to protect our nation and our communities.

We must stay vigilant, prayerful and strong, knowing that we must keep our nation and our way of life free for ourselves and for the generations that follow.

## Yes

From page 1

dale's maintenance and improvement projects.

The 2002 budget assessed 4,505 homes at \$80 each, for a gross revenue of \$360,400 before the 5 percent hold back the law requires, plus 2 percent for the tax collector and 1 percent for the property appraiser. In 2002, the lawn maintenance contract, property manager fee, wall painting, tree and shrub maintenance, irrigation repairs and pressure washing were budgeted for \$210,500 — over 60 percent of the entire budget.

The 2003 budget calls for 4,667 homes to be assessed, for a gross revenue of \$373,360, a small 3.5 percent increase. The big problem is that the items mentioned above in 2002 will reflect \$242,575, or 65 percent of the proposed budget in 2003. And that doesn't even include the rebuilding of the major entryways.

So the taxing district is faced with one of two options; making a number of reduc-

tions including the frequency of grass mowing, the property manager's service hours, wall painting and cleaning, cutting out some of the miles of irrigation, or ... asking us, the voters and residents, to approve an annual increase of \$20 which would go into effect in September 2003.

Another alternative the board considered was to borrow \$500,000 to keep the entryway project on course. But after 18 months of detailed research, the board decided it wasn't fair to saddle residents with more than \$2,000 per month in interest charges.

So on Sept. 10, I'm asking you to support all your neighbors in Bloomingdale and vote YES to help keep Bloomingdale one of the premier communities in Hillsborough County.

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### The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc.

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(813) 681-2051. Fax: (813) 651-1129  
E-mail: [BloomingtonHomeowners@Verizon.net](mailto:BloomingtonHomeowners@Verizon.net)  
Web Site: [www.BloomingtonGazette.com](http://www.BloomingtonGazette.com)  
BHA meetings are at the community office on the 1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

**President** — Ted Grable  
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**Treasurer** — Pam Liguori  
**Director** — Len Jaszak  
**Director** — Patricia Radel  
**Director** — Tony Diolosa  
**Director** — Steve Heckel  
**Director** — Cheryl Kehrmeyer  
**Director** — Michele Caballer  
**Director** — Joseph Grem

### Bloomington Special Taxing District

3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33594  
(813) 684-6667  
BSTD meetings are held at the community office on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

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**Trustee** — David West  
**Trustee** — Dale Kahn  
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**Patrol Member** — Steven Heckel, 654-4266  
**Patrol Member** — Brad Scharp, 643-5000  
**Patrol Member** — Paul Warr, 685-7883



### Bloomington Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132. (813) 685-2817  
BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

**President** — Bill Grace  
**Treasurer** — Fred Englehart

## THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

The official publication of the BHA since 1980

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## Big Crowd Turns Out To Talk Trucks

By LAURA FRAZIER

An estimated 300 southeastern Hillsborough residents turned out for a community meeting at Lithia Springs Elementary School Aug. 27 to discuss commercial truck traffic on Lithia Pinecrest Rd.

The Hillsborough County Commission is scheduled to rule on the public's request to reinstate weight limits on the road at its Oct. 2 meeting. Lithia area residents say since load limit signs were removed last August, the road has been used with increasing frequency by large trucks, many hauling hazardous materials.

County Commissioner Ronda Storms opened the meeting by offering concerned residents her support.

"I want to remind you that I led the charge to get Fish Hawk Blvd. and Boyette Rd. off the truck route, and I sup-

port you," said Storms, the District IV incumbent commissioner running for re-election this year.

About two-dozen residents addressed the crowd and county officials with their concerns, including the implications of a crash involving hazardous chemicals, alleged speeding and careless driving by truckers, noise pollution, plummeting property values, and increased wear and tear on the road that could translate to big taxpayer costs over time.

Brian Stayton, an attorney who lives in Lithia, alluded to the willingness of residents to sue Hillsborough County if no actions are taken to address their concerns.

"When you have accidents like this one," Stayton said, holding up a Lithia-Pinecrest Rd. accident scene photo to county officials, "it's going to be a problem."

County officials said



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo  
An estimated 300 concerned citizens attended the county's Aug. 27 community meeting at Lithia Springs Elementary School to discuss commercial truck traffic and weight load limits.

they're still working to complete road and traffic studies ordered by commissioners earlier this year. The studies will be made available to the public as soon as they're available, and could possibly be available to download from the county's web site.

Phosphate and commercial trucking representatives will

hold a public information forum at Lithia Springs Elementary School on Saturday, Sept. 14 from 9 a.m. to noon.

*Ed. Note: The full report from this meeting, available next week on [www.BloomingtonGazette.com](http://www.BloomingtonGazette.com), is condensed here due to Gazette deadline and space limitations.*

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# Permit, Backflow Device Required To Pump Pond Water

**BHA: Ordinance Unfairly Enforced**

By STEVE HECKEL  
Bloomingdale Homeowners  
Association Board Director

Everyone who lives on a retention pond would love the opportunity to irrigate their yards with pond water. This would cut down on your water bill and allow you to get around watering restrictions.

The problem is that auxiliary water supply systems, when improperly installed, can contaminate the public water supply. I am sure no one wants to make their own family or their neighbors sick.

A method to prevent this potential cross-contamination is available. It is called a Backflow Prevention Device. The device must be installed by a certified plumber at a cost of about \$400 plus an annual \$40 inspection fee.

Currently, as governed by county ordinances and codes (as well as some state and federal laws), it is illegal to pump water from retention ponds without a permit. Violators can face fines and up to 60 days in jail. Many community deed

restrictions also prohibit the use of pond water.

A permit to pump retention pond water may be obtained from the South-west Florida Water Management District. It is important to note that permits obtained by builders or developers in most cases do not transfer to homeowners.

All residents should be cautioned that if they are illegally pumping water from their pond, they will be caught and held liable, especially if they contaminate the public water system.

Through a well-intentioned interpretation of the county's backflow ordinance, everyone who resides on a pond or lakefront home site is presently required to install and maintain a backflow device, even if they're not drawing water from the pond. As it is currently interpreted, this ordinance would impact 454 homes, or about 10 percent of the Bloomingdale community.

Bloomingdale resident Cheryl Power-Lukens presented this issue at a Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) meeting. Upon investigation, it is the opinion of the BHA board that the ordi-



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Cambridge Cove resident Cheryl Power-Lukens, with daughter, Christina, said county-required backflow pipes are a safety hazard, unsightly and unnecessary for homes that do not connect their sprinklers to auxiliary bodies of water. The BHA board supports her position.

See Backflow, Page 10

## Club Welcomes Newcomers

**Members Plan Patriotic  
Tribute In Brandon Sept. 11**

By DORIS BLAKE  
Brandon Newcomers Club

The Brandon Newcomers Club is a non-profit social/service organization whose aim is to promote friendliness, to help people adjust to their new home and community, to extend the hand of friendship and to contribute annually to charity from one of our fundraisers.

We meet September through May on the third Wednesday of each month, 9:30 a.m. at Center Place, 619 Vonderburg Drive, Brandon.

Member activities include Book Club, Bowling, Bridge, Bunco, Couples Night Out,

Crafts, Dominoes, Gal's Night Out, Gourmet Club, Opinionated Ladies, Out & About, Out to Lunch and Something Old-Something New. We have two fundraisers a year that are open to the public.

Come try us. We are sure you will enjoy it. At our monthly meetings we have a variety of subjects that are entertaining and enlightening.

On Sept. 11, our club will hold a patriotic tribute at the Kmart on Hwy. 60, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. The public is invited to attend.

If you have any questions, please call our president E.J. Smith at 689-3159.

Want to promote your Bloomingdale area club in the Gazette? Call Laura Frazier at 654-6281 or e-mail frazier1@tampabay.rr.com.

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LAURA FRAZIER/PHOTO

Brandon resident Sadie Smith brings her portrayal of Betsy Ross to the AAUW's open membership tea Sept. 22.

### 'Betsy Ross' To Speak At Tea

By BARBARA REED  
American Association of  
University Women

The American Association of University Women's Brandon Branch will launch its 2002-03 program with a membership tea at the home of Barbara Reed on Sunday, Sept. 22, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. A portrayal of Betsy Ross by Sadie Smith will be presented. Mrs. Smith, attired in period dress, will re-create the life she researched in a first person narrative.

Membership in AAUW is open to women 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 Branch," is available to women who lack the required academic credentials, but support the mission of AAUW; to promote equity and education for women and girls, self-development over the life span, and positive societal change.

For information, call Arlene, 689-8457, or Mary Ann, 681-4502.

## Development Planned For Bloomingdale, John Moore

Rezoning Hearings Set  
For Sept. 17, Oct. 29

By LAURA FRAZIER

A group of Bloomingdale area residents hopes county officials and developers will proceed with caution when they review two current rezoning requests for land at the southwest corner of Bloomingdale Ave. and John Moore Road.

The group contends current plans for intensive commercial and residential development near the busy intersection would drastically increase traffic congestion, accidents and crime.

In addition, Bloomingdale area homeowner Ana Shaffer said, "This is a beautiful piece of heavily wooded land that should be developed correctly by preserving the natural beauty of John Moore Road."

"We would also like to see the Bloomingdale Ave. side of the property developed in such a way that it gives true meaning to the county's designation of the road as a scenic corridor," Shaffer said, citing nearby Bloomingdale Executive Park, MacDill Federal Credit Union and South Trust Bank as prime examples of congruent, aesthetically appealing development.

Citizens will have an opportunity to voice their concerns at two upcoming rezoning hearings. Developers will present their plans, and a zoning hearing master can remand the request or make a recommendation to commissioners for denial or approval.

Once a zoning hearing master makes a recommendation, the case is sent to the board of County Commissioners for a final decision, and it's a done deal.

Letters of opposition including the case number must be received at least 48 hours prior to the hearing to become a party of record; mail to Zoning Hearing Master, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd.,

20th Floor, Tampa, FL 33601 or fax to (813) 272-5348.

Please note that hearing dates and times are subject to change. For information call county planner Dyan Backe at (813) 307-4507 or visit [www.BloomingtonGazette.com](http://www.BloomingtonGazette.com) for updates.

### Rezoning Case No. 02-0797

The owners of 5.9 acres on the SW corner of Bloomingdale Ave. will present revised development plans at a rezoning hearing on Tuesday, Sept. 17. Plans call for 26,408 sq.ft. of general commercial use buildings (retail and general business including but not limited to supermarkets, financial institutions, convenience stores and car wash facilities). The property is presently zoned to permit agricultural usage and one home per acre.

The developer's first request in July was found by a hearing master to be incompatible with surrounding development. County planners are currently working with the developer to further define land use issues and standard county requirements.

Revised plans still in the works call for one 10,880-square-foot retail building nearest the intersection, two adjacent 3,114-square-foot retail buildings, and one 9,300-square-foot business/professional building on the west side of the property.

### Rezoning Case No. 02-1150

The owners of 42.5 acres south of Bloomingdale Ave. on the west side of John Moore Road will present initial development plans at a rezoning hearing on Tuesday, Oct. 29.

Plans call for 150 single-family homes to be constructed on 5,500-square-foot lots. The developer plans a gated community with 25 percent of the total acreage dedicated to open space, a pond and 20-foot setbacks.

## Special Cruise Offer

By JOHN BARNES

*Ed. Note: "Join the Navy and see the world" was certainly true in the case of Bloomingdale resident John Barnes. Barnes enlisted in 1951 and 22 years later in 1973 retired as a senior chief petty officer. He and his wife Ona, have lived in Bloomingdale for the past 16 years. Here he waxes nostalgic about his 1968 "pleasure cruise."*

Welcome Aboard! We will depart Norfolk, Va., at 0800 on April 3, 1968. Our heading is to St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, for a two-day visit, but no one will be allowed to leave the ship.

We will then sail into the South Atlantic Ocean, crossing the equator and arriving at Rio de Janeiro for a four-day visit.

From there we will head east across the South

Atlantic Ocean, bypass Cape Town, South Africa, and enter the Indian Ocean. After crossing the Indian Ocean we will sail through the Straits of Malacca into the Philippine Sea and arrive at the exotic port of Olongapo, Philippine Islands.

After four days in port, we will sail to "Yankee Station" in the Gulf of Tonkin to deliver our good will gifts of bombs and rockets to North Vietnam.

After a leisurely 30 days on Yankee Station, we will return to Olongapo for four days of upkeep prior to returning to Yankee Station to resume our good will gifts delivery.

This routine will continue month after month, but we will cruise to Hong Kong, China and Yokosuka, Japan, spending four days in each port but always returning to Yankee Station. Sometime in November, we will depart



Photo courtesy John Barnes

This photo of John Barnes was taken in 1968, two days before the end of his eight and a half month "pleasure cruise." His smile tells all, "Home is the sailor, home from the seas."

Olongapo and head for home, stopping to visit Sydney, Australia, and Wellington, New Zealand, for three days each.

Leaving Wellington, we head south to the Antarctic Ocean, around the tip of South America, through the Straits of Magellan and back to Rio de Janeiro for a good will visit. After two days in Rio we head north and arrive back at Norfolk, Va., December 18, 1968.

This cruise is "free" providing you join the Navy and don't mind working 12 to 14

hours a day. One drawback to this cruise is the ship doesn't have a swimming pool, shuffleboard, fine dining, lounges or bars. Music is provided several times a day by a bugle and a pleasant voice softly saying "REVEILLE!"

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MACK AUSTIN/Photo

### Public Hearing — Development Changes

A public hearing to discuss development modifications in the Fish Hawk area will be held Tuesday, Sept. 24, 1:30 p.m. at County Center downtown. These changes may affect the Bloomingdale community, so it is important to monitor them.

### Backflow

From page 6

nance is being misinterpreted, and therefore unfairly enforced. The board supports Power-Lukens' position that under the ordinance, only homeowners who pump water from a pond should be required to install the device.

As a representative of the BHA, I attended the Cross-Connection, Backflow, and Siphonage Board meeting in support of Power-Lukens' appeal hearing. Her appeal was denied.

However, when the BHA presented the issue to the County Commission at a town hall meeting in August, commissioners directed water officials to re-examine their interpretation of the ordinance and report back in 30 days with their findings. Commissioners also advised water department officials to take no further action

against Power-Lukens and other residents who do not pump pond water until the BOCC can review the matter next month.

If it is determined that the ordinance was being misinterpreted and unfairly enforced, the BHA will ask the county to reimburse Bloomingdale residents for money they spent to install the devices. This could save Bloomingdale residents over \$180,000.00 in initial costs plus over \$18,000 annually for inspections.

For more information and updates about this issue, attend the next BHA meeting on Monday, Sept. 16, at 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, or visit [www.BloomingdaleGazette.com](http://www.BloomingdaleGazette.com), or call the BHA at 681-2051.

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## Slippery Road From Abstinence To Addiction

*"Don't glibly dismiss your child's experimentation with drugs and alcohol. The experiment may blow up in their face..." Sharron Cosby*

By SHARRON K. COSBY  
Wake-Up Call Inc.

Do you like oysters?

How many times did you eat them before you realized that you either hated them or loved them?

Did it take more than one time of gulping one down?

Did you experiment with liking the taste and feel of the oyster?

If it took more than two or three times to decide, you probably were no longer experimenting or enjoying.

Let's apply the oyster theory to substance and alcohol abuse.

The first stage is abstinence.

Go back to the oyster example. Some people look at an oyster on the half shell and know, without ever eating one, that it is something they will not like.

Therefore, they abstain. So it is with substances. Some people just decide that it is not for them and they never try it. They are abstainers.

The second stage is experimentation.

You're right, more oysters. Say you ate one on a cracker with cocktail sauce and it wasn't too bad.

You tell your friends, "Let me try one more to make sure I really like it."

You're moving from experimenting to enjoying the taste of oysters.

Replace the oysters with alcohol or drugs.

Some friends are smoking a joint and they seem to be enjoying it, so you try it.

You didn't see flashing lights and your head didn't fall off like your parents said it would, so you do it again.



Photo courtesy Randy Horton, Artisan Photographs  
Sharron and Dan Cosby are co-founders of Wake Up Call Inc.

You really like how it makes you feel and don't see any harm in it. You've passed the experimental phase.

The third stage is recreation. The kids gather for a weekend party but it's not exactly a smashing success. Someone brings drugs and alcohol. Now we are having fun.

From there the shift becomes habituation; "We've got drugs and booze, let's party." Instead of having a party and then getting the drugs, the drugs come first and then the decision to party.

This is a dangerous crossover because the "fun" can only be had when there are drugs and alcohol present; the party becomes an excuse to use drugs and alcohol.

Using substances multiple times during the week is the chronic stage; now an excuse to use substances isn't needed.

The course is being set for the final stage, which is addiction.

This is a lifelong dependency on drugs and/or alcohol, the point where you cannot live without them and you live to get them at all costs.

What's the message for

See Wake Up, Page 22

## Brandon Area Kids In Crisis Need Advocates

Guardian training begins next month at Sabal Park

By SUZANNE MIZSUR-PORTER  
Hillsborough County Guardian Ad Litem Program

Do you cringe when you read about child abuse cases and wonder how you can help? We've all heard about the worst cases when they make headlines. While many people want to help, they simply don't know how.

Well, here's your chance to speak up for a child in need. Hillsborough County's Guardian ad Litem Program,

or GAL, needs more volunteers to represent abused and neglected children, hundreds of whom live in and around the Brandon area.

In an effort to encourage more residents from southeastern Hillsborough to become guardians, GAL will hold a five-week training session next month right in your neck of the woods.

St. Paul Insurance Cos. has generously donated the use of its corporate training quarters in Sabal Park. By allowing GAL to use this space, prospective volunteers who live in the Brandon area won't have to drive far from home to complete their train-

ing and become certified guardians.

GAL volunteers are trained to become court advocates for children who've been taken from their homes because of suspected abuse or neglect.

As you can imagine, the children are frightened and need someone to trust. That's where the GAL volunteer comes in.

The volunteer visits the child at least once a month, represents the child in court and provides the court with information so judges can determine what's best for the child. The ultimate goal is to see children living in a safe

and loving home.

No special background is required, just the desire to help some of our community's most vulnerable children. GAL provides complete training and has a staff whose sole job is to support our volunteers.

Volunteer orientation will be from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Oct. 8 at St. Paul Insurance Cos., Third Floor, 3632 Queen Palm Drive, which is in Sabal Park.

For more information and a complete training schedule, contact the Guardian ad Litem Program at 272-5110.



LAURA FRAZIER/Photo

Music students with directors Ted Hope, left, Scott Rudes and Bev Sutherland, right, display the trove of trophies Bloomingdale's music department brought home from a music festival competition in New Orleans last year.

## Bloomingdale High School Band Seeks Sponsors

A Bloomingdale Band Boosters Report

The Bloomingdale Senior High School Rajun' Bull Band, Hillsborough County's largest band, is looking for proud sponsors to help support its 2002-03 music program.

Your sponsorship contributions will help fund music scholarships, repair and replacement of antiquated instruments, uniforms, transportation, and more.

Four membership levels are available, including Benefactor (\$100), Gold (\$75), Silver (\$50) and Bronze (\$25). In addition to the satisfaction of knowing

that you are helping our inspiring young musicians, membership perks include business listings in band concert programs, homecoming barbeque tickets, window decals, T-shirts and more.

If you would like to be a proud sponsor of The Rajun' Bull Band, please mail your check made payable to Bloomingdale Band Boosters, Bloomingdale Senior High School, 1700 E. Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico, FL 33594. Information: Rachel Dutch, 689-1164.

Want to see your school event or fundraiser featured in the Gazette? Call Laura Frazier at 654-6281 or e-mail [frazier1@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:frazier1@tampabay.rr.com).

LETTERS? COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?

E-mail: [Letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com](mailto:Letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com)

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# BHA: Check Web Site For Sex Offenders

Visit [www.FDLE.state.fl.us](http://www.FDLE.state.fl.us)

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Gazette and Bloomingdale Homeowners Association encourage residents to check the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Web site for public records listing the current residences of registered sexual offenders and predators.

The database is easily searchable by street, city or ZIP code. Information is also available by calling 1-850-410-7000.

Parents should be aware that according to Florida law, residential restrictions may be placed on sexual offenders currently serving probation, but there are no restrictions on former convicts who have served their jail time and completed their probationary sentence. In addition, sexual predators and offenders convicted prior to the 1996 Jimmy Ryce act may not have residential restrictions attached to their probation sentence.

Local probation officers we spoke with said that after serving jail time and probation, registered sexual offend-

ers are required to notify FDLE with their new address whenever they relocate. When a registered offender establishes a new residence, FDLE issues a bulletin to local law enforcement and schools as a precautionary measure.

Although some employment restrictions may be indefinitely placed on offenders, it is legal for them to be employed or own many types of businesses that cater to families and children. Offenders are not always required by law to disclose their predator/offender status to the general public at

their place of employment.

Representatives of the Hillsborough County School district and Bloomingdale area Sheriff's deputies say they keep close tabs on registered offenders.

They encourage parents to speak with their children about safety issues in general, and to contact Sheriff's office and school officials with any specific concerns they might have.

The FDLE site also offers information about missing children, stolen property, fugitives, domestic security issues and more.

## Tax

From page 1

Bloomingdale's eight major entryways need complete refurbishing, and that can cost up to \$50,000 per entryway."

Other projects the board is considering include the installation of walls and wrought iron fencing in some areas, pedestrian amenities like shade trees and canopies, park benches, trash receptacles, bike racks and safety bollards.

The board also contends many of Bloomingdale's interior neighborhood entryways lack minimum landscaping to meet community standards.

"All these projects need attention if Bloomingdale is to stay on par with new subdivisions emerging in the

South Brandon and Lithia areas," Snelling said.

Regarding the community's progressive growth over the past 20 years, Snelling said, "Bloomingdale was always the little jewel out east."

"We've grown and we've developed very nicely alongside the new developments emerging all around us. The special taxing district board is committed to seeing that Bloomingdale always looks its' best. We trust we'll have the support of our residents on Sept. 10."

For more information about the Bloomingdale Special Taxing District, call 684-6667 or visit [www.BloomingdaleGazette.com](http://www.BloomingdaleGazette.com).



Bloomingdale Special Taxing District Board members, standing, President Thom Snelling, Myron Magedanz, David West, and seated, Alice Bureson, Dale Kahn, and Russell Jones. Not pictured, Don Cassels.

## School Board Meetings Televised

Hillsborough County School Board meetings are televised live on The Education Channel, Time Warner Cable channel 18, 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month, and 3 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. Board meetings are also rebroadcast at 1:30 p.m. on Fridays.

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## Community Council Update

### A Bloomingdale Area Community Council Report

Bloomingdale Area Community Council volunteers work directly with local law enforcement and county departments to research neighborhood issues and concerns. The council meets monthly. Information: Bloomingdale Community Resource Deputy Pete Maurer or Community Service Officer Sandy Capitano, 635-8040.

The council covered the following topics at its August meeting.

#### Member News

New council member Rick Fernandez, a Parkland Estates homeowner, attended his first meeting.

#### School Issues

Deputy Maurer said, "Overall, problems associat-

ed with the new school year were minimal. Traffic flow was good." Council members noted Cimino Elementary is now restricted to one entrance and needs sidewalks connected.

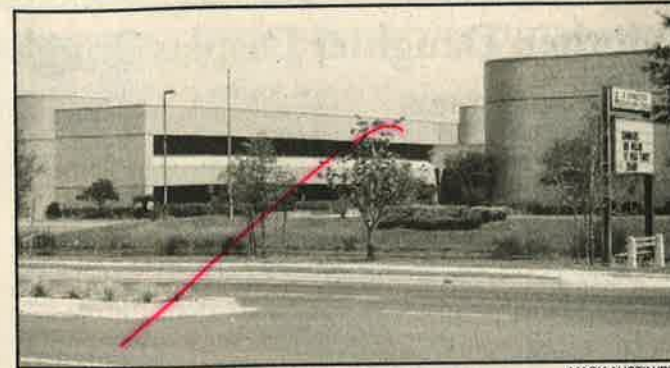
Bloomingdale High School traffic was light. Technical problems are being worked out to install a new traffic signal at the school's east entrance. It was also noted that an unplanned test of the fire suppression system took place in August.

A three-way stop is being coordinated for Natures Way and Culbreath Rd. near Alafia Elementary.

Concern was noted about drivers on Bloomingdale Ave. not stopping for buses as required where medians are not installed.

#### Truck Route Meeting

Members were reminded of the county's Aug. 27 community meeting at Lithia



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Tampa Electric Co. engineers are working through technical problems they encountered during the installation of a new traffic light at the east entrance to Bloomingdale High School. The signal will be used to help control congestion during peak traffic hours and special events.

Springs Elementary School, to discuss residents' concerns about truck traffic and load weight limits on Lithia Pinecrest Rd.

#### New Web Site

Members were encouraged to visit the Hillsborough County Sheriffs Office web-site at [www.hcso.tampa.fl.us](http://www.hcso.tampa.fl.us).

The site has a new Webmaster.

#### Neighborhood Crime

Neighborhood watch programs are a significant element of homeland security. Volunteers are needed for Bloomingdale Mobile Watch.

See Council, Page 16



## Avoid Nuisance, Health Hazard of Mosquitoes

A few simple steps can help protect us from these dangerous pests.

By MACK AUSTIN

Bzzzzz. Is that a familiar sound? It is if you've been outdoors in Florida for at least one evening. It is the waiting call of the mighty mosquito - that blood sucking bug that now poses a pos-

sible health risk in many Florida counties.

Despite our aggravation with these miniature hypodermic needles, one fact remains - they are here to stay. We are the ones who have to adapt to their habits and minimize contact with them.

There are simple ways we can reduce their numbers.

See Mosquitoes, Page 14

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## Commissioner's Corner

### Mother, Daughter Display Tough-Minded Candor

By RONDA STORMS

I don't know where our sweet little daughter comes by her independent personality and her debate skills, but at 3 years old, she can flat wear her mama and daddy down to a nub if we're not on our toes.

Believe it or not, parenting my daughter has given me great tools as your District 4 county commissioner.

First, she turns on the charm, trying to sweet talk mama and daddy with hugs and kisses and cute little antics ... all to get what she wants.

When that fails, our daughter switches to "Operation Pester," wherein she endlessly and in rapid fire repeats what she wants to the point that, if mama and daddy don't respond, other adults around us sometimes join her

crusade just to keep the peace.

When all else fails, she launches her last desperate attempt to beat us into submission: intimidation through the dreaded temper tantrum. She'll cry, she'll fuss and fume, she'll wail, "Mama, be nice! You be nice to me," as I offer some loving discipline.

My daughter's tactics are incredibly similar to my political life.

As a commissioner, I have had to fight for my district to win important improvements and protections. Consider: When I took office, Boyette Road and Bell Shoals Road were not even funded for much needed widening; Bloomingdale West needed an on-sight deputy to combat juvenile crime; Buckhorn needed security lighting at the park; South Brandon needed a library; many inter-

sections needed improvements; and, lastly, District 4 was already slated to become the water source for Pinellas and Pasco counties.

The list is too long, as space is limited, but I was delighted, as you were, when we won these victories. I fought hard, but got these done under very difficult political circumstances. For years, District 4 had been represented, in my view, by Tampa's wants and needs, not by District 4's unique needs. In fact, five of the current board members live in the city of Tampa.

Some people attack me for being too tough, and although I have made some mistakes, I think there are worse criticisms to have been levied against me. I have been the woman I promised you I would be when I asked you for your vote: an honest woman committed to repre-



County Commissioner  
Ronda Storms

senting District 4.

I was elected to represent District 4, and if I give in to powerful people's temper tantrums District 4 suffers. The bottom line is this: I can suffer the slings and arrows of political life as long as my district appreciates my unwavering commitment to remain the woman I was when I took office: a tough minded and honest representative of you, District 4.

### Mosquitoes

From page 13

Mosquitoes need water to hatch their young, so eliminate any sources of standing water around your home. Potential breeding spots include flowerpots, old tires, car and boat covers, trashcan lids and recycling containers left outside.

Drill holes in anything left outside that will hold old water. Clean out your gutters, bird baths and old plastic swimming pools.

The many retention ponds in our area would seem to be good breeding grounds for mosquitoes. But according to Joel Jacobson, Hillsborough County Mosquito Control section manager, "The ponds usually stay wet year-round and attract other insects and minnows that eat mosquitoes." He agreed that the more sources for breeding the public can remove from around their homes the better.

Some other basic ways to reduce your chances of being bitten include applying insect repellent containing

DEET when you're outdoors. Be sure to follow all product directions, and avoid applying repellent to children less than 2 years old.

Use care in applying repellent to small children and don't put it on their hands because it could get into their mouth or eyes. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants treated with repellent, and stay indoors during peak mosquito feeding hours (dusk to dawn).

While the West Nile virus is getting special attention, we must remember that mosquitoes also carry other diseases. This is why taking precautionary measures is very important. Most people who become infected with West Nile virus will have either no symptoms or only mild ones.

One other way residents can assist the county's mosquito control office is by reporting dead birds found near their homes. Hillsborough County Mosquito Control can be reached at 554-5025.

## Business Provides Nuisance Wildlife Control

By MACK AUSTIN

It's 3:45 a.m. and behind your house it sounds like a dozen coins tumbling in your clothes dryer. What could it possibly be? Oh, look, it's a family of cute raccoons. Wait, what should we do? Who should we call?

Sometimes we forget that not too many years ago these nice sculptured yards we have were once thick woods and quiet marshlands inhabited by a wide variety of animals native to Florida. That's right, they were here first.

So now we have to learn to live together. Those of us fortunate enough to have ponds or wooded areas near our property are familiar with visits from all sorts of animals including raccoons, possums, squirrels, rats and snakes. The big question is what to do when their visits turn into a nuisance.

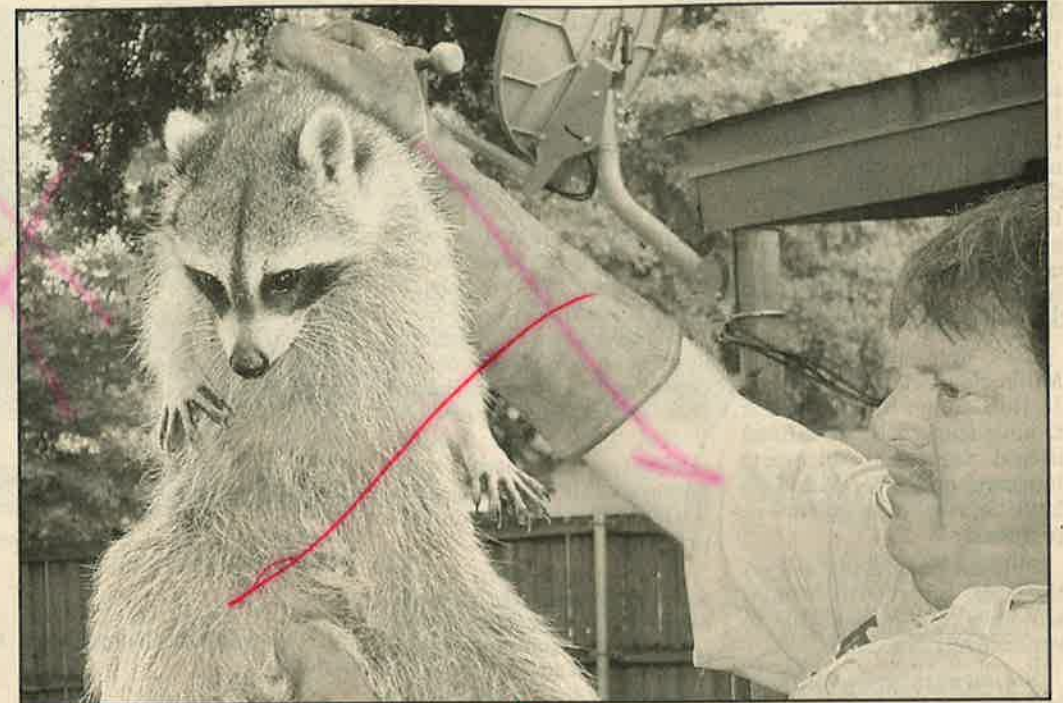
The first reaction of most residents is to call the County Animal Services Department. They handle animals, but only dogs and cats. How about the Florida Wildlife Division? No, they primarily deal with wildlife conservation issues.

One other option is to contact a professional certified by the National Wildlife Control Operators Association.

Animal Capture is a professional business, licensed and certified in the proper capture and release/disposal of a large variety of wildlife. They have been in business for over eight years. The owner, Charles Carpenter, worked for many years as an officer with Hillsborough County Animal Services.

Carpenter said, "Animal Capture was established to meet the need for a dependable 24-hour nuisance wildlife control business in the Tampa Bay area." This need grows as more new homes move into the wilderness.

Carpenter and his group of professionals have extensive experience and knowledge in the proper techniques and regulations dealing with the



Animal Capture can help when you find uninvited animals, other than cats or dogs, in your yard.

Photo courtesy Animal Capture

*"With hundreds of homes being built in our area, many animals find their way into attics, soffits, vents or open holes."*

**CHARLES CARPENTER**  
owner, Animal Capture

capture, release or disposal of a large variety of wildlife.

"Our service calls to remove animals also include the inspection of a resident's home to determine the possible points of entry for wildlife. These must be closed or other wildlife will find them. We will provide a written estimate, and all repairs we make are permanent and guaranteed," he said.

One special example Carpenter noted is the visits by the cute little masked visitors, raccoons.

"Raccoons are no longer creatures of the night. They have learned how nice it is to

See Wildlife, Page 18

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Council

From page 13

Minimal time is required and the benefits are great. New communication equipment includes cell phones and a base station. The program has benefited from improved coordination with the Sheriff's Office, and the support of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association. To join your community crime prevention team, contact Tgrable@tier.com.

The dead-end of South Miller Road by Bloomingdale Little League has become a trouble spot with vandalism, illegal dumping and teens hanging out late. Plans to have the road closed off are in progress.

Vehicle burglaries are on the rise, some with broken windows and several due to vehicles left unlocked.

Pet owners are cautioned to keep close watch on their dogs, especially those of high value.

Traffic, Pedestrians

Plans are underway to have traffic cameras installed at key intersections like Bell Shoals Rd. and Bloomingdale Avenue to monitor traffic flow and identify violators.

It was noted that wreckers responding to traffic accidents are responsible for cleaning up broken glass or other materials.

Several members expressed concern over the continued need to enhance the crosswalks near the YMCA and Little League complex, and to relocate some to more usable spots. Coordination is continuing on this project.

New legislation was recently passed that covers motorized scooters. More information to follow at a later date.

While not illegal, cutting through neighborhoods to get around traffic is disrespectful.



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Residents are concerned about illegal activity taking place on S. Miller Rd. near the Little League complex.

ful. Drivers will be closely monitored.

Directed patrols are special patrols set up at the request of residents to monitor problem areas.

Specific times, dates, locations, vehicles and other information is needed in scheduling these patrols.

Move It On Over

Motorists must move for emergency vehicles

A Gazette Report

Effective July 1, drivers are required to move over or slow down when approaching an authorized emergency vehicle that is stopped on a highway in Florida.

The "Move Over Act," passed during the 2002 session of the Florida Legislature, was signed by Gov. Jeb Bush on May 1.

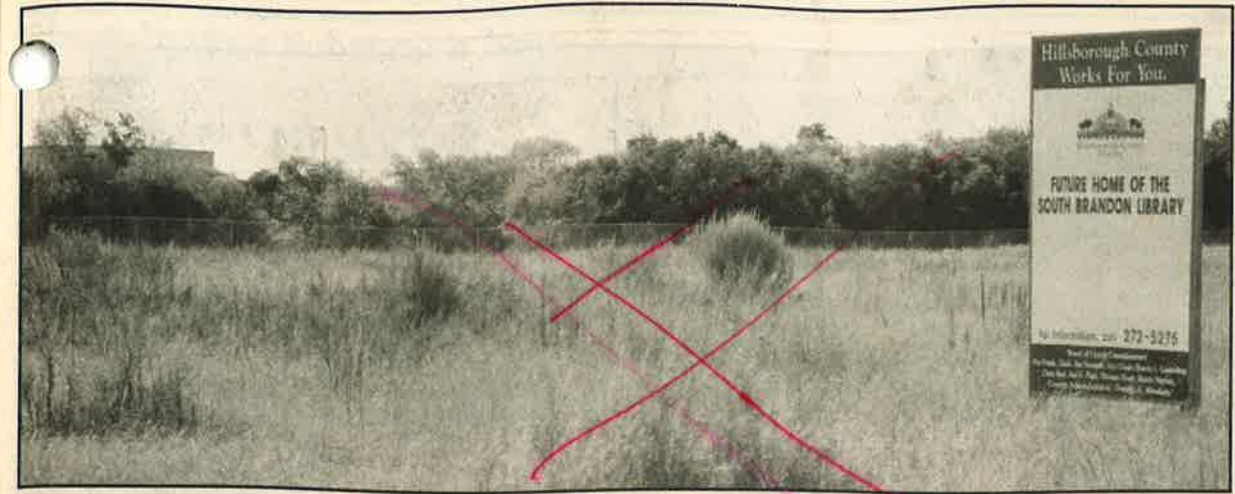
On interstate highways or other highways with two or more lanes traveling in the direction of the emergency vehicle, and except when otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer, drivers approaching a law enforcement or other authorized emergency vehicle parked on a roadway with their emergency lights activated, will be required to vacate the lane

closest to the emergency vehicle, as soon as it is safe to do so.

When approaching a law enforcement or other authorized emergency vehicle parked on a two-lane roadway with their emergency lights activated, and except when otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer, drivers will be required to slow to a speed that is 20 mph less than the posted speed limit when the posted speed limit is 25 mph or greater; or travel at 5 mph when the posted speed limit is 20 mph or less.

During the five-year period of 1996-2000, motorists in Florida crashed into working law enforcement vehicles that were stopped/parked along Florida roadways 1,793 times, resulting in five deaths and 419 injuries.

Source: Florida Highway Patrol Web Site, www.fhp.state.fl.us



MACK AUSTIN/Photos

Construction of the south Brandon library to the east of the school is set to start in 2004.

Bloomingdale High School Gets New Neighbors

By MACK AUSTIN

Bloomingdale High School is getting more new neighbors.

Construction on the property just west of the school off Hurley Road continues at a fast pace with new homes

and apartments being built.

Drivers in this area should proceed with caution.

New speed humps have been installed.

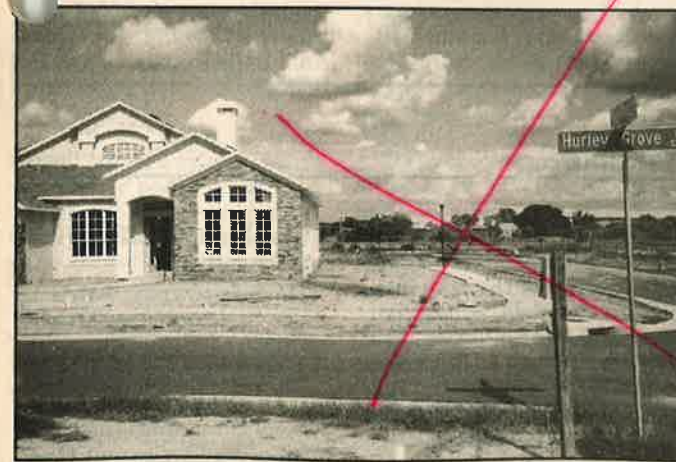
Additional property west of the school is currently for

sale.

It is presently zoned for professional buildings. Hopefully the new owners will construct businesses compatible with both the school and the traffic. High School parents would be wise to monitor this situation closely.

The official sign for the new south Brandon Library is now up in the open field to the east of the school. Construction is scheduled to begin in February 2004, to be completed in April 2005.

No news on the decision of the library name yet.



Construction continues on Hurley Rd. west of the high school.

Look for your neighborhood news The Bloomingdale Gazette

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MACK AUSTIN/Photo

### New Publix Takes Shape

Construction of the new Publix grocery store at the intersection of Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bloomingdale Avenue began last month. Hopefully, the contractors will build it as promised and residents can enjoy the convenience.

SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE  
THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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### Wildlife

From page 15

hang out with friendly humans. Look at the great menu we give them - pizza, cat and dog food, wings, fish, fruit and suntan lotion. Yes, suntan lotion. A lady was sunbathing and had a raccoon run off with her banana flavored suntan lotion!"

One idea that used to be prevalent was that a raccoon seen in the daytime probably had rabies. They do carry rabies, but you can't tell by sight if one has the disease.

"Raccoons have adapted. They've learned when and where they can get food," Carpenter said.

"With hundreds of homes being built in our area and some of these homes built very quickly, there will be areas missed that offer the opportunity for many animals to find their way into

attics through soffits, vents or holes left open."

No homeowner wants to share their home with these animals.

By taking a few precautions and suggestions, homeowners can reduce the likelihood of having one of these animals visit their homes.

These precautions include keeping trashcans tightly covered, not leaving pet food outside, being cautious about throwing food into wooded areas, and not feeding the animals.

Animals are looking for food and shelter.

By being cautious and attentive, homeowners can reduce the visits by wildlife.

These actions will protect you, your family, your homes and our wildlife.

## Bloomingdale Substation Notes

# Keeping Kids Safe

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER and OFFICER SANDY CAPITANO

There have been too many reports of missing, abducted or abused children in the news lately. It is essential for all parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, babysitters, and any one who cares for children to be extremely vigilant. Parents must also educate their children how to protect themselves.

Dangers to kids come in many forms. As law enforcement officers, we constantly promote the proper use of seatbelts and the proper installation of car seats. Thousands of children are seriously injured or killed each year in auto accidents.

Teaching your children to use their helmets and to be cautious when riding their bikes is another very important lesson that they must be constantly reminded of. The best lesson is by setting the right example.

Living in Florida presents its own dangers. Families with swimming pools must take the necessary steps by fencing the pools off to insure children cannot get near the water without adult supervision. You can't watch them every moment and it only takes a few minutes for a tragedy to happen.

There is no reason in the world for a child to be left in a hot car. The inside of a car can reach over one hundred degrees in Florida's summer weather.

Keeping all household chemicals and cleaners locked away from young children must be done to keep your children from being another tragic statistic. The ages of one to six have the highest number of accidental poisonings, usually due to curiosity.

These are some of the every day dangers we have to protect our children from. It would seem like these are enough. But there are those

with sick minds that would harm the helpless like five-year-old Samantha in California. No reason on earth justifies the actions of these kinds of people.

To protect your children from these very sick predators, you must take the time to teach your kids how to protect themselves without terrifying them. These "bad people" do exist.

Teach your children that when they are approached by a stranger in person or on the phone, never tell them they are alone. Just say their parents are busy and hang up. Also, never open a door when alone or invite someone over without permission.

All kids, including teens, must let someone know where they are going. Younger children should always get permission before going anywhere.

If someone should try to take your child, tell your child to make a scene, scream out loud, yell "fire" or call for help, and resist the abductor.

Tell your children that an adult may try to lure them away by offering candy, video games, or money. They may ask for help looking for a lost pet or even say they were sent to get them because their parents are hurt. You should have a secret code only you know to use. Teach them to trust their instincts, say "no" and get away.

One of the last but now one of the most dangerous means of abducting children is through use of the Internet. Check out There are many parent information sites on the internet that illustrate just how easy and yet terrifying this type of crime can be.

There is no need for our children or us to go through life in constant fear of other people. But, in these days and times, we must be cautious. The days of being able to trust just about anyone are gone.



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Teaching your children about some of life's dangers and how to avoid them will help them learn how to protect themselves.



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See Safe, Page 23





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### Little League Season Starts Today

Bloomington Little League begins a new season this month with practices starting today. The season runs through Nov. 16. Volunteers are still needed for umpires, coaches, managers and board members.

### Restaurant Review

## 8th Avenue Grill Has Open Ambience, Eclectic Menu

By ELTON DUMONT  
Exclusive to The  
Bloomington Gazette

We thought it would be a while for a return visit to Ybor City, but my wife proved me wrong (again).

On a recent Friday, as we toured Ybor again, she spied Mick and Kenny's 8th Avenue Grille at 1811 15th St. It was the tall, top to bottom French doors that line both Eighth Avenue and 15th Street that caught her eye. We were hoping for another home run like the Big City Tavern we reviewed in the July Gazette.

It wasn't too busy on our lunch date, so we were seated quickly. I went on a mini

safari and found that this nicely appointed restaurant has two bars and three separate dining rooms, all on one floor. The bigger dining room that is used for lunch is open, airy and hospitable, and we enjoyed the open view of the street. The open doors did not affect the air conditioning, so it was extremely comfortable.

The lunch menu was eclectic and very interesting. They always have their famous 8th Avenue spicy red Conch Chowder with Yuca and White Conch (\$2 cup, \$3 bowl).

Appetizers include Blackened Gator Kebobs, skewered gator tail with vegetables including Swamp Cabbage and Buerre Blanc (\$7),

Shrimp and Crab Stuffed Onion with various cheeses (\$7), Spring Rolls made with blackened chicken, Andouille Sausage and cheddar cheese with Chinois Sauce (\$7).

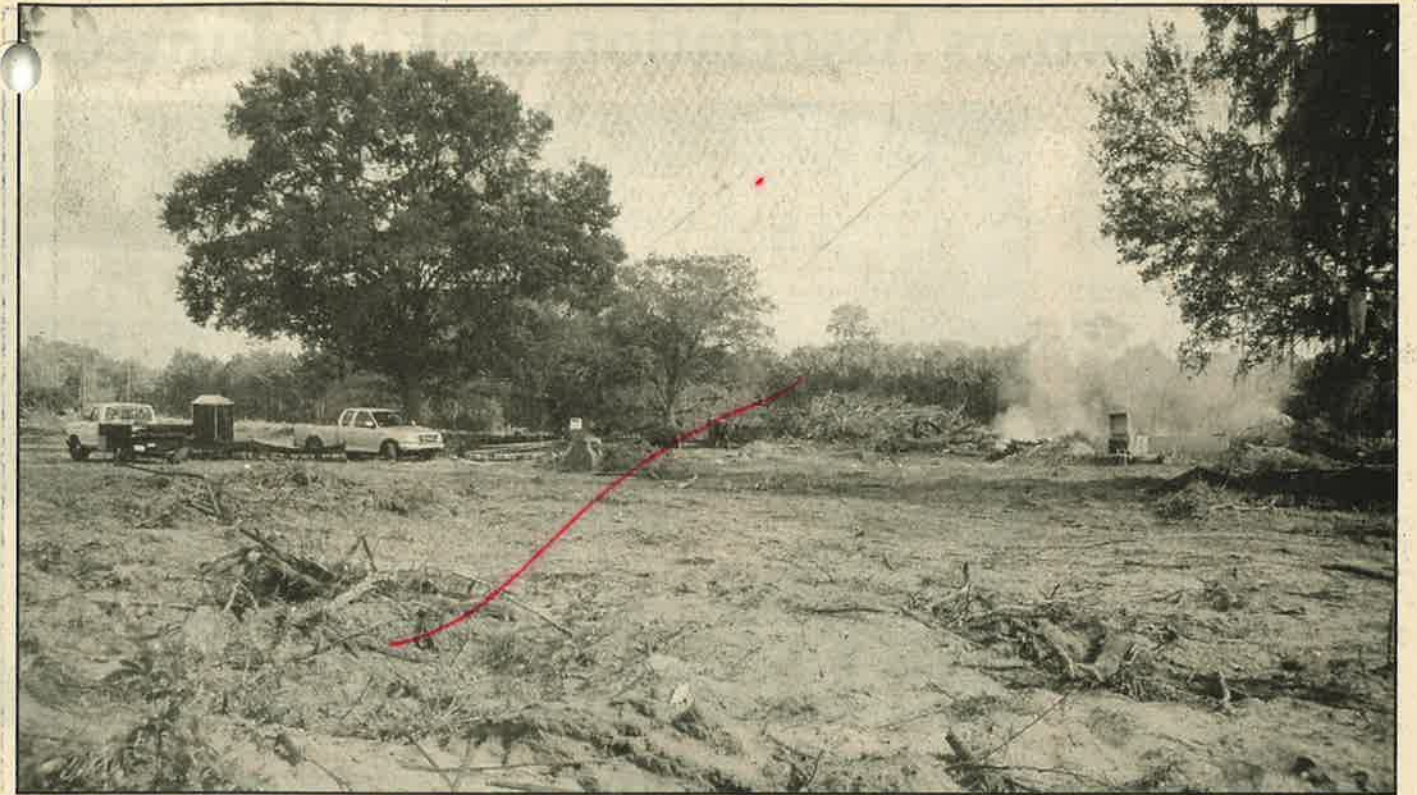
We chose the Trolley Treats appetizer; a platter of mini hamburgers with grilled onions and ketchup on warm buttered buns (\$7). Very American and very good. Among the 13 or so sandwich choices was the Blue Bomber Burger (\$8), a Black Angus Beef patty topped with heaps of Bleu Cheese and a "secret" sauce. The Peanut Butter BBQ Turkey Carver Sandwich (\$7), made with fresh roasted carved turkey breast, bacon and a peanut butter BBQ sauce on a Baguette.

My wife selected the Santa Fe Chicken Wrap (\$8), a marinated grilled breast, tortilla strips, jack and cheddar cheeses, lettuce, avocado in a roasted garlic tortilla wrap with dipping salsa and corn fries. I chose the Crab Cakes (\$7), pan fried and served with Key Lime Sauce and Sriracha. Lunch salads include Guava Dijon Shrimp Stuffed Tomato (\$9) and Black and Bleu Steak Salad (\$9).

Although we didn't try any dinner selections, I'll list a few.

From appetizers: Escarole Cocotte (\$6.95) in a pastry shell with garlic butter and

See Restaurant, Page 23



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Construction is well underway for the new Lithia Crossings Shopping Plaza on Lithia-Pinecrest Road.

## Lithia-Pinecrest Construction Forges Ahead

Building Starts On Lithia Crossings Plaza

By MACK AUSTIN

All you have to do is look out your car window when you're driving down Lithia-Pinecrest Road to see all the growth and development. From River Hills and Fish Hawk Ranch to Bloomington Avenue and Hwy. 60 there's more and more construction.

County planning is underway to involve residents in major decisions about what should go into some of the Lithia-Pinecrest Road development. This is a great idea and hopefully many residents will take advantage of this unique opportunity.

One of the most recent construction projects underway is the Lithia Crossings Shopping Plaza, next to Bloomington Animal Hospital, just south of the Lithia/Bloomington Ave. intersection.

According to county sources, approval for rezoning this property was completed back in 1988. With the new Publix being built right across the road, the owners must have felt that now is a good time for selling and building.

One plus to this new plaza will be the addition of some long awaited shopping and dining options. A Steinmart clothing store and a Chili's restaurant are confirmed tenants; more will follow at later dates.

Growth is inevitable in our area, and there is nothing wrong with good growth. But uncontrolled, uncoordinated and poorly planned growth can create confusion, frustration and disappointment.

All Bloomington area residents are encouraged to monitor growth and changes closely. Get involved in planning what will wind up in our communities. It is too late after the construction starts.

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This program is free, but seating is limited. To reserve your seat or for more information, please call or stop by today. If you are unable to attend, please contact our office for other viewing options.

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1:00PM & 7:00PM



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# Homeowners Association Seeks Volunteers

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association seeks neighborhood volunteers to serve on the board of directors.

The board meets monthly at the Bloomingdale community office on Bell Shoals Rd. to organize and operate the homeowners association. Principal objectives include:

To encourage a spirit of neighborly relations and cooperation among property owners and residents.

To support the procurement of improved utilities, governmental services and other benefits for the community.

To maintain high standards in the community and to express vigorous opposition to any encroachment or conduct which may tend to lower community standards.

To support physical improvements of the community and to assert opposition to any acts that could potentially depreciate property values.



The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Board of Directors is composed of non-salaried Bloomingdale resident volunteers, pictured standing, BHA President Ted Grable, and seated, directors Cheryl Kehrmeyer, Michelle Caballer, Pam Liguori, Joseph Grem, Joe Hickie, Steve Heckel and Pat Radel.

Interested residents are encouraged to attend the next association meeting,

Monday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. For information call 681-2051, visit [www.BloomingdaleGazette.com](http://www.BloomingdaleGazette.com) or e-mail [BloomingdaleHomeowners@Verizon.net](mailto:BloomingdaleHomeowners@Verizon.net).

Monday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd. For information call 681-2051, visit [www.BloomingdaleGazette.com](http://www.BloomingdaleGazette.com) or e-mail [BloomingdaleHomeowners@Verizon.net](mailto:BloomingdaleHomeowners@Verizon.net).

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## \$100 Reward Offered

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District is offering a \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest of the person(s) who dismantled and stole the community directory sign at the southern intersection of Natures Way and Culbreath Rd.

The cost to Bloomingdale residents to replace the sign was \$1,000.

Call the taxing district at 684-6667 or the Bloomingdale Community Substation at 635-8040.

You may remain anonymous.

## Sept. BHA Meeting Date Changed

The September meeting of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association board of directors has been changed, due to the Labor Day Holiday, to Monday, Sept. 16.

All Bloomingdale residents are encouraged to attend.

The meeting will be held 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale community office, 3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

The October meeting remains as scheduled on Monday, Oct. 7.

Information: 681-2051.

## Wake Up

From page 10

parents? Don't glibly dismiss your child's experimentation with drugs and alcohol.

The experiment may blow up in their face, and they will be left with a lifelong addiction.

Be careful to avoid the "kids will try it" or "it's only beer" or "it's only marijuana" mentality.

Unfortunately, some kids experiment the first time

with hard drugs and get more than they bargained for, certainly more than an oyster on a cracker.

Dan Cosby, a substance abuse counselor at Overcomers Counseling Center, and his wife, Sharron, are founders of Wake Up Call Inc., and can help you learn more about teen and family substance abuse problems. Information: 626-5394.

SAY YOU SAW IT IN THE THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

## Letters

Send letters to Editor, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594 or e-mail [letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com](mailto:letters@BloomingdaleGazette.com). All letters are subject to editing.

## Trucks Don't Stop

I am amazed that all this truck traffic is even at question, and for the industry to try and snow us with statistical garbage.

I have repeatedly seen, repeatedly meaning more than 15 times, heavy chemical and related trucks speeding down Bloomingdale Avenue.

I have seen them going too fast to stop in time for any problems coming up ahead, and I have seen them run a red light (not a close one, I mean a full red light) at least six times.

It is basically stupid to let these guys run wild on residential streets and access roads!

Dave Suban

## Restaurant

From page 20

goat cheese; Sesame Seared Yellow Fin Tuna (\$7.91) with seaweed salad, Wasabi and Ponzu drizzle; Mussels (\$6.51) from Prince Edward Island steeped in White Wine Tomato Broth; or Calamari Fingers (\$6.38) that are Panko crusted with marinara.

Entrees include: Ritz Lobster Casserole (\$14.83), a whole lobster removed from

the shell and broiled with buttery cracker crumbs and a touch of sherry; Cavatelli Fra Diavolo (\$19.27) made with lobster, scallops and mussels in a special red clam sauce; Center Cut Filet Mignon (\$21.72), an 8 ounce center cut filet grilled or "Pittsburghed" with Gorgonzola Demi Glace; and a Roasted Half Chicken (\$12.91) with roasted garlic and saffron

tomatoes.

Desserts include a Cream Brulee, Dried Fruit Bread Pudding, Molten Center Chocolate Cake, Cheesecake, or Key Lime Pie. And finally, don't overlook the fine wines and brandy for after dessert.

Our lunch bill for two was under \$30 including tax and gratuity, but as you can tell it would be pretty easy to spend a lot more. We enjoyed lunch

so much that we plan to return for dinner.

Rating based on 5 stars:  
Food — ★★★★★  
Ambience — ★★★★★  
Service — ★★★★★  
Overall — ★★★★★

Until we eat again ...

Your Gastronomical Servant,

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## Homes Recently Sold In Bloomingtondale

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