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See Our Ad On Page 27

The logo for the Valrico Edition of the Osprey Observer is contained within a white oval with a dark blue border. At the top, "VALRICO EDITION" is written in a black, sans-serif font. Below this, "Osprey" is written in a purple script font, with a small red star above the 'y'. To the left of "Osprey" is a stylized American flag, and to the right are three balloons (two red, one blue). Below "Osprey" is the word "OBSERVER" in a large, bold, purple serif font, with a small red star to its right. At the bottom, "YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER" is written in a black, sans-serif font, with a small blue star above the 'N'.

July 2026
Volume 23, Issue 7



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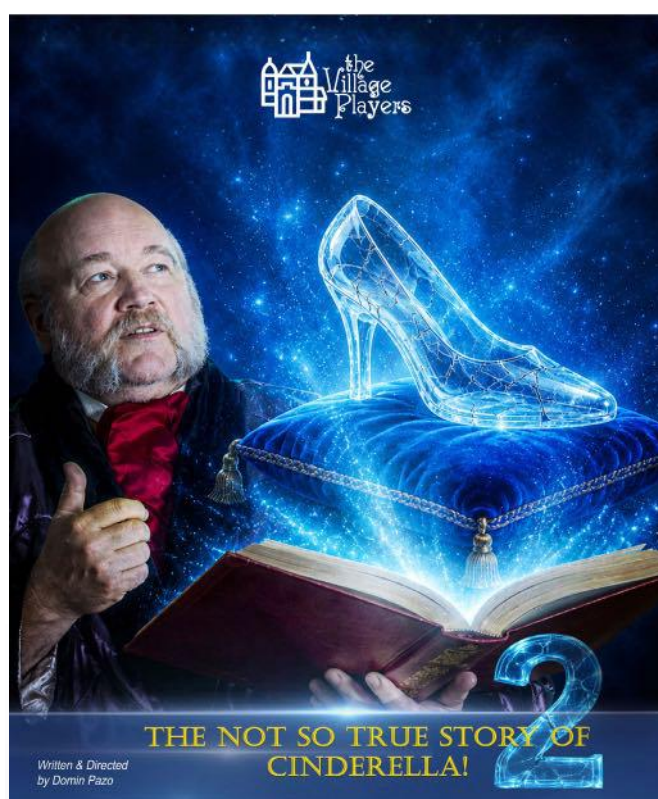
LION & HYENA RIDGE

See Our Ad On Page 28

CELEBRATING 24 YEARS OF PUBLISHING POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS

THE VILLAGE PLAYERS BRING BACK THE NOT-SO-TRUE STORY OF CINDERELLA FOR FUNNY SEQUEL

By Erin Taylor



"The audience really embraced the humor and energy of the first show," said Pazo. "We wanted to build on that by bringing back the characters people loved while raising the absurdity and the fun."

Performances will take place at the historic James McCabe Theater, located at 506 N. Fifth St. in Valrico. Built in 1915 and listed on Hillsborough County's Registry of Historic Places, the theater serves as the home of The Village Players and provides a unique setting for live community theater.

Performance dates:
• Evening performances at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, August 21-22.

- Matinee performances at 3 p.m. on Sunday, August 9 and 16.

Doors open at least 30 minutes before curtain.

Ticket Information

General admission tickets are \$23. Seniors, students and military personnel receive discounted admission at \$20. Tickets are available through TicketLeap at <https://thevillageplayersvalrico.com/>. For additional ticket information or box office inquiries, call 813-480-3147.

About The Village Players

The Village Players is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) community theater based in Valrico. The organization trains, rehearses and performs at the historic James McCabe Theater, a building constructed in 1915 and listed on the county's Registry of Historic Places.

The Village Players theater is bringing audiences back to the kingdom this August with *The Not-So-True Story of Cinderella, Part 2*, a comedic sequel that proves happily ever after is often just the beginning of the trouble.

Directed by Domin Pazo, the production continues the 2023 story after the glass slipper fit and the ball was a hit. Cinderella may have found her prince, but trouble has a way of finding her. As new royal problems emerge and villains begin causing chaos, the kingdom discovers that happily ever after may require a lot more work than expected.

Newcomers are welcome to the kingdom's latest adventure, as the story stands on its own. Filled with offbeat humor, unexpected twists and plenty of royal drama, the show delivers another round of fairy-tale fun with a PG-13 edge.

AFFORDABILITY TAKES CENTER STAGE AT LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP EVENT

By Brian Bokor

Long before congressional redistricting, county commission races or school superintendent elections entered the conversation, one word dominated the Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Wrap-up breakfast: affordability.

It wasn't framed as politics. It was the reality facing Florida families dealing with rising insurance premiums, grocery bills, utility costs and property taxes.

State Representative Danny Alvarez (R-Riverview) didn't ease into the topic.

"Everywhere I go as a state representative, the number one thing someone asks me about is affordability. I'm tired of my power bill. I'm tired of my fuel bill. I'm tired of my insurance, my rent, my mortgage, my interest rate," Alvarez told the audience.

That message set the tone for a discussion led by Alvares and Ron Pierce, president and CEO of RSA Consulting Group, reviewing the 2026 legislative session and issues expected on Hillsborough County's November ballot.

Pierce said the 2026 legislative session required three special sessions to complete the state budget, congressional redistricting and property tax reform.

Much of the discussion focused on a proposed constitutional amendment expanding Florida's homestead exemption while lowering the annual assessment cap on many nonhomestead properties. If approved by at least 60 percent of voters, the changes would take effect in 2027.

Pierce encouraged residents to understand the proposal's potential impact before voting. "Local governments just don't concede they lose that revenue," Pierce said. "They will try to come up with ways to increase revenue."

Alvarez agreed voters should make that decision. "There wasn't a chance that I was not going to give you the ability to say yes or no," he said.

"The citizens are tired. They're super exhausted from getting nicked and dined to death while they're trying to survive," he said. "This is not really a Republican and Democrat thing. This is a Floridian thing."



State Representative Danny Alvarez (left), BRCC President Amber Aaron and Ron Pierce, president and CEO of RSA Consulting Group, pose following the chamber's Legislative Wrap-up breakfast.

According to Alvarez, affordability will dominate campaigns at every level of government. "If you're running for county commissioner and you're not talking about affordability, ... then you're tone-deaf," he said.

The speakers also discussed Hillsborough County ballot questions, including expanding the County Commission from seven to nine district-elected members.

Voters are also expected to decide whether the Hillsborough County superintendent should once again be elected rather than appointed by the school board.

Audience questions covered construction permitting, the widening of Lithia Pinecrest Road and the future of the Tampa Bay Rays.

Pierce said approximately \$100 million has been committed to the Lithia Pinecrest Road expansion, with construction expected to begin within the next several years.

"I'd like the Rays to stay," Alvarez said. "I just don't want it on the back of my people."

Pierce closed by reminding attendees, "Pay attention to these local offices. In many cases, the decisions they're making have much more impact on your day-to-day lives ... than what we're doing in Tallahassee or Washington."

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Osprey Observer
2109 Lithia Pinecrest Rd.
Valrico, FL 33596



U.S. Army veteran Brian Nakamura, joined by his wife and three of his six children, celebrates outside their new five-bedroom Habitat for Humanity home during a dedication ceremony on June 24. Through Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough's Veterans Build program, the family now has a safe, affordable home with room to grow. See full story on Page 6.

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THERAPIST RELEASES FIRST BOOK, EXPLORING THE KOSHAS IN YOGA

By Jamie Lu

LaMor Clements, a yoga instructor and therapist of 20 years, debuted her first book, *Exploring the Koshas in Yoga Therapy*, on June 11. The book is targeted toward individuals with experience in yoga and yoga therapy instructors who are looking to deepen their understanding of yoga's foundational principles.

Clements is a long-time Brandon resident who graduated from Brandon High School and currently teaches yoga at BayCare Fitness Center, The Yoga House of Brandon and Valrico Yoga Sanctuary. She first became interested in yoga as a treatment for motion-related injuries in her hip caused by running and biking.

"And from that, I just fell in love with the practice of yoga," Clements said. "I wanted to learn more because there is more to yoga than just the poses, or what we call asana."

Clements went on to practice yoga therapy, which involves working one-on-one with individuals to design sessions that are best suited to their needs and goals. As Clements continued to practice and study yoga, she documented what she learned in a spreadsheet. She described the process of compiling her research as "quilting."

"My mother was a wonderful quilter," Clements said. "She was part of the Brandon Quilt Guild many, many years ago. So, this is my version of quilting, right, that made me feel connected to my mom through this process."

Clements spent about three years writing her knowledge into her book, which focus-



es on bringing the kosha model from the foundation to the forefront of yoga therapy.

According to Clements, koshas are elements of the human experience, and there are five in total: body, thoughts and emotions, energy levels, intuition and an inner sense of peace.

"You might also think of the koshas as looking through a kaleidoscope of yourself," Clements said. "The pieces and colors are always the same, but with each turn we see ourselves from a different perspective. ... When we pay time and attention to all five aspects of ourselves, we approach our living and healing from a holistic perspective."

The Yoga House in Brandon and Valrico Yoga Sanctuary will be hosting 'Meet and Practice with the Author' events' on Tuesday, July 18, and Sunday, July 2, respectively. Both will include book discussion, embodied activities for each dimension, practice, meditation, book signings and refreshments. The events provide CEUs for yoga professionals but are open to anyone to come practice and learn. Registration is \$45. Visit <https://theyogahousebrandon.com/> and www.valricoyogasanctuary.com to find out more.

Clements will be releasing her second book, *Coming Home to the Self: A Five-Week Journey Through the Koshas*, this winter or in spring 2027. This book is intended for anyone interested in meditation, journaling or practicing yoga at an easy, personal pace. To stay up to date on Clements' work, purchase her book or learn more about her, visit her website, www.yogilamor.com.

VALRICO INSTRUCTOR BRINGS MAHJONG TO LOCAL TABLES

By Marie Gilmore



Valrico resident Dina Greenwell is introducing more people across the Brandon, Valrico and Lithia communities to one of the country's fastest-growing social games through her business, Tampa Mahj Collective.

What started as Greenwell's personal passion for American mahjong has grown into a thriving business that offers beginner-friendly classes, private group lessons and community play events designed to bring people together.

"Tampa Mahj Collective is about much more than learning a game," said Greenwell. "It's about bringing people together, creating friendships and building confidence around the mahjong table."

American mahjong, a tile-based game that blends strategy, memory and luck, has experienced a resurgence in popularity in recent years. Greenwell said the game's appeal goes beyond competition, creating opportunities for meaningful social interaction in an increasingly busy world.

Tampa Mahj Collective welcomes players of all experience levels. During lessons, participants learn the fundamentals of the game, including how to read the National Mah Jongg League playing card, understanding game strategy and proper etiquette in a relaxed, supportive environment.

In addition to regularly scheduled classes, Greenwell offers private lessons for neighborhood groups, book clubs, birthdays, ladies' nights, corporate team-building events and other social gatherings. She travels to homes and venues throughout the Brandon area, providing everything needed for the experience, including mahjong sets, racks, mats and instructional materials.

To ensure each participant receives individual attention, private lessons are limited to eight players and typically last between two and two and a half hours.

Greenwell also teaches evening mahjong classes at AR Workshop in Brandon, where beginners can learn the game while enjoying a fun and welcoming atmosphere. The two-hour workshops provide another opportunity for newcomers to discover the game and meet other local players.

Whether guests are picking up a mahjong tile for the first time or looking to sharpen their strategy, Greenwell strives to create an environment where conversation, laughter and new friendships naturally develop.

As interest in American mahjong continues to grow nationwide, Tampa Mahj Collective is seeing that enthusiasm reflected locally through sold-out classes and increasing demand for private events.

Greenwell hopes even more residents will discover the game's unique combination of strategy, fellowship and fun.

For upcoming class dates, private lesson availability and pricing, visit Tampa Mahj Collective on Facebook at www.facebook.com/p/Tampa-Mahj-Collective-61577413624376/ or Instagram @tampamahjcollective.



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MOTION CHIROTHERAPY TO HOST EKG EVENT TO FOLLOW STATE LAW

Motion ChiroTherapy, a local Lithia business, has begun offering sports physicals, including electrocardiogram tests, following a new state law mandating student athletes to undergo heart screenings before participating in any athletics.

The law, called the Second Chance Act, took effect on July 1 and is aimed to circumvent sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) preemptively by identifying life-threatening heart conditions with the electrocardiogram, commonly referred to as EKG or ECG. Florida is the first state in the nation to adopt a law of this nature.

"This is a historic day for Florida families," said Evan Ernst, executive director of Who We Play For. "The Second Chance Act will save lives. Every parent deserves the peace of mind that comes from knowing their child has been screened before stepping onto the field, court or track. We encourage families not to wait until the last minute to schedule their child's ECG."

The law currently applies to students entering ninth grade and participating in school athletics for the first time, students new to a Florida high school athletic program or students participating in a high school sport for the first time.

SCA has claimed the lives of approximately 23,000 young people nationwide, according to data gathered by SCA awareness nonprofit Who We Play For.

"The goal is to help detect underlying



MOTION
CHIROTHERAPY

By Chloe Wagner

heart conditions that may not show obvious symptoms but could put an athlete at risk during exercise or competition," said Bob Lutz, owner of Motion ChiroTherapy. "At its core, this law is about improving athlete safety and encouraging earlier screening when appropriate."

Motion ChiroTherapy previously held a sports physical clinic in June; however, it

will continue to offer screenings for student athletes looking to complete their requirements for participation. The screenings are available for residents of Lithia, FishHawk, Riverview, Valrico and surrounding communities.

A physical alone at Motion ChiroTherapy is \$40, an ECG only is \$49 and the comprehensive physical along with the ECG screening is \$85. All ECG screenings are reviewed by board-certified cardiologists.

"The biggest thing I'd want families to know is that this is about more than just another school form. The goal is to improve athlete safety and catch potential heart concerns before they become a bigger issue," Lutz said. "It's also important for parents to know they don't have to figure it all out on their own."

To schedule an appointment at Motion ChiroTherapy, visit <https://motionchirotherapy.com/> or call 813-793-7791. To find a heart screening nearby, visit www.whoweplayfor.org.

GLORY DAYS GRILL CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF FOOD, FUN & COMMUNITY

By Libby Hopkins

Glory Days Grill & Sports House of Brandon is the perfect gathering spot with a fun atmosphere and fresh, made-in-house food for everyone, such as different jumbo chicken wing styles with endless flavorful sauces, hand-crafted burgers, fan-favorite entrees like its Fabulous Fish Fry and limited-time seasonal offerings — all at a value that'll leave you feeling victorious.

"We just celebrated our 30th anniversary this past April," said Jen Ulmer, chief marketing officer for Glory Days. "We are going to celebrate all year round, and we are thrilled the community is joining us in our celebrations."

In 1996, Glory Days Grill began in Burke, Virginia, and was founded by Richard Danker, Robert Garner and Jeff Newman. In 2023, the Florida franchise, owned and run by Bob Basham, Outback Steakhouse co-founder, purchased the 22 mid-Atlantic restaurants, bringing together all Glory Days Grill locations under one company with his brother, original co-founder Richard Danker. Together, Basham and Danker are excited to be expanding the brand through the Southeast region providing an appeal for sports fans and families, serving quality food in a fun atmosphere.

"Still to this day our focus is offering a family-friendly experience that is welcoming of all ages, with a menu and entertainment options that appeal to a wide range of pref-



Glory Days
GRILL

erences," Ulmer said. "Just like when you host a watch party in your own living room, Glory Days Grill aims to provide a real, fun sports experience with our multitude of televisions broadcasting sports games and other entertainment."

With the recent World Cup happening, Glory Days had all the games being shown at the Brandon location, with an outstanding menu to match the World Cup festivities. "Our limited-time tournament menu celebrated the spirit of the game with globally inspired food pairings and select beverages sourced from around the world," Ulmer said. "We really wanted all the countries that played in the World Cup represented with our food and drink selections."

"At Glory Days Grill, we're proud to support our local communities through sponsorships and our Dining for Dollars program," Ulmer said. "We believe in giving back and fostering strong relationships with the neighborhoods we serve."

Locally, Glory Days supports the Brandon Cowboys, Valrico High School, Armwood High School and North Brandon Little League.

"We also support our local heroes with a 10 percent discount," Ulmer said. "Tunnels to Towers is another program Glory Days supports in the Tampa Bay community. T

It is located at 11310 Causeway Blvd. in Brandon. Visit www.glorydaysgrill.com/locations/fl-brandon/ for more information.



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ALL-NEW MONSTER JAM FREESTYLE MANIA IS COMING TO TAMPA

Staff Report

Get ready for the summer event that will change everything you thought you knew about freestyle — Monster Jam Freestyle Mania. New event format for the first time ever in Tampa, where Monster Jam trucks team up with freestyle motocross (FMX) bikes to deliver gravity-defying skills and thrills. Cheer for your favorite team with four action-packed events at Benchmark International Arena from Friday through Sunday, August 14-16, as they pull off stunts you've never seen before. The energy, the action and the next-level thrills will keep you on the edge of your seat. It's an adrenaline rush you can only experience live.

Monster Jam Freestyle Mania features one-of-a-kind FMX bikes for this epic team competition, each with the bold, iconic look of your favorite Monster Jam trucks, like the legendary Grave Digger, El Toro Loco, Sparkle Smash and more. It's all happening at Monster Jam, where your outside voice is allowed, and every big moment comes with an even bigger smile. Monster Jam Freestyle Mania — two times the freestyle action. Full-send family fun!

Get ready for nonstop excitement as Tampa roars to life with gravity-defying stunts, heart-pounding races and plenty of big air. The world's best Monster Jam drivers combine forces with fearless FMX riders in an eight-team lineup to wow the crowd with big air jumps, crazy tricks and unbelievable backflips. Teams look to take each overall event championship title in five total competitions. Monster Jam trucks go all out in Racing, 2-Wheel Skills and Freestyle com-



petitions, while FMX bikes face off in Best Whip and Best Trick competitions. Fans will be right in the middle of the action, helping to crown the Team Event Champion as they get to score the athletes in real time based on their skills, stunts and saves.

The day of fun starts at the Monster Jam Pit Party on both Saturday and Sunday, your first stop for selfies with the trucks and bikes, high fives and autographs from drivers and riders and family-friendly activities. It's the perfect way to start a day of adrenaline-charged fun, plus get an insider's look at how these 12,000-pound trucks are built to stand up to the competition.

These aren't just any athletes; they're world-class male and female athletes who have mastered controlling these 12,000-pound beasts and dynamic FMX bikes. Whether pulling off insane backflips, nailing crazy tricks and whips or in all-out racing, these athletes are ready to wow fans with the most mind-blowing live motorsports action around.

Tickets for this event are on sale now at www.ticketmaster.com. Advanced parking passes are available at www.parkwhiz.com. Visit www.benchmarkintlarena.com or call 813-301-2500 for more information.

For more detailed local info, please visit the Tampa event page on www.monsterjam.com. Follow Monster Jam on its social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. Subscribe to the Monster Jam YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/monsterjam.

STRAWBERRY HOUSE BED AND BREAKFAST HAS NEW OWNERS

By Libby Hopkins

Talesha and Gary Grant have been called a bit of a renaissance couple as they are involved in many things.

"We are both artists, musicians and we've been life coaches for our company, Heroic Life Strategies, for 20 years, where we help people find their purpose and create a fulfilling life as well as corporations in their vision," Talesha said.

"Gary is a writer currently working on our book for our company. He's a martial artist and a guide to men, teaching them to find their heroic heart. He has an amazing ear for music production. I'm a painter, wood worker, singer, songwriter and make pottery, and I love helping women move their heart through art."

The Grants are the new owners of the historic Strawberry House Bed and Breakfast in Plant City. The Strawberry House is a Dutch Colonial house built in 1910 by the Albert and Ula Miles.

"From the stories we've heard, their children and grandchildren all grew up within these walls," Talesha said. "The home is located in the historic district of Plant City, just a mile from I-4. The previous owners, Carol and Ken Canty, who own the state theater right here in Plant City, are lovely people who protected the beautiful integrity of this historic home and themed the rooms, which we just love! The home at some time became a bed and breakfast; it made per-



Talesha and Gary Grant are the new owners of the Strawberry House Bed and Breakfast in Plant City.



fect sense to call it the Strawberry House."

The historic bed and breakfast has hosted hundreds if not thousands of travelers, and many are already reserving their room for the upcoming Strawberry Festival season.

"Prior guests still send strawberry-themed items to be included in the home's decor," Talesha said. "We love the Strawberry House, and we want to continue to keep its history and let people know she's here."

The Strawberry House has four themed spaces for rent: the Wild West Room; the Strawberry Festival Room; the Henry B. Plant Room; which the couple lovingly refer to as the train room; and the Strawberry Cottage, which has two bedrooms including a state theater theme. There is a beautiful oasis in the backyard, a sparkling pool with lots of greenery, umbrellas and lounging areas and a garden which is growing, small but mighty.

"We will definitely be doing high tea events and afternoon teas," Talesha said. "Our tearoom is available for rent for baby showers, bridal showers and small parties and intimate events."

To learn more about the Strawberry House Bed and Breakfast, you can visit its website at <https://strawberryhouse.co/>. It is located at 805 N. Wheeler St. in Plant City.

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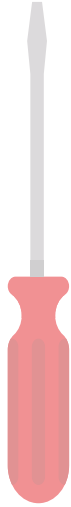


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LOCAL FAMILY OPENS FIRST BETTER BLEND LOCATION IN FLORIDA

The grand opening of Florida's first Better Blend location, Better Blend Brandon, was celebrated with fanfare on June 6. The celebration included free smoothie bowls for a year for the first 25 customers, half off smoothie bowls for the next 75 customers, free samples, a raffle for a food truck event, and a grand prize raffle with a total value of over \$1,000.

Owners Mike and Hillary Faustini are long-time residents of

Riverview. Hillary was born and raised in Brandon. Their reasons for bringing Better Blend to Florida are two-fold. Mike was searching for healthy low sugar, high protein food options as he was improving his health. Hillary was looking for a meaningful job that she could do while raising her kids, Skyleigh and Brody, and caring for her sister Hope who has Down Syndrome and is non-verbal autistic.

"I was looking for a healthier lifestyle and Hillary was looking for a job. We found Better Blend and we saw that it is a family run business, as well. That really resonated with us. We tried their products and we fell in love with them," Mike said.

"We have custody of my sister. It's important to me to take good care of her. When I was looking for a job, Mike was



Owners of the new Better Blend in Brandon, The Faustini family (Mike, Hillary, Skyleigh and Brody) on June 6, opening day.



By Jane Owen

like, "What can we do together that we will enjoy?" That's when we found Better Blend," Hillary said.

Better Blend smoothies are made with high-quality protein, organic stevia, zero added sugar, and 13 essential vitamins and minerals. The menu also includes acai bowls, protein bowls and snacks. Mike's current favorite menu item is the Acai Power Bowl. Hillary's is

the Orange Creamsicle Blend.

Better Blend was founded by Issac Hamlin in 2018. A college rugby athlete, Hamlin was inspired to find a better way to fuel his game. He was in Brandon for opening weekend.

"Opening our first Florida location in Brandon is incredibly special for us, and it makes it even more meaningful to do it alongside the family. They genuinely care about their community and share our belief that small, everyday choices can make a big difference in people's lives," Hamlin said.

Better Blend Brandon offers catering, has a food truck for events, and is located at 955 E Brandon Blvd, Brandon, FL 33511. For more information and to see their menu, visit www.betterblend-smoothies-bowls.com.

ARMY VETERAN AND FATHER OF SIX RECEIVES KEYS TO NEW HABITAT HOME

Staff Report



The Nakamura family has a new home in Windhorst Commons. The home provides much-needed space for the family of eight, made possible through the Veterans Build program and support from Old Republic Title.

After months of building alongside volunteers, U.S. Army veteran Brian Nakamura received the keys to his family's new Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough home during a special dedication ceremony on June 24. The home was made possible through Habitat's Veterans Build program with support from Old Republic Title.

Nakamura, his wife and their six children have been living in a crowded three-bedroom townhouse and are looking forward to the stability, space and security of a home of their own in Habitat's Windhorst Commons community. The new five-bedroom home will give the growing family room to thrive, including dedicated space for their son Bradley, who has autism and will benefit from having a quiet room of his own.

The shortage of affordable housing remains one of the most pressing issues for veterans across the country. In January 2024, 32,882 veterans were living without stable housing, reflecting high rental costs, limited availability and gaps in support services that leave many struggling to provide

safe homes for their families.

Like all Habitat homeowners, Nakamura invested hundreds of hours of 'sweat equity,' helping build Habitat homes, completing homeownership education and purchasing his home with an affordable mortgage that fits his family's budget.

During a visit to Windhorst Commons in December

2025, Florida Lt. Gov. Jay Collins toured Nakamura's future home to learn firsthand about the housing challenges veterans face and Habitat for Humanity's role in providing affordable, safe housing for families like Nakamura's.

Windhorst Commons is a 23-home Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough neighborhood providing affordable houses built with reinforced construction and hurricane-resilient features for veterans and working families. The remaining homes are expected to be completed by early 2027.

About Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough

Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough builds and renovates homes in partnership with people in need of decent, affordable housing and has worked with local homeowners and the community on more than 650 homes since 1987. Habitat affiliates around the world have helped more than 62 million people build or improve the places they call home. For more information, visit www.habitathillsborough.org.

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HIGH 5 INC. NEW COMPETITIVE DIVE PROGRAM HAS NEW COACH

By Emily Harper

High 5 Diving is excited to announce its brand-new competitive dive program. This program welcomes divers of all ages and diving abilities to reach their full potential.

The program is divided into four groups where divers will practice with others of similar skill levels to reach their individual goals.

Leading the program is Head Coach Anjel Clemente.

Clemente stated, "I want to create a very inclusive and supportive community here at High 5 where every athlete is measured for success not by where they stand on a podium but by their ability to grow as an individual, face adversity and break their own mental barriers."

Clemente's passion for diving has been a part of his life since he began the sport in eighth grade. He continued mastering his craft throughout high school and competed collegiately at Manchester University in North Manchester, Indiana.

Throughout his time at the university, Clemente set many school records, including the six-dive record on 1-meter board, the eleven-dive record on 1-meter board, and the six-dive record on 3-meter board. Furthermore, he was a two-time NCAA Regional Championship finalist and finished his



Head Coach Anjel Clemente.

collegiate career as an Academic All-American during his senior year.

Recognized for his leadership and success in sports, Clemente was inducted into his high school's hall of fame in January for soccer, diving and track and field.

After moving to the Tampa Bay area, Clemente served as the head coach of Academy

at the Lakes (2022-25) and Cypress Creek High School (2023-present). As a coach, his athletes have broken over 30 combined swimming and diving school records, and he has qualified multiple athletes for the FH-SAA State Championships.

"I love the sport of diving because to me it is an art. Our ability to create, focus, control and use our athleticism to create something so beautiful while leaving people in awe at the gracefulness has always been an art form to me. Diving requires so much focus and discipline and rewards with such beautiful executions," said Clemente.

To ensure each individual is placed in the appropriate group, Clemente is conducting tryouts/evaluations based on inquiries submitted through High 5's website. This is a great opportunity for both families and Clemente to meet and determine if the program is the right fit.

To learn more about this program or to submit an inquiry, visit <https://high5inc.org/diving/>.

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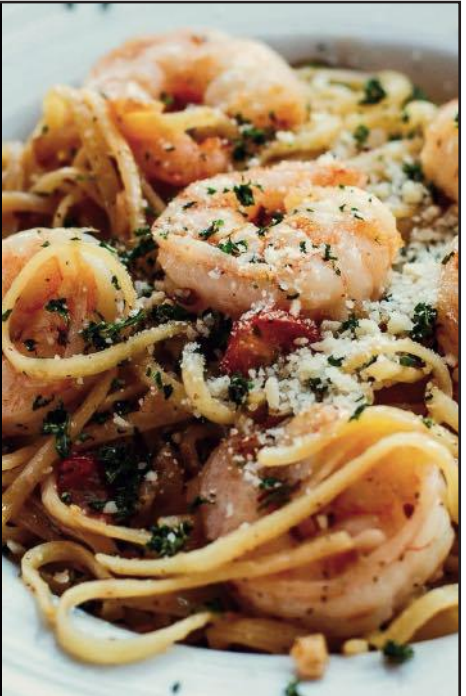
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Oklahoma! Play, Night of Worship, Back to School & More...

Compiled by Jenny Bennett
jbennett@ospreyobserver.com

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Join Plant City Entertainment Inc., located at 101 N. Thomas St. in Plant City, where 'the wind comes sweeping off the plains' for three weekends, from Friday, July 17, through Sunday, August 2. Tickets are available at its website, www.plantcityentertainment.com.

Delta Delta Chapter Of Beta Sigma Phi Meeting

The sisters of Delta Delta Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi gathered on June 27 at the home of Phyllis Bradbury in Plant City for a thoughtfully planned brunch meeting. The morning provided an opportunity for fellowship, meaningful conversation and reflection on the chapter's ongoing mission.

In addition to enjoying a well-prepared brunch, members focused on planning for the year ahead. Fundraising efforts were also a key topic of discussion. Members collaborated on developing practical and creative Ways and Means projects to support their charitable goals, demonstrating a continued commitment to community engagement.

Delta Delta is one of several Beta Sigma Phi chapters serving the Tampa Bay area. The organization welcomes women ages 18 and older who are interested in building connections, personal growth and commu-

nity involvement. For more information or to inquire about membership, please contact Julia Pickens at juliapickens88@gmail.com.

Night Of Worship At First Baptist Brandon

Join First Baptist Brandon for its annual Night of Worship on Sunday, August 2, at 6 p.m. in the sanctuary. This year's theme, Classics, will highlight beloved songs from the history of First Baptist Brandon's choir and orchestra ministry. Come be part of a meaningful evening as we remember God's faithfulness through the years and lift our voices together in worship and praise.

First Baptist Brandon is located at 216 N. Parsons Ave. in Brandon. Visit its website at www.fbcbrandon.org for additional information and events.



Back-to-school Celebration

Tampa Bay Mission of Hope and Holy Innocents Episcopal Church are sponsoring a back-to-school celebration on Saturday, July 18, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Tampa Bay Mission of Hope. This fun event will include hamburgers, hot dogs, ice cream, pizza, popcorn and donuts, as well as free clothing and shoes for students.

Donations of school supplies are also being collected; please donate at Tampa Bay Mission of Hope, located at 110 S. Parsons Ave. in Brandon.

For additional information, please call 813-716-3996 or visit its website at www.tbmissionofhope.org.

LOCAL STUDENT EARNS TOP HONOR AT NATIONAL THESPIAN FESTIVAL

By Zofia Osterman



Bloomingdale High theater student Alli Aristondo represented the school at the National Thespians Festival.

Bloomingdale High School theater student Alli Aristondo has made school history after becoming the first Bloomingdale student to compete at the National Thespians Festival, where she earned a Superior rating, the festival's highest honor, for her performance of *Changing My Major* from the musical *Fun Home*.

Aristondo qualified for the national competition after receiving Superior ratings at both the district and state Thespians festivals before advancing to nationals in Indianapolis.

"When I first found out that I had earned a Superior at the National Thespians Festival, I was watching a mainstage performance with my sister," Aristondo said. "When my dad texted me, I felt so incredibly happy, like I had reached a destination and I could finally celebrate."

She said the recognition was especially meaningful because *Fun Home* has had a significant impact on her, and earning the award reflected the dedication she put into bringing the character to life.

Making school history is something

Aristondo hopes will inspire others to pursue theater.

"I started theater in the fall of freshman year, and I knew I had to do something with my passion for it," she said. "Making school history means that I can show others that you can do something important in theater, and that it actually goes somewhere."

Preparing for the national stage required months of rehearsal while balancing academics and her role as captain of Bloomingdale's varsity golf team. She also studied the *Fun Home* script extensively and had the opportunity to meet the musical's co-writer, Jeanine Tesori, during a panel discussion at the festival.

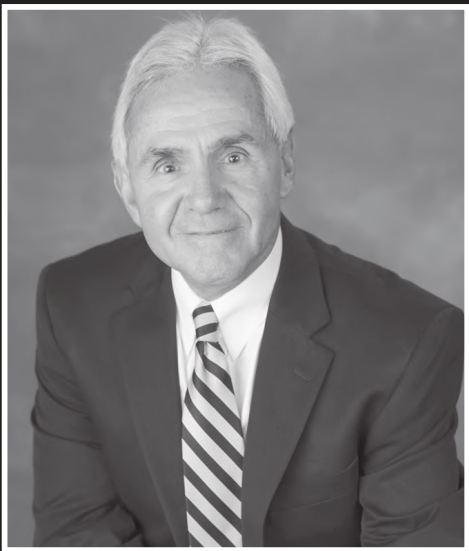
Aristondo credits Bloomingdale's theater program and director Dr. Chad Cornwell for helping make the experience possible.

Looking ahead, she has been appointed student liaison for Bloomingdale's Thespians program, where she will mentor future competitors.

"I'll have the opportunity to help guide, coach and support other students as they prepare their own entries," Aristondo said. "I'm excited to use what I learned from districts, states and nationals to help other performers grow."

She also offered advice to aspiring performers: "Even if you can sing beautifully, it is important to do your research. One thing that you can't learn is passion."

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GRAND OPENING OF NEW MACBETH & CHEESE PLAYHOUSE

By Srishti Tripathi



The Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce proudly celebrated the grand opening of the new MacBeth & Cheese Playhouse, marking an exciting new chapter for Brandon Performing Arts Inc. and the local arts community.

Chamber members, community leaders, supporters and guests gathered to celebrate the opening of the organization's expanded performance space, which will serve as a hub for live theater, entertainment and community engagement in the Brandon area.

Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce President Amber Aaron welcomed attendees and thanked everyone for joining the celebration before introducing MacBeth & Cheese Playhouse co-founders Camille 'C.J.' Hashem and Amy Windle. Hashem shared the organization's vision for its new home, emphasizing its commitment to creating immersive, accessible and memorable live theater experiences while expanding opportunities for local performers and audiences to connect through the arts.

Honorary Mayor of Brandon Riverview and Brandon Riverview Chamber Ambassador Abe Agosto of United Direct Lending presented a special proclamation officially declaring June 24 as MacBeth & Cheese Playhouse Day, recognizing the organization's contributions to the local arts and cul-

tural community. Brandon Performing Arts Inc., doing business as MacBeth & Cheese Playhouse, is an all-volunteer community theater dedicated to producing bold, engaging stage performances throughout the Tampa Bay area. Known for psychological thrillers, classic productions and original adaptations, the organization creates theatrical experiences designed to immerse audiences in every performance.

The newly opened venue represents an exciting expansion for the organization and will offer far more than live theater. In addition to stage productions, the space will host comedy shows, open-mic nights, acting classes, special events and other community-centered programming, creating an inclusive environment where creativity and connection can thrive.

"The arts play an important role in bringing communities together," said Aaron. "We are proud to celebrate MacBeth & Cheese Playhouse as they expand their impact in our community. Their passion for storytelling, creativity and creating meaningful experiences enriches the quality of life for residents throughout the Tampa Bay area."

For more information about MacBeth & Cheese Playhouse, upcoming performances, and community events, visit its website at <https://macbethandcheese.com/> or follow it on social media. The Playhouse is located at 225 East Brandon Blvd., Brandon and is building a calendar including comedy, plays and classes for the performing arts community.

THRIFTY DEPOT IN BRANDON OFFERS QUALITY ITEMS AT RESALE PRICES

By Jane Owen



Thrifty Depot is located at 723 W. Lumsden Rd. It is open Monday through Friday, 4:30-8:30 p.m., and on Saturday, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.

Bargain shoppers and anyone on a tight budget should check out Thrifty Depot in Brandon. Located near O'Brien's Irish Pub and Grill in the Oak Park Plaza on Lumsden Road, Thrifty Depot offer amazing deals on clothing, collectibles, housewares, toys, jewelry and more. The inventory changes often and includes both gently used items from garage and estate sales and new items purchased from liquidation pallets from local stores.

The owners, Gil Brenn and Doris Maggiore, are a son-and-mom team who live in Brandon and Valrico, respectively. They previously had a store in Tampa but decided to move their shop closer to home.

"Choosing this location was because it is close to home in our community," Brenn said.

Brenn and Maggiore love the hunt of finding good items. On early Saturday mornings, they go together to garage sales and estate sales in the area. They also regularly pick up pallets of liquidation items from stores like Target.

When asked what they love most about having a thrift store, the answer came quickly.

"We like people. We love the people that come in. It's fun to see what items people buy, and sometimes the most unusual items go quick. But we love getting to know people and the items they are looking for," Brenn said.

In addition to new items from liquidation sales, Thrifty Depot carries new jewelry, new military challenge coins and patches, new music equipment and 3D-printed art from a local artist. They have a nice selection of CDs, DVDs and records as well.

Veterans receive a 15 percent discount, and seniors receive a 10 percent discount.

Thrifty Depot is located at 723 W. Lumsden Rd. It is open Monday through Friday, 4:30-8:30 p.m., and on Saturday, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m. For more information, visit <https://thriftydepot.com/> or call 813-315-8210.



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COME MEET YOUR CANDIDATES AT THE 2026 CANDIDATE CONNECTION

Staff Report

The Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the 2026 Candidate Connection, formerly known as the Hob Nob, on Thursday, August 6, from 6-8 p.m. at The Regent, located at 6437 Watson Rd. in Riverview. This year's event, presented by Curry Law Group and

powered by RSA Consulting Group, will also commemorate America's 250th birthday, providing a meaningful opportunity for civic engagement while celebrating our nation's history.

Candidate Connection is designed to connect voters with the individuals seeking to serve their communities. The event offers a welcoming, nonpartisan environment where attendees can meet candidates, visit sponsor and community organization booths, learn about local initiatives and public services and engage in meaningful conversations with neighbors and community leaders.

Guests will enjoy light refreshments while networking with local business professionals, elected officials and residents from across Hillsborough County. The event encourages informed civic participation by providing direct access to candidates representing a variety of local, county, state and federal offices.

For attendees seeking a more in-depth experience, VIP admission includes early entry from 5-6 p.m. and exclusive small-group



conversations with participating candidates. These sessions provide an opportunity to hear directly from candidates about their visions, priorities and policy positions in a more personal setting.

Candidates currently scheduled to participate include Sara Peacock, judge candidate; Daniela Simic, Hillsborough County School Board; Sally Harris Williamson, Hillsborough County School Board, District 6; Nina McGucken Alvarez, circuit judge; Louie Aguila, judge candidate; Bob Henriquez, Hillsborough County property appraiser; Joshua Wostal, Hillsborough County Commission, District 7; Cindy Stuart, Hillsborough County Commission, District 7; Stacy Hahn, Hillsborough County Commission, District 5 (countywide); Brittany Lyssy, Hillsborough County School Board; Aileen Rodriguez, Hillsborough County Commission, District 7; Kevin Steele, U.S. Congress; and Bea Valenti, U.S. Congress.

Additional candidates may be announced prior to the event.

"Candidate Connection is one of our community's most important civic engagement events," said Amber Aaron, president and CEO of the Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce. For ticket information and event details, visit www.centralhillsboroughchamber.com.

STEVE YOUNG NAMED CEO OF HCA FLORIDA BRANDON HOSPITAL

Staff Report

HCA Healthcare has named Steve Young as its new chief executive officer. Young returns to Brandon Hospital after serving as chief executive officer of HCA Florida Blake Hospital and HCA Florida Englewood Hospital, bringing more than 18 years of progressive health care leadership experience within HCA Healthcare.

Young most recently led HCA Florida Blake Hospital, where he oversaw one of the state's premier Level II trauma centers and burn centers. Under his leadership, the hospital achieved record levels of patient, physician and colleague engagement while significantly expanding access to emergency care through the opening of freestanding emergency departments in Palmetto and South Bradenton. He also strengthened Blake Hospital's trauma and burn programs, ensuring more patients across Florida's Gulf Coast had access to advanced, lifesaving care.

Young is also familiar with the Brandon community, having previously served as chief operating officer of Brandon Hospital from 2019-20. During that time, he helped oversee numerous strategic expansion projects, including emergency department growth, operating room expansion, women's services enhancements, graduate medical education initiatives and multiple freestanding emergency departments serving the region.

As CEO, Young will lead HCA Florida Brandon Hospital, the largest acute care hospital in HCA Healthcare's West Florida Division. The hospital includes six free-



Steve Young, new CEO of HCA Florida Brandon Hospital.

standing emergency departments across Hillsborough and Polk counties, in addition to the hospital's main adult emergency department and children's ER. Together, these facilities provide care for nearly 220,000 patients annually, including more than 165,000 emergency visits.

"Steve is an accomplished leader with a proven track record of delivering exceptional patient care, building strong cultures and expanding access to health care," said Justin Brewer, chief operating officer at Brandon Hospital. "His previous leadership experience at Brandon Hospital, combined with his outstanding success leading hospitals across West Florida, makes him the ideal person to lead our team."

"I am honored to return to HCA Florida Brandon Hospital and rejoin a team that is deeply committed to serving this incredible community," said Young.

Young was born and raised in Sarasota and is a graduate of Cardinal Mooney Catholic High School. He and his wife, Katherine, have been married for nine years and have two children, Emily (7) and Scarlett (5).

Young earned a Master of Business Administration from Saint Leo University and a bachelor's degree in applied physiology and kinesiology from the University of Florida. He has been recognized for his leadership and commitment to health care excellence, including receiving the Tampa Bay Business Journal's Up & Comer Award.

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BRANDON WOMAN RECEIVES FIRST TYPE 1 DIABETES SERVICE DOG

By Chloe Wagner



Tampa-based nonprofit Dogs Inc. has gifted a Brandon resident with the organization's first Type 1 diabetes service dog, kickstarting the organization's new Type 1 program.

Dogs Inc., created in 1982, has a variety of nationwide programs for service dogs, including guide dogs, service dogs for veterans suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder, Gold Star family dogs and more. The Type 1 service dog program is brand-new, with Latha Dawn Sullivan being the first recipient.

Sullivan was diagnosed with Type 1 when she was 3 years old. Growing up, Sullivan struggled with diabetes "ruling her life," as well as her siblings and parents' lives, she said.

"I was considered a 'brittle diabetic' because my blood sugar levels were constantly fluctuating based on my emotions, stress, excitement and daily activities," Sullivan said. "I was very

blessed to have a wonderful family that always made life as normal as possible."

She began her Type 1 service dog research in 2022, quickly hitting financial and locational roadblocks. The only program that met her standards was Dogs Inc., which had not advertised a Type 1 service program.

Sullivan reached out to the nonprofit and

was informed that it had recently launched a program for Type 1 diabetics and jumped on the opportunity to be added to its waitlist at the end of 2025. While wait times for service dogs vary, Sullivan's service dog, a black Labrador lovingly named Rita, was placed within her care at the beginning of 2026.

Dogs Inc. was able to provide Sullivan with Rita free of cost, as all of its programs come at no cost to the service dog recipient. Dogs Inc. is fully funded off donations and is operated by volunteers.

Alysia Santos is the scent detection program manager for the Type 1 program at Dogs Inc., overseeing the entire process of training and homing of the dogs.

The total training period for the dogs lasts around two years. Volunteer puppy raisers provide the puppies with foundational training till they are about 16-18 months.

Type 1 trainers will teach the dogs to put their paws on them and eventually pair that cue with the scent of low blood sugar, which is followed by more advanced, nuanced tasks. The smells are obtained by volunteers with Type 1 who donate scent samples, such as perspiration or saliva.

Rita has greatly impacted Sullivan and the management of her Type 1 diabetes. She was constantly on alert with her diabetes before receiving Rita, carrying an emergency bag full of medications, snacks and juices everywhere she went. She has been able to live her life with less stress with Rita, as she is trained to detect blood sugar level changes and notifies Sullivan 10-20 minutes before her electronic medical devices can.

For more information and to get involved, visit <https://dogsinc.org/>.

SHARKCON 12 BRINGS SHARKS, SCIENCE AND HOLLYWOOD TO TAMPA THIS JULY

Staff Report

SharkCon 12 is set to make a splash at the Florida State Fairgrounds Expo Hall on Saturday and Sunday, July 18-19, bringing together shark experts, conservationists, celebrities and ocean enthusiasts for a weekend packed with education, entertainment and family fun.

Now in its 12th year, SharkCon has become one of the nation's premier shark and ocean-themed conventions, offering something for everyone — from curious families and beach lovers to marine science enthusiasts and dedicated shark fans.

One of this year's highlights is the premiere of Water Park Shark, the latest film from Anthony C. Ferrante, director of the wildly popular Sharknado franchise. Ferrante, along with the film's cast, will attend a special screening followed by a question-and-answer session with fans.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to meet and hear from scientists, conservationists and television personalities featured on Discovery Channel's Shark Week and National Geographic's SharkFest. These experts will share stories from the field, discuss shark research and offer behind-the-scenes insights into filming some of television's most popular shark programs.

Celebrity guest Mario Van Peebles, known for his acting and directing career and his role in Jaws: The Revenge, is also scheduled to appear.

Beyond the celebrity lineup, SharkCon offers dozens of interactive exhibits and activ-



ities. Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium, Gatorland and numerous conservation organizations will be on-site with educational displays, touch tanks and hands-on experiences designed to inspire the next generation of ocean advocates.

Families can enjoy a 45-foot inflatable megalodon, a 27-foot shark

slide, shark tooth sand digs, paddleboard and kayak clinics, marine rescue demonstrations and a free treasure map hunt with prizes for children. Guests can even try scuba diving in a safe, controlled environment through the Off the Wall Adventures and Outfitters Scuba Pool.

"SharkCon is more than just a great time," organizers said. "It is an event dedicated to raising awareness about shark and ocean conservation, as well as sustainability. We want to ensure the health of the oceans for generations to come."

SharkCon 12 will take place from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on both July 18 and July 19 at the Florida State Fairgrounds Expo Hall, located at 4800 U.S. 301 N. in Tampa.

Advance tickets are available online, with adult admission priced at \$24.95 and children's admission at \$9.95. Tickets will also be available at the door.

For more information, tickets or volunteer opportunities, visit <https://sharkcon.com/> or call 941-539-0833.

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UNITED FOOD BANK EXPANDS HUNGER RELIEF WITH NEW TRUCK, FORKLIFT

By Libby Hopkins

United Food Bank & Services (UFB) is expanding its ability to fight hunger in Eastern Hillsborough County with the addition of a new refrigerated box truck and forklift, thanks to the support of community partners and local government.

The nonprofit celebrated the new equipment during a ribbon-cutting and reveal ceremony held on June 23 at its Plant City headquarters. Community leaders, funding partners and supporters gathered to mark the milestone, which officials say will strengthen UFB's ability to rescue, transport, store and distribute fresh food to families in need.

The new refrigerated truck was made possible through funding from Publix Super Markets Charities and The Mosaic Company, while Hillsborough County provided funding for the organization's new forklift.

District 4 Hillsborough County Commissioner Christine Miller joined representatives from the sponsoring organizations and United Food Bank & Services leadership for the ceremony, highlighting the importance of partnerships in addressing food insecurity across the region.

According to UFB, the refrigerated truck will significantly increase the organization's capacity to safely transport perishable food items, including fresh produce, dairy products and other refrigerated goods. The addition will allow the food bank to rescue more food that might otherwise go to waste while ensuring it reaches local families safely.



The new forklift will improve warehouse efficiency by making it easier to move, organize and distribute large quantities of food. Together, the two pieces of equipment are expected to increase the organization's overall distribution capacity and help meet the growing demand for food assistance throughout Eastern Hillsborough County.

The investment comes as United Food Bank & Services continues to serve a growing number of residents facing food insecurity. During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the nonprofit distributed the equivalent of 3,534,951 meals to children, families, seniors and individuals across the community.

Organization leaders said the additional equipment will help expand that impact for years to come by increasing operational efficiency and allowing staff and volunteers to reach more neighbors with fresh, nutritious food.

United Food Bank & Services, located at 702 E. Alsobrook St. in Plant City, provides hunger relief, nutrition education and community support programs throughout Eastern Hillsborough County. Its mission is to provide dignified access to food and essential resources for those in need while helping families build healthier, more secure futures.

United Food Bank & Services is a nonprofit organization serving Eastern Hillsborough County through hunger relief, nutrition education, and community support programs. For more, visit www.UFBPC.org.

JOHN WESLEY COMES HOME TO PERFORM WITH BAND VERTICAL HORIZON

By Brian Bokor

There couldn't have been more than a dozen people gathered on the patio at The Talking Pint in Riverview that evening. No stage lights. No backstage security. No road crew. Just a man with a guitar, an amplifier, a couple of speakers and a handful of people enjoying an intimate acoustic performance.

As a longtime Porcupine Tree fan, I knew exactly who I was watching. Looking around, I couldn't help but wonder if anyone else did.

For more than three decades, Brandon native John Wesley Dearth III, better known simply as Wes to friends and family, has built a career taking him around the world, performing alongside internationally respected musicians on stages across North America, Europe and Asia.

What stayed with me wasn't just the music. It was the man behind it. Between songs, Wesley thanked people for coming, talked with anyone who wanted to say hello and carried himself with the humility of someone playing his first local show.

It reminded me that many people in Brandon and the surrounding communities have no idea that one of rock's most respected touring guitarists quietly calls Tampa Bay home.

That story comes full circle on Friday, July 24, when Wesley returns to the Tampa Bay area with Vertical Horizon for a concert at Jannus Live, located at 200 First Ave. N., Ste. 206, in downtown St. Petersburg. Fans can expect to hear Vertical Horizon favor-



Brandon native John Wesley Dearth III (far left) and Vertical Horizon perform at Jannus Live in St. Petersburg on Friday, July 24"

ites, including "Everything You Want," "You're a God" and "Best I Ever Had (Grey Sky Morning)," along with Tonic's signature hit, "If You Could Only See."

A 1980 graduate of Brandon High School and former

student at Nativity Catholic School, Wesley built his career one opportunity at a time. He released several critically acclaimed solo albums and spent years touring internationally with Porcupine Tree, logging more than 450 performances before joining Vertical Horizon.

Along the way, Wesley developed friendships with many of rock's most respected artists, including legendary Rush drummer Neil Peart. Vertical Horizon founder Matt Scannell also worked with Peart, collaborating with him on the band's 2009 album, *Burning the Days*.

Today, Wesley tours with Vertical Horizon, the multiplatinum band whose music helped define late-'90s rock. More than 25 years after the release of *Everything You Want*, the band continues to perform throughout the United States and internationally. He and his wife, Becka, a Ruskin native, chose to make the area their home rather than relocate to one of the music industry's traditional hubs.

"I'm thrilled to be doing a hometown gig and excited to see a ton of friends and family," Wesley said.

For Brandon, it's a chance to applaud one of its own.

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 - Helping you keep your emotions in check during market volatility
 - Helping you prepare for the unexpected

I believe that when it comes to your financial strategy, you deserve a personal relationship and professional advice. My goal is to help you achieve your goals. That means focusing on the future you see for yourself, building strategies just for you and helping you stay on track by partnering together over the long term.

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Financial Advisor

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA PROBATE DIVISION

IN RE ESTATE OF:

BRIAN ANTHONY CASTILLO,
Deceased.

File No. 2026-CP-002271
Probate Division

The administration of the estate of Brian Anthony Castillo, deceased, File No. 2026-CP-002271, is pending in the Circuit Court for Hillsborough County, Florida, Probate Division, the address of which is 2853 Lake Michaela, Valrico, Florida 33596, care of Ashley Castillo personal representative of the Estate of Brian Anthony Castillo.

The names and addresses of the personal representative of the estate as well as the personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against the Decedent's estate, including unmatured, contingent or unliquidated claims, on whom a copy of this notice is served must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the Decedent and other persons having claims or demands against the Decedent's estate, including unmatured, contingent or unliquidated claims, must file their claims with this court WITHIN THREE (3) MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT SO FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN §733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED UNDER FLORIDA LAW.

The date of the first publication of this Notice is Wednesday, July 15, 2026.

Attorney for Personal Representative:
Lane Johnson, Esq.
Florida Bar No. 0078984
111 North Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
Phone #: (850) 294-9740
Email: lanejohnsonlaw2020@gmail.com

Personal Representative:
Ashley Castillo
2853 Lake Michaela
Valrico, Florida 33596
Phone #: (202) 374-3797
email: ashleycastillo850@gmail.com

27NORTH REALTY BUILDS ITS BRAND ON CONFIDENCE, CLARITY AND CARE

By Kelly Wise Valdes

In a fast-moving Tampa Bay real estate market, 27North Realty has carved out a reputation built on something simple but increasingly rare: putting people before transactions.

"We believe people are looking for something different

than they were even a few years ago," said broker/owner Gregg Calvert. "They want honest advice, local expertise and someone who will tell them the truth, even when it's not the easiest conversation."

Calvert said that philosophy is the foundation of 27North Realty, where agents are encouraged to prioritize relationships over commissions.

"Clients continue to choose us because they know we genuinely care about the outcome, not just the sale," said Calvert.

That approach is reflected in the company's guiding phrase, 'navigate home,' which Calvert described as a commitment to clarity and care throughout the buying or selling process.

"Buying or selling a home can feel overwhelming," he said. "Navigate home' means helping people understand their options so they can make confident decisions."

Guidance often includes educating clients on flood zones, insurance costs, waterfront considerations, builder contracts, HOA rules and longterm financial implications.

"We want our clients to feel informed, prepared and supported every step of the way," Calvert said.

As Tampa Bay continues to grow, Calvert



27 North Realty's Shawna and broker/owner Gregg Calvert.



said buyers are becoming more intentional.

"The days of making rushed decisions are largely behind us," he said.

Buyers are weighing value, insurance costs and life-

style more carefully. Waterfront sellers, meanwhile, are focusing on presentation and pricing as competition increases.

"SouthShore attracts families who want more space, newer homes and a strong sense of connection," he said.

Calvert's promise to "outwork, out-prepare and out-care" shows up in ways that rarely appear on a closing statement.

"We've coordinated contractors, inspections, estate sales, moving companies, attorneys, title issues and repairs long before a home ever reaches the market," he said.

For newcomers to Florida, the team spends time explaining communities, schools, flood zones and lifestyle differences.

"We want them to choose the right community, not just the right house," he said.

"Real estate is ultimately about people," he said. "Homes matter because of the lives that happen inside them. Our goal is to help people navigate those moments with confidence, clarity and care."

For more information visit www.27north-realty.com or call 813-645-4663. 27North Realty's office is located at 6138 N. U.S. 41 in Apollo Beach.

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ROTARY'S CAMP FLORIDA NAMES ELEANOR SAUNDERS AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Libby Hopkins

Rotary's Camp Florida has been a part of the Brandon community since the 1950s. It was originally a camp used by the United Methodist Church, but in 1991, Rotary's Camp Florida was incorporated to acquire, operate and maintain a year-round camp facility for children with special medical needs. The property on which Rotary's Camp Florida sits was purchased on December 26, 1991, and extensively remodeled. As the church camp was built in the 1950s, it was not designed for special-needs children.

"It a local hidden gem, and I don't want it to be hidden anymore," said Rotary's Camp Florida's new director, Eleanor Saunders.



Eleanor Saunders will become the new Director of Rotary's Camp Florida on July 13 of this year. Saunders is a Brandon resident, a Rotarian and the former Executive Director of E.C.H.O. of Brandon.



fall into place."

The mission of Rotary's Camp Florida is to provide a safe, fun space to learn, grow and play for groups whose members need supportive accommodations.

"Rotary's Camp Florida is a 21-acre, ADA-compliant campsite, and I can't wait to start promoting the camp's mission to the community and beyond," Saunders said. "It is a place that has so much potential, and I love helping local nonprofit organizations realign and grow."

"I love that the camp has something for everyone," Saunders said. "My hope for the camp is that it will become very well known in the

local market as an option for retreats and events, and that earned revenue will fully support our campers, so kids with special needs can come to camp without money being a concern. They can just come to camp and be a kid."

For more, visit the camp's website at <https://rotaryscampflorida.org/> or call 813-654-4042. The camp is located at 1915 Camp Florida Rd. in Brandon.

LOCAL MUSIC TEACHER SHARE HIS PASSION FOR LEARNING TO PLAY INSTRUMENTS WITH HIS STUDENTS

By Libby Hopkins

Jonathan Cestero is a local music teacher who loves to continue learning right along with his students. Each school semester, he picks a new instrument to learn how to play while his students are learning to play it as well.

"I believe it is important to always keep growing," Cestero said. "As a musician, I enjoy the challenge of learning a new instrument and also showing my students the time and dedication required to play it. Together, we experience the highs and lows of music. This year, I chose the trombone."

Cestero is the director of bands at Manatee School for the Arts but lives in the Brandon area. He began playing music professionally at 18 after high school.

"My first band was with friends, and we were called The Super Villains," Cestero said. "We later developed into a full-time traveling gig that continued for 13 years. Afterwards, I attended the University of South Florida, where I earned my bachelor's degree, majoring in jazz performance. I continued my education by obtaining a master's degree in jazz performance, also from USF."

During his education, Cestero was able to study and perform in multiple countries such as Germany, England, Scotland, Colombia and Italy.

"My time in Italy gave me the opportu-



nity to perform in one of the largest jazz festivals in the world, Umbria Jazz Festival," Cestero said. "Throughout this time of education and exploration I performed with professional jazz acts such as Michael Bublé, The Temptations and The Glenn Miller Orchestra. Additionally, I performed at the 2019 Women's World Cup in Le Havre, France, as well as playing the 2025 Presidential Inauguration for the Veteran's Ball."

Teaching music is something Cestero is something he truly loves.

"Now, I apply my trade to students ages 11-18 as the director of bands for Manatee School for the Arts," Cestero said. "In this position, I am able to teach different levels of concert band material, percussion ensembles and a jazz band."

So, which instrument will Cestero pick for himself and his students to learn when school goes back in session for the fall?

"This upcoming year, I will attempt to learn the oboe," Cestero said. "It is an essential instrument for a woodwind performer like me. I'm also always on the lookout for donated instruments because so many children need them."

If you have any instruments you would like to donate to Cestero, you can email him at jcestero@msa.raeschools.org.



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OH SO RUSTIC MARKET KICKS OFF VIBRANT SUMMER SEASON

By Srishti Tripathi

As the summer heat rolls into Florida, many local activities begin to wind down. But at La Viva Plaza, the community energy is just warming up. The Brandon Sunday Market is



mer can occasionally see a slight dip in sheer numbers, it opens the door for fresh faces. "Summer does seem to bring out some new and original vendors of all types," the organiz-

ers noted, ensuring that attendees will always find something unique. Beyond the unique artisan crafts and delicious food truck eats, what truly sets this event apart is its deep, grassroots connection to the neighborhood. In a landscape often dominated by third-party event coordinators, this market is proudly homegrown.

Organized entirely by Oh So Rustic, a beloved brick-and-mortar home decor store located right on the market site at 788 W. Lumsden Rd. in Brandon, the event has become a staple for local shopping. While some might question launching a market series in the middle of a brutal Sunshine State summer, the organizers view it as business as usual.

"During our almost 10 years of existence, we have always operated in the summer," the organizers shared. "We have many full-time vendors; it's also a good time for relatively new vendors to gain some experience, and frankly the weather is not much different in July than it is in September. It's Florida, baby!"

The market provides a crucial platform for small businesses. Vendor and food truck spots are intentionally kept accessible at just \$40, which helps keep the marketplace dynamic. While sum-

mers can occasionally see a slight dip in sheer numbers, it opens the door for fresh faces. "Summer does seem to bring out some new and original vendors of all types," the organiz-

ers noted, ensuring that attendees will always find something unique. Beyond the unique artisan crafts and delicious food truck eats, what truly sets this event apart is its deep, grassroots connection to the neighborhood. In a landscape often dominated by third-party event coordinators, this market is proudly homegrown.

"We are not one of the many out-of-area 'vendor management companies,'" the owners emphasized.

Instead, they described the gathering as "a market by the people for the people" wholly focused on fostering a genuine local connection.

For those planning to attend the upcoming dates on July 12 and August 9, the atmosphere promises to be incredibly lively. The market features free admission, pet-friendly walking paths, interactive booths and live entertainment courtesy of Music By Robbie.

"Our vendors are dancing in the aisles when they're not selling merch," the owners added. "It is Brandon's market and we are honored to be a part of it."

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BACK 2 SCHOOL BASH COMING TO COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS ON AUGUST 1

Staff Report

Families from across Hillsborough County are invited to kick off the new school year at the 2026 Back 2 School Bash, taking place on Saturday, August 1, from 9 a.m.-12 Noon at the Hillsborough County Fairgrounds, located at 215 Sydney Washer Rd. in Dover.

The annual community outreach event brings together the Hillsborough County Fair, Hillsborough County Public Schools, local nonprofits, churches, businesses and community partners with one common goal: helping students begin the school year prepared for success.

- This free event will feature:
- A backpack and school supply giveaway (while supplies last).
 - Resources from Hillsborough County Public Schools.
 - More than 100 community vendors.
 - Family-friendly activities.
 - A kid zone and bounce houses.
 - Information on educational and community support services.

Registration for the 2026 backpack giveaway will be walk-up only, making it easier than ever for families in need to receive as-



sistance. "The Back 2 School Bash is much more than a school supply giveaway," organizers said. "It's an opportunity for our community to come together and ensure every child begins the school year with confidence, encouragement and the resources they need

to succeed."

Each year, thousands of children and families attend the event, making it one of the largest back-to-school outreach efforts in Hillsborough County. In addition to receiving backpacks and school supplies, families can connect with organizations offering valuable educational, health and social service resources.

Community members, businesses, churches and civic organizations are encouraged to support the event through sponsorships, school supply donations or volunteering.

Additional information, sponsorship opportunities, volunteer registration and a list of needed school supplies are available at www.hillsboroughcountyfair.com/p/back-to-school-bash.

GFWC BR. JUNIOR WOMAN'S CLUB CONTINUES 70-YEAR LEGACY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE & IMPACT

By Ella Baroni



The GFWC Brandon Junior Woman's Club welcomes new members.

For more than seven decades, the GFWC Brandon Junior Woman's Club has been making a lasting difference in the Brandon community through volunteer service, fundraising efforts and outreach programs. Founded in 1955, the organization is part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and is dedicated to improving the lives of others through hands-on service and community support.

Leading the club is second-year President Mylisa Cartmill, whose passion for helping others reflects the organization's mission. Cartmill proudly embraces the club's motto: "We don't sit, we don't stand, we SERVE." Whether she is organizing community projects or rescuing French bulldogs in need of loving homes, she is committed to making a positive impact.

A third-generation Floridian who grew up in Brandon, Cartmill has deep roots in the community she serves. Her dedication

to helping others and creating positive change inspires fellow members and encourages more women to become involved. Looking ahead, she hopes to expand the club's membership and continue strengthening its presence throughout the Brandon area.

The GFWC Brandon Junior Woman's Club provides women with opportunities to give back, develop leadership skills and build meaningful friendships while serving their community. The club meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at the historic Brandon Woman's Club clubhouse, located at 129 N. Moon Ave. in Brandon. Members pay annual dues, and women interested in joining are encouraged to attend a meeting and learn more about the organization's mission and impact.

For women looking to make a difference, the Brandon Junior Woman's Club offers an opportunity to turn compassion into action. As Cartmill and her fellow members continue their work, they prove that when women come together with a shared purpose, they have the power to create meaningful change in their community. For more, visit www.gfwcbrandonjuniors.org.

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HGTV'S HOMETOWN DREAM TEAM CELEBRATES SIXTH SEASON SUCCESS

By Libby Hopkins

Brian and Mika Kleinschmidt of Riverview met in high school chorus class, but they didn't become a couple until years later after high school. Mika spent a decade working in the fitness industry helping clients achieve their personal goals, while Brian went to attend the University of Central Florida, where he spent his spring breaks and weekends volunteering for Habitat for Humanity. He fell in love with building homes as he gained lots of hands-on experience as well. After graduation he started flipping homes on his own.

The 2008 housing crash made a way for Brian and Mika's paths to cross. Since the housing crash left Brian unable to flip homes, he started opening a chain of fitness clubs. This led to him connecting Mika and them becoming a couple, and a romance and business were born. While Mika was becoming one of the top realtors in the area, Brian had the itch to get his hands dirty again with construction.

"Life has been amazing and we have done so much since we were in the fitness industry," Brian said.

The couple just wrapped up season six of their HGTV show, *100 Day Dream Home*. Mika is also a mentor on the HGTV show *Battle on the Beach*, which premiered in June. Additionally, the couple has a local realty company, Dirt 2 Design.

"We built this together from the ground



Brian and Mika Kleinschmidt are HGTV reality TV stars and local real estate business owners.



up," Mika said. "We are local realtors in the area, and we do a ton of projects with our local community. Most of the things we do are not on TV."

At Dirt 2 Design, their 'Dream-Design-Build-Start' approach brings their clients' entire real estate journey together in one seamless experience. Whether it's helping them buy or sell in the Tampa Bay area, designing spaces that reflect their vision or building custom homes with trusted local partners, the Kleinschmidts are with their clients every step of the way.

"With a personalized approach, strong local connections and a commitment to exceptional service, we make it easy to turn your ideas into reality and confidently take the next step," Brian said.

For more information, visit the website at <https://dirt2design.com/> or call 813-400-3910.

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MOM TURNS TRAGEDY INTO HOPE WITH NEW OVERDOSE SUPPORT GROUP



Showneen Hall of Riverview lost her son, Walter Shumaker, on October 22, 2023, at just 27 years old. He died from a fentanyl overdose.

Showneen Hall of Riverview got a call on October 22, 2023, that no parent ever wants to get. The call she got was to let her know that her son, Walter Shumaker, had died of an overdose. To make matters worse, because Walter had been incarcerated a few times in his life, she did not receive support from her community in her time of need.

"After losing my son to fentanyl addiction, my family and I were met with judgment and stigma by the very community that should have embraced us," Hall said. "The stress and harm caused by that treatment deeply affected my health and contributed to my suffering a heart attack."

Hall's son was just 27 years old at the time of his death.

Hall looked for support to help with her grief and found Tonya Aber of Ohio's Facebook post about an organization she started for families who were grieving the loss of loved ones who passed from drug overdoses.

"Tonya told me about her losing her daughter, Jessie, who also died from a fentanyl overdose," Hall said. "She also told me about the nonprofit she started to help families in the same situation as mine."

By Libby Hopkins

Aber's nonprofit is called 4 Them We Fight, and its mission is to love, support, advocate and educate veterans, addicts, those in recovery, those with mental illness and anybody else who may need a voice.

"We want to bring the veteran's story of their heroism to the public, show those lost in addiction through those in recovery that hope is possible and bring strength and love to those who just feel beaten down," Hall said. "This is why I started a Tampa chapter of 4 Them We Fight."

"We are here to remind parents, especially mothers of addicted angels, that it is OK to not be OK," Hall said. "There is no shame in loving a child who battled addiction, regardless of their past or their record."

Through 4 Them We Fight, Hall has become a certified NARCAN provider and is currently looking for local businesses that would allow her to put free NARCAN boxes at their locations to help raise awareness about fentanyl overdose.

"NARCAN nasal spray competes with opioids to bind with the same receptors in the brain, reversing the effects of an opioid overdose in two to three minutes," Hall said. "This can save lives."

"I will be hosting support meetings once a month, and they are free to attend," Hall said. "We are also looking for toiletry items to be donated so we can give out toiletry bags to the homeless in our area."

To learn more, visit its website at <https://4themwefight.org/> or contact Hall at 813-270-6896.

EASTERSEALS HOSTS INCLUSIVE SUMMER CAMP FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

By Chloe Wagner

The Easterseals School for Limitless Learning is hosting its summer program designed for young neurodiverse learners and those with other disabilities in kindergarten through second grade.



The program currently has 22 campers, but Dr. Stewart and the school have plans to expand the summer program to hopefully accommodate more students in the future. Activities for the camp are thought

fully planned out with the support for each child's various needs. It is designed to foster an environment in which the children feel safe, understood and successful. Some activities at the camp include sensory activities, themed crafts, STEM exploration, music and movement, story time, outdoor play, gross motor activities and imaginative play.

The hands-on experience provides interactive STEAM-related (science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics) activities for children to learn and grow in an inclusive, supportive environment.

Easterseals Florida has served individuals from all walks of life with all kinds of disabilities across Florida since 1948. This includes services such as workforce development, early intervention, autism services, mental health services and recreation and camps. The school, located in the Bloomingdale area, was founded in 2024.

Easterseals School for Limitless Learning's school administrator, Dr. Janine Stewart, heads both the school and the summer camp programs.

"The summer program was created in response to the need for meaningful, structured activities during the summer for special needs children," Dr. Stewart said.

According to Dr. Stewart, Hillsborough county faces a growing need for specialized education services, with 35,000 students, or 15 percent of the county population, needing individualized education programs.

"We believe every child deserves meaningful access to STEAM experiences, and we provide the individualized supports to help each camper succeed," Dr. Stewart said.

The most beloved tradition at camp are the Friday Water Days, where campers end their week with water-related festivities such as sensory friendly water play, sprinklers, splash activities and outdoor fun.

"Because our campers are neurodiverse, every child has different interests and sensory preferences. Some love messy sensory play, while others enjoy movement activities, music, building, or hands-on exploration," Dr. Stewart said. "We intentionally offer a variety of sensory rich experiences, so every camper has opportunities to engage in activities they enjoy."

Easterseals School for Limitless Learning is currently enrolling for its Early Learning and Lower Elementary programs. To learn more or to schedule a tour, visit <https://florida.easterseals.com/> or contact Dr. Stewart at jstewart@esfl.org or 813-236-5589. Easterseals School for Limitless Learning is located in Valrico at 2460 Bloomingdale Ave., Ste. 170.



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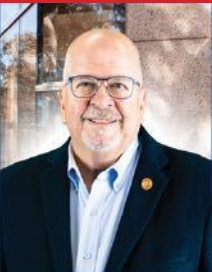
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INSIDE

Know The Key Dates And The Three Ways To Vote Ahead Of Florida’s Primary Election

Staff Report



FROM THE DESK OF...★



Craig Latimer
Supervisor of Elections

In order to be an effective voter, you must be an informed voter. You need to know the key dates, know the three methods of voting available to every voter in Hillsborough County and wear your “I Voted Sticker” proudly.

Are You Ready To Vote?

The 2026 primary election is right around the corner, so I want to know — are you ready to vote? You still have time to register to vote, request a vote-by-mail ballot and make changes to your voter information.

Primary Election Dates & Deadlines

Deadline to register/change party: Monday, July 20.

Deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot: Thursday, August 6, 5 p.m.

Votes by mail: Due to our office no later than 7 p.m. on Tuesday, August 18.

Early voting: Monday, August 3, through Sunday, August 16, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Election day: Tuesday, August 18, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Call our office at 813-744-5900 or visit our website and use the Voter Information Lookup tool at www.votehillsborough.gov to check your status and make any updates.

The deadline for candidates to qualify for the ballot was June 12. Visit the Local Candidates & Committees page of our website to see local candidates who qualified with our office, and the Candidates and Races database on the Division of Elections website at <https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/candidates/> to see who

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COUNTS



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qualified with them. Sample ballots showing the races that will be on your primary election ballot will be available on our website next month.

Understanding Primaries

During the primary, political parties nominate state and local candidates to move on to the general election. The races that appear on your ballot depend on where you live and what party you belong to.

Florida has closed primaries, which means that you must be registered with a political party to vote in that party's primary races. However, the primary election will also include nonpartisan contests that everybody votes on, whether affiliated with a party or not.

There will be three different ballots: a Republican ballot, a Democratic ballot and a nonpartisan ballot. Nonpartisan judicial and school board races will be on everyone's ballot, and voters in State Senate District 16, State House District 62 and State House District 63 will have a Universal Primary Contest on their ballot. Universal Primary Contests occur when all candidates for a seat have the same party affiliation and the winner would be unopposed in the general election.

Voters living in Temple Terrace and

some special taxing districts will also have a referendum on the ballot.

Take a look at this quick video that explains Florida's closed primaries: <https://vimeo.com/676448886>.

Legislative Updates For 2026 — What's Changed?

You may live in a different congressional district because the legislature changed the district boundaries this year. Those changes affect which candidates will be on your ballot. We're sending new voter information cards to all voters so you can see all of your voting districts at a glance.

What Hasn't Changed?

Florida's voter registration and voting ID requirements haven't changed for the 2026 election. If you plan to vote in person, go to www.votehillsborough.gov and search "What to Bring" to find the list of acceptable ID.

The Last Word

Your signature can change over time — and the signature on file is used to verify your identity on vote-by-mail ballots, provisional ballots and petitions. Call us at 813-744-5900, go to www.votehillsborough.gov or visit any of our offices or public libraries to get a voter registration application (<https://registertovoteflorida.gov/home>) and update your signature so that you are #ElectionReady for 2026.



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Daniela Simic
www.danielaforschools.com


Chris Taylor
www.electchristaylor.com

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER
DISTRICT 6


Kenneth Gay
www.votekennethgay.com


Sally Harris
Williamson
www.sallyharris.org


Karen Perez
www.keepkarenperez.com



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DISTRICT 3


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www.votetwandabradleydistrict3.com


Gwen Myers
www.voteuwenmyers.com

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DISTRICT 5


Donna Cameron
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<https://donnacameroncepeda.com>


Stacy Hahn
www.votestacyhahn.com

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
DISTRICT 7


Aileen Rodriguez
www.voteaileen2026.com


Cindy Stuart
www.facebook.com/VoteCindyStuart

13TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GROUP 7


Luis Aguila
www.louiefordjudge.com


Sara Peacock
www.sarapecockforjudge.com

13TH JUDICIAL COURT
GROUP 13


Nina McGucken
Alvarez
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WHO'S GOT YOUR VOTE?

SARA PEACOCK 13TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, GROUP 7

Staff Report

Few judicial candidates bring the combination of experience, community involvement and professional respect that Sara Peacock offers. A Tampa native, Peacock has spent her life in the community she now seeks to serve as a circuit judge.

Inspired by her parents, who are both attorneys, for the past 15 years Peacock has built a legal career that has prepared her for the responsibilities of the bench. Her experience includes family law, criminal defense and civil litigation, giving her a broad understanding of the issues that come before the circuit court. She has handled matters affecting individuals and families, earning a reputation for fairness, professionalism and sound judgment.

The respect Peacock has earned throughout her career is reflected in the broad support she has received from the legal community. Her endorsements include a retired chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court, numerous retired appellate and circuit court judges, the retired Hillsborough County public defender and more than 30 former presidents of local and statewide bar associations. Those who have worked with Peacock and ob-



served her career firsthand recognize in her the qualities of an outstanding judge.

Away from the courtroom, Peacock is deeply involved in her community. She is married to Jason Bartos, and they have two children. She volunteers at her children's school, serves as 'Cookie Mom' for her daughter's Girl Scout troop, sings with the Tampa Oratorio Singers, volunteers with efforts to help children facing food insecurity and serves as an elder at Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, where she has been a lifelong member. Her commitment to service reflects the same values of responsibility and leadership that have guided her legal career.

Peacock understands that judges make decisions that affect real people and real families. She believes every person deserves to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect, and that every case deserves careful preparation and thoughtful consideration.

Those qualities have defined Peacock's career and make her the right choice for circuit judge.

For more about Peacock, visit her website at www.sarapeacockforjudge.com.

MIKE BELTRAN FLORIDA CONGRESS DISTRICT 14

Staff Report

Former Conservative Republican State Representative Mike Beltran is running for Congress District 14 - a newly configured district that includes all of South and East Hillsborough, including Brandon, Riverview, Valrico, Lithia, Bloomingdale, Durant, Sun City Center, Apollo Beach, Ruskin, Wimauma, Balm, Gibsonton, Plant City, Dover, and Seffner as well as South and West Tampa.

For six years, Beltran served the people of Southern and Eastern Hillsborough County as their voice in Tallahassee. Beltran is a leader on issues related to the judiciary and constitution and is a fierce advocate for Hillsborough County. He was appointed by Governors Rick Scott and Ron DeSantis to the Judicial Nominating Commission for Florida's Thirteenth Circuit Court in Hillsborough County.

"I'm running for Congress to fight to defend the Constitution, preserve individual liberty, uphold the rule of law and preserve the American Dream for my sons' generation." Beltran is Pro-life, Pro-Trump, will be tough on violent crime and illegal immigration, and has promised to pursue a constitutional amendment to redress birth tourism and anchor babies. Beltran is endorsed by



Gun Owners of America, over 20 current or former Florida State legislators, including Former Senate President Tom Lee, over a dozen local officials, including Commissioner Josh Wostal, over ten former judges or JNC members, over ten local Republican Club officials, four previous candidates for FL-14, four Trump lawyers, including a former Ambassador, and many veterans and

high-ranking officers and law enforcement personnel, including two Generals and three Colonels.

Beltran is also an Eagle Scout and takes pride in this formative experience he had growing up. He attended the University of Pennsylvania and graduated in 2005 with a B.A. and honors in international relations, magna cum laude. He then went on to earn his law degree from Harvard Law School in 2008 before moving to Florida in 2010, where he served as a law clerk to a federal district judge. Beltran has been recognized as an Outstanding Young Florida Lawyer. He is still a practicing business attorney by trade, and he is happily married to his wife, Hope. The couple have two young sons, Michael and Ross.

For more, visit Beltran's campaign website at www.beltranforcongress.com.

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Sara Peacock has been practicing law for 15 years with experience in criminal defense, family law, civil litigation, and insurance litigation. She's tried 68 jury trials, including both criminal and civil cases.

She is involved in our community and volunteers for deserving causes. A Hillsborough County native, Sara is married with two children and is an elder at her church.

ELECT SARA PEACOCK FOR CIRCUIT JUDGE

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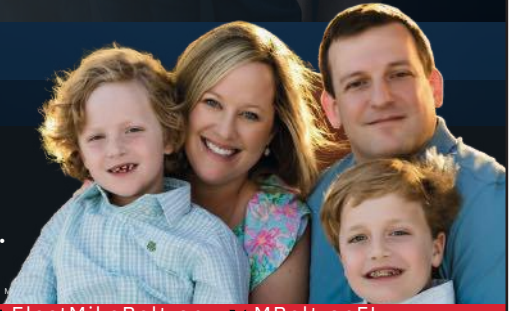
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- ➔ KEEP parents - NOT bureaucrats - in control of their child's education.

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NINA ALVAREZ

13TH JUDICIAL COURT, GROUP 13

Staff Report

For Nina McGucken Alvarez, serving the people of Hillsborough County is both a professional calling and a personal mission. As a third-generation Tammpanian and lifelong resident of Hillsborough County, Alvarez has spent her life building strong connections within the community she proudly calls home. Her commitment to fairness, justice and public service has guided a legal career spanning more than 17 years and has earned her a reputation as a compassionate advocate and skilled attorney.

Alvarez brings a diverse range of legal experience to her work. For the past decade, she has been the owner of McGucken Alvarez, P.A., a law firm concentrating in family law, probate and guardianship matters. Through her private practice, she has helped families navigate some of life's most challenging circumstances with compassion, professionalism and a steadfast commitment to protecting their rights.

In addition to her private practice, Alvarez serves as assistant regional counsel with the Office of Criminal Conflict and Civil Regional Counsel in Tampa. She is privileged to serve as the only attorney in Hillsborough County appointed to represent indigent clients with developmental disabilities. This unique role



reflects both her specialized legal knowledge and her passion for advocating for vulnerable members of the community. Her work in public service has provided her with extensive courtroom experience and reinforced her belief that every individual deserves equal access to justice, regardless of their circumstances.

She has also served for 15 years on the Hillsborough County court-appointed registry for incapacity, guardianship and guardian advocacy matters, gaining valuable insight into the legal and personal challenges faced by families and individuals requiring court protection.

Beyond her professional achievements, Alvarez is deeply rooted in family values. She has been married for 19 years and is the proud mother of two daughters. Her career and family have shaped her understanding of the issues that matter most to local families and strengthened her commitment to ensuring every person has a voice and a fair chance at justice.

With experience, integrity and a lifelong dedication to Hillsborough County, Nina McGucken Alvarez remains focused on our community with fairness, impartiality and respect for the rule of law.

SALLY HARRIS

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, DIST. 6

By McKenzie Brown



Longtime educator, business owner and community leader Sally Harris has dedicated her life to improving educational opportunities for children and families throughout Hillsborough County. Now, she hopes to continue that work by bringing her experience and ideas back to public service.

Harris founded Circle C Ranch Academy in Tampa in 1985, launching what would become one of the area's most respected early childhood education programs. For nearly four decades, the academy has earned local, regional and national recognition for excellence, receiving repeated national accreditations and maintaining the Florida Department of Children & Families Gold Seal of Excellence since 1999.

Beyond her work in education, Harris has been actively involved in the community. She has been a member of the South Tampa Chamber of Commerce since 1984 and served as its president from 1988-89. She has also held leadership positions with

several professional and civic organizations, including the Florida Vocational Association, the Business and Professional Women's Association and the Hillsborough Association for Child Care Professionals.

Harris previously served on the Hillsborough County School Board from 2014-18 and later served as board chair. During her tenure, district graduation rates increased by 15 percent, reaching 83 percent in 2018. She also championed teacher pay raises, supported workforce development and apprenticeship programs.

Harris said she decided to run because she believes she can still make a meaningful difference in the lives of students and educators. "I felt like I still had some great ideas and work that could make a difference."

Among her priorities is improving kindergarten readiness. Harris noted that only about 50 percent of children enter kindergarten fully prepared and believes expanding access to the county's free Voluntary Prekindergarten program could help address the issue.

A mother of five, foster parent to more than 30 children and grandmother of nine, Harris has built a career centered on service, leadership and a commitment to helping children succeed.

Contact Sally Harris at 813-766-8429 or visit her online at www.sallyharris.org.

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 - ✓ Spearheaded IT upgrade to prepare district for future needs and cost savings
 - ✓ Worked thru sustained budget to include teacher raises
 - ✓ Built advocacy for Work force and Certifications for industry skills and apprenticeships
 - ✓ Sally Attended all graduations for the district
 - ✓ Visited all schools in District 2 several times as well as hundreds of other schools
 - ✓ Created a Strategic Plan for our district and a Vision of "Preparing Students for Life."

Sally Harris Williamson is KID FOCUSED!

Get to Know Sally
She is Strongly Focused on
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Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment, National Co-President
National Association for Childcare Professionals, Board of Directors
Hillsborough Association for the Education of Young Children, President

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Political Advertisement Paid for and Approved by Sally Harris, Newspaper for Hillsborough County School Board, District 2

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POLITICALLY SPEAKING

STACY HAHN
COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DIST. 5

Stacy Hahn has called Hillsborough County home for 25 years. "My husband, Jeff, and I raised our three sons here because we believe in this community and the opportunities it offers families," Hahn said. "For the past eight years, I've had the privilege of serving on the Hillsborough County School Board, overseeing one of the nation's largest school districts, managing a multibillion-dollar budget and working to protect taxpayer dollars while improving outcomes for students."



By Libby Hopkins

trict 5, to bring the same disciplined, results-driven leadership to the community. "I'm running for county commission to bring that same leadership, accountability and problem-solving approach to the decisions that will

shape our community's future," Hahn said. "My priorities are straightforward: protect taxpayers, improve infrastructure, support law enforcement and first responders and ensure growth is planned responsibly so our quality of life is protected." "Through initiatives like the Early Childhood Literacy Fair, Storytime Online, the Early Childhood Literacy Bus and community book distributions, we've helped thousands of children develop a love of reading before they enter the classroom," Hahn said.

"If elected, I want people to know they have a commissioner who is accessible, prepared, fiscally responsible and committed to making thoughtful decisions that strengthen our community for generations to come," she said. "When we work together, we create deeper, more lasting impacts."

To learn more about Hahn or become involved in her campaign, you can visit her website at www.votestacyhahn.com.

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HCA FLORIDA BRANDON HOSPITAL HOSTS OFFICE RIBBON CUTTING AND TOURS

Staff Report



HCA Florida Brandon Hospital recently celebrated the opening of the new HCA Florida Brandon Medical Offices with a ribbon cutting and tours of the 70,000-square-foot medical office building. The building is located at the corner of Moon Avenue and Oakfield Drive, across the street from HCA Florida Brandon Hospital, located at 119 Oakfield Dr. in Brandon.

"With the opening of this new medical office building, HCA Florida vascular specialists and HCA Florida cardiac surgical specialists will begin seeing patients in a convenient location near HCA Florida Brandon Hospital," said Laura Ehlen, vice president of operations at HCA Florida Brandon Hospital. "The building will continue to expand access to outpatient care and provide dedicated space for our growing graduate medical education program."

The new medical office building reflects Brandon Hospital's focus on helping patients access connected care close to home, from hospital-based services to outpatient follow-up and specialty care. Brandon Hospital also has plans to construct a pedestrian bridge spanning Oakfield Drive that will connect the new medical office building to the hospital's main campus. The bridge will

provide a safer and more convenient route for patients, physicians and hospital staff traveling between the two facilities, further enhancing connectivity across the hospital's expanding campus.

The office building also serves as the home of HCA Florida Brandon Hospital's Graduate Medical Education (GME) program, providing state-of-the-art technology and dedicated learning environments designed to support the next generation of physicians. Brandon Hospital offers Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited training programs in internal medicine, emergency medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pathology, transitional year, surgery, addiction medicine, interventional cardiology and cardiovascular disease. The hospital's GME program currently includes nearly 200 residents and fellows.

The new GME space was thoughtfully designed to enhance both education and well-being, featuring advanced simulation laboratories where residents and fellows can practice and refine clinical skills in a realistic environment. Additional amenities include modern classrooms, collaborative office space, on-site sleeping quarters, a fitness area and dedicated spaces for relaxation and wellness, creating a comprehensive learning environment that supports academic excellence and physician development.



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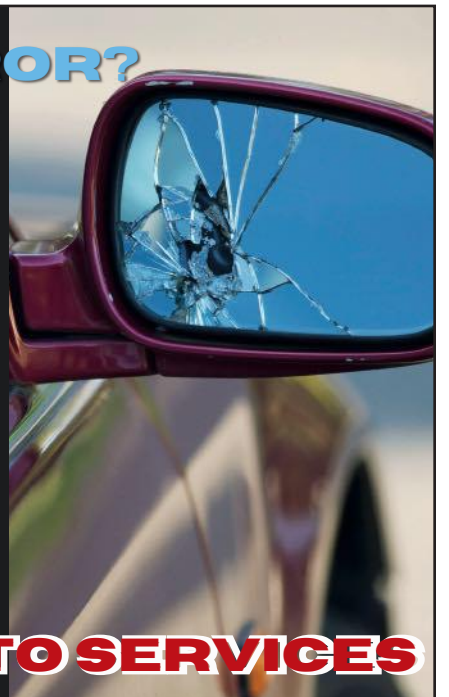
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PARKS & RECREATION FINALIST FOR BEST PARKS PROGRAM IN COUNTRY

Staff Report



since 2021, expanding from 26 programs serving 300 athletes to 68 programs reaching 955 athletes. The latest innovation is a dedicated Buddy Baseball field serving athletes ages 8-22.

- Collaborating with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to revitalize seven recreation centers through a \$4.5 million investment.

For the fourth time in five years, Hillsborough County has been honored as having one of the top parks and recreation programs in the country.

Hillsborough County Parks & Recreation is one of four national finalists in the Class 1 category for the 2026 National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management, the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration announced. Class 1 includes the nation's largest parks and recreation departments, serving populations of more than 400,000.

Only one department will receive the highest award, the Grand Plaque, in October. Each finalist sends the judges a short video highlighting their department.

Achievements and highlights from Hillsborough County Parks & Recreation include:

- Effectively managing 180 parks, 223 sports fields, 118 playgrounds, 54 recreation centers, 47 athletic complexes, 11 dog parks, nine splash pads and four cultural/performing arts centers, spanning over 3,500 acres.
- Adding 40 new pickleball courts and six new splash pads and fitness zones in underserved communities.
- The Adaptive Sports program, which has grown by more than 200 percent

- Launching the Swim Safe Initiative for children enrolled in Hillsborough County's Head Start program. In partnership with the City of Temple Terrace, the Tampa YMCA, the City of Tampa and High 5 Inc., children ages 3-5 are taken to nearby pools to receive free swim lessons.

- Hosting 336 performances last year at the New Tampa Performing Arts Center (NTPAC), ranging from The Florida Orchestra to fully staged musical theater, ballet, modern dance, stand-up comedy and jazz.

- Partnering with the American Heart Association to expand emergency preparedness across the park system, securing \$125,000 to purchase nearly 100 automated external defibrillators (AEDs). These devices were strategically placed with youth sports partners, high-use parks and rural locations.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors park and recreation agencies in the United States and military installations worldwide that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development and more.

COLLEGE RECEIVES \$120,000 STUDENT TRAINING GIFT FROM ADVANCE AUTO PARTS FOUNDATION

Staff Report

The Hillsborough College (HC) Foundation has received a \$120,000 donation from the Advance Auto Parts Foundation to support students in the college's workforce programs, including the Automotive Service



Technology and Diesel Systems Technician programs. The gift includes funding for industry-recognized certifications, specialty tools and instructional resources designed to help students build successful careers in the automotive repair and maintenance industry.

"We are proud to partner with and help support the automotive technology program at Hillsborough College and its students, as there's a growing demand for skilled automotive technicians," said Todd Davenport, president of the Advance Auto Parts Foundation and senior vice president, real estate and development at Advance Auto Parts. "Through this partnership, students will have expanded access to industry-recognized certifications, professional-grade tools and hands-on training that allows them to grow into skilled technicians dedicated to getting vehicles back on the road safely."

The gift includes \$40,000 to help students earn additional Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certifications — a key credential for advancing toward master technician status. The Advance Auto Parts Foundation will also provide three top-performing students with professional-grade tool sets containing about 800 tools, valued at approximately \$15,000.

\$5,000 in Advance Auto Parts gift cards will support the purchase of training materials and equipment.

"This generous investment from the Advance Auto Parts Foundation will have a lasting impact on our students and the communities they will serve," said Garrett Weddle, executive director of the Hillsborough College Foundation. "By helping students earn industry certifications and access the tools they need to succeed, this partnership removes barriers to opportunity while strengthening the pipeline of skilled technicians for Tampa Bay's workforce."

Students, faculty and representatives from the Advance Auto Parts Foundation celebrated the partnership during a gift presentation event on June 25 at the HC Ybor City Campus Training Center, located at 5610 E. Columbus Dr. in Tampa.

About Hillsborough College

Hillsborough College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. Hillsborough College also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Visit www.hcfl.edu/accreditation for more information.



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STUDENTS EARN TOP HONORS AT 2026 FLORIDA FFA STATE CONVENTION

Staff Report



Newsome High School FFA took home several awards from the FFA State Convention including Florida's Finest chapter award.

Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) students brought home an impressive collection of state championships, top five finishes and chapter recognitions from the 2026 Florida FFA State Convention, showcasing the district's strength in agricultural education, leadership development, and career readiness.

The annual convention, held from June 15-19 in Orlando, brings together nearly 6,000 FFA members, advisors, alumni and industry leaders from across Florida to compete, develop leadership skills and celebrate excellence in agricultural education. The event features career development events (CDEs), leadership workshops, award ceremonies and recognition of the state's top FFA chapters and student organizations.

Students from HCPS middle and high schools earned state recognition across a wide range of competitive events, from floriculture and forestry to agricultural communications, environmental science and agricultural technology.

"These outstanding achievements reflect the dedication of our students, teachers and advisors, as well as the strength of our agricultural education programs," said Superintendent Van Ayres.

Several HCPS teams captured first-place state titles, including:

Middle School State Champion: Randall Middle School took first place in Nursery & Landscape.

High School State Champions: Durant High School took first place in Citrus, Environmental & Natural Resources, Floriculture, Vegetable Evaluation, Ornamental Horticulture Demonstration — Landscaping (Ashlyn Demanovich and Jackson Sturgis).

HCPS students earned numerous additional top-five finishes.

Middle School Awards: Mulrennan Middle School took fifth place in Livestock Evaluation and second place for Meats Evaluation. Randall Middle School took fourth place in Meats Evaluation.

High School Awards: Durant High School took second place in Forestry and Nursery & Landscape, third place in Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems and Food Science & Technology, fourth place in Meats Evaluation and fifth place in Dairy Cattle Evaluation & Management and Livestock Evaluation.

Florida's Finest: Durant High School, Mulrennan Middle School, Newsome High School, Plant City High School, Randall Middle School, Turkey Creek Middle School.

Chapter SAE Awards: Durant High School.

Premier Chapter Awards: Brandon High School, Durant High School, Durant Junior Chapter – J.F. St. Martin, Newsome High School, Randall Middle School and Tomlin Middle School.

FFA is the nation's premier organization for students interested in agriculture, food systems, environmental science, agribusiness and natural resources. To learn more about HCPS's FFA programs, visit the website at www.hillsboroughschools.org.

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Edited by:
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EYE ON BUSINESS

To Submit Business News & Press Releases Mail Attn: Business Editor, 2109 Lithia Pinecrest Rd., Valrico, FL 33596 Fax 657-4469 | Email: jbennett@ospreyobserver.com Deadline: 15th of each month.

Chill Cawfee & Quig's Kava Lounge Moves From Valrico To FishHawk

Chill Cawfee & Quig's Kava Lounge is a family-owned community gathering place designed to bring people together throughout the day. In the morning, guests can enjoy handcrafted coffee, espresso drinks and a welcoming cafe atmosphere. As the day transitions into evening, Quig's Kava Lounge provides a relaxing, alcohol-free social environment featuring premium kava beverages, community events and entertainment. Its goal is to create a place where friends, families, professionals, entrepreneurs and neighbors can connect, work, relax and build relationships. Whether you're looking for your morning coffee or a comfortable place to meet friends, enjoy live entertainment, participate in community events or simply unwind after a long day, Chill Cawfee & Quig's Kava Lounge offers a unique experience that combines hospitality, wellness and community under one roof.

Chill Cawfee is now located at 16741 FishHawk Blvd. in Lithia after moving from its Valrico location. For additional information, visit its websites at <https://chillcawfee.com/> and <https://quigskavalounge.com/>.



HealthSource Chiropractic Of Valrico Ribbon Cutting

At HealthSource Chiropractic of Valrico, its goal is to help every patient get back to doing what they love. Whether you're recovering from an injury, managing chronic pain or looking to improve your overall health and mobility, it is committed to providing the tools, treatments and support you need to keep moving forward. Alongside personalized care focused on long-



term wellness and recovery, services include spinal decompression therapy, high-powered laser therapy, functional rehabilitation, chiropractic adjustments, shockwave therapy and wellness care designed to address the root cause of pain and dysfunction.

HealthSource Chiropractic of Valrico is located at 1995 E. SR 60 in Valrico. For additional information, visit its website at www.healthsourcechiro.com/location/valrico/ or call 813-315-8491.

D1 Training Opens In Brandon

D1 Training is excited to bring a new approach to fitness and athletic development to the Brandon community. D1 combines the energy and coaching of Division I-style training with a welcoming environment for youth athletes, adults and families.

Owned by Dennis and Camilla Santa Paula, D1 Training Brandon was created with a simple vision: to provide local families access to the same level of coaching, structure and performance training typically available only to elite athletes. As parents themselves, they saw firsthand the need for a place where children can build confidence, discipline and healthy habits while adults pursue their own fitness goals.

D1 offers age-based training programs for youth athletes, adult fitness classes, personal training, speed and agility development, strength and conditioning, team training and seasonal camps.

D1 Training Brandon is located at 1915 W. Lumsden Rd. in Brandon. For more information, visit D1 Training Brandon, go to its website at <https://d1training.com/facility/brandon> or follow @d1training-brandon.



Rosemary Real Estate Team At Flip Side Realty By Design

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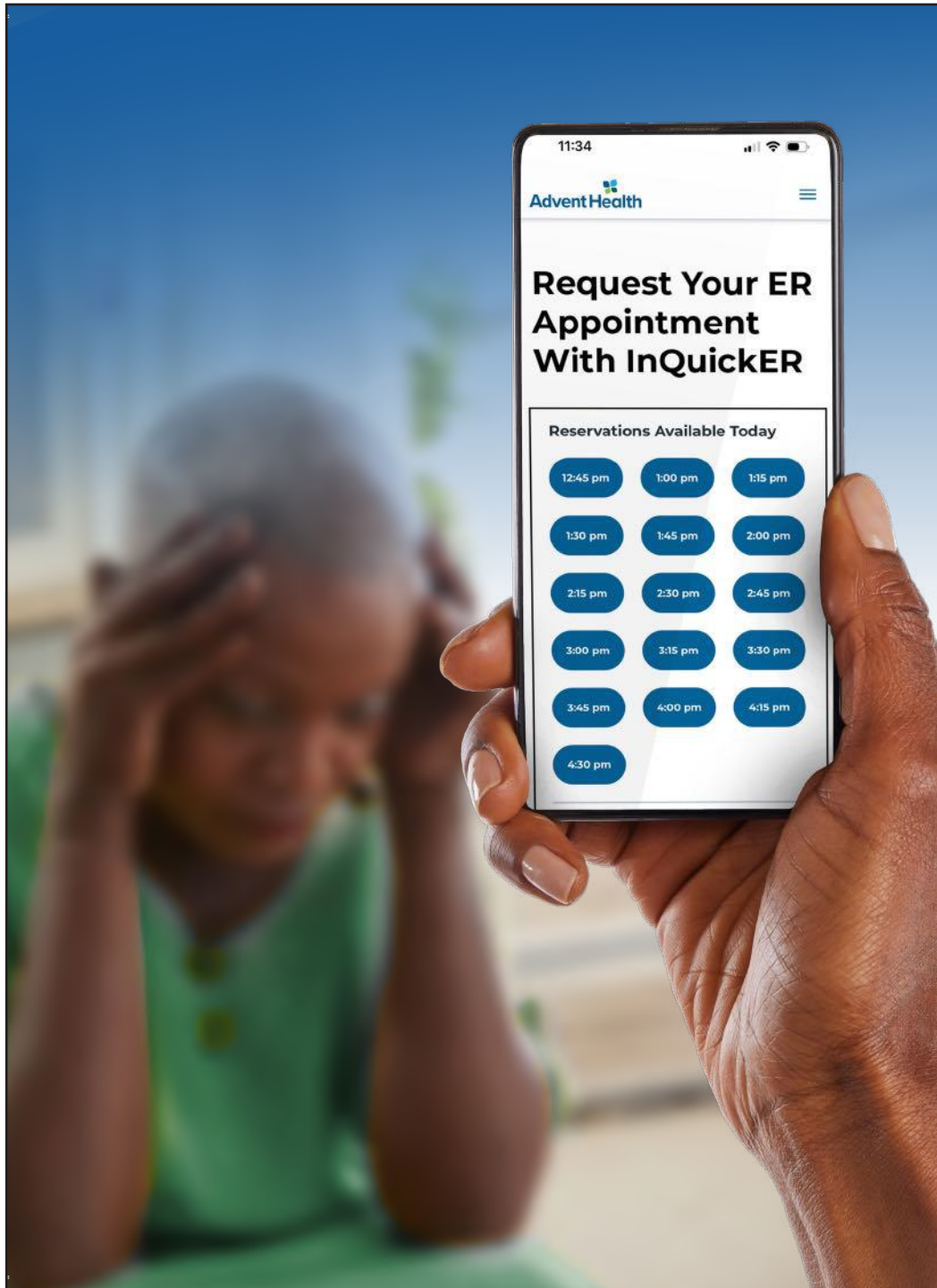
To contact Leist, call 301-399-4332. For more information, visit her online website directly at <https://rosemaryrealestateteam.com/>.

Smylie Legacy Law Celebrates Move With Ribbon Cutting

Smylie Legacy Law celebrated a move to Ware Boulevard, close to Adamo Drive.

Owner Scott Smylie lives in Valrico and is passionate about giving families the gift of order and peace instead of chaos when a loved one passes away. Smylie Legacy Law is an estate planning and elder law boutique firm that focuses on helping clients create and understand their estate plans.

Smylie Legacy Law is located at 410 Ware Blvd., Ste. 818, in Tampa. To learn more, visit <https://smylielegacylaw.com/> or call 813-667-6808.



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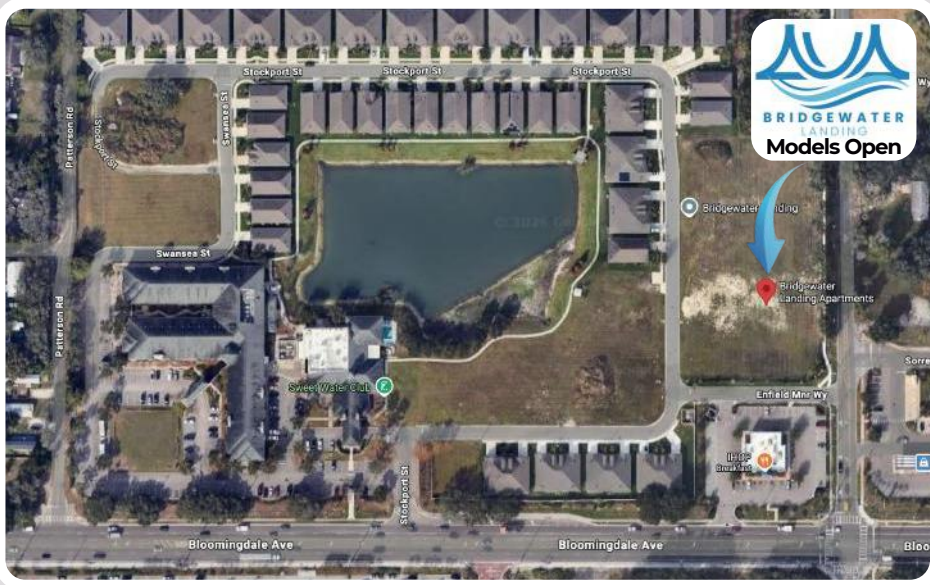
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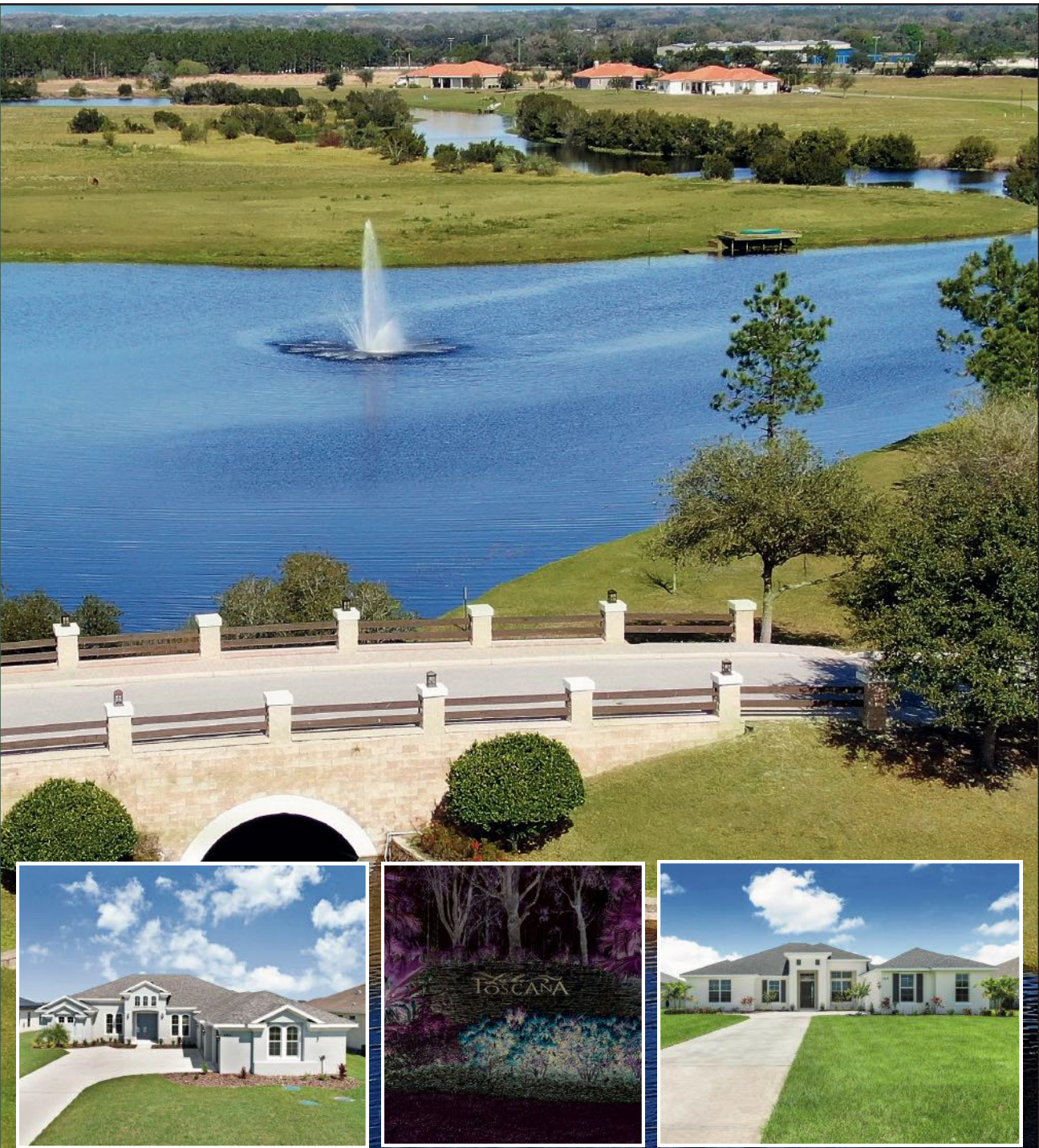
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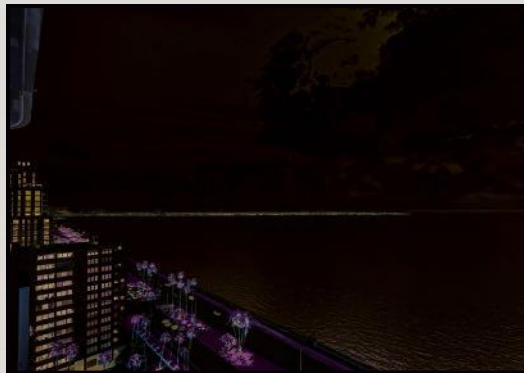
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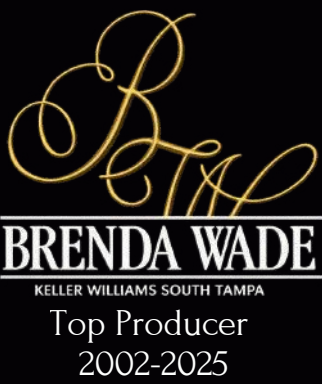


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