

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

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FEATURE STORY

Pride Cleanup Day Is Oct. 8.

PAGE 3

BUSINESS

Bloomington High School freshman Jessica and Jennifer Kalb help run Flip Flop Teen Swap, a teen consignment shop owned by their mother, Lora Tucker.

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At right, JoAnn Diana and her daughter Denise Dittfeld, Bloomington resident and safety director for the Brandon Bears, organized a blood drive in memory of JoAnn's husband and Dittfeld's father, Gene H. Diana, who passed away earlier this year. Above, Beth Belliveau, attended by Florida Blood Services technician Tatiana Sepulveda, participates in the Aug. 20 blood drive.



LESLIE WHITE/Photos

Youth Football Fans Teamed Up To Give Gift Of Life

DRIVE HONORS MEMORY OF FAMILY MEMBERS

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

The Brandon Bears and Brandon Steelers youth football and cheerleading teams joined efforts to increase local blood supplies during the West Coast Youth Football Conference opening day Aug. 20 at Bloomington High School.

The Bears' safety director, Bloom-

ington resident Denise Dittfeld, organized the event in memory of her father, Gene H. Diana, and Mary Jane Mulkey, Deborah McMillan and family members of Bears' players or board members.

Florida Blood Services brought out its Bloodmobile and invited football fans to come in and donate. Donors were given their choice of team color bandages and team T-shirts. A total of 30 people participated, donating enough units to potentially save 90

lives. Everyone that donated signed an 11-by-14-inch photo mat with a picture of the event, which will be on display in the Bears' field house trophy case.

More than 750 units a day are required to provide adequate blood to those who need it in the Tampa area, according to Florida Blood Services. For more information about blood drives, call 1-800-68-BLOOD or visit Florida Blood Services at www.fbs-blood.org.

Neighborhood News ♦ PAGE 6

Name, Sign Recipients To Be Announced Sept. 8
Six Sections Request Names, Signs

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There's Lots Of Activity In Bloomingdale!!...

HOMES RECENTLY LISTED

10809 Kenbrook Drive	\$179,900
2317 Needham Drive	\$217,000
1408 Graywood Court	\$224,900
522 Sandy Creek Drive	\$237,500
1201 Briarpark Way	\$239,900
718 Caliente Drive	\$249,900
4304 Arley Place	\$269,900
3910 Dunaire Drive	\$270,000
3713 Orangecrest Street	\$279,900
1421 Monte Lake Drive	\$285,000
3402 Cade Lane	\$305,000
3916 Dunaire Drive	\$329,900
2015 River Crossing Drive	\$349,500
1408 Clarion Drive	\$350,000
2112 Golf Manor Boulevard	\$365,900
3809 Hanover Hill Drive	\$389,000
5104 Bell Shoals Road	\$865,000
5106 Bell Shoals Road	\$935,000

CONTRACT PENDING

2408 Needham Drive	\$165,900
526 Sandy Creek Drive	\$168,000
6102 Becklin Place	\$169,900
4111 Quail Briar Drive	\$176,000
6641 Summer Cove Drive	\$179,000
10921 Kenbrook Drive	\$179,500
4021 Fontana Place	\$185,000
2606 Wrencrest Court	\$192,900
3908 Briarlake Drive	\$197,000
6929 Summer Harbor Lane	\$198,000
6630 Summer Cove Drive	\$199,900

CONTRACT PENDING (cont'd)

3923 Casaba Loop	\$199,900
3901 Penrod Lane	\$200,000
6931 Summer Harbor Lane	\$203,000
2634 Wrencrest Court	\$205,000
1409 Trail Boss Lane	\$207,000
514 Sweetleaf Drive	\$211,140
1426 Trail Boss Lane	\$214,900
4607 Preston Woods Drive	\$219,900
4133 E. Moreland Drive	\$224,900
709 Isleton Drive	\$229,900
501 Cedar Grove Drive	\$234,900
4105 Eastridge Drive	\$235,000
1428 Trail Boss Lane	\$239,900
3723 Hollow Wood Drive	\$249,900
1309 Bloomingdale Trails Boulevard	\$254,000
2011 River Crossings Drive	\$254,760
3407 Gray Whetstone	\$257,000
3723 Greenford Street	\$258,000
1927 River Crossings Drive	\$258,520
1623 Carter Oaks Drive	\$269,900
1602 Dumont Drive	\$270,000
1717 Shady Leaf Drive	\$275,000
1502 Kyle Court	\$279,900
2025 Alafia Oaks Drive	\$279,900
1902 River Crossing Drive	\$279,900
1410 Bloomingdale Trails Boulevard	\$284,900
1509 Holleman Drive	\$289,900
4205 Elba Place	\$294,900
3812 Hollow Wood Drive	\$295,000
1226 Lornewood Drive	\$299,900
2010 River Crossing Drive	\$305,000
4428 Winding River Drive	\$309,900
2011 Timberfall Lane	\$310,000
2603 Brookville Drive	\$315,000
1408 Queensbury Avenue	\$330,000
4406 River Overlook Drive	\$337,500

CONTRACT PENDING (cont'd)

2004 River Crossing Drive	\$344,900
4419 Merrick Run Lane	\$351,900
2233 Golf Manor Boulevard	\$389,000
4408 Maren Trace Lane	\$390,000
4629 River Close Boulevard	\$410,000
2216 Eagle Bluff Drive	\$425,000
4324 Fair Court Drive	\$529,000
2207 Hickory Ridge Drive	\$559,900

HOMES RECENTLY SOLD

2606 Shilo Court	\$178,450
4109 Encina Drive	\$192,900
748 Isleton Drive	\$196,000
720 Isleton Drive	\$205,000
2218 Kenwick Drive	\$217,000
2004 Dumont Drive	\$234,500
1414 Trail Boss Lane	\$236,500
1260 Lornewood Drive	\$245,000
4304 Ellenville Place	\$247,000
4611 Portobello Circle	\$249,900
4607 Davenport Place	\$252,000
3612 Elk Ridge Lane	\$260,000
Treeline Drive	\$260,500
4603 Oak River Circle	\$279,900
2230 Longmore Circle	\$287,000
4815 Swift Circle	\$304,900
3939 Applegate Drive	\$305,500
4531 River Close Boulevard	\$305,000
2330 Timbergrove Drive	\$361,900
2318 Longmore Circle	\$382,000
1409 Crooked Stick Drive	\$388,000

WE SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

Dispose of Household, Garage Junk For Free Oct. 8

COLLECTION SITE ON NATURES WAY

A Gazette Report

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. will host a PRIDE Community Cleanup Day on Saturday, Oct. 8 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The collection site is on Natures Way, at the Hillsborough County Parks maintenance facility just west of Alafia Elementary School. There is no charge for this service. Identification is not required; residents will only be asked to sign in their name and address. This project was made possible by Bloomingdale residents' annual membership dues and a grant from the Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations.

Acceptable Items

Appliances, mattresses, water heaters, televisions, steel and other metals, glass, furniture, non-commercial construction debris and tires will be accepted.

Used computer components (printers, faxes, monitors, etc.) will be accepted. A private recycling company will provide a certificate of hard disk obliteration upon request.

High School Students Can Earn Community Service Hours

MORE HELP NEEDED AT OCT. 8 CLEANUP

A Gazette Report

Bloomingdale's PRIDE Cleanup Days offer a great opportunity for high school students to lend a hand in their neighborhood — and to rack up the 20 or more community service hours required to qualify for many college scholarships, including the Florida Bright Futures program.

More volunteers are needed at the Oct. 8 Cleanup to help residents unload small items from their vehicles, direct traffic and hand out fliers. Volunteers of all ages are needed throughout the event, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Shift help is welcome, from 9 a.m. to noon, or from noon to 3 p.m. The BHA will provide refreshments and snacks for volunteers. The event takes place at the Parks Maintenance facility on Natures Way, near Alafia Elementary School.

To sign up for a shift, or the whole day, please call 643-2990 and leave a message with your name, phone number and the hours you are available to help, or e-mail laurafrazier@tampabay.rr.com.

Some Items Cannot Be Accepted

Yard waste will not be accepted. In addition, hazardous materials including paint, batteries, propane tanks, household chemicals and waste from commercial activities cannot be accepted.

Hillsborough County residents

can dispose of hazardous materials for free on the second Saturday of each month from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the South County Facility, 13000 U.S. 41, north of Big Bend Road, Phone 671-7611. The site accepts collectible waste, non-collectible waste, yard

See JUNK, Page 17

Free Pick-Up Of Reusable, Salable Items

ITEMS WILL NOT BE COLLECTED AT OCT. 8 BHA EVENT

A Gazette Report

Reusable items for charitable donation will not be collected during Bloomingdale's Oct. 8 PRIDE Cleanup Day, but a number of local organizations make it easy for people to salvage salable items in good condition.

•Goodwill Industries: Call for free pickup, 689-6279, or drop off at Bloomingdale Wal-Mart site, or at 1106 E. Brandon Blvd. (next to Super Wal-Mart) Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

•Lighthouse For The Blind: Call for free pickup, 251-2407.

•Purple Heart Services: Call for free pickup, 899-2780.

•Salvation Army: Call for free pickup, 621-6425, or drop off at 9926 E. Adamo Drive, between U.S. 301 and Falkenberg Road, Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



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PRIDE Teams Foster Neighborhood Friendships, Revitalization

BHA WILL HELP NEW GROUPS GET STARTED

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Cheryl Kehrmeier has good reason to take pride in her neighborhood section, Windsor Woods, and the entire community of Bloomingdale.

A former Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) board member, Kehrmeier spearheaded the organization's Neighborhood PRIDE program two years ago. PRIDE is the acronym she created to illustrate the mission of the program — People Revitalizing, Improving, Developing and Enjoying our community.

PRIDE kicked off in April 2003 with a community-wide cleanup day that coincided with the national Great American Cleanup. Kehrmeier and her fellow volunteer BHA board members advertised the event by direct mail, in the Gazette and on the community's Web site, www.bloomingtondalegazette.com. Neighbors hit the streets in full force that day, armed with gloves, trash bags, T-shirts and refreshments doled out by BHA board members and neighborhood volunteers. The event was funded by a Hillsborough County mini-grant and a portion of BHA membership dues.

Inspired by the success of the community-wide event, Kehrmeier took her idea to form smaller, neighborhood section PRIDE teams home to her Windsor Woods neighbors.

A small group of neighbors spread the word throughout Windsor Woods by going door-to-door, putting up signs and e-mailing friends. Many neighbors showed great interest in the program and soon the ideas began to flow.

"A few years ago, we had a Memorial

PRIDE Team Activity Ideas

Kick off a PRIDE team in your neighborhood section with the following suggested activities, or one of your own. For help to get started, call 643-2990 or e-mail laurafrazier@tampabay.rr.com.

- Host a block party. Elect several neighbors as "grillmasters" to set up barbecues and tables in their driveways. Neighbors bring their own utensils, food to grill, drinks and side dishes to share.
- Plan a neighborhood-wide yard sale. Put up signs and advertise the event for free in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtondalegazette.com.
- Compile a neighborhood or street directory by going door-to-door, listing neighbor's names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Consider adding neighbor's occupations for business networking purposes.
- Host a yard and street cleanup day. Pass out fliers with a few large trash bags attached; ask for neighbors willing to help elderly or disabled people trim low branches or shrubs. Have older children deliver refreshments in wagons or wheelbarrows to neighbors working outside.
- Start a morning or evening walking group.
- Organize an informal basketball or football game for teens and adults at Bloomingdale East or West Park. Provide sports drinks and snacks.
- Distribute copies of your section's deed restrictions door-to-door (available on www.bloomingtondalegazette.com).
- Plan a sidewalk costume party or kids' Halloween parade.
- Decorate your section entryway for the holidays. Recruit a jolly neighbor to visit homes with holiday wishes and small treats for children.
- Seek out neighbors who need assistance to help take care of their home and yard maintenance (contact BHA Neighbors In Need committee for special assistance with this project, 681-2051).

Address neighborhood concerns in a positive, head-on way. If dog waste is a problem in your section, consider passing out pet waste collection bags with a couple dog biscuits attached, accompanied by a friendly note reminding people of the county's "pooper scooper" law.

Day kids' bike parade around the neighborhood, and then several streets had block parties. We have organized a neighborhood-wide cleanup where we walked around the streets picking up garbage, cleaning mold off the mailboxes, and giving the whole area a once-over. Then we had a gathering with food and beverages to refresh and reward ourselves. We also got together

to decorate our entryways for the holidays."

Kehrmeier said the program has been a big success in Windsor Woods.

"The community has a new sparkle. Once a few residents spiffed up their homes and yards, some others decided to put on a new roof or paint, or re-sod or landscape. Forming individual PRIDE teams in sections or even just

on one street also brings our community closer. It seems like neighbors are out working in their yards and getting to know each other, which is also a big part of the program."

Several other neighborhood sections have formed PRIDE groups.

Amy McGill rallied her neighbors in the Bloomingdale Estates section to form a PRIDE team last year. The group hosted a neighborhood yard sale, delivered copies of deed restrictions to every home, and applied for a Hillsborough County mini-grant to install signs at one entrance to their section. The team also went door-to-door collecting funds for neighborhood projects like enhanced entryway landscaping.

Kehrmeier said the Windsor Woods group is organizing a program to help clean up the yards and homes of their elderly, sick or disabled neighbors.

"I think Oak Crest's PRIDE group is helping out neighbors in need on a regular basis, and I know it's been done in the Sandy Creek Manors section."

Neighbors can raise funds door-to-door for PRIDE projects, but some expenses may be covered at least in part by BHA membership dues funds or Hillsborough County mini-grants.

The BHA will provide information, support and basic start-up costs to any resident interested in forming a PRIDE group on their street or in their section.

PRIDE teams are invited to submit articles or event notices to be published in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtondalegazette.com. In addition, the Bloomingdale Community Office is available by appointment for PRIDE teams to meet.

For more information, attend a monthly meeting of the BHA board, call 643-2990 or e-mail laurafrazier@tampabay.rr.com.

Your Inside Connections

The Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc.

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

President: Ted Grable **Vice President:** Joe Hickle
Treasurer: Pam Liguori **Director:** Tony Diolosa
Director: Lydia Harrod **Director:** Steve Heckel
Director: Dale Kahn **Director:** Jane Lee
Director: Stanley Lee **Director:** Myron Magedanz
Director: Ken Pyse

Bloomingdale Special Taxing District

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

President: Thom Snelling
Vice President: Russell Jones
Treasurer: David West
Correspondence Secretary: Paul Sims
Recording Secretary: Michael Buday

Trustee: David Steck
Trustee: Joe Harless
Property Manager: Al Devney

Bloomingdale Community Security Program

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

Coordinator/Equipment Manager:

Tony Diolosa, 681-1146
Treasurer: Paul Kelmer
Patrol Member: Steven Heckel



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Patrol Member: Brad Scharp
Patrol Member: Paul Warr

Bloomingdale Oaks Special Taxing District

P.O. Box 3132, Brandon, FL 33509-3132
Phone: 685-2817
BOSTD meetings are held at 3419 Cade Lane on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.
President: Bill Grace
Treasurer: Fred Englehart

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Advertising Manager — Tami Donaldson
Phone: 627-1322; E-mail: tdonaldson@tampatrib.com

How to Choose a Cosmetic Dentist



As seen on ABC's *Extreme Makeover*, dentistry has changed dramatically in the past decade. And most often, it is the Smile Makeover that makes the greatest difference in one's appearance.

Dr. Scott Arnold of Arnold Dentistry in Valrico, explains, "Today's technology for materials and procedures has improved significantly. New materials like stronger porcelains and resins allow us to restore teeth without having to use metals. The benefit of these advances is that we now have materials and skills to create the most natural looking smiles that dentistry has ever been able to provide."

He continued, "Many times these complete Smile Makeovers can be completed in just two visits! Truly, crooked teeth can be straightened, broken and chipped teeth repaired and missing teeth replaced. What used to take years is now done in just a few visits: with amazing quality."

These types of procedures should be performed by a highly trained cosmetic dentist. Of course all dentists are concerned with the cosmetic appearance of their work. A cosmetic dentist should have extensive training from a cosmetic institute. Even then, it is the client's responsibility to research a doctor's credentials, materials and referrals.

Dr. Scott Arnold of Arnold Dentistry is a graduate of the prestigious Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. He continues his quest for the latest in cosmetic dentistry knowledge there annually. He and his team make the consultation fun. They are excited about the work they do and are happy to show you countless incredible before and after photos of their clients. Dr. Arnold demands excellence. This requires the most experienced and talented laboratory utilizing the best materials available today. He won't settle for less. After all, it is your smile we're talking about. It has to be durable and look great!

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Dentistry

Training

1 Start by ensuring that whoever is doing your treatment has specific training in aesthetic dentistry either at the university level or through continued education courses. Your dentist should continue his or her aesthetics education every year.

Consultation

2 Once you find a dentist who interests you, make an appointment for a consultation. While there, ask to see the photo album of the dentist's own *before and after* cases. Be sure that it contains only the work they have done and are not stock photography or simulations.

Exam

3 During the records appointment, the dentist should personally do a comprehensive examination of your teeth. He or she should view x-rays, discuss any discomfort you may be experiencing and ask you pertinent questions about what you would like to change about your smile or bite. They should then give you several treatment options to enhance or repair your smile.

Laboratory

4 Ask what laboratory ceramist and materials the dentist uses to make veneers. Laboratories and material can also be researched. Your dentist should have no problem helping you to get personal validation that they use an excellent lab and materials.

Kerzie Family Gets Slimed In Orlando

The Kerzie family of Bloomingdale spent a week in Orlando this summer at the Nickelodeon hotel. The family was selected to compete in a game show at the Nickelodeon studio and won the dubious honor of being slimed from head to toe. Pictured, along with several members of the Nickelodeon entertainment staff, are Gina and Todd Kerzie and their sons Hayden, Blake and Connor. Gina said, "We had the slimetime of our lives!"



Name, Sign Recipients To Be Announced Sept. 8

6 SECTIONS SUBMITTED PETITIONS

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Hundreds of neighbors in six unnamed sections of Bloomingdale are participating in a drive to name their neighborhoods and have new entryway signs installed.

The six sections that submitted peti-

tions to the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association (BHA) last month are sections E, C, H, O, F and B. All six sections showed great interest and involvement in the program. The PRIDE committee intends to schedule each of those sections for signs and naming, one at a time, over the course of about six months.

The committee is reviewing the results and plans to announce the order in which the six sections will be named

at its Sept. 8 board meeting and on www.bloomingtondalegazette.com.

Once the six sections are named and signs are installed, only two remaining areas of the community, A and M, will remain unnamed.

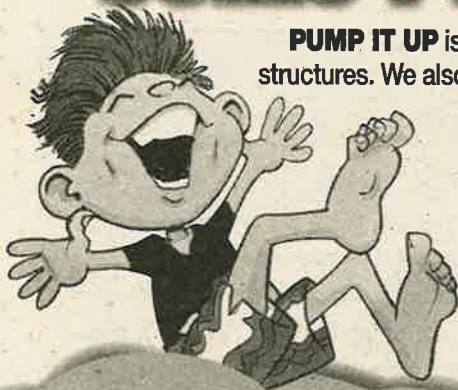
Fabrication and installation of the signs has been made possible by a series of Hillsborough County mini-grants and may be subsidized by a portion of BHA membership dues funds. Once the signs are installed, the Bloomingdale

Special Taxing District will assume maintenance and repair costs.

The BHA intends to add names signs to all unnamed sections of community, one at a time, according to neighborhood interest and as funds become available.

To find out which section your home is in, visit the Deed Restrictions section of www.bloomingtondalegazette.com or call 681-2051.

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Next BHA Meeting Is Thursday, Sept. 8

DATE CHANGED DUE TO LABOR DAY

A Gazette Report

The next meeting of the Bloomingdale Homeowners Association Inc. board of directors will be Thursday, Sept. 8.

The regular monthly meeting, usually

scheduled for the first Monday each month, was rescheduled this month due to the Labor Day holiday.

New residents who attend a meeting are given a warm welcome by the BHA board, along with a free Bloomingdale logo license plate. The board is pleased to provide new residents with the resources or contacts they may need for

local information regarding deed restrictions, schools, parks and recreation, law enforcement, county services, etc.

All residents are invited to attend the open meetings to observe the proceedings, address any neighborhood concerns they may have, or find out how they can help with special BHA proj-

ects.

Meetings take place at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, in the plaza behind SunTrust Bank, just south of Bloomingdale Avenue.

For more information about the BHA, call 681-2051 or visit www.bloomingtondalegazette.com.

Neighbor Inspired To Pick Up And Walk

MORNING ROUTINE IS HELPFUL, REWARDING

By HEIKE HOUSE
Special to The Gazette

"It is so green and fresh here! Beautiful and clean," said my 79-year-old mother in her warm, German accent. She was visiting from Illinois for a three-week vacation. Anyone who has ever been to the Chicago area knows that it's less than clean. And the sky never appears quite as blue as our own Florida sky.

My mom's words came back to me as I began my daily morning walk. Walking, or any type of exercise for that

matter, has never been a priority for me. I could be spending my time doing something more important, more useful. But walk, I must — doctor's orders.

As I walked, I realized that it is "green and fresh here, beautiful and" ... OK, it is not as clean as it could be, or should be. I had just taken a few steps past an empty soda can when I heard "pick it up."

Of course there was no one else nearby. Whether it was my conscience, God or just my vivid imagination, I did back up and pick up the soda can. Just a few steps ahead was a lovely park bench with a conveniently placed waste can nearby. As I tossed the empty into

See HELPFUL, Page 16

LETTERS

Coach Applauds Tryout Efforts, Sets Roster

Send letters to editor to: The Bloomingdale Gazette, 3509 Bell Shoals Road, Valrico, FL 33594 or e-mail laurafrazier@tampabay.rr.com. Letters are published on a space-available basis and are subject to editing.

I would like to thank all the folks who helped make the Bloomingdale Breakers (12 and under AAU baseball) fall 2005 tryouts and 2-day mini-camp a success.

We wanted to give the boys an intense weekend similar to major league baseball's spring training. All the boys who tried out gave a great effort, and I only wish I could keep all of them on the roster.

A special thanks to Bloomingdale Little League for the use of their great fields and their continued support our team.

The Breakers' fall 2005 roster includes Connor Bottorff, Will Crockett, Fred Donnell, Royce Easley, A.J. Ellis, Connor Ewing, Jackson Kelly, Josh Langer, Ryan Marshall, Jake Osborne, Spencer Poston, and R.J. Zak. Assistant coaches will be Clint Crockett, Larry Langer and Dave Marshall

Tom Ewing
Head coach, Bloomingdale Breakers

Birthday Parties:

Birthday Parties are happy days at STARS! We create wonderful birthday memories with fun & excitement for the birthday child & their guests. Running, tumbling, climbing, & playing games, & all of the activities that the children want to do will be done in a safe, exciting, & supervised environment. Use of our moonwalk is included with each party!

We carefully plan each party with your child in mind... & we take care of all the clean up! Make your child's next birthday the best one ever! Be sure to schedule your special day early, as our parties are very popular.

Cheerleading:

STARS is the bay areas best & one of the country's top all-star cheerleading programs. In 3 short years teams have captured 10 State, 44 Regional & 33 National Championships. We provide teams & classes for all ages (4yrs-19yrs) & skill levels to include Novice (beginner), Intermediate (moderate skill level & some experience) & Elite (advanced skill level & experience).

For more information call 813-835-1600 or email rischulz@aol.com

Tumbling:

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BLOOMINGDALE
NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

County Seeks Nominees For Good Neighbor Award

DEADLINE IS SEPT. 8

News Report

Do you have a special neighbor? One who goes above and beyond in being helpful? Show how much you appreciate them by nominating them for the Lonnie Lea Napier Good Neighbor Award.

The award recognizes those neighbors who help simply because help is needed — individuals who demonstrate the spirit shown by the late Lonnie Lea Napier, who died following an accident that occurred while he was helping a neighbor.

Nominees for the fall quarter will be accepted until Sept. 8.

Individuals, neighborhood associations and community groups may make nominations to the Office of Neighborhood Relations at any time throughout the year. On a quarterly basis,

the county will recognize a "good neighbor." The quarterly nominations will be reviewed and an annual Lonnie Lea Napier Good Neighborhood Award will be presented by the County Commission in the winter of 2005.

All residents of Hillsborough County are eligible to nominate and be nominated. The nominee must demonstrate an ongoing spirit of compassion and helpfulness to his/her neighbors.

The annual award comes with a \$2,000 prize to be awarded to the neighborhood association serving the area in which the recipient lives. If the winner resides in an area in which there isn't an association, county staff will work with residents in the area to form one.

Nomination forms can be found on the county's Web site at: www.hillsboroughcounty.org/mail/onr_nomination.html or by calling the Office of Neighborhood Relations at 272-5860.

County Wants To Recycle Solid Waste Contracts

PUBLIC COMMENT WELCOMED

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

Most Hillsborough County taxpayers recently surveyed agree on what's most important to them when it comes to trash, yard waste and recycling collection services.

"They just want the stuff gone from the curb," said James Ransom, spokesman for the county's Solid Waste Management Department.

With contracts for three major waste handlers up for renewal this year, Ransom's department recently conducted an informal survey at home-

owners' association and community meetings throughout the county.

"(About) 99.9 percent of the people we've talked to are very pleased with the system as it is operating now, and they aren't asking for any major changes," he said.

Three private companies the county contracted with in 1997 to provide solid waste services — Republic Waste Services, Liberty Waste and Recycling and Waste Management of Tampa — are up for contract renewal this year. Together, the trio provides 16 collections a month for each

See WASTE, Page 12

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5/8 in. Bamboo - Vertical	\$9.99sf	\$4.69sf	3,000sf
1/2 in. Spice Maple Ginger	\$8.99sf	\$3.99sf	3,000sf
1/2 in. Spice Maple Natural	\$8.99sf	\$3.99sf	3,000sf
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Deputy Puts Focus On Children's Safety

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS PLANNED

By MACKAUSTIN
Correspondent

The BACC, Bloomingdale Area Community Council, is made up of residents from various homeowners associations in our community. The council works with law enforcement, county and state government representatives to help improve safety, security and the quality of life in the greater Bloomingdale area.

The council meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Substation on Bell Shoals Road. All interested residents are invited to attend. For information, call 635-8040.

At the August meeting of the BACC, Deputy Pete Maurer emphasized concerns for the safety of kids in our community. Maurer will coordinate efforts with officers from the Tampa Police Department to schedule special presentations on "Kid Safety." When plans are complete, specific information will be published in the Gazette and on www.bloomingtongazette.com.

Other business discussed at the council's August meeting is



MACKAUSTIN/Photo

Due to the large volume of traffic on Culbreath Road between the YMCA and Bloomingdale Little League, parents and ball players are asked to use the designated crosswalk.

as follows:

Ball Players Asked To Use Cross Walk

Maurer briefed members on plans being coordinated with Hillsborough County traffic engineers and parks maintenance supervisors to complete the crosswalk located between Bloomingdale Little League and the YMCA, near the intersection of Bloomingdale Avenue and Culbreath Road. With the large volume of traf-

fic in this area, parents and ball players are asked to use the crosswalk since it offers a more secure area to access the fields.

Right Hand Turns To Be Restricted

Maurer briefed the council on the results of recent traffic blitz operations completed by sheriff's deputies. The most recent areas covered were the intersections of Bell Shoals Road and Bloomingdale Avenue, and Bloomingdale

Avenue and Lithia-Pinecrest Road. Maurer said, "One of the largest groups of citations involved drivers not stopping for the red light before turning right (south) on to Bell Shoals Road." Traffic engineers are now scheduled to install a "no right on red" sign to improve safety at the intersection.

Sheriff's Gang Unit Raising Awareness

Maurer noted that although gangs are not a big problem in our area, special training sessions are being offered throughout the county by the Sheriff's Gang Unit to help educate residents on gang recognition and other issues. Training is being scheduled for the Bloomingdale Area Community Council.

Report Trespassers To Sheriff's Office

Council members were

briefed by Maurer about several "trespassing on private property" incidents that have occurred in our area. Some have involved vehicles destroying property. The most recent incidents took place on the property by the new library on south Kings Avenue. Deputies are monitoring these and other sites for trespassing. Residents observing trespassers are asked to call the Sheriff's Office at 247-8200.

Don't Blow Yard Waste Into Street

Council member Hooper noted that several residents and lawn services are blowing yard waste in the streets. This waste eventually ends up in our community drainage systems, which increases the potential for flooding.

Council Promotes Better Bus Routes, Parking

Council member Corbin, one of MacDill's representatives for coordinating HARTLine bus routes for MacDill employees, stated that he is continuing to work with HARTLine and business owners in our area to improve routes and parking areas.

Bell Shoals, Bloomingdale Project Status Unclear

Several members expressed concern about this major traffic safety project. As of the last update plans were still being coordinated. Members noted that their main concern is "losing the \$3.6 million dollar programmed for this project."



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Classes, School Traffic Back In Session

USE CAUTION IN SCHOOL ZONES

By DEPUTY PETE MAURER
Bloomingdale Community Resource Officer

Alafia No Parking Zones

Parents of Alafia Elementary School students are reminded to obey the "No Parking" signs near the school. These areas are set up to provide protection for parents and kids. Also, do not drop your kids off inside the County

Parks Maintenance area. It is very dangerous with the trucks going in and out all day long.

Use Caution Near Cimino

All drivers traveling near Cimino Elementary School are reminded to use extra caution when driving near the school entrance. Kids are crossing Culbreath Road, traffic is very dense and community traffic can slow down traffic.

See CAUTION, Page



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Boating Skills, Seamanship Training Offered In Brandon

MOST ACCIDENTS DUE TO OPERATOR ERROR

By MACK AUSTIN
Correspondent

When it comes to safe boating, all boaters know there is absolutely no substitute for being properly trained and skilled in operating their vessels.

With thousands of residents in our area that enjoy the beautiful waters of the Gulf of

Mexico and Tampa Bay, as well as the many rivers and the hundreds of lakes in our area, the need to complete professional boating skills training is essential.

Some boaters believe the vast majority of boating accidents are caused by vessel equipment problems. However, most accidents have been determined to be caused by operator error.

Sixty percent of boating accident fatalities are the result



MACK AUSTIN/Photo

Bloomington area boat owners can increase their boating skills and learn professional seamanship techniques by completing the Boating Skills and Seamanship course offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla No. 74 in Brandon.

of capsizing, falling overboard or flooding and swamping. Having a properly trained, highly skilled operator who has

attended a Coast Guard Auxiliary Boating Skills and Seamanship Course is vital to provide a safe recreational environment

for passengers and other boaters.

The course is jointly sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and the United States Power Squadrons, approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, and is recognized by the United States Coast Guard. The course is taught by experienced members of the local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla No. 74 in Brandon.

The next course, consisting of 12 lessons, begins Sept. 8 and runs through Nov. 17. Classes will take place Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. at Brandon High School, 1101 Victoria Ave. Tuition is \$40 a person. Information or to register: www.cgaux74.org or call 654-1306.

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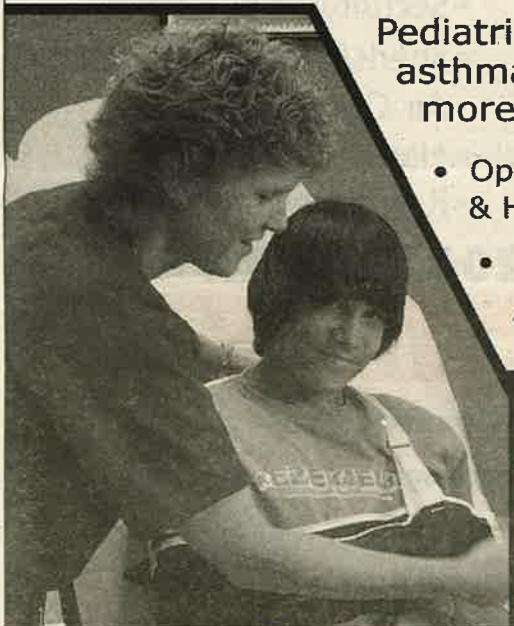
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WASTE

Continued From Page 8

household: two regular trash, one recyclable material and one yard waste pick-up each week.

The monthly assessment county residents pay for solid waste services — now just under \$7 per household — is likely to increase when the contracts are renegotiated.

“As we re-negotiate the contracts, there will probably be small rate increases that reflect the current cost of living and operation expenses. But we don’t anticipate anything significant,” Ransom said. “Our administration is very lean and fine-tuned.”

More than 80 percent of Hillsborough’s solid waste operations are privatized.

The Board of County Commissioners is expected to schedule a public hearing to review public comment before deciding on the contract renewals. The meeting will be announced in local newspapers and on www.bloomingtongazette.com.

To submit comments about solid waste services or the contract renewals to the Board of County Commissioners, call 272-5660 or visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org/bocc.



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BLOOMINGDALE SCHOOLS

New Program Gives Bloomingdale Freshmen A Smooth Start

SLOWLY INTEGRATES STUDENTS INTO HIGH SCHOOL LIFE

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

A new "Freshman Academy" program was launched this year at Bloomingdale Senior High School.

Ninth-grade guidance counselor Mary Grable said school faculty and administration worked together over the past year to develop a program that would offer incoming freshmen much-needed support as they advance from junior high to high school.

"It's a way for freshmen to feel part of a smaller group, since they're coming into a school of 2,300 students," said Grable, a recent teacher of the year at Bloomingdale.

The program involves smaller learn-

ing communities that team the ninth-graders for several classes, slowly integrating them into the mainstream high school life.

Ninth-graders are grouped together for English, math and social studies classes, all taught in the 300 wing at the west end of the school.

A special course has been added to teach incoming freshmen what high school is all about. The first semester class, known as the Keystone course, is taught by the social studies teacher, who will also teach the students history during the second semester.

The Keystone orientation to high school gives students a tour of the school, teaches them how to use the media center, introduces them to personnel, and provides information on clubs, activities, sports and freshmen time management, organization and study skills.

Grable is excited about the Keystone class because in order to address the freshman class in the past, she's had to interrupt one of their academic classes. Having a course devoted to fundamental issues keeps the distraction from academics to a minimum.

The benefits of the Freshman Academy are numerous, said Grable. Students have more opportunities to get to know their teachers, and the consistency of grouping students together allows for a more comfortable educational setting. In addition, the rules, regulations and expectations remain constant for all students in the program.

In creating the Freshman Academy, Bloomingdale High dedicated two staff members to oversee the ninth-graders. Grable and assistant principal Scott Rudes will focus solely on the freshman class. This change in focus allows both faculty members to work more closely

with teachers and teams, and allows both to be more involved with the students.

More than 1,000 incoming freshmen and their parents learned of the Freshmen Academy at school orientation, and Grable said the feedback so far — from both parents and students — has been very positive.

"We're finding it to be really successful. At first, kids were skeptical, but now they're requesting to be in the 300 wing," said Grable.

To further promote a team atmosphere, students may purchase T-shirts with a "FBI" logo, an acronym for Freshmen at Bloomingdale Initiative.

"We found that when freshmen would come in, it would take them all year to figure out what's going on. I think this program will help jumpstart them off to high school," Grable said.

Operation Stop Watch: New Program Promotes Safer Bus Stops

OPERATION STOP WATCH

A Gazette Report

Operation Stop Watch, a new initiative launched by Hillsborough County Sheriff David Gee, uses volunteers to monitor public school bus stops in

Hillsborough County.

Volunteers are needed to spend a few minutes in the morning and/or afternoon at one bus stop to monitor what is happening and report any suspicious persons or activity to the sheriff's office. Qualified volunteers will receive a T-

shirt designating their role in the program.

In an open letter to county residents on the sheriff's office Web site, Gee wrote, "Our goal is to create a corps of dedicated volunteers to assist us in keeping our children safe from the

thugs and criminals who want to prey on the innocent."

Volunteer applications, program fliers and more information are available online at www.hcso.tampa.fl.us, or call Deputy Robin Anderson, 247-8115, or J.D. Callaway, 247-8058.

ON OUR COMMUNITY WEBSITE

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BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT

Updated Tax Assessment List Complete

4,742 HOMES, 364 APARTMENTS

By LAURA FRAZIER
Editor

The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District (BSTD) board of trustees meets at 7 p.m. on the second Monday each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office, 3509 Bell Shoals Road. All meetings are open to the public. For more information call 681-6667 or e-mail bloomington.homeowners@verizon.net.

Meeting Held Aug. 8

BSTD president Thom Snelling convened the board's regular monthly meeting on Aug. 8, 2005, at 7:02 p.m. Trustees in attendance were Michael Buday, Joe Harless, Thom Snelling, David Steck and David West. Trustees

Help Wanted: On-Call Licensed Handyman
The Bloomingdale Special Taxing District property manager is looking for a part-time handyman to do small painting, landscaping and electrical jobs on call. The person must have a Hillsborough County occupational license, liability insurance, a pick-up truck and their own tools. For information, contact Al Devney at 684-6667 or 431-6348.

Rusty Jones and Paul Sims were absent. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 12.

Tax Assessment File Updated

Trustee Buday told the board he has finished updating the file provided by Hillsborough County for the Bloomingdale non-ad valorem tax assessments. The new list of assessed residences includes 4,742 homes and 364 apartments (two apartment complexes). Buday reported a gross total assessment

of \$510,600.

July Financial Report Approved

Vince Ferraro of Ferraro, Higginbotham & Hayes presented the financial report. A motion made by trustee West to approve the report was seconded by trustee Harless and approved unanimously. As of July 31, 2005, the total cash on hand in Am-South Bank was \$275,315.66. Several year-to-date expenditures were noted, including \$27,035 for wall painting, \$8,563 for sign repairs, \$5,092.49 for accident site

repairs and \$55,990 for irrigation.

Board: More Weeding Needed

Charles Turner from Raymow attended the August meeting in accordance with his contract agreement. The board asked if Raymow crews could pull more weeds. Turner said they were working on sending a detail crew to Bloomingdale once every three weeks rather than once a month.

Eat, Drink, Pitch Out The Window

In the month of August, property manager Al Devney found the following items discarded on Bloomingdale public property: one 12-inch stainless steel sink, one telephone tester, one-eighth of a one-dollar bill, half of an electrical box, three shirts, five gloves and one pink rabbit.

Service League Sports A New Name

OLDIES FUNDRAISER SET FOR OCT. 8

By LINDA CHION KENNEY
lchion@mediageneral.com

What's in a name often was confusing so the ladies of Valrico decided to do something about it.

Now, the service organization founded as the GFWC Junior Service League of Brandon is known as the GFWC Val-

rico Service League.

The aim is to differentiate the group from the two other Greater Federation of Woman's Clubs in the area: the GFWC Brandon Service League and the GFWC Brandon Junior Woman's Club.

"We do a lot of good things in the community and we just wanted people to know the difference," Karen Boraiko, membership chairwoman for the Valri-

co group, said. "We decided to change our name this past summer after I received two phone calls from women who wanted information about the other groups and the chamber of commerce gave them my name."

With their new branding announced, the Valrico club members are hard at work promoting their major annual fundraiser, which this year is an Oldies Rock 'n' Roll Dinner-Dance and Silent Auction featuring Billy Lindsey with an Elvis Presley tribute.

"Dress appropriately, if you care,"

said Willie Vogelgesang, fundraising chair for the Valrico Service League.

"If you want to, get into your poodle skirt," said president Dottie Enright.

"And your ducktails," added Vogelgesang.

The event is scheduled for Oct. 8 from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Buckhorn Springs Golf & Country Club at 2721 S. Miller Road in Valrico. Tickets cost \$50 per person.

"We've done a fashion show in the past," Boraiko said of the group's annu-

See SERVICE, Page 18

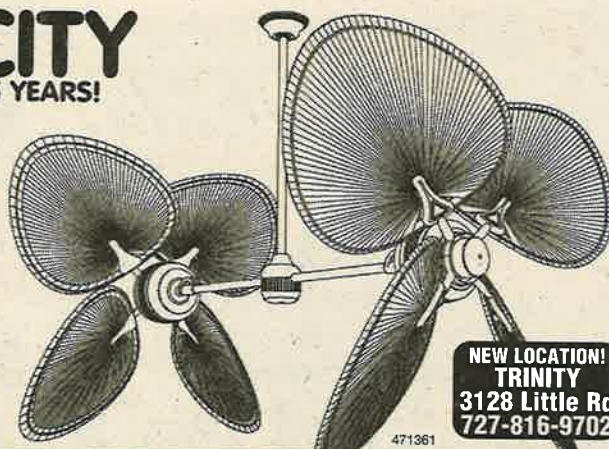
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Teen Consignment Shop Offers Vintage Values

FLIP FLOP TEEN SWAP

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

When writing that timeless "What I Did Over Summer Vacation" essay in freshman English class this fall, twins Jessica and Jennifer Kalb will likely share their endeavors into the arena of enterprise.

At 15, the sisters have already entered the business world with the opening of Flip Flop Teen Swap, a girls' consignment shop owned by their mother, Lora Tucker.

The bubble-gum pink teen shop on Bloomingdale Avenue opened its doors June 11. The store is stocked with colorful tops, trendy jeans, skirts, dresses, shoes and accessories for girls and juniors. The shop takes in a whopping 1,500 items a week.

The twins have worked alongside their mother for years, garnering experience and the eye to stock a shop that appeals to their age group.

"They both love clothes," said Tucker, who also owns Lora's Thrift Avenue on Oakfield Avenue and Thrift Avenue II, right next door to Flip Flop Teen Swap. Tucker's mother once ran a consignment store in Old Hyde Park, making Jessica and Jennifer the third generation of store operators.

"We've always loved consignment, and I realized early on you could get more clothes for less money," Tucker said. It's an attitude she sees coming around to today's teens.

"I'm really surprised to see the teens come around. But, when you go to the malls everything is the same. Everybody's wearing it. In consignment shops, you find things you wouldn't ordinarily find."

Tucker said Jennifer has an eye towards design, while Jessica enjoys running the register. Both girls have a knack for closing out the drawer at the end of the sales day.

"They've been waiting all summer for it to open up," said Keifer Tucker, the girls' stepfather.

The twins and their mother designed the interior of the store and did all the decorative painting themselves. Both girls are enterprising and imaginative, according to their mother, who proudly shows off a selection of handmade bracelets the girls have for sale in the shop.

Flip Flop Teen Swap is at 2226 E. Bloomingdale Ave. The building is hard to miss — a colorful beach shack on the corner of Lithia-Pinecrest Road and Bloomingdale Avenue. The side of the shop was painted by Susan Jordan of Whimsical Walls and Murals by Susan.

Store hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; closed Sunday. Items must be clean, less than two years old and on a hanger. Appointments are not required. Consignors split the sales 50-50 with the shop. For more information call 657-4030.



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Bloomingtondale High School freshmen Jessica and Jennifer Kalb help run Flip Flop Teen Swap, a teen consignment shop owned by their mother, Lora Tucker.

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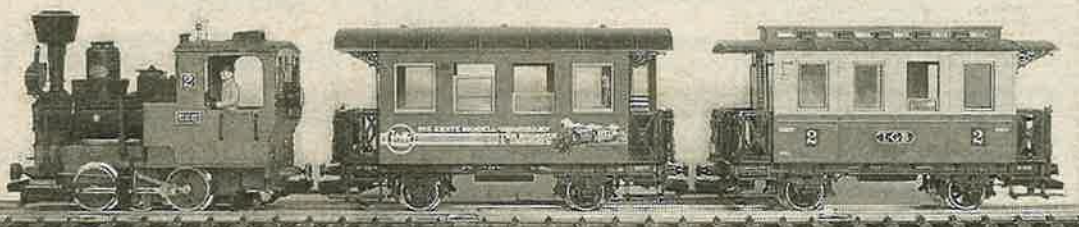


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HELPFUL

Continued From Page 7

the can and continued on, I told myself that I would bring along something for trash for tomorrow's walk. After all, I have to walk anyway. Why not do something constructive?

Lo and behold, there at my feet was a small plastic bag. I do believe God was trying to tell me something.

And so it begins. Each morning I put on my walking clothes and I grab a plastic sack or two on my way out the door. And each morning, I return with at least one sack filled with the trash I've picked up along the way. Many people just kind of look at me, not sure what it is that I'm "collecting." Others know me and are simply puzzled by my actions. So now you know!

I am not paid to pick up garbage, but I am rewarded. God rewards me every day by granting me the health and ability to walk at all. I can breathe the fresh morning air. I can hear the melodious sound of the birds singing their songs to one another. Just yesterday, I saw a small rabbit scamper by

in the grass. It was the first I've seen since we moved to Florida almost five years ago.

I am rewarded with "good morning" from joggers, bikers and other walkers. I've received numerous "thank yous" and even an occasional "God bless you" from other passers-by. And today, God even rewarded me with money! I picked up a severely, road-damaged 50-cent piece.

The fact that I am able to pick up a full bag of trash every day on my 45-minute walk saddens me. People do not realize the damage they do by littering our streets. Even the smallest gum wrapper or plastic straw tossed out the window, takes away from the beauty of our neighborhood. Think before you litter. After all, you're almost home. Hold onto that wrapper for just a few minutes longer and dispose of it properly.

Nature's Way forms a beautiful circle for all of us to enjoy. Let's all help to keep it that way. And while you're at it, please slow down. The speed limit is 30 mph, but that's another story!

BLOOMINGDALE BUSINESS Jewelry, Loan Shop Owner Wants To Overcome Stigma

ALL ITEMS CHECKED
BY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

By LESLIE WHITE
Correspondent

Diamonds may be a girl's best friend, but Bloomingdale Estate Jewelry & Loan owner Keifer Tucker says a good jeweler ranks a close second.

The new store at 2222 E. Bloomingdale Ave. is stocked with one-of-a-kind pieces including bands, precious stones, solitaires, watches, necklaces, bracelets and antique brooches.

"We accumulate a lot of really neat stuff, and we don't have the overhead jewelers have, so we can sell it for a lot less," Tucker said.

The business also loans cash. Tucker said no loan is too big or too small, or he'll purchase your items outright.

"It's less expensive to come in and get a quick loan than put it on your credit card."

Tucker said he's trying hard to get people to overcome the stigma of patronizing pawn-type shops.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office conducts regular checks to ensure that everything sold in the jewelry and loan business is legitimate.

"This is a completely different industry than it used to be," Tucker said.

Items received at the store are held for a minimum of two months to allow for the legal process.



LESLIE WHITE/Photo

Keifer Tucker shows off a tray of a few of the unique pieces available at Bloomingdale Estate Jewelry & Loan.

All items are carefully inspected and any necessary repairs are done on-site by full time jeweler Cliff Moroni, who has more than 30 years experience in the business.

See JEWELRY, Page 18

Car Keys Found

A set of Toyota car keys, including remote control and key number tag, was found in the vicinity of Erindale Drive Sunday morning, August 29. For information call Mary, 684-6316.

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Bloomingtondale Real Estate Market Still Red Hot

BUYERS COMPETITIVE, SELLERS GET CREATIVE

By LESLIE WHITE

Bloomingtondale home prices are soaring and property values are climbing. Sellers are selling, and buyers are buying, all at a frantic pace.

Sue Babulski of Avalor Realty specializes in selling homes in Bloomingtondale East and West, except for several years that she spent in New Jersey.

"When I came back to this area, I was just floored by the prices," said Babulski,

recalling that homes in this area used to average \$112,900.

"In some instances, the prices now are changing weekly or daily, and where they used to be lowered (during the sales process), now they're going up. The market is just incredible," said Babulski.

For years, she said, Bloomingtondale has attracted buyers primarily because of the A-rated schools, the sense of community and the close proximity to everything people need.

Debbie Edwards, also of Avalor Realty, added that the Bloomingtondale Golfer's Club is a draw for many potential residents.

Babulski also noted how the deed restricted neighborhoods of Bloomingtondale keep property values up and communities attractive to potential buyers. And with the community upkeep a priority, it's no surprise that presenting a home in the best light possible gives sellers an edge.

Bloomingtondale resident Paige Pearson of Paige ONE Creations is doing her part to help the process. According to Pearson, real estate staging has never been trendier than it is right now.

Jan Hungate, a Realtor with Real Works, agrees.

See HOT, Page 19

JUNK

Continued From Page 3

waste, scrap metal, tires, used motor oil and lead acid batteries.

To gain access to the county collection site, residents must show a copy of their property tax bill and photo identification. For more information, call 272-5680 or visit hillsborough-county.org/solidwaste.

Help For Elderly, Disabled Residents

BHA volunteers offer to assist elderly or disabled residents who need help hauling items on cleanup day. To schedule a pick-up, call the BHA office, 681-2051, before 11 a.m. Oct. 6.

More Volunteers Needed

The BHA is a nonprofit, all volunteer organization. More volunteers are needed on cleanup days to staff the site and help residents unload their cars. To help, call 643-2990 or e-mail laurafrrazier@tampabay.rr.com. High school students and Scouts can earn community service hour credits for helping with this project.

CAUTION

Continued From Page 10

Don't Roll Through Stop Signs

The three-way stop signs on Culbreath Road near both Alafia and Cimino, like all stop signs, require motorists to come to a complete stop. If you roll through, you will get a citation.

Stop For School Buses

Traffic on both sides of the road must stop for school buses loading and unloading kids on streets with no medians. This includes Bell Shoals Road and Bloomingtondale Avenue west of Bell Shoals Road.

Fines Doubled In School Zones

Do not speed in school zones. The average fine, doubled in school zones, is \$360.

Magazines, Volunteers Needed

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and Bloomingtondale residents continue to support this special program, designed to help high school students improve their reading skills. Residents are asked to bring magazines that teens would be interested in reading (sports, fashion, entertainment, travel, etc.) to the community substation on Bell Shoals Road. Volunteers are also needed to deliver the magazines to the school, and to assist students with their reading skills. For information,

call the substation at 635-8040.

Computers For Kids In Need

Cops and Computers for the Community, a nonprofit charitable program sponsored by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, puts public safety professionals and members of the computer industry together to place computers into the homes of students with special needs. In this day and age, all students must have a computer. The program's philosophy is "Changing lives, one computer at a time." More safety professionals, computer professionals and volunteers are needed for this great team. For information, visit the program's Web site, www.ccftc.org.

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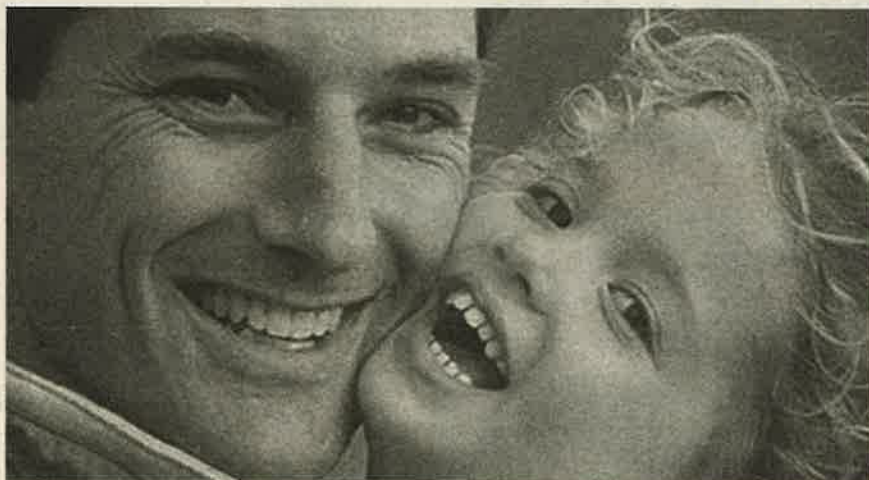
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Johnny Carino Sets Up Shop In Brandon

ELTON: TRY IT, YOU'LL LOVE IT

By ELTON DUMONT
Exclusive to The Bloomingdale Gazette

About a year ago, I reviewed the Dale Mabry location of Johnny Carino's. After apologizing for being a little off my regular beat, I went on to offer my praises for another great Italian chain. We waited patiently for them to find a location in Brandon, and now here it is at 11395 Lumsden Blvd.

My wife and I, along with our friend and neighbor Sandy Wynwood, recently visited the newest Italian eatery in Brandon. I won't keep you in suspense. Our recommendation: Try it, you'll love it!

The entire building, formerly a Mexican chain restaurant,

was remodeled to offer more seating capacity. There are even private, curtain-enclosed tables on one side for a romantic or business meal. We asked for and were seated at one of those tables — perhaps a good idea because the overall appointment is pleasant, but it does tend to be a bit noisy when all tables are filled up.

I can't wait to tell you about the good things on the menu.

Appetizers include sautéed mussels in a garlic Chablis lemon butter sauce. They also offer pepperoni bread stuffed with mozzarella and fresh parmesan. Italian nachos consist of fried pasta chips layered with sausage, chicken, pepperoncini, black olives, tomatoes and jalapenos, and are topped with mozzarella and alfredo sauce.

See SHOP, Page 19



LINDA CHION KENNEY/Staff photo

Members of the newly renamed GFWC Valrico Service League meet at Panera Bread in Valrico to discuss the upcoming oldies fundraiser. From left are president Dottie Enright, Lorraine Grenville, Mary Beth Snits, Karen Boraiko, Karen Bennett, Andrea Dwight and Willie Vogelgesang.

SERVICE

Continued From Page 14

al fundraisers. "But this year we decided to do something different."

Last year's All That Jazz Fest and Silent Auction raised a little more than \$5,000, of which \$4,000 was donated to the New Horizons Group Homes for special needs adults.

The service group, founded in 1984, has 28 members: two live in Brandon and the rest in Valrico.

"This club used to be part of the Brandon Junior Woman's Club, but back in 1984 they decided to split off," Boraiko said.

The Valrico club works with Yates Elementary School, hosting a breakfast book club for the third-graders and an art contest for the fifth-graders. For the holidays, the group donates to families whose names are submitted by Yates and the Emergency Care Help Organization.

Members also help to bag rice, beans and flour for migrant families through the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry Inc. in Wimauma.

The group also presents an award each year to an outstanding ECHO volunteer in the name

of longtime club member Shirley VanderMeer Latimer, a longtime ECHO supporter prior to her death. The Volunteer of the Year award recipient is announced at ECHO's annual volunteer luncheon.

In addition, the group participates in the Brandon Service League's annual Very Special Arts Festival at First Baptist Church of Brandon.

The group is open to women of all ages. "I joined because my neighbor asked me to," Vogelgesang said.

"And I joined because Willie asked me to come and try it," Enright said. "This is my second year and I'm president."

The group meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Bloomingdale Regional Library at 1906 Bloomingdale Ave., next door to Bloomingdale High School.

For information or to purchase tickets to the Oldies fundraiser, call Dottie Enright at 685-9710 or Karen Boraiko at 651-4082.

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JEWELRY

Continued From Page 16

Having a jeweler in-store allows customers to have repairs done on their own pieces, even allowing for the crafting of custom work, Tucker said.

Moroni can recreate an existing piece, doing his own casting, the end result being a truly one-of-a-kind creation. They also offer free jewelry cleaning anytime, while you wait.

Besides jewelry, Tucker carries select furniture pieces, stereos, televisions, lawn equipment,

power tools and diving equipment.

"Everything I sell is guaranteed," said Tucker, who encourages customers to return faulty items to the shop.

Bloomingtondale Estate Jewelry and Loan is at the corner of Bloomingdale Avenue and Lithia Pinecrest Road. Store hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; closed Sunday. Information: 684-1212.

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SHOP

Continued From Page 18

For a salad, choose from grilled salmon, chicken gorgonzola with sun dried tomato or chicken scaloppini, to name just three. Yes, they do have pizza, including a three-meat or a five-cheese. House specialty entrees include the Johnny skilletini, a chicken and sausage or shrimp combo, homemade lasagna or the Johnny's combo covered with rich marinara sauce. Almost all of the entrees come in regular and grandioso size. Typical entrees run from \$8.99 for angel hair pasta with artichokes to \$18.99 for twin filets Italian style.

I wrestled between the veal picatta sautéed with artichoke hearts, mushrooms and capers in a lemon basil cream sauce, but finally decided on the grilled chicken diavolo. The vegetables included zucchini, squash, carrots, broccoli, red pepper and mushrooms in a tangy, not too spicy tomato sauce, and it was delicious.

Sandy ordered the penne gorgonzola pasta, with sliced chicken and mushrooms, sautéed in garlic with a creamy gorgonzola cheese sauce and garnished with fresh tomatoes. She asked if they would add some sun dried tomatoes, which they were happy to oblige. Sandy raved about the

results.

My wife ordered the chicken parmigiana and received a generous serving that was accompanied by a side of spaghetti. It was tender and moist (not easy for chicken parm), and properly seasoned. Her review? Also delicious!

Sandy and Mrs. Dumont shared a tiramisu for dessert and here the opinion differed. Mrs. D. thought it was good, while Sandy thought it to be a tad bland without a lot of coffee flavor.

Our total including the governor and the server was under \$70.

And as an added note, Mr. and Mrs. D. had occasion to return to Johnny Carino's two days later to meet a large party for lunch. We both absolutely recommend without any reservation any of their panini sandwiches. If you're a seafood fan, try the tilapia panini with jalapeno garlic cream sauce and provolone cheese.

They have a child's menu and are open every day. They do not take reservations or have call-ahead, so be prepared for a wait (just like all the restaurants in Brandon). Finally, the staff is eager to serve as the rating indicates. We were fortunate to have Theresa as a super-qualified server.

Until we eat again, I remain your humble gastronomical servant, Elton Dumont.

HOT

Continued From Page 17

Real Works has a team with each member devoted to different aspects of buying and selling a home.

"We want to provide a high level of service," said Hungate of the specialized team approach, part of which includes helping sellers get their homes ready for this competitive market.

Pearson works with Hungate to help make properties more marketable by rearranging the furniture to help maximize space, and removing personal items from view, which allows the potential buyer to visualize their own belongings in the home.

"The goal is to make whoever comes into your home feel like it's theirs already," said Pearson. The depersonalization, she said, speeds up the selling process because buyers see less of the personal imprints and more of the home itself.

At times, it's necessary to remove excess furniture to make the space available in the house more evident, although completely vacant houses take longer to sell, according to Hungate. Pearson brings in furniture and décor to enhance the appeal and bring scale to the room.

"Without anything in the rooms, they appear smaller. People need something to put their eye on to give them a sense of scale, and Paige is great at that," said Hungate.

With Pearson on board, Hungate says people are able to get a better sense of the home they're considering buying, and it makes a difference.

One of Hungate's listings, on the market and vacant for a month, sold in four days after Pear-

son brought in furniture.

At a November 2004 meeting, Hungate and her associates were told that more than 1,090 people per day are moving to Florida, with more than 50 percent of them relocating to the Tampa area, and the influx shows no signs of slowing. That means multiple buyers are vying for the same properties, with homes now selling above the appraised value, sometimes thousands over.

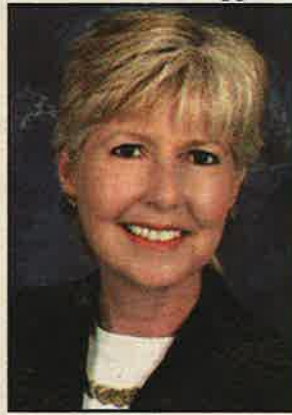


Photo courtesy of Avaral Realty
Sue Babulski, of Avaral Realty, specializes in selling homes in Bloomingdale East and West. The current market, she said, "is just incredible."

Pearson admits the biggest mistake she sees sellers make is the over-abundance of personal items.

"If someone walks into your bathroom and sees your toothbrush, they have a harder time visualizing themselves in there," she said. "The same is true for pictures. I watched during an open house as women paid more attention to the personal pictures than they did the home."

The removal of personal pictures can leave a gap in a home's appearance, but through Pearson's husband Chip's framing business, called Hang Ups, she is able to provide a neutral substitute.

As a closing gift to customers, Real Works plans to provide Pearson's unpacking and placement services, in which the furniture is placed to maximize space and design, with her expertise to evaluate the space in the home and make recommendations for decorating.

Babulski and Edwards of Avaral Realty are located at Bloomingdale Professional Center and can be reached at 685-0111. Hungate and her Real Works team can be reached at 662-9400. Contact Pearson at 503-8125. Pearson's services, which also include room makeovers and move-in services, are available to Realtors as well as individuals.

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