Busch Gardens
SUMMER NIGHTS
Wild Thrills, Cool Nights
See Our Ad On Page 33

Bloomingdale/ FishHawk
Osprey OBSERVER
YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER
June 2026
Volume 25, Issue 6
24 YEARS Osprey OBSERVER Your Community Newspaper POSITIVE NEWS
Ph: 813-657-2418

aqua GLOW Adventure Island
LIGHT UP YOUR SUMMER NIGHTS!
See Our Ad On Page 10

CELEBRATING 24 YEARS OF PUBLISHING POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS

FREE WORKOUTS, LASTING FRIENDSHIPS: FIA FISHHAWK CONTINUES TO GROW

By Libby Hopkins



FiA FishHawk is a part of FiA Nation, which started as a simple idea; bringing women together for free, outdoor workouts.

Cinthia Mora, aka Dora, and her friend, Allison Panarese, aka Sherlock, co-founded FiA FishHawk. FiA stands for Females in Action, which is a community of women dedicated to making each other stronger in all areas of people's lives through activities that include bodies, minds and hearts. A FiA workout is a promise, always free, open to all women, held outdoors and ends with a circle of trust.

"We are both passionate about fitness, community and creating a space where women can show up exactly as they are, no pressure, just support, movement and friendship," Mora said.

FiA FishHawk is a part of the larger fitness group FiA Nation, which started as a simple idea: bringing women together for free, outdoor workouts that are welcoming and consistent. What began as a small group has grown into a strong and supportive community where women of all fitness levels can come together, build friendships and stay active.

"It's truly become more than just workouts; it's a sisterhood," Mora said. "Each woman is welcomed into the group with a fun, unique nickname, a badge of honor that reflects her fun personality and becomes part of her FiA identity. FiA Nation is a national fitness group in 24 states and growing."

Currently, there are five FiA groups in the state of Florida. FiA is for women only, and workouts are open to women of all religions and beliefs. FiA workouts are outside, rain or shine, and no one is left behind.

"We do a variety of workouts that are always scalable for all fitness levels," Mora said. "This includes strength training circuits, cardio intervals, partner workouts, bootcamp-style sessions and sometimes themed workouts or fun challenges. We also mix in mobility, core work and occasionally social gatherings, like breakfasts or special events, to build connection outside of workouts."

The feedback Mora and Panarese have gotten from their group has been very positive.

"The feedback has been incredibly positive," Mora said. "Many women say FiA FishHawk is their 'happy place' or the best part of their week. Members often share that they feel stronger, more confident and more connected, not just physically but mentally and emotionally. A lot of friendships have formed that go far beyond workouts."

Joining FiA FishHawk is very easy; all you have to do is show up at one of the scheduled workouts.

"FiA FishHawk is open to all women, and the workouts are completely free," Mora said. "Just show up to any scheduled session, no sign-up required. You can also follow us on Facebook for updates, times and location details. We love welcoming new faces anytime."

If you would like to join the FiA FishHawk group, you can visit its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567702071640 or email Mora at fiafishhawk@gmail.com. To learn more about FiA Nation, visit its website at https://fianation.com/.

FROM VALRICO TO WASHINGTON: BLOOMINGDALE STUDENT'S ART HEADED TO U.S. CAPITOL

By Marie Gilmore



1st Place - Ireland Cates Bloomingdale High



3rd Place - Madelyn Bowers Bloomingdale High



Ireland Cates and Madelyn Bowers.

Student artists from Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) earned top recognition in the 2026 Congressional Art Competition, a district-wide showcase announced by Congressman Vern Buchanan celebrating the creativity of high school students across Florida's 16th Congressional District.

This year, 31 student artworks were submitted for consideration. HCPS students claimed first, second and third-place honors, underscoring the strength of the district's visual arts programs.

The first-place winner was Ireland Cates, a sophomore at Bloomingdale High School in Valrico. Her piece, "The Capitol," will be displayed for one year in Washington, D.C., in the corridor connecting the U.S. Capitol and the Cannon House Office Building.

Second place was awarded to Olivia Fields of Riverview High School in Riverview for "Production, Consumerism, Stars, and Stripes." Third place honors went to Madelyn Bowers of Bloomingdale High School for her artwork, "Repetition."

HCPS students also received recognition in the competition's Facebook Fan Favorite Awards, which honor student works selected by the public and displayed in the congressman's offices in Washington, D.C.; Bradenton; and Brandon. Fan Favorite Award winners include Malik Dante Walker of Sumner High School in Riverview for "Jammin' Under the Sun" and Adam Nuykin of Sumner High School for "Make a Splash."

"I'm incredibly impressed by the talent and creativity showcased by the students who participated in this year's Congressional Art Competition," Buchanan said. "Each submission reflected remarkable skill, originality and hard work."

The judging panel included representatives from State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, including faculty and administrative leaders in art, academic affairs and public engagement.

The Congressional Art Competition is held annually to recognize and encourage artistic talent among high school students across participating congressional districts.

IN THIS ISSUE:

GIRL SCOUTS AWARD.....PG 3
MOTORING FLORIDA .....PG 5
TONY BARONI WINS AWARD....PG 14
ONE WATER UPDATE.....PG 24
EYE ON BUSINESS.....PG 33

PRSTD STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MANASOTA, FL
PERMIT #1456

ECRWSS EDDM
Postal Customer

Osprey Observer
2109 Lithia Pinecrest Rd.
Valrico, FL 33596



Four area families celebrate receiving the keys to their new homes at Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough's Windhorst Commons community in Brandon. The affordable, hurricane-resilient neighborhood is helping local families achieve the dream of homeownership through partnerships with community sponsors, volunteers and Habitat for Humanity. See full story on Page 4.

TIME FOR ANOTHER
SUPER FAST OIL CHANGE
EXPRESS OIL CHANGE 10 MINUTE SERVICE | TIRE ENGINEERS FULL SERVICE AUTO CARE
10-MINUTE FULL SERVICE OIL CHANGE


Lowest Pricing on TIRES, MAINTENANCE & AUTOMOTIVE REPAIRS
10524 CR 672 I 813-499-0884 I NOW OPEN!
11690 Boyette Rd, Riverview I 813-499-9606
M-F: 8am - 6pm, Sat: 8am - 5pm, Sun: Closed
25% OFF
Valid for conventional and full synthetic oil changes.
Not to be combined with any other offer.
Only valid at Riverview FL - Boyette & CR 672 locations.
Exp: 7/31/2026
$40 OFF
Any Air Condition Repair
Not to be combined with any other offer.
Only valid at Riverview FL - Boyette & CR 672 locations.
Exp: 7/31/2026

Summer Time

One of the Last Local Private Practices.

Doctor-owned. Locally operated. No corporate influence.

BRIDGES DENTAL

LAURA COYLE BRIDGES, D.M.D.

4316 New River Hills Parkway
Valrico, FL 33596

813-654-3399

www.bridgesdental.com



Dr. Caroline Dau | Dr. Laura Bridges

Patients With Dental Insurance

FREE Exam & X-Rays
PLUS $250 Credit Toward Treatment

Applied to crowns, bridges, implants, Invisalign, or restorative care. We will waive any out-of-pocket expense your insurance does not cover for the exam and X-rays.

*With this coupon. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Treatment credit valid on procedures $1,000+. Expires 7/31/2026

No Insurance - No Problem!

$99 New Patient Package
(Exam • X-Rays • Healthy Mouth Cleaning)
PLUS $99 Future Treatment Credit

Credit may be applied toward any future treatment.

With this coupon. Not valid with use of our wellness plan or prior services. Expires 7/31/2026

Proudly accepting the following dental insurance providers:

• Aetna • Ameritas • Assurant PPO • Cigna • Connection Dental • Blue Cross Blue Shield • GEHA • Delta Dental • MetLife • Guardian • Principal • Premier

The patient and any other person responsible for payment has a right to refuse to pay, cancel payment, or be reimbused for payment for any other service, examination, or treatment that is performed as a result of and within 72 hours of responding to the advertisement for the free, discounted fee, or reduced fee service, examination, or treatment.

REED & REED

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

813.438.5960

NEEDREED.COM

101 E Lumsden Road
Brandon, FL 33511

Proud Supporters of ECHO
* Board of Directors

LIKE

Having a Lawyer in the

FAMILY

Personal Injury Cases

FREE CONSULTATIONS

Auto Accidents • Slip and Fall
Boating Accidents • Dog Bites
Wrongful Death • Motorcycle



SCOUTS USE COOKIE FUNDS TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

By Liv Baker



Receiving the Girl Scout Silver Award is no easy task for a Cadette, but it became the reality for three local Girl Scouts of Troop 33529.

Camilla Holmes, Rose Burkhardt and Ada Strom were awarded the Girl Scout Silver Award for creating a helpful brochure which offers support to middle schoolers struggling with poor mental health.

The Girl Scout Silver Award signifies meaningful contribution to the community and is awarded to Cadettes who either complete a Cadette Journey, demonstrate leadership experience or design a sustainable project confronting an issue impacting the local community.

The award requires 50 hours of hard work, planning and leadership demonstration. It is one of the most honorable awards a Girl Scout can earn.

For this troop's Silver Award project, they created a pamphlet that includes ways to recognize feelings of anxiety and depression, offering coping techniques and resources to those struggling.

Inspired by firsthand experiences with poor mental health, these girls noticed the lack of discussion surrounding mental health in middle schools and aimed to remind others they are not alone.

"It has always been a very personal topic for us," the troop said. "Many students, including ourselves, struggle with stress from fitting in and maintaining good grades. We know how hard it can be when you don't have healthy coping strategies and wished we had something like this when we were going into middle school."

The girls said their goal was to help others understand their feelings, encourage them to ask for help and offer support.

Beginning with 200 printed copies, the pamphlets were first distributed around Randall Middle School. After receiving the Silver Award, they were distributed to 39 middle schools in Hillsborough County. It even made its way to local elementary schools' nurse offices.

In April, the troop was officially recognized by the Hillsborough County Public Schools Board.

Project advisor and troop leader Jennifer Strom said that with the help of a licensed community mental health specialist and local printers, the girls were able to use funds from selling Girl Scout cookies to print the brochures.

"Next up, they are aiming for their Gold Award, which will likely also be related to mental health and will likely include what couldn't in this project," Jennifer Strom said. "We're just so proud of them because they're bound to achieve higher things, that I know."

To contact the Girl Scouts of West Central Florida, call 813-281-4475. You can visit its Leadership Center & Girl Scout store at 4610 Eisenhower Blvd. in Tampa.

MINTZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT SHOWS BRAVERY BY SAVING THE LIFE A FELLOW CLASSMATE

By Olivia Clark

Donovan Enu is a bright and joyful fourth grader at Mintz Elementary School in Brandon, who truly lights up a room. He has a deep love for art, anime and video games, and his creativity shines through everything he does.



Donovan Enu (right) and Rowan Scalera (left) are friends and students at Mintz Elementary in Brandon.

"Donovan is incredibly kind, generous, and thoughtful," said his mother and teacher at Mintz Elementary, Jennifer Kramer. "He values his friendships and always tries to make others feel included. He also has a great sense of humor and loves telling jokes to make people laugh. I am a fourth grade math and science teacher at the same school they attend, and I'm so proud to see those same qualities of curiosity and kindness growing in him."

Rowan Scalera is an amazing young boy with a big personality and an even bigger heart.

"He loves virtual reality and, like Donovan, enjoys making people laugh with his jokes," Kramer said. "Rowan is known among his peers as a loyal and dependable friend. What really stands out about him is his courage, his respect for others and he carries himself with maturity beyond his years. He's the kind of kid who naturally lifts others up and brings joy to those around him."

During lunch this past April, Donovan was sitting with his friends, eating and chatting just like any normal day. Suddenly, he felt a piece of food get stuck in his throat. At first, he tried to swallow it down and asked a friend for a drink, hoping it would help, but instead it made things worse. The food became lodged, and Donovan realized he couldn't breathe.

Panic set in. He stood up, clutching his throat, tears streaming down his face. In that frightening moment, Rowan immediately recognized what was happening. While others froze in confusion and fear, Rowan stayed calm and sprang into action. He rushed around the table, positioned himself and performed the Heimlich maneuver on Donovan.

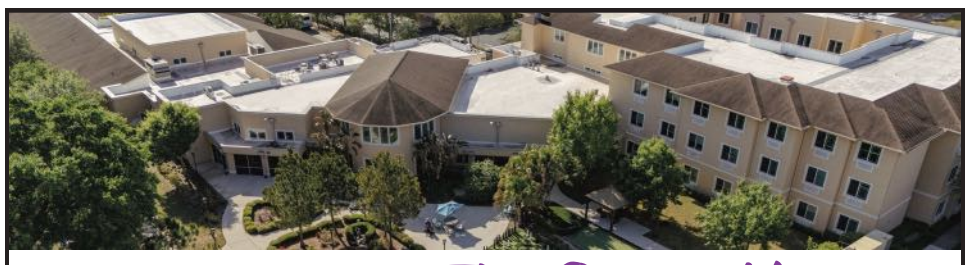
Fortunately, the food was dislodged, and Donovan was finally able to cough it up and breathe.

"Shortly after, Principal Kevin Martin ran over and helped comfort Donovan as the situation settled," Kramer said. "It was a terrifying moment that could have ended very differently, but thanks to Rowan's courage and quick thinking, it became a story of heroism."

"She (the school nurse) assured me that Donovan was OK and was in her office with her," Kramer said. "From the tone in her voice, it was clear that this was no ordinary nurse visit, and my heart dropped."

Kramer and her family feel incredibly thankful, grateful and honored that Donovan has a friend like Rowan.

"In such a chaotic and frightening moment, Rowan was the only one who remained calm and in control," Kramer said. "His bravery didn't just save Donovan; it showed true character and leadership."



A NEW NAME. The Same Heart.

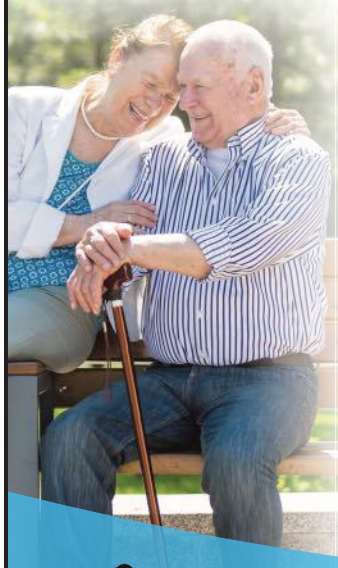
TESSERA OF BRANDON IS NOW

Ambiance at BRANDON

ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

by Providence Senior Living

PROUDLY PART OF THE PROVIDENCE SENIOR LIVING FAMILY.



The caring team and compassionate staff residents and families know and trust remain the same, now supported by experienced local ownership dedicated to building a meaningful community and Creating the Best Day Possible for every resident—every day.

Ambiance at Brandon proudly offers Assisted Living and Memory Care enhanced by state-of-the-art technology, innovative safety features, and personalized support designed to provide comfort, connection, and peace of mind for residents and families alike.

Call Jill or Bill at 813-607-6880 today to schedule your personal tour and experience the difference at Ambiance at Brandon.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE 2025 BEST OF THE BEST Tampa Bay Times

Proudly recognized as a Tampa Bay Times Best of the Best winner for 6 consecutive years—including the most recent!

Creating the Best Day Possible™

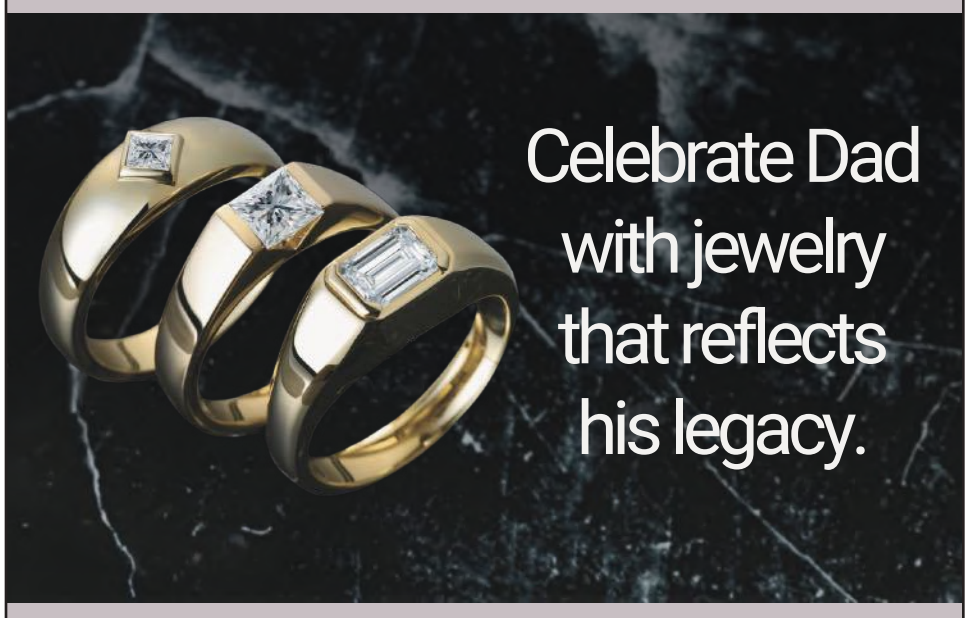
1320 Oakfield Drive // Brandon, FL 33511

813-607-6880 // Sales@ambiancebrandon.com

AmbianceBrandon.com

Assisted Living Facility #PENDING

Strong. Timeless. Unforgettable.



Celebrate Dad with jewelry that reflects his legacy.

McAuley FINE JEWELRY

Free Estimates!

Open Tuesday - Friday 10 - 6 • Saturday 10 - 4

813-689-8124

201 S Kings Ave, Brandon

Custom Bridal Design | Loose Gemstone Sales

Watch & Jewelry Repair On Site. We purchase your scrap GOLD! But we'll give you more in trade!

FOUR FAMILIES MOVE IN AT HABITAT'S WINDHORST COMMONS

Staff Report



Megan Grufman celebrates with her children, David and Melanie.



Devan Mitchell and her son, Stephen, stand outside their new home in Windhorst Commons.



Natalie Sanchez and her daughter, Sariah, tour their new Habitat for Humanity home



Paris Johnson celebrates with her children, Galaxy and Deavi at their Habitat home in Brandon.

For four Hillsborough County families, the dream of homeownership has become a reality thanks to Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough and a network of community partners dedicated to addressing the region's affordable housing crisis.

During a series of home dedication ceremonies this spring, four mothers and their children received the keys to new homes in Windhorst Commons, Habitat's 23-home affordable housing community in Brandon. Each family arrived with a different story, but all shared a common challenge: rising housing costs that made stable homeownership seem increasingly out of reach.

For Megan Grufman, a single mother of two, the dedication marked the end of years spent living in overcrowded conditions with extended family. After rent prices made independent housing unaffordable, Grufman and her children moved in with her parents. Megan shared a room with her 11-year-old son, David, while her 17-year-old daughter, Melanie, slept in a makeshift space in her grandmother's room.

Now, the family has a home of their own thanks to Habitat's 2025 Real Estate Build, sponsored by the Suncoast Tampa Association of REALTORS®.

"There were so many times I didn't know how we would ever get ahead or have a place of our own," Grufman said during her dedication ceremony.

Just days earlier, Devan Mitchell and her 15-year-old son, Stephen, celebrated a similar milestone. The billing specialist had spent years navigating rising rents and maintenance issues in rental housing while trying to provide stability for her family.

"This home means everything to us," Mitchell said. "It means stability, safety and hope for my son and me."

Mitchell's home was made possible through a partnership between Hillsborough County and Habitat for Humanity. The county invested $1.4 million toward construction costs and materials for homes in Windhorst Commons, along with an additional $600,000 for infrastructure improvements including roads, utilities and sewer lines.

The need for affordable housing has also affected families like Natalie Sanchez and her 6-year-old daughter, Sariah. As a remote retention specialist, Sanchez spent years balancing work and motherhood while struggling with the financial pressures of escalating rental costs.

Through Habitat's affordable homeownership program and support from home sponsor Central Bank, Sanchez now has an affordable mortgage and a permanent place to raise her daughter.

The family's dedication ceremony marked one of the earliest milestones in the development of Windhorst Commons, which was specifically designed to provide affordable, disaster-resilient housing for working families and veterans.

For Paris Johnson and her children, Galaxy and Deavi, homeownership means something beyond financial stability — it means permanence.

Johnson, a billing and funding specialist, had watched her rent climb by more than $600 per month since 2019. Despite the financial strain, she worked through Habitat's homeownership program, completing financial education classes and hundreds of hours of required sweat equity.

"We've always made every rental feel like home," Johnson said. "But this is the first time we can truly settle in without worrying about having to leave."

Her home was sponsored by Ajax Paving, whose volunteers joined Habitat supporters in celebrating the family's achievement.

Habitat homeowners purchase their homes through affordable mortgages designed to fit family budgets. In exchange, participants complete financial education courses and contribute sweat equity hours, often helping build not only their own homes but those of future neighbors as well.

According to Habitat for Humanity of Tampa Bay Hillsborough CEO Tina Forcier, the impact of homeownership extends far beyond the walls of a house.

"A home changes everything for a family," Forcier said. "From a child's confidence in school to a parent's peace of mind, affordable homeownership creates opportunities that can last for generations."

Windhorst Commons is being developed as a hurricane-resilient neighborhood featuring homes equipped with storm shutters and built to withstand Florida's challenging weather conditions. The community will eventually include 23 homes.

As construction continues through early 2027, additional families will join the growing neighborhood, each bringing their own story of perseverance and determination. For more, visit HabitatHillsborough.org.

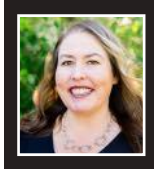




Osprey OBSERVER

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

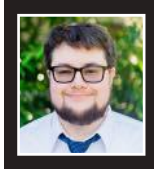
PUBLISHING POSITIVE COMMUNITY NEWS THROUGHOUT:
Bloomingdale/FishHawk • Riverview • Brandon/Winthrop • Valrico and NEW SouthShore (Apollo Beach/Ruskin/Wimauma)



MANAGING EDITOR
Marie Gilmore
813-657-2418
editor@ospreyobserver.com



BILLING MANAGER
Terry Vassalotti
813-657-2418
terry@ospreyobserver.com



NEWS REPORTER
Taylor Wells
813-657-2418
twells@ospreyobserver.com



DELIVERY MANAGER
Bill Andrew
813-657-2418
bandrew@ospreyobserver.com



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR
Libby Hopkins
813-657-2418
libby@ospreyobserver.com



CUSTOMER SERVICE
Jenny Bennett
813-657-2418
jbennett@ospreyobserver.com

GRAPHICS MANAGER - **Kathi Hayes** - *khayes@ospreyobserver.com*

www.OspreyObserver.com

FOLLOW US:

BRCC BRANDON RIVERVIEW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE · GREATER SOUTHSHORE Chamber of Commerce · Riverview WOMAN'S Club · 100 Women Who Care Riverview/Fishhawk · VALRICO / FISHHAWK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ADVERTISING SALES TEAM



FISHHAWK ADVERTISING
Melody Gershkoff
813-300-5152
mgershkoff@ospreyobserver.com



HOUSE ACCOUNTS & VALRICO ADVERTISING
Kerrie Hoening
813-625-1527
kerrie@ospreyobserver.com



BRANDON ADVERTISING
Jane Owen
541-405-5574
jowen@ospreyobserver.com



RIVERVIEW ADVERTISING
Olivia Clark
330-416-0771
oclark@OspreyObserver.com



SOUTHSHORE, RUSKIN & WIMAUMA ADVERTISING
Melissa Hartmann
813-833-7470
mhartmann@ospreyobserver.com

Publishing Positive News Since 2001

2109 Lithia Pinecrest Rd., Valrico 33596 • (office) 813-657-2418

MOTORING FLORIDA



nitishrele@gmail.com

'ROGUE' IS THE 'ONE' YOU WANT IN THE GARAGE!

By Nitish Rele



Time was when the tremendously popular midsize Altima ruled the roost. But with SUVs and cross-overs taking over, the sedan's time has passed. Undoubtedly, the Nissan Rogue with a cozy, well-damped ride has slowly but surely caught up with the youth and their active lifestyles. Now, this compact SUV is the Japanese carmaker's top-selling vehicle in the United States, and rightly so.

ROGUE AWD (ROCK CREEK)
Tires: 235/65/R17
Wheelbase: 106.5 inches
Length: 183 inches
Width: 72.4 inches
Height: 66.5 inches
Weight: 3,713 pounds
Tow capacity: 1,500 pounds
Fuel capacity: 14.5 gallons
City/hwy/: 27/32/29 mpg
Base price: $33,990
Price as tested: $37,835
www.nissanusa.com

For 2026, the powertrain maintains its status quo with a 1.5-liter DOHC intercooled and turbocharged engine developing 201 horsepower at 5,600 rpm and 225 pounds-feet of torque at 4,000 rpm. It is coupled with a continuous variable transmission, which can be noisy at times. The electric power rack-and-pinion steering conveys a solid on-center feel, willing to change directions when hustled along the road. An independent strut with coil springs makes up the front, while the rear is equipped with a multilink suspension. The all-wheel-drive system distributes torque evenly to the wheels irrespective of road conditions. Drive modes available are eco, auto, sport, off-road and snow.

Ensconced on the unibody-type structure is a V-motion black grille with mesh, and LED headlights and daytime running lights. Offered at no extra cost on the Rock Creek trim are dual auto AC, 8-inch touchscreen for infotainment controls, eight-way driver and four-way front-passenger power and heated seats, quilted leatherette seats and shifter, a D-shaped tilt/telescopic steering column, push-button start, a 12.3-inch digital instrument panel and a center console pass-through. Ingress and egress are effortless with the 60/40-split rear seat, which, when folded, ekes out 74.1 cubic feet of space. And passenger volume is an admirable 105.4 cubic feet. Need to haul extra luggage/belongings? The tubular roof rack capacity can hold up to 220 pounds of weight. That this is the off-road capable and adventure-ready Rock Creek model is evident from all-terrain 17-inch tires, hands-free power lift gate, all-season cargo area protector/floor liners, and lava red accents on tires, roof rack, seats, front fascia and seat back rests.

The dual front and side airbags, front-center airbag, side curtain airbags for both rows, four-wheel antilock brakes with electronic brake distribution and brake assist, vehicle dynamic control, antiskid system, front-seat active-head restraints, rear cross-traffic alert, front/rear crumple zones, hill start assist, blind-spot warning, lane-departure warning, auto emergency brake with pedestrian detection, daytime running lights and tire pressure monitoring system are standard. Looking into the future of autonomous transport, the ProPilot Assist helps drivers to maintain their lane and set vehicle speed and distance to a car ahead.

Listen up, all you younger and urban SUV buyers. Nothing beats the Rogue in usefulness, functionality, respectable fuel-economy figures and value. In fact, it is one handy 'Rogue' you want to keep by your side, or, in this case, parked in the garage.

CEDER'S
FULL SERVICE LAWNCARE
813.559.1495
RONN1EGRUBER@YAHOO.COM
7409 50TH AVE SOUTH, TAMPA, FL 33619
RONNIE GRUBER / OWNER

SWIM LESSONS FOR ALL AGES
Swim Life FishHawk - Lithia, FL
INFANT SURVIVAL SKILLS,
STROKE DEVELOPMENT,
CONFIDENCE BUILDING
"COACH NATALEE" 813-613-3377

Dine Local OSPREVOBSERVER.COM

1/2 Off
Appetizer with any dinner entree. Friday & Saturday 6pm-Close
Dine In ONLY
Note Available For To Go
STRANDHILL PUBLIC
10288 Causeway Blvd

Voodoo Valrico FL Estd 2024
Teacher's Happy Hour Every Friday, 3-6 p.m. All Teachers Receive the Founder's Family Discount
10% OFF ENTIRE Purchase

10% OFF ENTIRE Purchase
J.F. Kicks Restaurant & Patio Bar
813-643-7777
Only valid with regular menu. With this coupon. Must present before submitting payment. Before tax. One coupon per visit. Not valid with other offers.

LUNCH SPECIALS EVERY DAY
FAMILY MEAL SPECIALS
$49.95
Take Out & Delivery
La Septima Cafe
702 W Lumsden Rd. Brandon
Not Valid with any other discounts, promotions or coupons. No Cash Value.

10% OFF ENTIRE Purchase
Sunflower Cafe
Sunflower Cafe
813-65-SUSHI
Only valid with regular menu. With this coupon. Must present before submitting payment. Before tax. One coupon per visit. Not valid with other offers.

Happy Hour
Thursdays 4 - 6 pm
$5 Classic Shakes
MilkShake EST FACTORY 1914
10446 Stelling Dr.
Riverview
(in the Mission BBQ plaza)

TACO DIRTY — Bowls. Tacos. Mexican Things.
FREE TACO
with any purchase
10460 Stelling Dr.
Riverview
(in the Mission BBQ plaza)
Must present coupon. Not valid with any other discounts. No cash value.

STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE HOLDS FIRST-EVER 'ADVOCACY DAY'

By State Attorney Suzy Lopez

When someone becomes the victim of a crime, their life can change in an instant. In those painful moments, our office works hard to provide support and compassion as we seek justice. It's why we held our first-ever 'Advocacy Day' during National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April.



State Attorney Suzy Lopez and 69th district of the Florida House of Representatives member Danny Alvarez speak during the inaugural Advocacy Day event, bringing together victim advocates, survivors and community partners to support crime victims and strengthen the network of care throughout the community.

We brought together victim advocates, survivors and community partners from across our region to strengthen the network of care that helps victims and their families rebuild. The event focused on healing and hope as attendees heard from our keynote speaker, Lisa Mae, who miraculously survived an abduction and assault by serial killer Bobby Joe Long. In an ultimate story of survival and triumph, she shared how she turned her pain into purpose by becoming a Hillsborough County Sheriff's Deputy in order to help victims.

Attendees also heard from sexual assault survivors, specialists in critical incident stress management and even got to partake in a short trauma-informed yoga session. And no event is complete without a visit from Lorne the Courthouse Facility Dog, where participants got to see firsthand the power of animal-assisted intervention.

Their stories were a profound reminder that victim advocacy is not only about services but also about restoring hope when it is needed the most. While seeking justice is my top priority as state attorney, supporting crime victims is just as important. From launching our first-ever Victim Toolkit to connect individuals to vital resources to creating this meaningful Advocacy Day event, I will remain committed to ensuring that no victim feels forgotten or alone.

Throughout the week, our victim advocacy team also created a moving art installation in our lobby by featuring the word "STRONG," filled with colorful ribbons representing different types of crime. It stood as a visible reminder that while every victim's story is different, each deserves to be heard.

Every day, victim advocates, prosecutors and support staff walk alongside individuals during some of the darkest chapters of their lives.

They offer strength and reassurance. And we will continue to do so not only during National Crime Victims' Rights Week but every single day.

The State Attorney's Office of the 13th Judicial circuit encompasses all of Hillsborough County, including the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City. The office staff consists of approximately 320 dedicated public servants including 130 prosecutors, as well as investigators, victim advocates and support staff. The office handles approximately 50,000 cases every year. To learn more about the organization or apply to become part of the team, visit www.sao13th.com.

JROTC RAIDER TEAM EARNS NATIONAL TITLE AT U.S. ARMY COMPETITION

Staff Report



Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) is proud to announce that the Newsome High School Army JROTC Coed Raider Team has earned national recognition after winning first place in the Masters Elite Division at the United States Army Cadet Command National Raider Competition, defeating more than 4,000 cadets from across the country.

The team's victory marks one of the highest honors achievable in a high school JROTC Raider program and is considered a rare accomplishment nationwide.

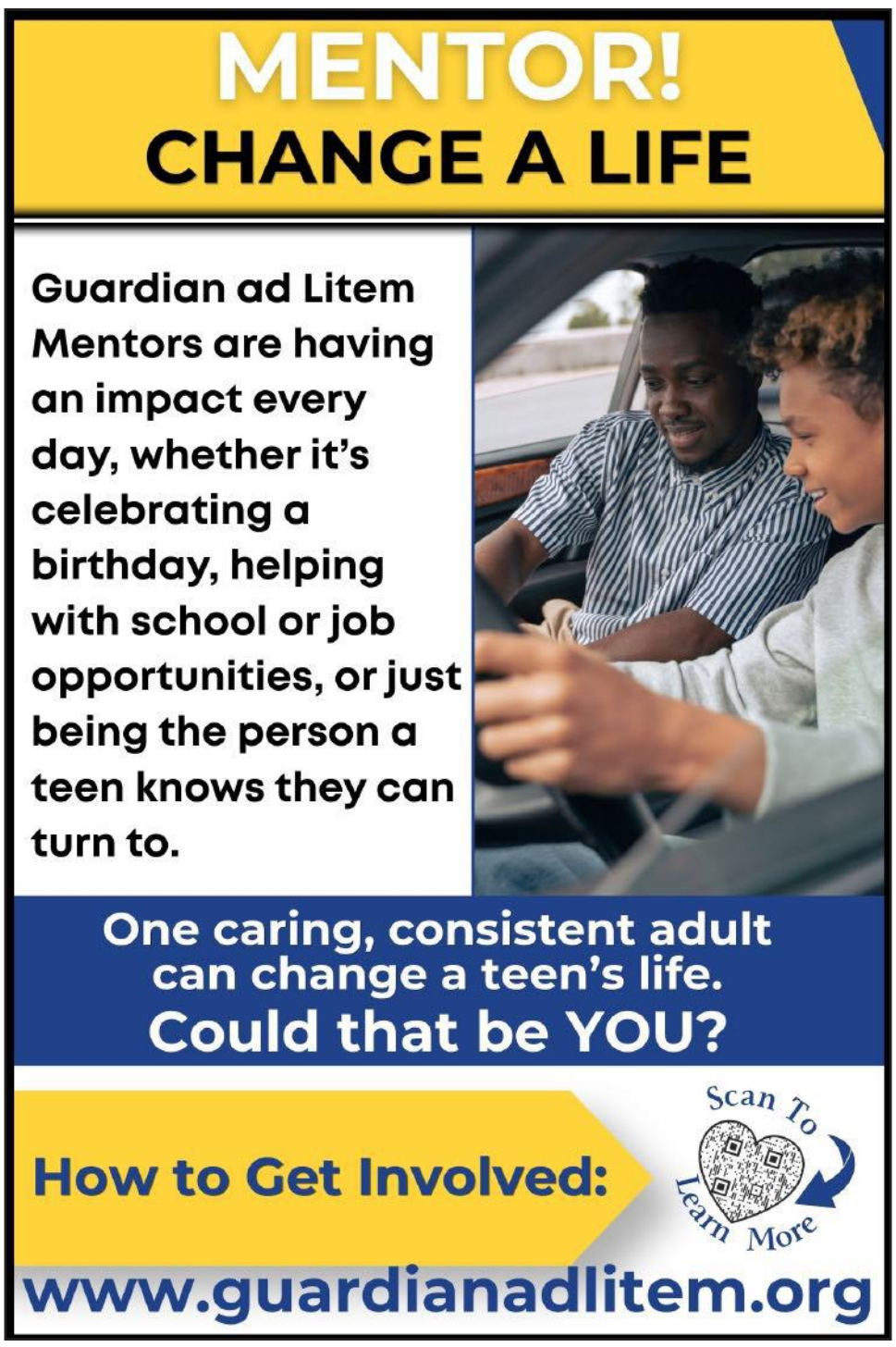
Often described as the high school equivalent of the U.S. Army's elite Ranger competitions, the National Raider Competition is a physically and mentally demanding, military-style athletic challenge. Hosted by U.S. Army Cadet Command, the event tests cadets in team-based events, such as endurance running, obstacle courses, rope bridge construction, rescue scenarios and strength-based challenges, designed to build leadership, teamwork and resilience.

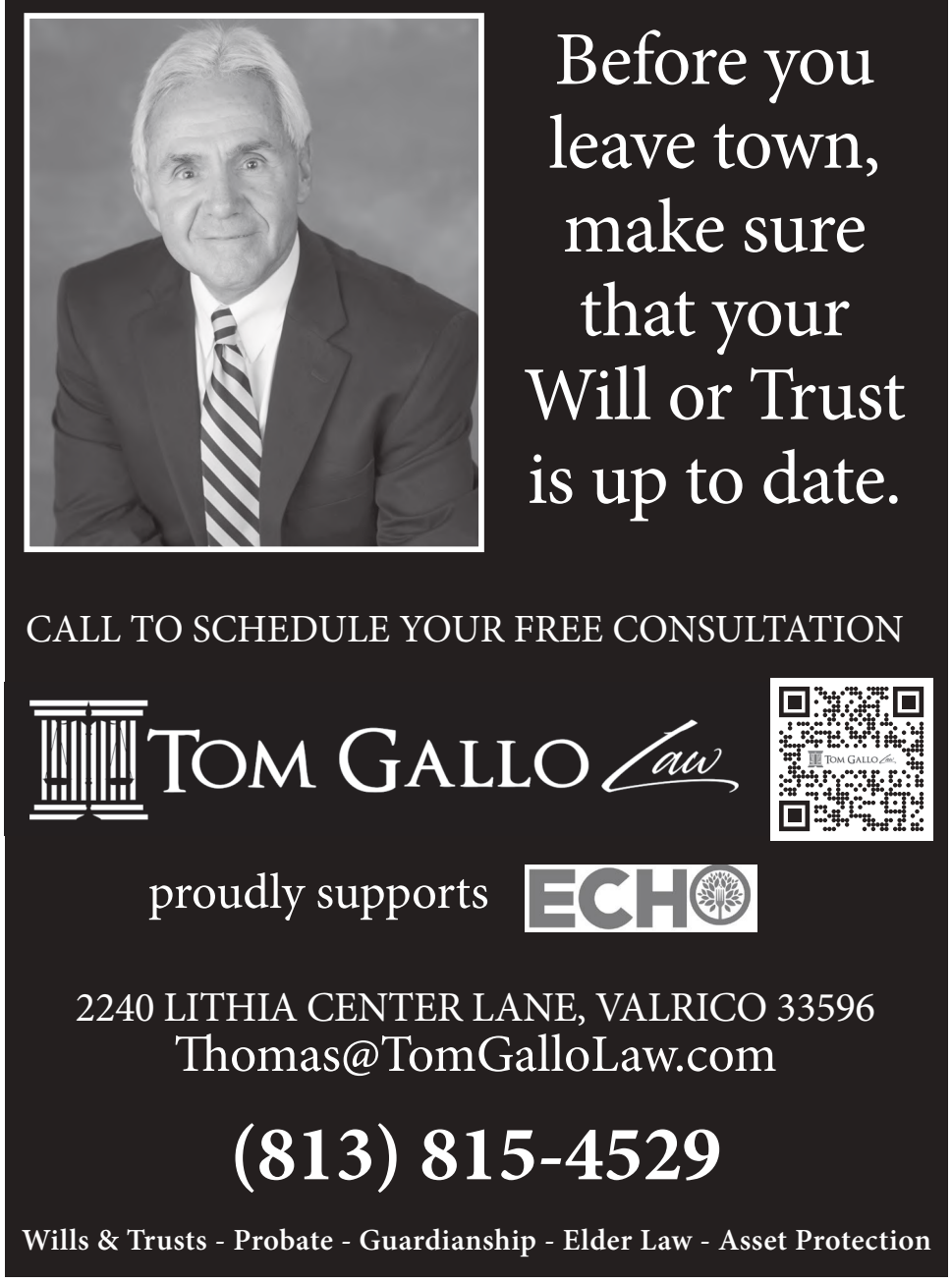
Newsome High School competed in the Masters Elite Division, the competition's most advanced level, which is reserved for the nation's top-performing JROTC Raider teams.

"This extraordinary achievement reflects the dedication, discipline and teamwork of these cadets, as well as the outstanding leadership of their instructors," said Superintendent Van Ayres. "Winning at this level is a testament to the strength of Newsome High School's JROTC program and the commitment of our students to excellence."

The Army JROTC Raider program emphasizes physical fitness, mental toughness, leadership development and service, preparing students for success both in and beyond the classroom.

To learn more about the JROTC programs at HCPS visit the website at www.hillsboroughschools.org.





TEACHING KINDNESS EARLY: STUDENTS BRING HOPE TO MAKE-A-WISH FAMILIES

By McKenzie Brown



The Learning Experience (TLE), a preschool and daycare center in Lithia, is joining more than 300 locations nationwide to spread joy and help grant wishes for children battling critical illnesses. The initiative, 'Let's Grant Wishes,' began on April 1 and continued throughout the month.

During this campaign, preschool students at participating centers were introduced to the mission of Make-A-Wish and the impact they can have on others. Guided by teachers and philanthropy characters Charity the Chihuahua and Grace the Greyhound, students engaged in hands-on activities, such as group projects and arts and crafts. Families and staff also played an active role by contributing through online fundraising pages and special events hosted at each location.

Brad Wahl, chief brand officer of The Learning Experience, expressed pride in the organization's ongoing partnership with Make-A-Wish. He emphasized that the initiative is designed not only to raise funds but also to teach children the importance of generosity and kindness from an early age. By participating, students began to understand how their actions, no matter how small, can make a meaningful difference.

To kick off the campaign, The Learning Experience released a special episode of its educational series, Bubbles and Friends. The episode highlights Riley Rose and the Sherman family, who founded The Riley Rose Foundation in 2019 in honor of their daughter. The foundation supports childhood cancer research and provides 'Riley Rose Art Carts,' which deliver arts and crafts supplies to hospital patients undergoing treatment, offering comfort and creativity during difficult times.

The Let's Grant Wishes fundraiser was part of The Learning Experience's broader philanthropy curriculum, developed in partnership with Make-A-Wish Southern Florida. This curriculum encourages children to practice kindness and generosity in everyday situations, whether in the classroom, at home or in their communities.

As the program's characters reminded students, "It doesn't matter how big or small you are; it's the size of your heart that matters."

Since launching in 2018, the program has raised millions of dollars for nonprofit organizations across the country, including more than $1.4 million for Make-A-Wish. The Lithia location has contributed through a variety of creative fundraising events.

Kristin Maurer, assistant director at The Learning Experience in Lithia, highlighted the impact of these efforts.

"At The Learning Experience of FishHawk, we are teaching the values of kindness, generosity and community through our philanthropy program," she said. "With the incredible support of our families, we raised $10,000 in just four weeks through events like a bike-a-thon, lemonade stand, bake sale and raffles."

For more information, contact our local The Learning Experience and visit TLE Make-a-Wish at https://secure2.wish.org/site/TR?fr_id=7025 to make a donation.







THREE USF FACULTY TO BE INDUCTED INTO FL INVENTORS HALL OF FAME

Staff Report



The Florida Inventors Hall of Fame announced that three distinguished University of South Florida faculty innovators are among the 2026 class of inductees. Dr. Mark Frankle, Dr. Patrick Hwu and Donald Keck are receiving the prestigious honor for their groundbreaking research and contributions to science and society.

"The University of South Florida is proud to serve as the home of the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame," said USF President Moez Limayem. "The 2026 inductees represent the very best in Florida-connected innovation. Their achievements remind us that research, entrepreneurship and invention have the power to improve lives, strengthen industries and shape the future."

Frankle, the chief of shoulder and elbow surgery at the Florida Orthopaedic Institute and a clinical professor in the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine, is an internationally recognized orthopedic surgeon, inventor and medical device innovator.

"It is incredibly meaningful to see reverse shoulder arthroplasty recognized by the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame as an invention that has changed lives," Frankle said. "The goal was always to restore function and relieve pain for patients who had limited options. I am proud that this work developed here in Florida."

Hwu is the president and chief executive officer of Moffitt Cancer Center and a professor of oncologic sciences in the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine. He is an internationally recognized physician-scientist and pioneering innovator in cancer immunotherapy. Hwu is best known for foundational work in developing chimeric receptor genes that led to modern CAR T-cell therapies.

Hwu holds more than 10 U.S. patents and he has authored more than 300 scientific publications.

Keck, a professor in USF's Institute for Advanced Discovery & Innovation, is a pioneering physicist whose work revolutionized global communications and laid the foundation for the modern internet. As a member of Corning's Optical Waveguide Project team, Keck co-invented low-loss optical fiber in 1970, transforming fiber optics from a scientific concept into a practical, scalable technology for long-distance communication.

The 2026 class of inventors will be formally inducted Nov. 6 at the Annual Induction Ceremony and Fundraising Gala in Tampa.

15 STUDENTS NAMED NATIONAL MERIT $2,500 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Staff Report

Local National Merit $2,500 Scholarship winners:
Chase A. Copeland, Bloomingdale
Casey A. Ayres, Newsome
Shreyashi Bodaka, Strawberry Crest
Shelby L. Bray, Strawberry Crest
Vritti A. Udasi, Strawberry Crest

Fifteen students from Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) have been named recipients of the prestigious National Merit $2,500 Scholarship, according to an announcement released today by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

The HCPS students are among 2,500 Merit Scholar designees nationwide, selected from a highly competitive pool of more than 15,000 finalists in the 2026 National Merit Scholarship Program.

National Merit $2,500 Scholarship winners are chosen based on the strongest combination of academic achievement, leadership and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The number of winners in each state is proportional to that state's share of the nation's graduating high school seniors.

"These students represent the very best of Hillsborough County Public Schools," said Superintendent Van Ayres. "Earning a National Merit Scholarship is a tremendous achievement and a reflection of years of hard work, academic excellence and strong support from dedicated teachers, families, and school communities."

Recipients were selected by a committee of college admissions officers and high school counselors who reviewed a comprehensive portfolio of information, including: academic records and course rigor, PSAT/NMSQT scores, leadership and contributions to school and community activities, a student-written essay and a recommendation from a high school official.

The $2,500 scholarships are single-payment awards funded primarily by NMSC, with support from corporate partners and donations to the organization's President's Fund. Students may use the award at any regionally accredited U.S. college or university.

The National Merit Scholarship Program began in October 2024, when students took the PSAT/NMSQT as high school juniors. By the conclusion of the 2026 competition, approximately 6,700 students nationwide will have earned National Merit Scholarships, totaling nearly $24 million.

Founded in 1955, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation is a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance and works to honor academically talented students and encourage educational excellence.

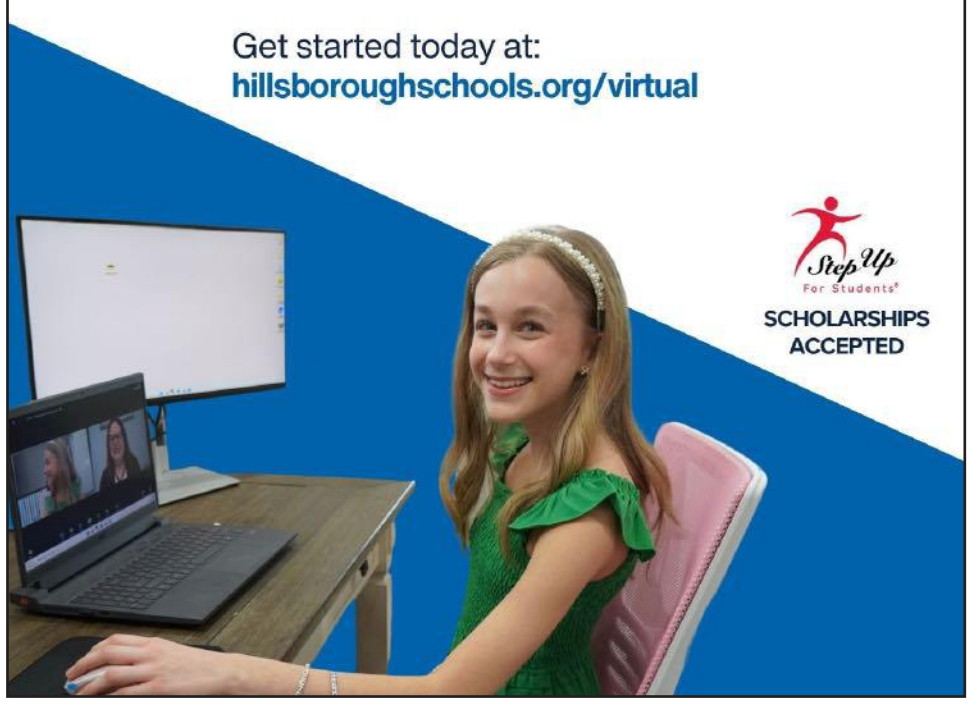
LEARN VIRTUALLY FROM HOME
WITH HILLSBOROUGH VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Looking for a flexible education option for your child? Discover Hillsborough Virtual School—your local online learning option for grades K–12.

With over 200 courses available, students can learn anytime, anywhere, on a schedule that works for your family—making it a great way to stay on track or get ahead.

Whether full-time or part-time, students stay connected with certified teachers, counselors, clubs, athletics, and graduation opportunities.

Get started today at:
hillsboroughschools.org/virtual



Step Up For Students®
SCHOLARSHIPS ACCEPTED

Daley & Associates
PrimeMed of Tampa Bay

Daley Life & Wellness
Your Road to Wellness Begins Here



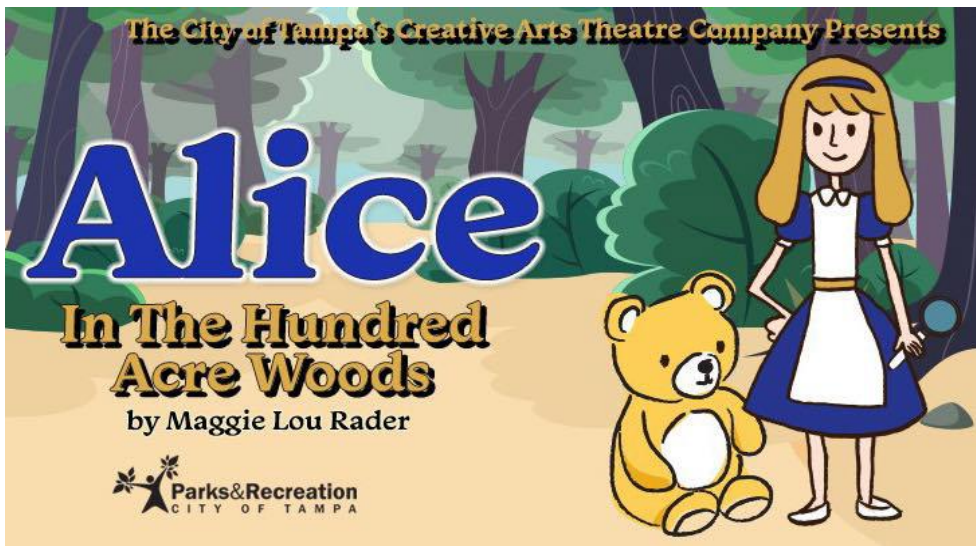
- Branded Weight Loss
- Compounded Weight Loss
- Skin Health & Wellness
- Energy Rejuvenation
- Hair Loss Solutions
- Sexual Health & Wellness

Andrew Daley, MD
Internal Medicine

813-530-0903
631 W. Lumsden Rd, Brandon, FL 33511
Careglp.carevalidate.com/Partner/daley-life-wellness

ALICE IN THE HUNDRED ACRE WOOD CHILDREN'S THEATER AT LIBRARIES

Staff Report



In June, residents are invited to attend a free, live children's theater experience, *Alice in the Hundred Acre Wood*, written by Maggie Lou Rader, at the library that focuses on dramatic and imaginative play.

True crime in the Hundred Acre Wood? Yes, please! Join the fun as Alice, the best detective in Wonderland, hunts for clues in a crime caper mystery featuring some of childhood's favorite characters. When Winnie the Pooh hires Alice to solve the case of Christopher Robin's kidnapping, she arrives in the Hundred Acre Wood to find a very anxious Piglet, a terribly unfocused Tigger and a very Eeyore-y Eeyore.

Will Alice find the culprit? Will she be able to bring Christopher Robin home? This literary mashup will have audiences laughing as they follow clues and help Alice crack the case.

This event is recommended for ages 5 and up. Tickets will be available at the marked service point 15 minutes prior to each showing on a first-come, first-served basis.

Show times and locations:

Thursday, June 4, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. at Jan Kaminis Platt Regional Library, located at 3910 S. Manhattan Ave. in Tampa.

Friday, June 5, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. at Riverview Public Library, located at 9951 Balm Riverview Rd. in Riverview.

Monday, June 8, at 11 a.m. at C. Blythe Andrews, Jr. Public Library, located at 2607 E. Dr. MLK, Jr. Blvd. in Tampa.

Thursday, June 11, at 11 a.m. at Riverview Public Library.

Friday, June 12, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. at New Tampa Regional Library, located at 10001 Cross Creed Blvd. in Tampa.

Tuesday, June 16, at 11 a.m. at Town 'N Country Regional Public Library, located at 7606 Paula Dr., Ste. 120, in Tampa.

For more information, visit https://hcplc.org/childrenstheatre.

This event is presented by Creative Arts Theatre Company, the City of Tampa's professional theatre company for young audiences.

BILINGUAL LEGAL TEAM AT RJS LAW GROUP SERVES TAMPA AND BEYOND

By Mylena C. Ferman



RJS Law Group (RJS) has served Ruskin and Tampa's English and Spanish-speaking clients with legal representation since 2002.

The law group consists of three main lawyers: Brandon Kolb, who primarily handles traffic defense; Ana Salinas, who oversees personal injury cases, probate cases, trust-related cases and wills; and Rolando Santiago, founder and managing partner of RJS, who works on real estate, business law and personal injury cases. All RJS employees are natively fluent in both English and Spanish.

"We have a large client base of people who are first-generation immigrants and so their English is extremely limited. To discuss technical issues can be challenging. It is not challenging for us," Santiago said.

Their expertise in taking on cases for Spanish speakers has earned them a reputation locally and internationally. RJS has taken on numerous personal injury litigation cases, including in Argentina, Honduras, El Salvador and Japan.

"It's fun, you know?" Santiago said about the international cases. "It's fun to be able to help folks, to have the knowledge to be able to help when they thought there was no justice available to them."

In addition to her local work, Salinas helps coordinate RJS' international cases and is a licensed attorney in Honduras.

"We focus on the person-to-person," Santiago explained, "...We are a firm where clients can get ahold of the attorney, can get ahold of the paralegal."

Humanity is at the core of RJS' business practices.

"We get results for the clients because of the staff. Everybody here is knowledgeable," Santiago said.

According to its website, RJS also takes general civil litigation, workers' compensation and immigration law cases. The cost of the services varies. Most services charge an hourly rate that typically ranges from $400-$800. Other services have a base or flat fee. For example, will kits have a flat fee of $750, basic trusts have a base fee of $3,500 and traffic defense is approximately $300 per infraction.

To learn more about RJS Law Group, visit its website at https://rjslawgroup.com/, email at info@rjslawgroup.com or call 813-641-0010. RJS Law Group is open from Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m., and by appointment on weekends. It is located at 306 N. U.S. 41 in Ruskin.

CARDINAL ROOFING
813-689-ROOF
License# CCC1325939
Roof Repairs, Replacement & Maintenance
Shingle, Flat, Tile & Metal
Blown-In Insulation • Solar Attic Fans

CARDINAL BUILDING AND RESTORATION
CGC1537220 / IICRC #70229671
Fire, Smoke, Water & Mold Remediation
24/7 Emergency Water Extraction
Structural Drying, Tarp & Board-Up

(813) 689-ROOF

Mister Pasta
MADE fresh MADE WITH LOVE
FRESH PASTA MADE DAILY
CREATE YOUR OWN PASTA BOWLS
FRESH SAUCES MADE IN-HOUSE
SALADS, SANDWICHES & DESSERTS
FAST, FRIENDLY DELIVERY AVAILABLE
11681 BOYETTE RD. RIVERVIEW, FL 33569
(813) 252-4628
WWW.MISTERPASTA.COM

ASP AMERICA'S SWIMMING POOL CO.
Specialized in Remodeling, Repairs, & Resurfacing
Real Estate Pool Inspection
Call 813-641-4968
or visit ASPSouthShoreFL.com
© 2026 ASP Franchising SPE LLC. All rights reserved. Each location independently owned & operated. License CPC1460605
Remodeling | Cleaning | Repairs | Construction
STAYCATION IS THE NEW VACATION

SORORITY CELEBRATES 95 YEARS OF BETA SIGMA PHI AT FOUNDER'S LUNCH

Staff Report



Members of Beta Sigma Phi's Delta Delta Chapter celebrate the sorority's 95th anniversary during the annual Founder's Day Luncheon held at the Columbia Restaurant Museum in Ybor City.

Members of the Delta Delta Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi International Sorority recently joined sisters from across the Suncoast Council (Tampa) to commemorate a milestone anniversary at the organization's annual Founder's Day Luncheon. This year's celebration honored the 95th birthday of Beta Sigma Phi and marked the close of another sorority year.

The luncheon was hosted at the historic Columbia Restaurant Museum in Ybor City, where attendees gathered among displays of vintage costumes and cultural artifacts that reflect decades of rich history. The venue provided a fitting backdrop for an afternoon steeped in tradition, reflection and celebration.

A highlight of the event included the reading of the Mayor's Proclamation, followed by members uniting to recite the Founder's Day Pledge — a tradition that reinforces the sorority's values of friendship, learning, and service.

Recognition of outstanding members was also a focal point of the program. Lee Livingston was honored as Delta Delta Chapter's 'Woman of the Year,' while Julia Pickens received the distinction of Suncoast Council's 'Woman of the Year,' acknowledging their contributions to the organization.

The ceremony included the installation of the 2026-27 Suncoast Council Executive Board, ushering in a new year of leadership. Excitement continued, as it was announced that the upcoming Beta Sigma Phi theme will be 'BSP Sisters Light Up the World.'

Looking ahead, members eagerly anticipate the 2026 Florida Cruise Convention, which will take place aboard Royal Caribbean's Radiance of the Seas. The event promises to be a memorable gathering of sisters from across 26 stated, culminating in the announcement of the Florida 'Woman of the Year.'

Beta Sigma Phi is an organization for women over the age of 18. Women interested in learning more about membership opportunities can contact Pickens at juliapickens88@gmail.com or visit the Suncoast Council website at https://bspsuncoastcouncil.weebly.com/.

FLVS FLEX OFFERS TUITION-FREE SUMMER COURSES FOR STUDENTS

Staff Report



As summer break approaches, Florida students have the opportunity to use time away from the traditional classroom to focus on practical skills that support academic success, career readiness and personal well-being through tuition-free online courses.

Available to students statewide, the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) Flex option allows students to take individual courses online and work at their own pace, making it possible to continue learning alongside summer schedules, jobs or family commitments.

"FLVS Flex provides students with a way to continue learning on their own terms," said Jason Schultz, senior director of instruction at FLVS. "By offering courses online and year-round, we're able to meet students where they are."

FLVS Flex courses are aligned with Florida educational standards and state requirements and are designed to support a range of student academic and instructional needs.

For example, the Driver Education/Traffic Safety course fulfills the state requirement that students complete a driver education course before obtaining a learner's license.

Health and fitness offerings provide options for students completing required physical education coursework outside the traditional school year, while career and leadership courses allow students to explore postsecondary interests and develop decision-making and organizational skills.

All courses are taught by Florida-certified teachers and include instructional support and interactive components. Students may enroll in one or more courses based on individual academic plans.

FLVS Flex courses are available tuition-free to Florida students, with unique requirements that apply to those receiving scholarship funding. Students can enroll in individual courses on a rolling basis throughout the summer. Additional information about course offerings and enrollment is available on the Florida Virtual School website at www.flvs.net/enrollment/flex.

Course Offerings

FLVS Flex offers courses designed to help students develop academic, career and life skills outside the traditional classroom.

Middle school courses include:

- Business Keyboarding
- Career Research and Decision Making
- Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Learning Strategies

High school courses include:

- Career Research and Decision Making
- Critical Thinking and Study Skills
- Driver Education/Traffic Safety
- Fitness Lifestyle Design
- HOPE - Physical Education (Core)
- Leadership Skills Development
- Life Management Skills
- Outdoor Education
- Personal Fitness



BRANDON RIVERVIEW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CELEBRATES LOCAL EXCELLENCE AT 2026 CHAMBER MEMBER AWARDS

Staff Report



Nonprofit Award: A Kid's Place.



Medium Business Award: The GOAT Plumbing Company.



Large Business Award: Grease Monkey.

The Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce (BRCC) proudly hosted its annual Chamber Member Awards (CMAs) on April 30 at Hillsborough College, bringing together business leaders, nonprofit organizations and community advocates for an evening dedicated to celebrating the strength and success of the local business community. The event was presented by HCA Florida Brandon Hospital, with additional sponsors including Christopher Ligori & Associates (Bar Sponsor), Hillsborough College, Suncoast Credit Union, TECO, Spectrum Reach, The Regent, Grease Monkey and Beach Geeks IT.

The CMAs recognize organizations and individuals who have made a significant and lasting impact through leadership, innovation and service. The event honored not only award recipients and finalists but also the collective contributions of the chamber's membership, which continues to shape the economic and social fabric of Brandon and Riverview.

"This event is about our members — the small businesses, nonprofits, and service organizations that make up the foundation of our community," said Amber Aaron, chamber president. "The chamber exists because of them, and we are proud to celebrate their achievements and contributions."



Citizen of the Year: Melissa Canfield.



Community Leadership Award: Col. Nikki Bosley, HCSO



Volunteer of the Year: Pat Magruder

2026 Chamber Member Awards winners:

- Emerging Business Award: Skyline Transport
- Small Business Award: 2nd Amendment Armory
- Medium Business Award: The GOAT Plumbing Company
- Large Business Award: Grease Monkey
- Nonprofit Award: A Kid's Place

Individual award honorees:

- Citizen of the Year: Melissa Canfield
- Volunteer of the Year: Pat Magruder
- Ambassador of the Year: Allie Savvides
- Community Leadership Award: Colonel Nikki Bosley, HCSO

Business of the Year finalists:

- Emerging Business: Camp Mirage and United Direct Lending
- Small Business: G-Force Parking Lot Striping of Tampa and Parwani Law, P.A.
- Medium Business: Fluent Cannabis and T&J Painting
- Large Business: Spectrum Reach and Suncoast Credit Union
- Nonprofit: ECHO and Easterseals Florida

Taste of BRCC Winner

A highlight of the evening was the Taste of BRCC, where attendees sampled offerings from local restaurants and food vendors and voted for their favorite. This year's winner was Embassy Suites Tampa Brandon.

Participating vendors included Bolay Kitchen Brandon, Ciccio Cali, Dave's Hot Chicken, Donovan's Meatery, Embassy Suites, Graze Craze, New York New York Pizzeria, Tutto Tavola and Funnel & Funk.

Celebrating Community Impact

The CMAs serve to recognize the dedication, perseverance and entrepreneurial spirit required to build and sustain successful businesses and organizations. Each finalist and winner represents a commitment to excellence and a passion for making a difference in the community.

Event Partners

The BRCC extends its gratitude to event partners who helped make the evening a success, including Messer Productions, ABC Event Planning, Socially Funded and Photo Booth Rental & More.

About the Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce

The BRCC empowers businesses through opportunities for brand exposure, education and advocacy while fostering meaningful connections that strengthen its community and promote collaboration and growth. For more, visit www.centralhillsboroughchamber.com.

Make your summer gatherings delicious

Order Chick-fil-A® Catering today!

Chick-fil-A® Brandon South
2010 Bloomingdale Ave
813-571-0569

Chick-fil-A® Lake Brandon Village
11325 Causeway Blvd
813-655-1237



Chick-fil-A BRANDON SOUTH LAKE BRANDON VILLAGE

© 2026 CFA Properties, Inc. All trademarks shown are the property of CFA Properties, Inc.

RUTLEDGES' PINCH A PENNY NOW OFFERS NEW POOL CONSTRUCTION

By Emily Harper



The Rutledge family, who has proudly served the community for 18 years.

Pinch A Penny Pool Patio & Spa, located in FishHawk, has been serving the community since 2008. Through the years, the Rutledge family, who owns and operates the business, has been dedicated and committed to their clients' needs.

Recently, the business has expanded its services, now offering new pool construction. This includes design, material selection, installation and 30 days of after-service support to ensure the pool is functioning properly and as intended.

Jim Rutledge sets his business apart from other pool building companies as a company already rooted and invested in the community. In this expansion, Pinch A Penny is still a small, intimate pool company focused on its clients' unique preferences. He explained that it expanded its client services to create a small, custom boutique-style pool building business focused on its customers.

Unlike other companies, once construction is complete, the company provides its clients with ongoing services, such as chemical testing, repairs and warranty work.

Jim Rutledge stated, "We are not going anywhere. When there is an issue, we are going to be there to support you."

Since offering new pool construction, the Rutledges' business has provided services to clients in both Hillsborough and Manatee counties. Throughout each specific building process, it has maintained its commitment to personalized service, quality workmanship and customer satisfaction.

Customers appreciate working directly with a local, family-owned business that takes the time to understand their vision and transform outdoor spaces into beautiful backyard retreats. Whether clients are looking for a custom-designed pool, a complete outdoor living area or enhancements to an existing space, the team works closely with them from concept to completion.

Known as a great community partner, the Rutledge family has long supported Newsome High School's Marching Band in addition to numerous community organizations.

In addition to pool construction, the business also specializes in outdoor kitchen design and fire pits, artificial turf and landscaping, along with patio lighting.

The Rutledges' Pinch A Penny Pool Patio & Spa store is located at 16715 FishHawk Blvd. in Lithia, in the shopping center across from Newsome High School. To learn more about its services and set up an appointment for new pool construction, contact 813-655-3700 or email the stoe at store191@pinchapenny.com.

TENNIS PLAYER SIGNS WITH C ONVERSE UNIVERSITY ON SIGNING DAY

By Nick Nahas



Bloomingdale High School senior tennis player Laila Clark signed with Converse University in Spartanburg, South Carolina, on Spring National Signing Day.

Bloomingdale High School senior tennis player Laila Clark signed with Converse University in Spartanburg, South Carolina, on Spring National Signing Day, April 15.

"When I signed my letter of intent, the biggest thing going through my mind was gratitude," said Clark. "I was thinking about my parents and everything they've sacrificed to give me this opportunity, and my coaches who have pushed me to become a better player and person. It was a really special moment because it wasn't just about me, it was about everyone who helped me get there. I felt proud, thankful and excited for what's ahead."

According to Clark's head coach, Anthony Fiorita, she is the first player ever from Bloomingdale High School to sign a letter of intent and play college tennis.

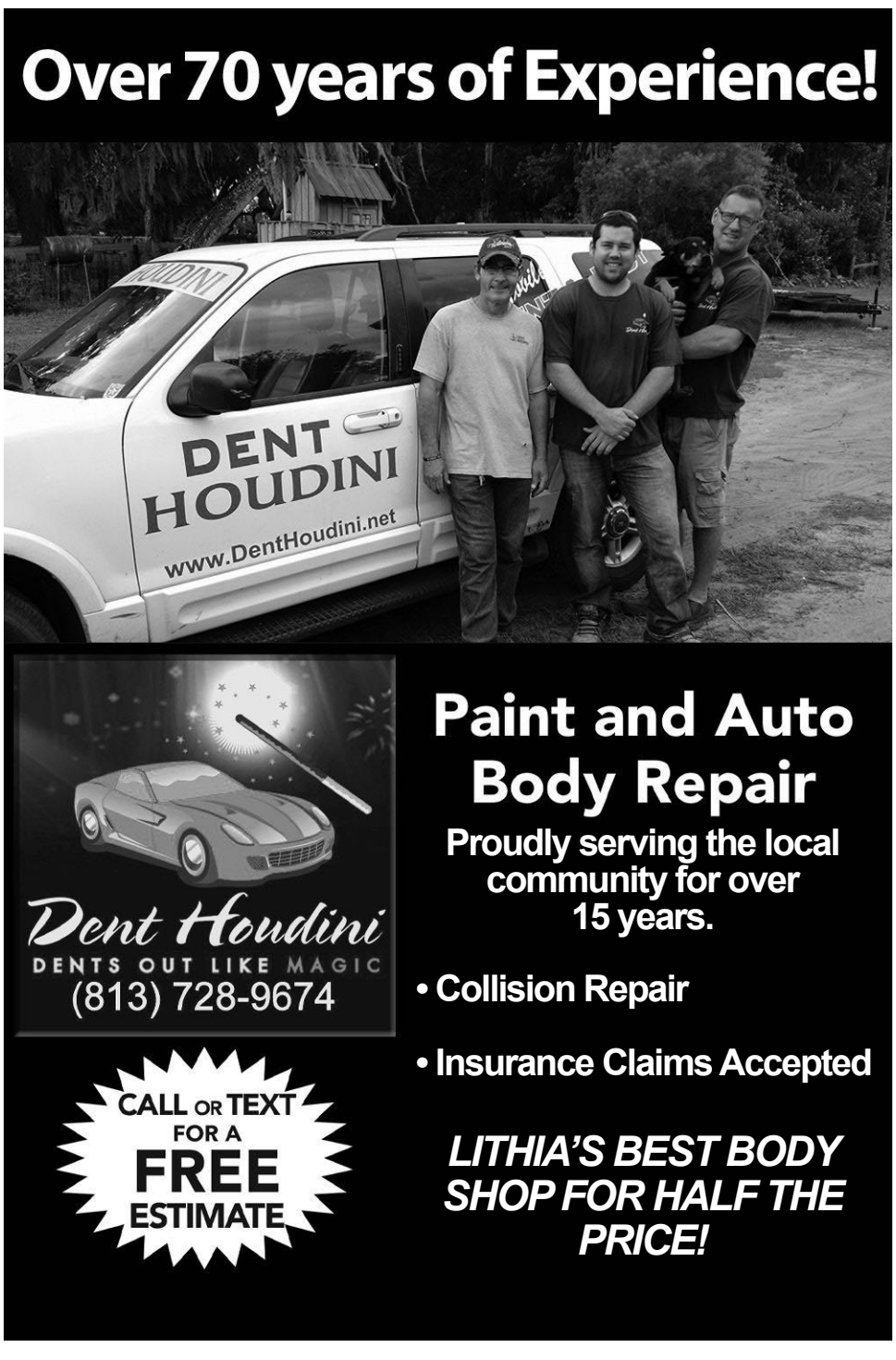
"I was so proud of her," said Fiorita. "This college signing was something that she didn't even consider a few months ago. She honestly wasn't sure that she was ready to make that jump to college. Anyone who sits and watches her play knows that there is no question. Converse University just signed a diamond in the rough, and with more polishing she will shine on the college level."

Clark was also recently recognized by Hillsborough County Public Schools with the Andres Garcia Memorial Award for Most Outstanding Female Tennis Player in Hillsborough County for 2026.

"I was honestly surprised and extremely honored," said Clark. "Knowing what the award represents makes it even more meaningful. It's not just about performance but also character and dedication, so it really meant a lot to be recognized in that way. I'm very grateful and motivated to keep representing those values moving forward."

Clark finished second in districts this season. She has lettered on the varsity tennis team since her freshman year and was the team captain this year. She also has well over a 4.0 GPA. She plans on majoring in mathematics or engineering.

"My ultimate goal is to compete at the highest level I can and continue improving every day," said Clark. "In college, I want to make an impact on my team, help us win and keep developing my game. Beyond that, I'd love to see how far tennis can take me. Whether that's playing professionally or staying involved in the sport in some way long-term."





ENTER NOW for the next TBT GIVEAWAY!

ENTER TO WIN!

$500

BASS PRO SHOPS GIFT CARD!

Bass Pro Shops
YOUR ADVENTURE STARTS HERE®

WE DONATE $3 ♡ OF EVERY ENTRY

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER!

GREAT OUTDOORS. GREAT MEMORIES.
ENDLESS GEAR. ENDLESS ADVENTURES.
EVERY SEASON. EVERY REASON.
SUPPORT A CAUSE. MAKE AN IMPACT.

TIB | kw SUBURBAN TAMPA KELLERWILLIAMS. REALTY

Winner to be announced JULY 1st. on our Facebook Page.

The Tony Baroni Team will donate $3 per entry to My Warrior's Place.

ENDS 6.30.26

Register NOW with the QR code or visit us at TonyBaroni.com/Contest

MY WARRIOR'S PLACE

My Warrior's Place is a local nonprofit offering healing programs, support, and a peaceful refuge for Veterans, First Responders, and families of Fallen Heroes.

the PROMISE The Tony Baroni Team

The Promise means that we will deliver the best service you could ever imagine receiving. That everyone on our team will be focused and care about your needs as if you were our only client. That we will anticipate challenges and get ahead of it so we can stop any surprises. The Tony Baroni Team is focused on making this a ★★★★★ experience that exceeds all your expectations.

TIB | kw KELLERWILLIAMS.

Tony Baroni Team

3,200+ Homes Sold | 2,800+ 5 Star Reviews

(866) 695 - 9747

TonyBaroni.com | @tonybaroniteam



TONY BARONI AWARDED REALTOR OF YEAR BY TAMPA BAY TOP PRODUCERS

By Libby Hopkins



Local Valrico realtor Tony Baroni of Keller Williams recently won Male Realtor of the Year – Agent's Choice through Tampa Bay Top Producers

The Tony Baroni Team at Keller Williams Realty in Valrico was built on relationships, referrals and creating exceptional client experiences. Tony Baroni entered into the real estate world in 2005 after previously working as a logistics consultant in the automotive industry, where he focused heavily on strategy, saving clients' money, negotiation and efficiency systems. Over time, the business naturally grew through referrals from happy clients across North America and trusted relationships throughout the logistics community.

"The team has now helped thousands of families buy and sell homes and has earned more than 2,800 five-star reviews online," Baroni said. "Our focus is getting listings sold, helping relocations move here from out of state and helping clients buy and sell in the same market and closing on the same day."

Baroni was incredibly honored to recently be nominated and to win Male Realtor of the Year – Agent's Choice through Tampa Bay Real Producers.

"What made the recognition especially meaningful was that it came from peers within the real estate community," Baroni said. "In the last five years, our team has won Male Realtor of the Year three times, the Ultimate Leadership award twice and Team of the Year once through Tampa Bay Real Producers, which is the top 500 agents in Tampa Bay within three counties. For the entire team, it felt less like an individual accomplishment and more like recognition of the culture, hard work and client experience that the whole organization strives to create every day. Everyone on the team contributes to that success."

If you ask Baroni what makes his realty business different from other ones in the community, he will tell you it's his team's reputation and service.

"One of the biggest differences is that our business was truly built on reputation, yet we are technology enhanced," Baroni said. "We focus heavily on relationships and long-term connections, rather than simply transactions. We want clients to feel supported not just during the buying or selling process but long after closing as well. Our old-school philosophy of answering our phones, getting back to people quickly and making the process as smooth as possible is what we focus on as a team."

The team also places a huge emphasis on systems, communication and culture internally so that clients consistently receive a high level of service no matter who they work with on the team.

"We genuinely believe that creating an outstanding experience is what earns repeat business and referrals for life," Baroni said. "So, training is a huge part of what we do on an ongoing basis."

You can visit its website at www.tonybaroni.com or call 813-425-1400. Its office is located at 2350 E. SR 60, Ste. 207, in Valrico.

HC SWEEPS 2026 NJCAA WOMEN'S TENNIS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Staff Report



Photo Credit NJCAA

The Hillsborough College Hawks women's tennis team celebrates after capturing the 2026 NJCAA Division I Women's Tennis National Championship in Sumter, South Carolina. The Hawks swept all nine singles and doubles flights to earn their fourth national title in program history and third championship in the last four years.

The Hillsborough College (HC) Hawks tennis team won the National Junior College Athletics Association (NJCAA) Division I Women's Tennis National Championship during the national tournament held in Sumter, South Carolina, from May 2-6. This is the team's fourth national championship title in school history and the third in the last four years.

The Hawks won in dominant fashion, sweeping the championship to win every match in the Division I singles and doubles competitions, for a total of nine individual champions.

"I am unbelievably proud of how this team competed to sweep all nine flights and bring the national title back to Tampa Bay," said Sarah Lytle, HC athletic director and tennis head coach. "We are so grateful for the opportunity to represent Hillsborough College on a national stage and hope we made our community proud."

"Once again, our HC Lady Hawks tennis team has risen to excellence in the tennis world," said Joe Bentrovato, Dale Mabry campus dean of student services. "Capturing their second consecutive NJCAA national championship and third in four years, these remarkable student-athletes went undefeated in the tournament. This is a testament to their intense focus, resilience and teamwork."

HC ended the tournament with a final team score of 45 points, with second place going to Cowley College with 32 points and third place going to Collin College with 23 points.

Flight winners, earning first-team All-American honors, included:

Flight 1 singles — Youn-soo Cho.

Flight 2 singles — Salomea Jasiczek.

Flight 3 singles — Sydney Stark.

Flight 4 singles — Noah Rojas.

Flight 5 singles — Aisulu Zholbolat.

Flight 6 singles — Emily Lederer.

Flight 1 doubles — Stark and Cho.

Flight 2 doubles — Rojas and Zholbolat.

Flight 3 doubles — Lederer and Jasiczek.

Additional recognition went to Lytle, who was named Coach of the Tournament.

"Behind every great team are great coaches and support staff," Bentrovato said. "That's where Sarah Lytle, Chris Nyholm and Scott 'Kiki' Keller come into play. Together, they make Hillsborough College proud and further cement this program as one of enduring excellence."

"I want to thank all the staff at HC and the community members who support us year in and year out," Lytle said. "This team would not be possible without every single one of you."

Hillsborough College serves more than 46,000 students annually at its five campuses located throughout Tampa Bay. For more information, visit www.hcfl.edu.

Visit www.hcfl.edu/accreditation for more information.



WELLNESS WARRIORS HELP ENHANCE LIVES THROUGH HOLISTIC PRACTICES

By Libby Hopkins



Shirley Sullivan, Lisa Kennedy and Shari Leiterman are known as the Wellness Warriors.

Shirley Sullivan, Lisa Kennedy and Shari Leiterman are known as the Wellness Warriors to the Brandon community.

"Shari and I first met while she was working at a local cafe, and I was immediately drawn to her high-vibrational energy and warm spirit," Kennedy said. "When she asked if we could be friends, I didn't hesitate to say yes. Our connection grew naturally through our shared passion for wellness, spirituality and community."

At that time, Kennedy had recently graduated from yoga teacher training and was beginning to step into teaching.

"Shari started attending the new moon goddess circles and full moon gatherings I was hosting in my home, and she became incredibly supportive of my journey," Kennedy said. "She connected me with the owner of the local health food store and cafe, who graciously allowed me to begin offering yoga classes there. Shari also helped spread the word to everyone she knew. I still remember teaching my very first class in that space. It was such a meaningful moment because it gave me the confidence to continue teaching and eventually expand into other locations and wellness offerings."

Leiterman introduced Kennedy to Sullivan, who happened to be a neighbor.

The three women joined together to form the Wellness Warriors.

"The Wellness Warriors was created as a community-centered wellness group focused on bringing people together through holistic healing, education, mindfulness, movement, spirituality and connection," Kennedy said. "We recognized that many people were searching for authentic community and meaningful ways to support their well-being beyond traditional approaches."

What began as small gatherings and wellness discussions gradually expanded into workshops, circles, healing events, educational presentations and community collaborations.

The Wellness Warriors' activities include sound healing, meditation experiences, full moon and new moon circles, yoga, drumming circles and educational wellness workshops, to name a few.

"We welcome anyone who feels called to explore wellness, healing, mindfulness, spirituality or simply meaningful human connection," Kennedy said.

Visit www.facebook.com/share/1fe6ehdgpd/ or call 813-946-6164. The Wellness Warriors meet at Divine Harmony LLC - Holistic Wellness, located at 1218 Millennium Parkway in Brandon.

BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY UNVEILS ACTION-PACKED SUMMER

Staff Report



Summer is coming in hot at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. The park today unveiled its can't-miss summer lineup, including Summer Nights, offering extended hours from now through Sunday, August 9, with an all-new drone show, themed dance parties, returning fan-favorite entertainment and seasonal food and beverage offerings. Plus, the all-new Lion and Hyena Ridge opens soon. The best part: Access to all events and attractions is included with park admission.

Summer Nights, Bigger and Better

From now through August 9, guests can experience the park after dark nightly with Summer Nights, offering extended park hours, electrifying entertainment and nighttime thrills, including:

• The all-new Wild Skies Drone Show & Fireworks Spectacular with two shows. On select nights, visitors can enjoy a nighttime spectacular featuring 400 drones and fireworks, during two all-new shows: a patriotic-themed show for America's 250th birthday and a drone show, starting Friday, July 10, showcasing designs unique to Busch Gardens.

• The all-new Beach Bash show, which is filled with retro, high-energy fun the whole family will love and takes place in Gwazi Plaza, and the Boom Box Dance Party returns with energetic vibes in Stanleyville.

• Nighttime rides, which offer a whole new experience, enjoying Busch Gardens' nine world-class roller coasters after dark.

Back by popular demand, these fan-favorite shows are held indoors when guests want to beat the heat:

• Cirque Electric — This acrobatic show features new thrilling, world-class, cirque-style performers to the Stanleyville Theater beginning Thursday, June 11. Guests can witness their extraordinary talent alongside an electric ensemble of dancers.

• Animal Tales — During this educational presentation, guests learn more about the park's diverse collection of more than 200 animal species and meet some of the animal ambassadors in person.

• Icons — This fan-favorite live performance features hits inspired by musical legends.

• Rhythm of Nature — Audiences embark on a spellbinding ice adventure following the journey of a brave young hero into a magical dream realm to uncover the wonders of the animal kingdom and embrace their destiny. This ice spectacle dazzles guests with the beauty, danger and wisdom of nature.

America's 250th Celebration at Busch Gardens

This patriotic summer event is packed with all-American excitement throughout the park. From now through Sunday, July 5, guests can experience special military appreciation offerings, shop patriotic merchandise and indulge in festive summer treats. To cap it off, a dazzling patriotic-themed drone show will captivate audiences.

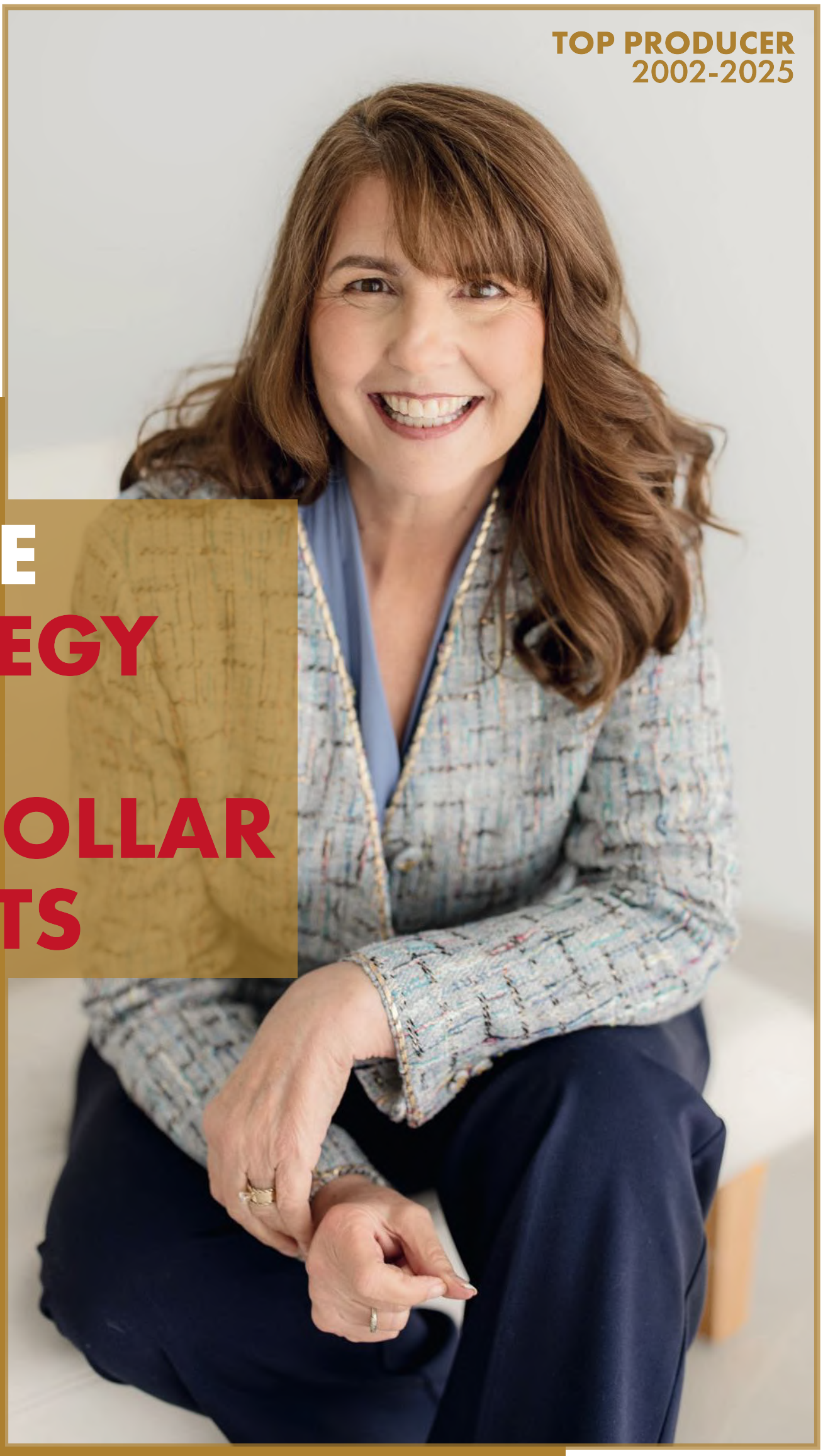
For more information, visit https://buschgardens.com/tampa/. Follow Busch Gardens Tampa Bay on Facebook and Instagram for the latest summer details and information.



BRENDA WADE
KELLER WILLIAMS SOUTH TAMPA

TOP PRODUCER
2002-2025

WHERE
STRATEGY
MEETS
TOP-DOLLAR
RESULTS



SCAN

TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT US

THE #1 REAL ESTATE TEAM
IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

BrendaWade.com • Direct: 813-924-8677

SPRING INTO SOMETHING NEW!

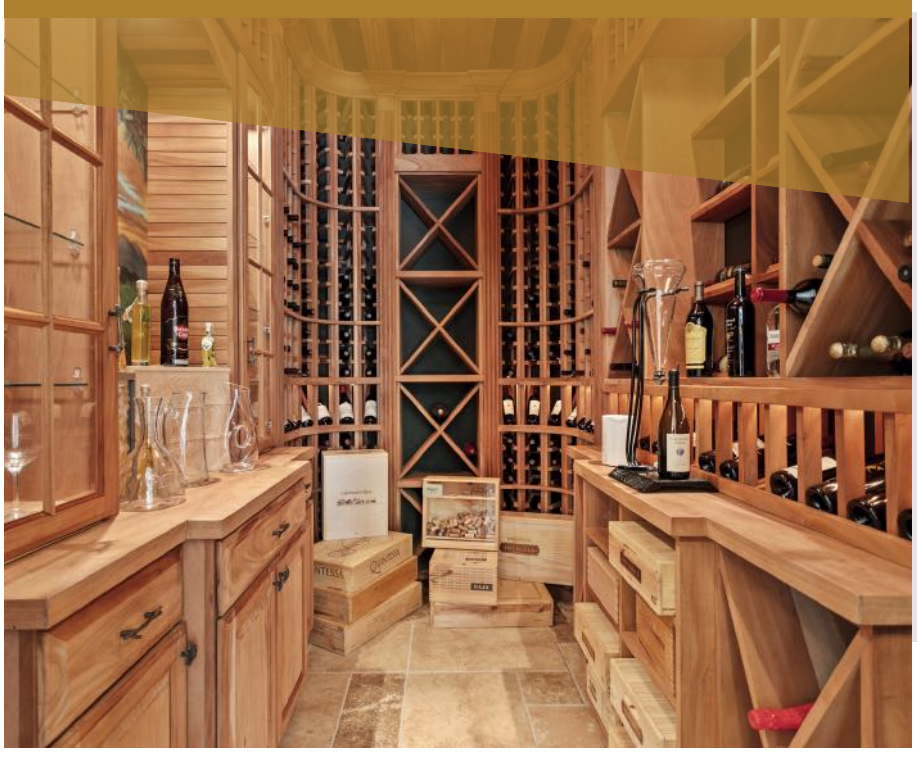
Let's be **REMARKABLE** *together!*

BRENDA WADE
KELLER WILLIAMS SOUTH TAMPA



FEATURED LISTING

OFFERED AT
$2,250,000



16303 Dunlindale Dr
Lithia, FL 33547

EXPERIENCE
YOU CAN TRUST.

RESULTS
YOU CAN SEE.

Office: 813-655-5333 • Brenda@BrendaWade.com

AMERICAN SEWING GUILD BRANDON WINS BIG AT STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

By Libby Hopkins



Members of the Brandon/Eastbay Chapter of the American Sewing Guild (ASG) competed in the sewing competition at the Florida Strawberry Festival. Many of the guild's members took home ribbons this year from the competition.

The 91st Florida Strawberry Festival took place this past February. One of the highlights at the festival was the Neighborhood Village's sewing competition for adults 18 and up. The 2026 festival's annual theme of 'Still Growing' was incorporated into every category, including sewing.

Members of the Brandon/East Bay Chapter of the American Sewing Guild (ASG) competed in the sewing competition, and many of the guild's members took home ribbons.

"There were a variety of categories to enter," said Judy Rich of the Brandon/East Bay Chapter of ASG. "The categories that most of our members entered were quilting, wearing apparel and accessories, hand embroidery and needlework, home decor, and embellished-upcycleable. Several of our members assisted with the intake process for quilts and hand sewing. Under home decor, some members entered wall hangings and table runners, both quilted and machine embroidery. For wearing apparel and accessories, members entered children's clothes, machine embroidered and constructed bags of all varieties. One member entered a refurbished bench cover; another entered a bag with multiple zippers to use for sewing supplies."

The American Sewing Guild's headquarters is located in Houston, Texas, and serves as a link between its chapters. ASG's mission is dedicated to advancing sewing as an art and life skill.

"The national organization started in 1978 as the American Home Sewing and Crafting Association," Rich said. "In 1983, it became a nonprofit organization, and in 2001 ASG opened their national headquarters in Houston. The Brandon/East Bay Chapter was incorporated in 2003 when the charter was signed. We currently have two of the founding members in our group."

There were 12 quilts entered into the sewing competition from various ASG members.

"It was the most quilts entered into the sewing competition over the last 12 years," Rich said. "I am amazed at the talent that our group has. Many hid their light under a basket. We are always excited to have new members whatever their level of sewing is. We were all beginners at one point."

The group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at Brandon Community Center, located at 502 E. Sadie St. in Brandon, from 10 a.m.-12 Noon.

"There are smaller neighborhood groups that meet in Sun City, Brandon and Riverview," Rich said. "At the moment, our chapter has more than 110 members, and they come from as far as Wimauma and Wesley Chapel to be a part of our group."

The chapter's meetings consist of a sewing tutorial, and then members have time to share their current projects with the group to inspire fellow members.

"We love seeing what other members are working on," Rich said. "It gives us the opportunity to get our creative juices flowing."

If you would like to learn more about ASG, you can visit its website at www.asg.org. If you would like to learn more about the Brandon/East Bay Chapter of ASG, you can contact Rich at judyrich49@gmail.com or visit its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/brandoneastbayasg.



Family Owned & Operated
The Rutledge Family
Proudly Serving Our Community for 18 Years

- Custom Material Selection
- Outdoor Kitchen Design & Fire Pits
- Artificial Turf
- Landscape & Patio Lighting

813-655-3700
16715 FishHawk Blvd
Across from Newsome High School
Lithia/FishHawk
store191@pinchapenny.com



HILLSBOROUGH COLLEGE TO HOST FUTURE HAWK REGISTRATION DAY EVENTS

Staff Report

Hillsborough College (HC) will host a series of Future Hawk Registration Days during May and June. Students admitted for the fall semester will have the opportunity to prepare for classes by connecting with HC staff, attending orientation and selecting courses to complete fall 2026 registration.

Future Hawk Registration Days are free to attend, but space is limited. Students must RSVP to secure a seat at https://events.hccfl.edu/en/5e2GUzf7/g/XMf3r-6r5Jy.

Tuesday, June 16, 4:30 p.m. — Ybor City Campus:

- Student Services Building at 1310 E. Palm Ave. in Tampa.
- Contact: Charlene Campbell, ccampbell36@hccfl.edu.

Wednesday, June 17, 5 p.m. — SouthShore Campus:

- SMPF 201/202 at 551 24th St. NE in Ruskin.
- Contact: Ryan Brown, rbrown62@hccfl.edu.

Tuesday, June 23, 5 p.m. — Plant City Campus:

- PTEC 116 and 118 at 1206 N. Park Rd. in Plant City.
- Contact: Sharlotte Henderson, pcenrollment@hccfl.edu.

Tuesday, June 30, 5 p.m. — Brandon Campus:

- BSSB Auditorium at 10451 Nancy Watkins Dr. in Tampa.
- Contact: Shamill Washington, swashington31@hccfl.edu.

Hillsborough College serves more than 46,000 students annually at its five campuses located throughout Tampa Bay. For more information, visit www.hcfl.edu.

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. Questions about the accreditation of Hillsborough College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097; by calling 404-679-4500; or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Visit www.hcfl.edu/accreditation for more information.

For a complete listing of Hillsborough College press releases, visit https://news.hccfl.edu/press-releases/default.aspx.

FROM HOMETOWN PUZZLES TO GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT EMPIRE

By Libby Hopkins

In 2017, father-and-son team Jeffrey and Blake Stone were proudly showing off their very first business venture in Brandon, a single escape room facility hand-built inside a converted law office. Today, the Stone family has transformed that local passion project into an international entertainment powerhouse, anchoring a massive global escape room franchise and introducing cutting-edge British virtual reality technology to the United States.



The GAME OVER Escape Rooms brand has expanded to more than 34 countries worldwide.

The Stone family is the owner of several GAME OVER Escape Rooms throughout Brandon and Tampa.

"Our family's rapid ascent showcases a masterclass in business scaling, shifting from localized, handcrafted experiences to high-tech, multinational partnerships," said Jeffery Stone. "When Legends Escape Rooms first opened its doors on Brandon Boulevard, it was a deeply personal affair. Our family spent six months meticulously building every puzzle by hand. Our initial rooms leaned heavily on family heritage and immersive storytelling."

That focus on premium quality paid off massively; their popular Dungeon VII room reached international critical acclaim when it received the Best Overall In-Person Escape Room of the Year award in 2021 from the industry site ESCAPETHEROOMers.

To aggressively scale their business, the Stone family partnered with GAME OVER Escape Rooms, a global industry titan originally founded in Athens, Greece.

"Transitioning our operations to serve as official flagship showrooms, we opened high-tech corporate locations across the area," Jeffery Stone said. "The upgrades brought premium electronic automation, movie-set-quality detailing and world-renowned room themes, like Lost City of Atlantis, Money Heist, Haunted Mansion, and Philosopher Stone."

The GAME OVER Escape Rooms brand has expanded to more than 34 countries worldwide. Because of their proven operational expertise, the Stone family now helps facilitate North American franchise opportunities for the GAME OVER corporation, guiding the next generation of entertainment entrepreneurs across the continent.

"In addition to conquering physical escape rooms, we have officially pivoted into the future of immersive tech," Jeffery Stone said. "Our family has partnered with VRXtra, a premier virtual reality gaming company from the United Kingdom that has taken the British entertainment sector by storm."

In a massive win for the local economy, the Stones have just launched the first-ever VRXtra location outside of the United Kingdom right here in the Tampa Bay area. Located at 317 N. Dale Mabry Highway in Tampa, the state-of-the-art facility sits in the booming Midtown district.

If you would like to learn more about GAME OVER Escape Rooms or visit one of its locations, visit https://tampa.escapegameover.us/en.



SERVING UP INCLUSION: JUDY MOORE MARKS 25 YEARS OF TENNIS FOR FUN

By Jay Braden













For 25 years, Judy Moore has been quietly transforming lives on the tennis courts of Brandon. What began as her son's high school project has grown into Tennis For Fun (TFF), a widely respected program serving individuals with Down syndrome and other intellectual and developmental disabilities — one that is now inspiring similar initiatives across Florida and beyond.

For Moore as director of TFF, the milestone is less about longevity and more about impact. The program has become a cornerstone for families seeking inclusive recreational opportunities, offering participants not just a chance to learn tennis, but a space to build confidence, friendships, and a sense of belonging.

"When we started, the goal was simple," Moore has often said in reflecting on the program's early days. "We wanted everyone to have the chance to play, to feel included, and to have fun." That guiding principle remains at the heart of TFF today.

Over the years, the program has expanded significantly. What began in Brandon now serves as a model for other communities looking to replicate its success. Programs inspired by TFF have been established in multiple locations throughout Florida and in other states, a testament to both its effectiveness and its adaptability.

This Brandon program empowers individuals with Down syndrome, intellectual or developmental disabilities to grow into a model replicated across Florida and beyond.

Participants in Tennis For Fun engage in structured tennis activities tailored to their abilities, supported by a network of dedicated volunteers, coaches, and family members. The emphasis is not on competition, but on personal growth and enjoyment. For many families, the program fills a critical gap.

Parents often describe the program as life-changing. Beyond the physical benefits of exercise, participants develop social skills and independence. Many form lasting friendships, while others discover a newfound confidence that carries into other areas of their lives.

"Before joining, my son was hesitant to try new things," one parent shared. "Now he looks forward to every session. He's made friends, he's more active, and he feels proud of what he can do."

The success of TFF is also rooted in its community support. Volunteers play a central role, working one-on-one with participants to ensure each individual feels encouraged and included. Their commitment, combined with Moore's steady leadership, has created a program culture that is both welcoming and empowering.

As the program has grown, so too has its influence. Organizations in other regions have looked to TFF as a blueprint for developing inclusive sports programming, thus demonstrating that such initiatives can be both impactful and sustainable, Moore and her team have helped significantly to broaden access to recreational opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Despite the expansion and recognition, those closest to the program say Moore remains focused on the individuals she serves. Her leadership style—hands-on, compassionate, and consistent—has been a driving force behind TFF's enduring success.

As Tennis For Fun marks its 25th anniversary, the celebration is as much about the community it has built as it is about the years it represents. For participants and their families, the program is more than an activity—it's a source of joy, connection, and possibility.

And for Judy Moore, the mission continues much as it began: one player, one rally, and one smile at a time.

For more, visit http://tennisforfun.org/.

CHEERS TO CONFIDENCE AND COVERAGE!

Call me!



Florida Insurance Chick

AUTO | HOME | FLOOD | BUSINESS

SERVICE YOU DESERVE...

DISCOVER WHAT SETS US APART!

Southshore Insurance Professionals™

PROTECTION YOU CAN TRUST™

11216 Winthrop Main Street
Riverview, FL 33578
Office: (813) 448-7580
southshoreins.com
michelle@southshoreins.com

HOME SERVICE HEROES

ELECTRIC – AIR – PLUMBING



HOME SERVICE HEROES

ELECTRICAL | AIR | PLUMBING

SERVICE TODAY WITHOUT DELAY!

VETERAN OWNED

24/7 SAME DAY SERVICE

LICENSED AND INSURED

FINANCING OPTIONS





CALL NOW

(813)653-4221

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION TEAM SWEEPS TOP HONORS AT STATE SAFETY ROADEO

Staff Report

Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) is celebrating a standout performance by its Transportation Department after hosting and competing in the State School Bus Safety Roadeo, organized by the Florida Association of Pupil Transportation (FAPT).



The top finishers include: Juan Maldonado, first place, Area 1. Cassandra Varnes, second place, Area 5. Romy Taju, third place, Area 7.

HCPS welcomed transportation teams from Sarasota, Manatee and Gadsden counties for the statewide event, which tests school bus operators on driving skills via a challenging obstacle course, safety knowledge and precision. HCPS rose to the top, earning first, second and third place overall.



Romy Taju serves Schmidt Elementary, Brandon High, Jennings Middle, Tampa Bay Technical High and Mann Middle Schools.

The top finishers include:

- Juan Maldonado, first place, Area 1.
- Cassandra Varnes, second place, Area 5.
- Romy Taju, third place, Area 7.

"These three professionals don't just represent HCPS on the leaderboard — they represent the heart of our Transportation Department," said Superintendent Van Ayres. "Their dedication to safety, skill and excellence reflects the high standards we set for serving students every day."



Cassandra Varnes serves the 40th Street magnet ramp, Young Middle Magnet and Lockhart Elementary Magnet Schools.

All three winners will go on to represent the State of Florida at the International School Bus Safety Roadeo this summer in Austin, Texas, competing against top drivers from across the nation.

Interested in joining the HCPS Transportation Team? Visit www.hillsboroughschools.org.

Juan Maldonado and Cassandra Varnes serve magnet schools.

Juan Maldonado serves the HDA magnet ramp, Jefferson High School, Tampa Heights Elementary Magnet School and Woodbridge Elementary School.

Cassandra Varnes serves the 40th Street magnet ramp, Young Middle Magnet School and Lockhart Elementary Magnet School.

Romy Taju serves Schmidt Elementary School, Brandon High School, Jennings Middle School, Tampa Bay Technical High School and Mann Middle School.

IN BLOOM MINISTRIES LOOKS TO HELP VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

By Libby Hopkins

Jess Waldrop of Lithia is the owner of In Bloom Aesthetics and Med Spa, located at . Her focus has always been about making women feel and look beautiful, as well as helping women start their own businesses.



Jess Waldrop is the owner of In Bloom Aesthetics and Med Spa in Lithia.

"One of my biggest goals with the spa is to help women launch their own businesses," Waldrop said. "I run a yearlong certification program that includes advanced training and business development where I walk alongside aestheticians as they grow their skills and build their practices from the ground up."

In 2021, God told Waldrop to build a ministry for removing the branding off women who have been trafficked.

"These tattoos are typically on their face and neck and it's a constant reminder of the trauma that they went through," Waldrop said. "When I found our current location in FishHawk, I knew immediately that it would be a safe place for these women to come to. It's a 1,250 sq. ft. warehouse built out as a spa. Once you walk through the door and it locks behind you, it feels like the world could be ending outside and you'd never know. The parking lot is also very private, since most of the surrounding businesses close by 5 p.m. It felt like God had set the space apart for exactly this purpose."

From there, In Bloom Ministries was born.

Tattoo removal is a process, not a single event. Most tattoos take anywhere from eight to 15 laser sessions to fully remove, depending on the size and the type of ink used and where it sits on the body.

"Sessions have to be spaced six to eight weeks apart to give the body time to heal between treatments, which means a full removal journey can take a year or longer from start to finish," Waldrop said. "The lasers used for this work are medical-grade and represent a significant investment. We're partnering with licensed laser technicians and medical professionals who share our heart for this mission. Industry pricing for a single session typically costs $200 to $500, so the full cost to remove a tattoo from one woman can easily reach $3,000 to $7,000 or more. These survivors will not see a bill, never feel pressure and never owe us anything."

Waldrop has assembled a board and is currently waiting for her nonprofit status to be approved for In Bloom Ministries. She is looking to the local community for grant writers, donors and local doctors to help her with her mission.

"The most immediate need is help finding grants to purchase the machines," she said. "We're also building a network of licensed laser technicians and doctors who are willing to donate their services."

If you would like to help Waldrop and In Bloom Ministries, you can contact her at 813-990-0063 or jess@inbloommedspa.com.

In Bloom Aesthetics and Med Spa is located at 16637 FishHawk Blvd., Ste. 102, in Lithia. For more information, visit www.inbloommedspa.com.









VALRICO / FISHHAWK
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SHOP LOCAL



2 Chr 29:3
MASTER GARAGE DOOR CO.
DOORS • OPENERS • SPRINGS
(813) 684-7744
steve@mastergaragedoor.com
mastergaragedoor.com
28 years serving the community with only the highest quality parts and service.

Garage Door Service, Repair & Installation
- Residential Garage Doors
- Garage Door Openers
- Broken Springs
- Cables
- Rollers
- Doors off Track

FREE Estimates on New Garage Door Installs

Celebrating 28 Years of Serving Our Community

The Right IT for Your Business!
- Managed IT
- Cloud Services
- Network Setup

RYT Empowering YOU with Technology
813-563-1000 | Jennifer@RYT.Tech
www.RYTITSolutions.com
710 Oakfield Dr, Suite 220, Brandon, FL 33511
Family Owned & Operated Since 2013







EDGE POOLS
Call us: 813.230.2838
Call Today
Visit Our Website:
www.EdgePoolsFL.com
Lic#: CPC1459497
Family Owned & Operated

COASTALVERIFY
VERIFY BEFORE YOU BUY™
TAMPA BAY PROPERTY TURNOVER INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM™
✓ Property Condition Verification ✓ Risk & Hazard Identification
✓ Photo Documented Reports
Commercial & Residential Properties
Call 656-222-1706 | www.coastalverify.com

Tampa's Plumbing Solution
CFC1431290
Installation, Service & Repair
813.540.1010
www.TampasPlumbing.com
- Plumbing Fixtures
- Water Leak Repair
- Water Filters/Softeners
- Shower Valves
- Sump Pumps
- Water Heaters
- Garbage Disposal
- Toilet Repairs
- Drain Clog
- Natural Gas & LP Plumbing

Hablamos Español
Licensed, Bonded & Insured
info@TampasPlumbing.com

JUNK REMOVAL FOR A CLEAN AMERICA!
Veteran Owned
Duty Calls Hauling LLC
941-999-8373
HELPING HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESSES RECLAIM THEIR SPACE WITH PRIDE AND EFFICIENCY.
Serving FishHawk & Valrico
www.dutycallshauling.com | dutycallshauling@gmail.com

LEADERSHIP CLASS COMPLETES LEGACY PROJECT BENEFITING A KID'S PLACE

Staff Report





The Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce the completion of the Leadership Brandon Riverview Class of 2026 Legacy Project benefiting A Kid's Place, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to providing a safe, stable, and nurturing home for foster children.

Each year, participants in the Leadership Brandon Riverview program select a community Legacy Project designed to make a lasting impact on a local nonprofit organization.

After hearing the heartfelt mission and needs presented by A Kid's Place, the Leadership Class selected the organization as the recipient of this year's project. A Kid's Place provides a unique, home-like foster care environment where sibling groups can remain together.

One of the needs identified by the organization was the replacement of aging benches in the children's outdoor play area.

To fund the project, the Leadership Class partnered with the Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce to host the Leadership Brandon Riverview Cornhole Tournament in March. The tournament was a tremendous success thanks to Tampa Electric, Raulerson Castillo & Company – CPA's and Consultants, Sellers and Associates, Tampa Bay Harley-Davidson, SouthState Bank, Hungry Howie's, Suncoast Credit Union and RSA Consulting.

Additional excitement was provided by event vendors including LeAnne's Old Fashioned Cookies, Funnel & Funk, Champion Wellness Centers, Photo Booth Rental and More, and Socially Funded.

The class dedicated a full day of service to completing the project and worked together to purchase supplies, build, and install four custom benches with attached planters surrounding the children's play area.

"The Legacy Project is one of the most meaningful parts of the Leadership Brandon Riverview program because it allows participants to make a direct and lasting impact in our community," said Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce President Amber Aaron. "The Class of 2026 demonstrated tremendous heart, teamwork, and dedication throughout this entire process, and we are incredibly proud of what they accomplished for A Kid's Place."

The Brandon Riverview Chamber of Commerce thanks everyone who supported the Cornhole Tournament and Legacy Project and helped make a meaningful difference for the children and families served by A Kid's Place.

To learn more about A Kid's Place, visit http://www.akidsplacetb.org/. For more about Leadership Brandon Riverview and the Chamber of Commerce, visit www.centralhillsboroughchamber.com.

MARRIED BAND DIRECTORS STRIKE A CHORD AT TWO LOCAL SCHOOLS

By Jane Owen



Middle and high school band students in Litha and Valrico are honing their skills under the direction of husband-wife musical power duo Jordan and Sara Fraze.

Jordan Fraze is the director of bands at Bloomingdale High School in Valrico. Wife Sara is the director of bands at Randall Middle School in Lithia. They both graduated from Florida State University (FSU) in 2022 with degrees in instrumental music education. The Frazes left college with the desire to work in the same community.

"It's hard to find the job you really want and love because there is only one band teacher at every school. So, for us to be in the same community and have same students, that was the dream. That was what we really wanted to do- work in the same community and work together," Sara said.

After school hours, it is not unusual for Sara to help at high school marching band rehearsals or for Jordan to be at middle school concert rehearsals. Their mutual passion for music and education is complimented by their close relationship and history of working together. They learned to balance professional responsibility and working together at Florida State University, where they were both drum majors with the FSU Marching Chiefs.

"I think we both expect the same standard of excellence out of our students. And so, if one of us walks into a rehearsal for the other, there's a lot of reinforcement of expectations going on," Jordan said.

Prior to becoming the directors of the programs, Sara was an FSU music education intern at Burns Middle School, which feeds into Bloomingdale, and Jordan was an intern at Bloomingdale. Sara taught the current Bloomingdale sophomores through seniors when she was an intern at Burns.

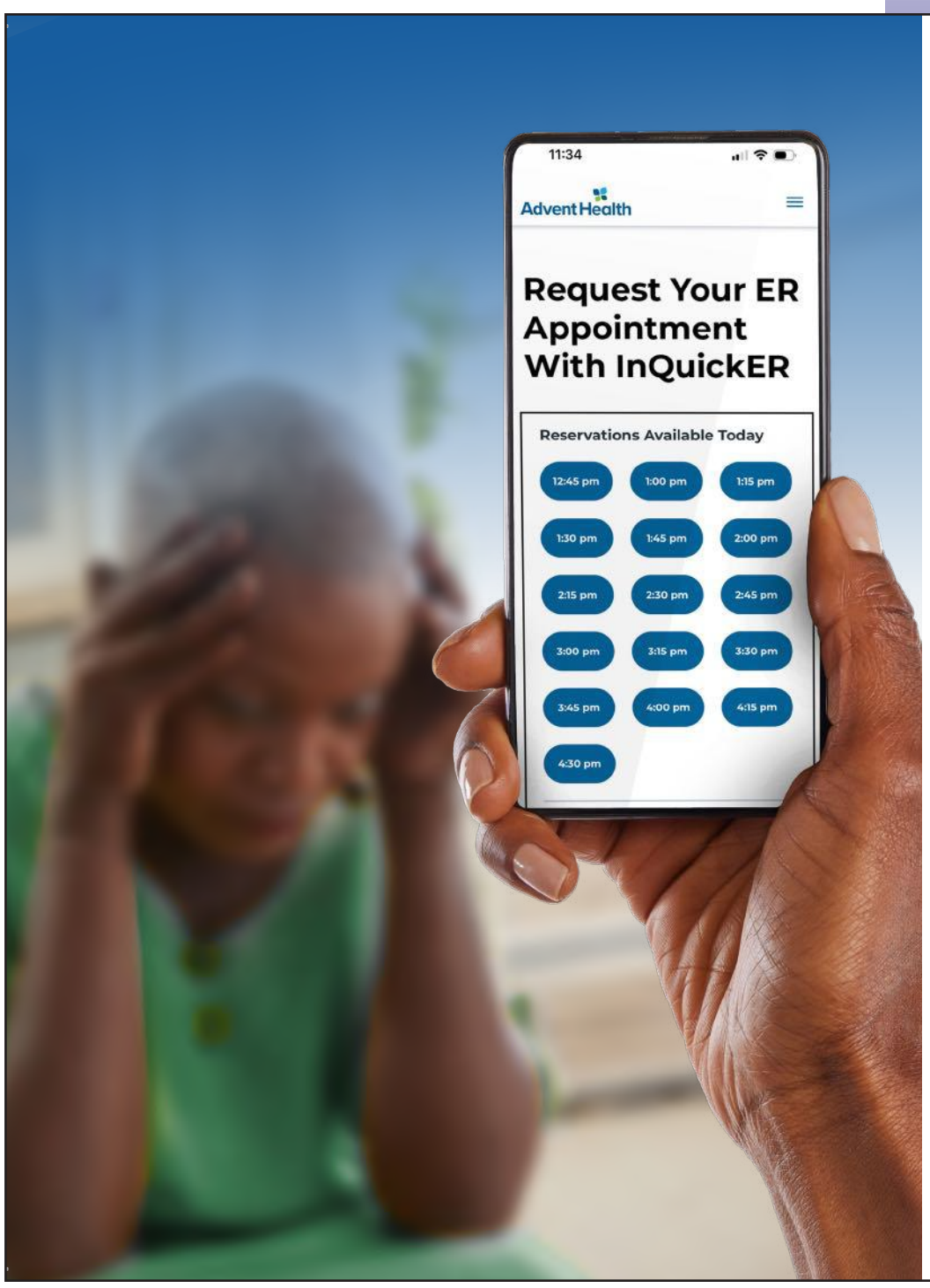
When Jordan assists Sara at Randall, being Bloomingdale's band director is never a focus.

"I want them to stick with band, whether it's at Bloomingdale or Newsome. I just want them to know the expectations when they get to high school. They are higher, yes, but it's such a great opportunity for them to keep doing music wherever they go," Jordan said.

"What I tell them is red and blue, Newsome and Bloomingdale — red and blue make purple, and we're purple. We work really well together because red and blue make purple," Sara said.

Jordan plays French horn and trumpet. Sara plays trombone. They both play with the Fanfare Concert Winds community band, are instructors at FSU Summer Music Camps and are Emerging Leaders with the Florida Music Education Association. Sara is also the treasurer of the Hillsborough County Secondary Music Council. When not working, Jordan listens to classic rock from the '70s or band music. Sara listens to movie soundtracks, instrumental music and her favorite band, The Beatles.

Jordan and Sara Fraze can be reached at: jordan.fraze@hcps.net and sara.fraze@hcps.net.



Get InQuickER to feel better faster.

When unexpected illness or injury strikes, InQuickER helps you take control. Request your ER treatment time online, wait from the comfort of home and get care that fits your schedule — day or night.

Request your ER arrival time.
GetInQuickER.com

In a life-threatening medical emergency, call 911, do not use InQuickER.

4425974694

AdventHealth Riverview

$1.6 BILLION ONE WATER PROJECT MOVES FORWARD IN S. HILLSBOROUGH

By Brian Bokor





Hillsborough County officials officially broke ground on the One Water South Wastewater Conveyance and Treatment Project on April 24, marking a major milestone in the county's $1.6 billion One Water infrastructure initiative.

The project centers on construction of a 200-acre Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant near the Southeast County Landfill in Lithia. County officials said the facility is designed to support South Hillsborough's long-term wastewater and reclaimed water needs through at least 2050.

The One Water Program serves the county's rapidly growing south-central service area, including Apollo Beach, Brandon, Gibsonton, Riverview, Ruskin, Sun City Center, Valrico and Wimauma.

County leaders described the One Water Program as a long-range strategy focused on resiliency, sustainability and future growth. The 'One Water' concept treats drinking water, wastewater, reclaimed water and stormwater as one interconnected system designed to protect resources while supporting regional development.

The wastewater conveyance and treatment project itself is estimated at approximately $1.2 billion. The project includes the advanced treatment facility, the Balm Road Super Pump Station and more than 20 miles of wastewater and reclaimed water pipelines. The broader $1.6 billion capital program also includes additional long-term drinking water and reclaimed water improvements throughout South Hillsborough County.

By 2030, the Lithia facility is expected to process 24 million gallons of wastewater per day, with designs already in place to eventually expand capacity to 30 million gallons per day.

"What's going to be built is a 30 million gallon per day advanced wastewater treatment plant, some of the most advanced technology that's out there, for purposes of providing adequate treatment capacity for our growing community," said George Cassady, assistant county administrator for public utilities.



The project also includes the Balm Road Super Pump Station, which can move up to 56 million gallons of wastewater per day to the new facility. The station features a 5-million-gallon emergency storage tank designed to improve long-term system resiliency.

Pipeline construction is another major component of the project, including 10 miles of wastewater pipeline and 13 miles of reclaimed water pipeline ranging from 42-48 inches in diameter. Officials said reclaimed water infrastructure is critical because it reduces dependence on drinking water supplies while improving environmental sustainability and future water reliability.

Much of the large-scale utility construction residents are currently seeing throughout South Hillsborough, including pipeline staging, trenching operations and roadway utility work, is tied to multiple major infrastructure projects happening simultaneously across the region.

While Tampa Bay Water's 26-mile South Hillsborough Pipeline project and Hillsborough County's One Water Wastewater Program are separate initiatives, the two projects are closely connected and designed to work together to support continued growth across Riverview, Brandon, Ruskin, Valrico and surrounding communities.

The project is being delivered through a progressive design-build partnership between Garney Construction and Hazen & Sawyer, along with partners Ardurra, Stantec and Wade Trim.

"What makes this project stand out is that it goes beyond simply adding treatment capacity," said Eric Wagner, director of southeast plant operations at Garney. "At a time when growing communities are looking for more sustainable ways to plan ahead, Hillsborough County is setting a strong example through its long-term investment in infrastructure."

County leaders said the investment is necessary as South Hillsborough continues experiencing rapid residential and commercial expansion.

"We are developing homes here, but we didn't have the infrastructure before," said Hillsborough County Commissioner Christine Miller. "And so, as the people continue to push outside of the city, we have to provide the resources for them."

While pipeline work began in fall 2025, the April 2026 groundbreaking launched vertical construction for the treatment facility and pump station. Phase one is expected to be completed in 2028, with full buildout anticipated by 2030.

Officials said existing customers should not notice interruptions to daily water or wastewater service during construction.

"The beauty of this program is that customers will not see a change in their service," Cassady said. "This will just provide additional resilient capacity for now and in the future."

Drivers may notice construction activity near County Road 672 and east of U.S. 301, though county officials said efforts are being made to minimize traffic disruptions during construction.

Once complete, the One Water Program is expected to become one of the most important infrastructure systems supporting long-term growth and resiliency throughout South Hillsborough County.

LIVINGSTONE ACADEMIES

EVERY STUDENT CAN GROW IN THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT!



NOW ENROLLING
K through 12th grade students at all 3 locations
(Seffner, Valrico, Brandon)

FREE TUITION & SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

VISIT LIVINGSTONESCHOOLS.ORG TO ENROLL NOW

HCA FLORIDA BRANDON CELEBRATES NICU GRADUATION OF BABY PHILLIP BORN AT 23 WEEKS

Staff Report





HCA Florida Brandon Hospital proudly celebrates the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) graduation of Phillip Brown, a baby born at just 23 weeks gestation who has overcome extraordinary odds after spending 196 days in the hospital's Level III NICU.

Born on October 16, 2025, Phillip weighed just 630 grams (1 lb., 6.2 oz.) at birth. After more than six months of specialized, around-the-clock care, he is now heading home with his family weighing 6,245 grams (13 lbs., 12 oz.), marking a significant milestone in his journey.

Phillip's mother, Michelle Brown said, "Today, I'm feeling really emotional. Six months ago, I prayed for this day every day, and it's finally here. I'm excited he's coming home, but I'm very teary-eyed because of everything we have been through, from him being born at six months to having to have two procedures and how he's been progressing. I honestly can't thank the NICU team enough. Not only did they save my son, but they also treated me with love and care and made sure I knew my son was stronger than I could ever imagine. They all love him so very much."

Phillip's care journey included advanced respiratory support, nutritional management and more delivered by a multidisciplinary team dedicated to the most fragile patients. As a Level III NICU, HCA Florida Brandon Hospital is equipped to care for premature and critically ill newborns requiring complex medical attention. Now, Phillip is one of the first micro-preemies (born extremely premature) to go home without any need for additional oxygen support.

Dr. Kiran Dwarakanath, NICU medical director at HCA Florida Brandon Hospital, praised both Phillip's resilience and the team's commitment. "Phillip's journey is a powerful example of what is possible with advanced neonatal care, early intervention and an unwavering team approach. Babies born this early face significant challenges, but Phillip showed incredible strength every step of the way. We are honored to have been part of his care and to support families like Michelle's through such critical moments."

NICU graduation marks a significant transition for families, symbolizing not only medical progress but also hope, perseverance and partnership between caregivers and loved ones.

Phillip wore a graduation cap and gown, and hospital staff lined the halls, cheering him on as he took his final lap around the NICU on his journey home. His story stands as a testament to the lifesaving capabilities of modern neonatal care and the dedication of the clinicians at HCA Florida Brandon Hospital.

DOG DAYCARE • LODGING • TRAINING • SPA SERVICES

CanineCabana
your dog's oasis away from home



CALL TODAY FOR PUPPY TRAINING!

50% off 1st 3 Nights For New Lodging Guests

Local, Family Owned and Operated
Celebrating 17 Years

Offering a Safe, Fun, Expert Care
7 Days a Week / 365 Days a Year

9708 Carr Road, Riverview 33569 • (just off Boyette Rd., 1 mile West of Bell Shoals Rd)
(813)672-WOOF (9663) • www.CanineCabana.BIZ
info@canineCabana.biz #CanineCabanaFlorida

Spring Ahead of Plumbing Problems!
Tackle Those Big Projects Now With Spring Savings!



FREE PLUMBING INSPECTION WITH ANY SERVICE (A $99 Value!)
POPULAR SPRING SERVICES:
Water heater replacement: $200 OFF
House re-pipe: $350 OFF
Sewer line repair: $250 OFF
Gas line installation: $150 OFF
Financing available
Offer Ends May 31, 2026
CALL NOW — LIMITED TIME OFFER!
Restrictions apply. One system per home.

Call today for a FREE ESTIMATE!
(813) 436-3994
bluefrogplumbing.com/brandon

FITNESS FORGE

NOW OPEN
Private Personal Training Studio



Summer Student Athlete Program Available

Taylor Green & Brett Daven

13456 BOYETTE RD., RIVERVIEW, FL
www.fitnessforge2025.com
BOOK YOUR FREE ASSESSMENT
(813) 654-1313
Fitness Forge is registered with the state of Florida as a Health Studio Facility Registration #HS16660

ENJOY A SWEET TREAT AT
COLD STONE CREAMERY



3426 Lithia Pinecrest Road, Valrico
12970 US Hwy 301 Suite 103, Riverview



GET THE DIRT: COMMUNITY WATER WISE AWARDS PROGRAM

BY LYNN BARBER, URBAN HORTICULTURE AGENT





The purpose of this award program is to recognize individuals, businesses and community associations that have made a commitment to conserve water resources and protect the environment while using Florida-Friendly Landscaping (FFL) principles. Homeowners complete an application and include photos of their landscape. The entire landscape is evaluated using the FFL principles.

The principles include right plant, right place; water efficiently; fertilize appropriately; mulch; attract wildlife; manage yard pests responsibly; recycle; reduce stormwater runoff; and protect the waterfront.

Landscapes are evaluated by UF/IFAS County Extension agents. Winners are selected based on performance in these categories: retention of existing trees and vegetation, landscape design and plant selection, stormwater runoff prevention, efficient irrigation and aesthetic appeal.

All residents submitting an entry will receive a letter providing feedback. Winning homeowners receive a handmade mosaic steppingstone. Winning businesses can opt for a plaque. Awards are presented in the winning entry landscapes or at a City of Tampa event.

"Up to 50 percent of water used at home can come from watering your lawn," said Amelia Brown, demand management program manager for Tampa Bay Water. "These new awards allow us to celebrate even more homeowners and businesses for efforts to save water while maintaining a beautiful environment."

Winners receive a custom mosaic steppingstone made by a local artist and recognition at local city council and county commission meetings.

The new Best of the Region Award will be presented at a Tampa Bay Water board meeting. Applications are open until Friday, July 31, at https://awards.tampabaywaterwise.org/.

BRANDON MEALS ON WHEELS MARKS 50 YEARS OF SERVING NEIGHBORS

By Libby Hopkins



Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels provides nourishing midday meals from Monday through Friday for those in the Brandon community who are unable to serve themselves. Volunteers reach out to help home bound neighbors in need of a nutritious meal through the combined efforts of many local Brandon churches.

Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels coordinates the activities of the member churches. The menu, preparation and delivery of these meals is the responsibility of each of the member churches. Clients are referred to Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels through various organizations, churches, family, physicians, neighbors or friends.

The local nonprofit recently held its 50th anniversary this past April at Generations Church in Brandon. "Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels celebrated our 50th Anniversary this year," said Barbara Brooks, recording secretary for the Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels. "We were started on March 9, 1976, by St. Andrew's United Methodist Church and Limona Village Chapel. We currently have 17 member churches in the area who deliver almost 200 meals per day, Monday through Friday, to medically needy shut-ins in Brandon, Valrico and Seffner. In 2025, we delivered 48,191 meals. We are a 501(c)(3) and receive no government money."

Volunteers delivered meals through COVID and hurricanes as long as it was safe for its drivers. Many of these volunteers were honored at the recent celebration.

"We honored Lillian Foster of St. Andrew's for her 36 years of service, which included volunteer positions as president and general coordinator," Brooks said. "At age 92, we were delighted to have her in attendance."

Brooks joined the Greater Brandon Meals on Wheels in January 1996 as a cook but became New Hope's driver coordinator in 2006.

"I had just joined the church and was looking to get involved, attended a meeting and signed up to help immediately," Brooks said. "I have been the recording secretary for about 15 years. Our board of directors oversees the 17 churches, but each church coordinates their kitchen and cooks, including preparing their meals and mapping their routes."

Brooks and all the volunteers at the Greater Brandon Meals on Wheel hope to continue their mission as long as there is a need in the community.

"We currently are looking to add one more church on Tuesday to serve about 20 meals," Brooks said.

If you would like to volunteer or if you are a local church that would like to become involved with the organization, contact general coordinator Carol Shick at 813-404-1973.

DIRECTORY OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

PRESSURE WASHING AND SCREEN REPAIR
10% OFF *all work over* $100
COOPER
• Houses
• Pool Cages
• Decks
• Driveways
• Sidewalks
• Gutter Cleaning
• & More
FREE ESTIMATES
813-892-5283

JUNK REMOVAL
RESIDENTAL & COMMERCIAL
The JUNKLuggers
LET US HELP YOU RECLAIM YOUR SPACE!
• Eco-Friendly Hauling and Removal Service
• Single Item to Full Clean Outs Available
• FREE Estimates
1-800-LUG-JUNK | junkluggers.com

HEAT & AC
BROWN COMFORT SYSTEMS
HEATING & AIRCONDITIONING
SERVICE YOU CAN TRUST
Residential & Commercial
Installation & Repair
Commercial Refrigeration
(813) 671-2555

NOTARY
Mobile & Online Notarization
Wills & Trust Notarization
Power of Attorney
Real Estate Closing
Apostille Services
DMV & Vehicle Titles
Minor Travel Consent Forms
Passport
Marriage License
Estate Planning
Loan Signing Services
Angie Anderson
813-750-0161
angie@stellarnotaryservices.net
www.stellarnotaryservices.net

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Home Remodeling Done Right!
Kitchens • Bathrooms
Showers • Flooring
Painting • Roofing
New Construction • Additions
NANCY'S REMODELING
813-634-8272
4922 Cape Stone Avenue, Wimauma
Nancysremodeling.com
Remodeling USA 1
CGC1532096 | CCC1336456

PEST CONTROL
TNT
termite & pest control
Residential and Commercial
(813) 468-8574
TNTtermiteandpestcontrol.com
LOCAL & FAMILY OWNED
"DYNAMITE CUSTOMER SERVICE"

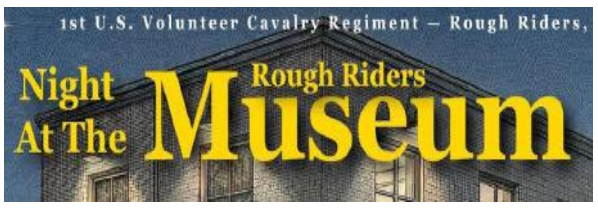
POOP SCOOPER
NO MORE POOP SCOOPING!
Starting $12 /a visit
TIDY·TAILS
BACKYARD CLEANUP
TEEN OWNED BUSINESS
813-419-0533

HOME INSPECTOR
Veteran Owned
SERVICES:
• Standard Home Inspection
• 4 Point
• Wind Mitigation
• HUD Consulting
APEX SIGHT SOLUTIONS
Vision with Purpose, Integrity from Above.
(813) 860-8374
ApexSightSolutions.com
Admin@ApexSightSolutions.com
Florida License #HI18082

Advertise here for just $50 per ad or as low as $200 per month ... (INCLUDES ALL 5 EDIeTIONS)
Call Us Today! (813) 657-2418 or Visit OspreyObserver.com

ROUGH RIDERS BRING HISTORY TO LIFE AT THE *NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM* EVENT

By Kelly Wise Valdes



The Tampa Rough Riders will bring history to life on Friday, June 5, during its Night at the Rough Riders Museum, a community event blending education, live performance and a touch of Hollywood.

The 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment - Rough Riders Inc. was formed for the purpose of creating and perpetuating a living memorial to the unique accomplishment of President Theodore Roosevelt and the members of the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment known as 'the Rough Riders.' The Tampa Rough Riders are a Florida nonprofit corporation and a Federal 501(c)(3) charity. Since 1978 the Regiment has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars both financially and in volunteer hours. Whether providing material goods or manpower, Rough Riders live to get up close and personal with the community where they live and work.

Billy Hogan, volunteer curator for the Rough Riders Museum and lead organizer for the event, said it's an evening you won't want to miss.

"The Rough Riders' Teddy Roosevelt Museum is a series of 10 exhibits chronologically arranged in our hall," said Hogan. "We will have docents in period attire at the exhibits explaining from the Ten Years' War in Cuba (1868-78) through the end of the Spanish-American War and about our present-day organization."

This year marks the second time the Rough Riders have hosted the event.

"We accomplished this for the first time in June 2022 in what we then called History Week, the period of time in June corresponding to when the original Rough Riders were in Tampa in 1898," Hogan said.

Doors open at 5 p.m., and visitors will be guided through the museum before entering a food and beverage area. Hogan said the evening's most distinctive feature will be historical reenactors.

"The most unique part of this event will be actors impersonating Teddy and Edith Roosevelt," said Hogan. "They will conduct their performance about 6:20 p.m., and they will be followed by book author Mark Barry. At 7 p.m., we will play the movie Night at the Museum with Ben Stiller and Robin Williams. The Roosevelt actors are making their first appearance at one of our events, and we are excited to hear their recreations of Teddy and Edith."

Organizers hope to draw at least 150 attendees. The entry fee for the event is $5 or a new teddy bear — 12 inches or larger.

Hogan emphasized the Rough Riders' long-standing charitable mission.

"Each year the Rough Riders collect, sort and store thousands of teddy bears for our teddy bear program," he said, noting that the organization donates bears to hospitals, nursing homes, foster programs and other community partners. "We also donate about $50,000 annually through scholarships and other donations to nonprofit causes."

The Teddy Roosevelt Museum was recently named a Blue Star Museum — one of five in Tampa — and offers free admission to active-duty military families. The 2026 program runs through Labor Day, Monday, September 7.

The Rough Riders *Night at the Museum* event runs from 5-10 p.m. at 601 N. 19th St. in Tampa. For more information and registration, visit www.tamparoughriders.org.

FLEXIBLE LEARNING & SUPPORT: WHY TO CHOOSE HILLS VIRTUAL SCHOOL

By Superintendent Van Ayres



A Letter From The SUPERINTENDENT of Hillsborough County Public Schools
Van Ayres

When families search for learning options that fit their lives, they often face a false choice: flexibility or quality. Hillsborough Virtual School offers both.

As part of Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS), Hillsborough Virtual School is not an outside vendor or a one-size-fits-all platform. Students learn from certified HCPS teachers who know this community and are invested in its students. Families retain access to extracurricular activities, in-person support and the full resources of our district, the same foundation that has earned the trust of Hillsborough County families for generations.

Coursework is aligned to district standards, so students stay on pace with their peers while learning in a way that works for them. Whether a student thrives on a flexible schedule, needs a different environment or is balancing other commitments, Hillsborough Virtual School adapts without lowering expectations. The combination of personalized pacing with rigorous standards is what makes it sustainable choice for so many families.

Summer is also a powerful window of opportunity. Students can get ahead in their coursework, recover credits, or strengthen essential skills before the new school year begins. High-quality courses are designed to meet students where they are and help them move forward with confidence and to not just cover material but also truly build on it.

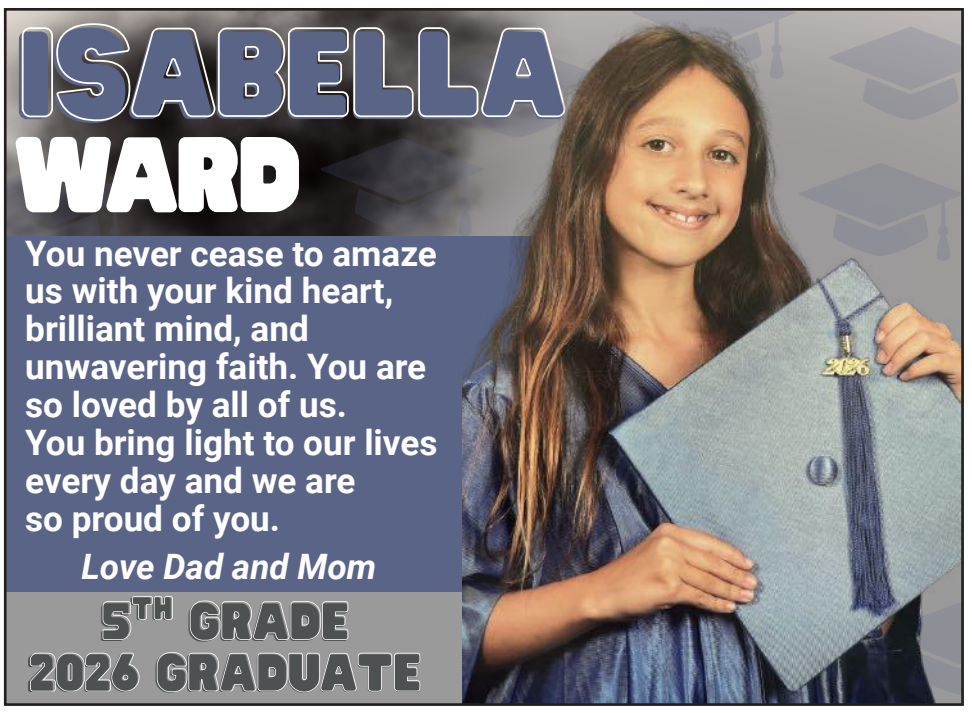
Even in a virtual format, they're far from navigating it alone. Real teachers provide ongoing instruction, feedback and connection. Parents gain greater visibility into their child's progress and a more active role in the learning experience.

This is what sets Hillsborough Virtual School apart: flexibility paired with accountability, independence supported by structure and innovation grounded in the values of our public school system.

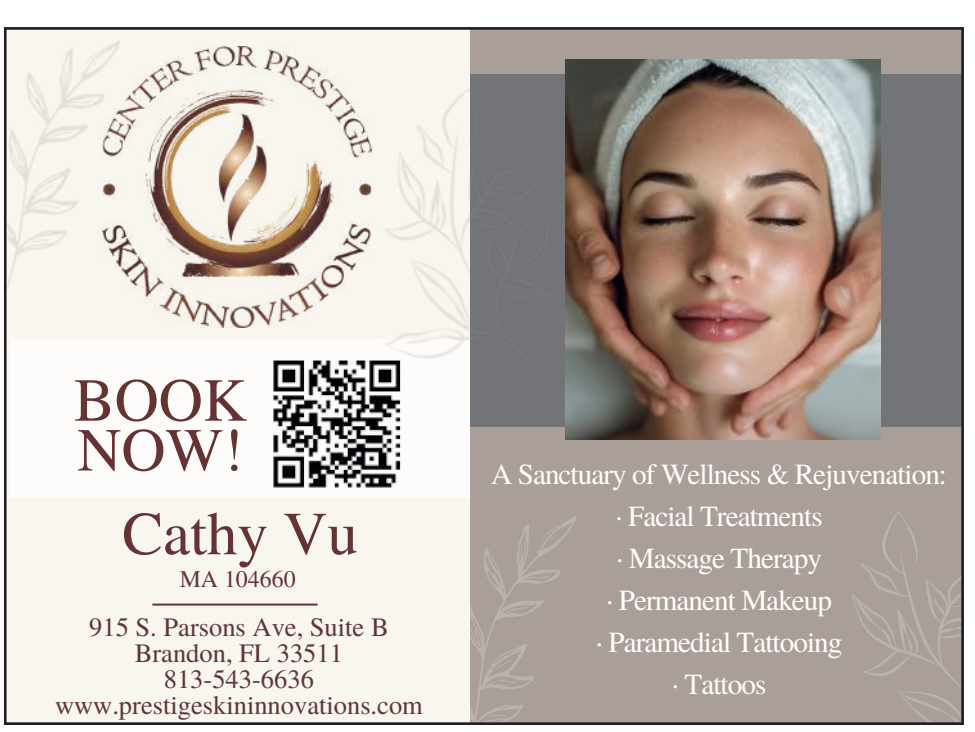
If you are considering summer enrollment or planning for the 2026-27 school year, I encourage you to take a closer look. For many families, Hillsborough Virtual School isn't just an alternative; it's the right fit.

Learn more about options directly at www.hillsboroughschools.org/virtual.









VBS, HC Registration, Rendon Award & More...

Compiled by Jenny Bennett
jbennett@ospreyobserver.com

Vacation Bible School At Creekside Church Of Christ.

This summer, Creekside Church of Christ is hitting the trail for Vacation Bible School 2026! Joy Is the Way is a camping-themed adventure where children will gather around the campfire, discover God's direction, and learn what it means to walk with Him each day. Through teamwork, challenges, and plenty of fun, kids will explore how God leads, teaches, and helps us trust Him on every step of the journey!



Camp is suitable for children entering 4K through 5th grade and will take place Wednesday–Friday, June 24–26, from 6:00–8:20 PM each night. Register today at Creekside.life/VBS.

Creekside Church of Christ is located at 3949 Lithia Pinecrest Rd., in Valrico.

Registration Open for Fall 2026 Semester at Hillsborough College

Fall 2026 registration is open for all new and returning students at Hillsborough College. Registration is available at hcfl.edu/registernow for existing students. Registration and application information for new students can be found at hcfl.edu/admissions. HC offers flexible class schedules and course delivery options, allowing students to study at their own pace without compromising their work or family obligations. Options include: on campus, hybrid, simulcast, online with live class meetings, online without live class meetings and flexible start.

Hillsborough College serves more than 46,000 students annually at its five campuses located throughout Tampa Bay. For more information, visit hcfl.edu.

Hillsborough County Public Schools Recognized As A 2026 Best Community For Music Education

Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) has once again been named a Best Community for Music Education by the NAMM Foundation, a national honor that celebrates school districts demonstrating a strong commitment to providing comprehensive, high-quality music education for all students.

The designation reflects the passion, professionalism and dedication of HCPS music educators, whose efforts ensure students across the district have meaningful opportunities to learn, perform and grow through music. From classroom instruction to performances, advocacy and community collaboration, HCPS music programs continue to make a lasting impact on students and the broader community.

"Being recognized once again at a national level is a testament to the passion and commitment of our music educators," said Superintendent Van Ayres. "Because of their work, students throughout our district experience high-quality music education and arts programs that inspire creativity, build discipline and foster collaboration at every grade level."

For more information about music education programs in Hillsborough County Public Schools, visit www.hillsboroughschools.org.

School Board Member Honored With Distinguished Leader Award

Hillsborough County School Board Member Patti Rendon has received the Distinguished Leader Award from the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA), recognizing outstanding leadership and a commitment to effective school board governance that supports student success.

The Distinguished Leader Award recognizes board members who demonstrate dedication to professional learning, leadership development and governance excellence. Recipients must first earn both the Certified Board Member (CBM) and Advanced Certified Board Member (ACBM) designations through FSBA.



"School board members who earn this award go above and beyond in their commitment to effective governance and public service," said Tina Pinkoson, director of leadership services for the Florida School Boards Association. "By earning the Distinguished Leader Award, member Rendon demonstrates outstanding leadership, a commitment to continuous learning and a lasting positive impact on students, schools and their community."

The Florida School Boards Association is the statewide professional association representing Florida's 67 elected school boards.

CIMINO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW PRINCIPAL

By Libby Hopkins



Anne Fiorita, former assistant principal, recently became principal of Cimino Elementary in Valrico.

Anne Fiorita considers the staff and students at Cimino Elementary School in Valrico to be like family. Fiorita's son attended fourth and fifth grades at the school, and she has been a part of the school since 2019.

"Cimino has played an important role in our lives for many years," Fiorita said. "My son attended Cimino for fourth and fifth grades. I served as a district peer evaluator and mentor at Cimino and then in the 2019-2020 school year became the assistant principal."

Fiorita recently became the new principal at Cimino Elementary School.

She began her teaching career in Maryland and New Mexico before joining the Hillsborough County Public Schools family in 2005 at Limona Elementary School. She later moved to Boyette Springs Elementary School, where she taught first and second grades.

"I was raised in Maryland with my parents, who still live there as semi-snowbirds," Fiorita said. "I have been in education since graduating from college starting at a small private school in College Park Maryland. I met my husband in high school, and we married my first year of teaching. We moved to New Mexico, where I continued to teach and a few years later our son was born. We moved to Florida in July of 2004."

Teaching runs in Fiorita's family.

"My husband is currently a teacher at Bloomingdale High School, where he is also the girls and boys tennis coach after he retired, and my son is currently a teacher at Tomlin Middle School," Fiorita said.

Fiorita and the staff and faculty at Cimino have set their sights on excellence, and they are dedicated to providing their students with high-quality support and instruction. The school is fortunate to have educators, parents, community members and business leaders as partners in this important mission.

"It is a humbling honor to have been chosen for this role and a job I don't take lightly," Fiorita said. "Cimino has a strong history in our community that is very important for me to continue the positive legacy formed from great students, staff, families and community supporters. It's so exciting to see what the future holds."

Fiorita loves the relationships she has created during her time at Cimino.

"I love building relationships and watching people grow," Fiorita said. "This is true for students, staff and myself. There is always something to learn, and to be surrounded everyday by learning is always exciting. I love never knowing what the day will bring. I love it when past staff come back to visit and when former students pop by to say hello and talk about all their adventures since leaving Cimino."





RESCUE PETS ISSUES URGENT PLEA FOR FOSTERS AS SHELTERS REACH CAPACITY

Staff Report

Rescue Pets of Florida, a volunteer-driven nonprofit that recently celebrated over 25,000 adoptions in its first 10 years, is issuing an urgent plea for foster homes as shelters and rescues across the Tampa Bay area reach dangerous overcrowding levels during kitten season.

The rescue currently has zero available foster homes for incoming kittens, while county shelters and rescue partners throughout the region continue to operate at or beyond capacity. According to the organization, local shelters have already begun euthanizing animals for space.

"We are at a critical point," said Jeanine Cohen, director and cat division lead for Rescue Pets of Florida. "Every single foster home directly translates into lives saved. Right now, we are being forced to make heartbreaking decisions simply because we do not have enough homes available to safely place more animals."

Founded in 2015, Rescue Pets of Florida began as a small cat rescue originally known as Rescue Cats of Florida. Over the past decade, the organization has grown into one of the region's largest volunteer-based rescues, operating five adoption centers throughout Tampa Bay and expanding its mission to save cats, dogs, neonatal kittens and farm animals in need.

The rescue relies entirely on volunteers and foster families rather than a traditional shelter facility. Foster homes provide temporary care for animals until they are medically cleared and adopted into permanent homes.

"We provide everything," said Tara Pisano, director and dog division lead for Rescue Pets of Florida. "Food, medical care, supplies, support — we just need people willing to open their homes temporarily. Even fostering for a few weeks can literally save lives."

In addition to rescue and adoption efforts, Rescue Pets of Florida has become known for its regional impact through spay/neuter initiatives and shelter partnerships. The organization also sponsors rescue and partner-rescue spay/neuter clinics aimed at reducing overpopulation before animals enter shelters. Since 2023, Rescue Pets of Florida and its rescue partners have completed thousands of sterilization surgeries, helping reduce intake pressure across multiple counties.

Rescue Pets of Florida is currently seeking foster homes throughout St. Petersburg, Valrico, Wesley Chapel, Spring Hill, Plant City and surrounding Tampa Bay areas. Community members interested in fostering can apply at www.rescuepetsofflorida.org/volunteer.

Donations to support medical care, food, and emergency rescue efforts can be made at www.rescuepetsofflorida.org/donate.

About Rescue Pets of Florida

Founded in 2015, Rescue Pets of Florida is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming homeless animals throughout the Tampa Bay area.

TGH/GREENBROOK SENIOR CENTER OPENS NEW LOCATION IN BRANDON

By Libby Hopkins



The TGH Senior Center powered by Greenbrook Medical recently celebrated the grand opening of its new senior center in Brandon. The new center is located at 427 S. Parsons Ave., Ste. 120, in Brandon.

Greenbrook Medical has served the Tampa Bay area since 1991 with a mission to help seniors live their healthiest, most fulfilling lives by delivering an outstanding, concierge-like care experience. Its partnership with Tampa General Hospital in 2024 was a natural extension of that commitment. Thus, the TGH Senior Center powered by Greenbook Medical was born. It recently opened its new location in Brandon.

"We are thrilled to partner with Tampa General Hospital to establish its first senior center," said Neil Machhar, CEO of Greenbrook Medical. "This collaboration is an innovative way for health systems to partner with community providers to transform the delivery of care and achieve better patient outcomes for the communities we serve."

Dr. Raj Machhar, chief medical officer of Greenbrook Medical, added, "Combining our holistic approach to care with the resources of Tampa General Hospital, we're confident we can improve the lives of seniors across the Tampa Bay Region."

The TGH Senior Center powered by Greenbrook Medical is built around high-touch, relationship-based primary care designed to feel personal again.

"Our full-service clinics are designed to provide seniors with personalized care focused on their unique needs," said Jordan Gray, marketing director for Greenbrook Medical. "We are physician-led, coordinated and intentionally structured to support healthier lives over time through more time with patients, stronger care coordination and a personalized approach so you can live your best life."

The new center's care model is based on strong patient-doctor relationships that provide the same time, convenience and respect.

"Our patients can expect an experience that feels steady, respectful, and clear," Gray said. "The goal is for patients to leave appointments with fewer unanswered questions, more confidence in the plan and care that reflects their full health story. Patients will benefit from extended visits with their primary care physician and a specialized senior care team to help manage chronic conditions and support long-term wellness goals. You'll see your same doctor on every visit and be able to receive convenient, on-site diagnostic and treatment services so that you can get more care in fewer places."

If you're interested in becoming a patient or would like to schedule a meet and greet with a physician near you, call 813-725-1904 and its onboarding team will assist you. The TGH Senior Center powered by Greenbrook Medical is located at 427 S. Parsons Ave., Ste. 120, in Brandon. There is also a Riverview location at 10453 Stelling Dr.

Join the Valrico FishHawk Chamber of Commerce for the

4th Annual
Honorary Mayor of
East Hillsborough County
Charity Race
June 1 - June 30, 2026

A portion of the proceeds to benefit the following charities

Emergency Care Help Organization
IMPACT
RAINING CATS & DOGS SHELTER AND SANCTUARY, INC
HIGH 5, INC. EDUCATION · ATHLETICS · COMMUNITY
FORGOTTENANGELS

For event information, visit Facebook:
@GlarosForMayor (Steve Glaros)
@ChrisforMayor2026 (Chris Ciulla)

VALRICO / FISHHAWK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Welcome To Our Newest Chamber Members!
Serenity Meadows Memorial Park, Funeral Home & Crematory • Hunt Lending Team • Grease Monkey
Brand Hyve • Bells Beauty Bar LLC

midday POWER HOUR+
Join us at our Midday Power Hour every Wednesday, 11am at Beef O'Brady's Bloomingdale for a presentation and networking with other local business owners!
WWW.VALRICOFISHHAWK.ORG





NEW HORIZONS GROUP HOMES PROVIDES MORE THAN SHELTER: HOSTS LUNCHEON

By Brad Stager

Ensuring the well-being of those who are at risk of marginalization or exploitation because of a disability is a principle wholeheartedly embraced by New Horizons Group Homes in its mission to provide safe, sustaining shelter for adults with special needs.

The genesis of New Horizons was in 1992, as a community of people concerned about a lack of resources for residents dealing with ability challenges came together in a partnership with the special needs ministry of First Baptist Church of Brandon. Its mission from the outset has been to support the notion that independence, dignity and respect are essential to a fully lived life, and that a home is an important part of making this possible for those whose disability makes daily living difficult.

From that beginning in 1992 grew a village, starting with the Mary Lou Creamer home, which opened in 1999 on the property located at 109 E. Clay Ave. in Brandon. That first structure was home for six women residents and was followed in 2002 with the opening of the Alice Storms home, which housed six men. A grant from Hillsborough County allowed for construction of the Peter and Brenda Watkins home, which opened to six men in 2017. Creamer, Storms and Watkins are among the names of New Horizons' founders.

The homes are operated as assisted living facilities licensed by the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, with much of the funding derived from residents' Social Security benefits as well as through special events, like barbecues and luncheons, and developing supportive relationships with businesses and individuals in the community who wish to help.

As a partner with First Baptist Church's special needs ministry, New Horizons emphasizes Christian values in creating the homes' environments. Residents are encouraged to develop their full potential as human beings, and New Horizons draws upon community connections and resources to provide them. Many residents hold jobs and all are expected to do chores to keep the homes operating smoothly. Outings to local events and attractions also keep residents busy.

"It's a Christian, family-centered home to be all that they can be," said Brenda Watkins.

To learn more, including how to take a tour for interested families, visit www.newhorizonshomes.org or call 813-571-2690.

SPECIAL NOTE: On Saturday, June 13, New Horizons Group Homes will host its annual luncheon from 12 Noon-2 p.m. at First Baptist Church Brandon, located at 216 N. Parsons Ave. in Brandon.

Tickets are $25 each, or $175 to sponsor a table for eight. Call 813-653-2466 for more information about tickets and sponsorships.

LIEUTENANT GOV. JAY COLLINS ANNOUNCES OPERATION F3

Staff Report



Lt. Gov. Jay Collins (Photo / X)

Recently, decorated Green Beret, Lieutenant Gov. and gubernatorial candidate Jay Collins announced 'Operation F3, Florida Families First: Education on Florida's Terms' in Tampa.

"Florida's families need a governor who truly understands the classrooms, the challenges and the dreams of Florida's children," said Jay Collins. "Florida doesn't need more Washington-style bureaucracy. We need bold, practical leadership rooted in our values, and that's exactly what I'll deliver as your next governor."

Jay Collins emphasized the importance of building an education system on Florida's terms, respecting parental rights and ensuring Florida's education is practical, not bureaucratic.

Operation Florida Families First has three main pillars: 1. Cybersecurity and Protecting Our Kids: We cannot put our children's education solely in the hands of artificial intelligence. There must be humans in the education and security loops. As governor, Jay Collins will direct immediate investments into cybersecurity, training and partnerships with Florida's world-class defense and technology sectors.

2. Rejecting One-size-fits-all Bureaucracy: Children must have the option to customize their education tailored to their career goals, whether they choose to go to college, learn a trade or join the military. Every child is unique and our education system should reflect that. However, giving each child an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a bureaucratic nightmare. 3. Trade Opportunities and Agricultural Training: Florida is home to many industries, including agriculture. Our education must prepare students for good-paying jobs and make all industries accessible to them.

Jay Collins was joined by Second Lady Layla Collins and Bernadette Pello, president and co-founder of Livingstone Academy, who shared their firsthand experience in education policy to support Jay Collins' approach. They emphasized the importance of integrating workforce education and ensuring each student has the ability to customize their education. See the biographies of the guest speakers below:

Layla Collins, Second Lady, State of Florida: Layla Collins has had a storied career in the United States Army which began in 1994 and spanned over two decades. Layla Collins served in multiple SOF units with a wide range of focus. Layla Collins was selected to be a core member of a Special Actions Team that evaluated security protocol at the highest levels of our government. She collaborated to develop curriculum and courses to train and educate other service members on sensitive skills and best practices. Working within the SOF community allowed

Layla Collins is the proud wife of Jay Collins, and mom of two precious boys, Gabe and Colt. Bernadette Pello, President and Co-founder, Livingstone Academy

Jay Collins is a 23-year veteran of the U.S. Army Special Forces, having served in combat around the world defending our nation. He currently serves as Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' lieutenant governor. For more information, visit www.jayforflorida.com.

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

Why fund an IRA early?

Because time can make a big difference.

If you wait until the tax deadline to fund your IRA each year, you miss out on 15 months of potential tax-deferred growth on your contribution. For example, many people wait until April 15, 2026, to contribute to their IRAs for 2025, when they could have funded them as early as Jan. 1, 2025.

Although 15 months may not seem like a significant amount of time, it may considerably impact your retirement savings.

The following hypothetical example shows the difference between funding an IRA at the beginning of each year and at the tax deadline the following year.

IRAs: traditional, Roth and spousal	
Contribution limit	$7,500 for 2026
Catch-up contribution (at age 50+)	Ages 50 and older: $1,100 for 2026
Tax credits	Depending on income limits

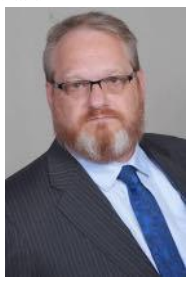
The difference 15 months can make*

IRA contributions begin at age	Total years investing	Money accumulated for retirement		The benefit of contributing early	
		Early contributions (Beginning of each year)	Late contributions (Tax deadline)	Individual	Both spouses
35	30	$787,623	$736,095	$51,527	$103,055
40	25	$537,147	$502,008	$35,138	$70,277
45	20	$358,563	$335,106	$23,247	$46,495
50	15	$231,237	$216,109	$15,127	$30,255
55	10	$127,138	$118,821	$8,317	$16,635
60	5	$52,918	$49,456	$3,461	$6,923

Source: Edward Jones calculations.

This projection assumes the individual contributes the maximum annual limit each year, including the full catch-up contribution starting in the year they turn 50 and continuing thereafter. For 2026, the standard contribution limit is $7,500, with an additional catch-up limit of $1,100. These limits may change over time due to cost-of-living adjustments or legislative updates.

The assumed annual rate of return is 7%, used solely for illustrative purposes and not indicative of any specific investment. Edward Jones does not provide tax or legal advice; you should consult a qualified tax or legal professional regarding your personal situation. Calculations assume reinvestment of all income and do not account for taxes, transaction costs, fees, or other charges, all of which would reduce actual results.



Adam M benAbram
Financial Advisor

10312 W Bloomingdale Ave
Suite 105
Riverview, FL 33578
813-626-3052

INS-3518I-A-E-FL-1 EXP 30 NOV 2027 © 2026 EDWARD D. JONES & CO., L.P. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. AECSPAD 2843991G

www.edwardjones.com/adam-benabram

Serving Tampa Bay With Results-Driven Advocacy



TKT LAW

THE LAW OFFICES OF
TIFFANI K. THORNTON

Office@TKTLAW.ORG

PRACTICE AREAS:
REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY
BUSINESS LAW
FAMILY ESTATES

813-337-7349
653 W. LUMSDEN RD. BRANDON



From all-day activities at the Hillsborough County Fairgrounds to Tampa's Liberty By The Bay events along the river to any number of neighborhood gatherings with families & friends, we have many ways to mark our nation's celebration July 4th! For this one in particular, let's do it safely, peacefully, & with a commitment to keep working on "liberty & justice for all."

I give free ad space to groups or events that improve our community. Call me with your ideas! — Ann Marie



Ann Marie Vaughan, Realtor

RE/MAX AllianceGroup

Over $15 million in sales in 2025

RE/MAX Hall of Fame, Top 1% among all agents across Tampa Bay

Certified Luxury Home Specialist

Newsome High, Riverview High parent

"I live here. I love it here. And I sell here like no one else!"

Direct: 813-748-4536

Email: annmarievaughan@verizon.net

Web: annmarievaughan.realtor

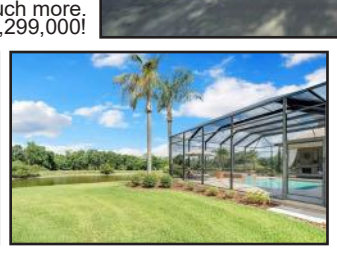
Before The 4th, Check Out These 4 FishHawk Area Homes!

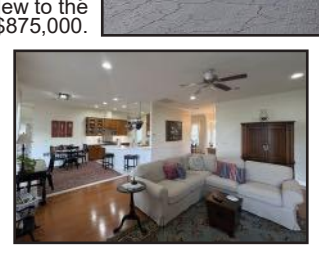
EXCELLENCE & ELEGANCE surround you at this magnificent, custom-built, 5,000-SF home in FishHawk's Kestrel Ridge! On a cul-de-sac half-acre in the security-gated enclave, the property features an impressive pool & spa lanai with a panoramic view of conservation woods & water. An outdoor kitchen & gas fireplace flank the heated pool on a travertine-tiled deck; triple pocket sliders open it all for great entertaining. Details are just as dazzling inside, of course: coffered ceilings, crown molding, columns & arches, gorgeous granite, diagonal-tile floors & backsplashes, decorative listello, raised-panel wood cabinets, walk-in wine closet & so much more. New sale price offered at $1,299,000!



BRING YOUR ANIMALS, BOATS, RVs, or simply spread out with this upgraded, custom home on almost 2.5 fenced acres east of FishHawk! Under a 1-year-new roof, this smart & stylish design maximizes 2,400 SF by centering everything around a spacious great room that opens through French doors to a multi-level screened porch & brick-pavered pool lanai. It has 3 big bedrooms, 2.5 baths, an extended 3-car garage, a drive-thru carport for 2 additional vehicles,& a list of improvements by its owners for the last 15 years. No deed restrictions -- so while you're within 5 minutes of many suburban amenities, you're miles away in terms of peace & privacy. New to the market this month at $875,000.




A SOLAR-HEATED POOL in a freshly resurfaced & screened lanai, along a cul-de-sac with a wooded backdrop instead of another neighbor, gets your attention first at this home in FishHawk's Shearwater enclave! But don't overlook all the other attractive qualities here – including brand-new luxury vinyl plank & carpet alongside tile floors, a dimensional-shingle roof installed with the solar panels just 6 years ago, as well as customizations from a stone fireplace to cabinet / shelf buildouts in 2 rooms to a French-door den or office in front. This 2,350-SF Cardel Sandhill design also has been modified to open the 4th bedroom into a play space in the back corner between secondary beds & bath. $549,900



THE SPARKLING STAR of this FishHawk home is the privacy-fenced pool, heated & newly resurfaced, welcoming you to a screened & super-sized lanai! For entertaining or simply relaxing, this backyard bonus is a big reason to buy. But beyond that obvious attraction are other advantages that make this 4-bed, 2-bath, 2020-SF Inland Vinoy design stand out from its neighbors: 2025 AC, 2023 roof, 2022 pool filter, replacement faucets & other fixtures, custom office furnishings built into the 4th bedroom, even an air-conditioned garage & a new storage shed at the end of an artificial-turf dog run. It's in the Tanager Ridge neighborhood, near Bevis Elementary, the Osprey Club & more! $525,000

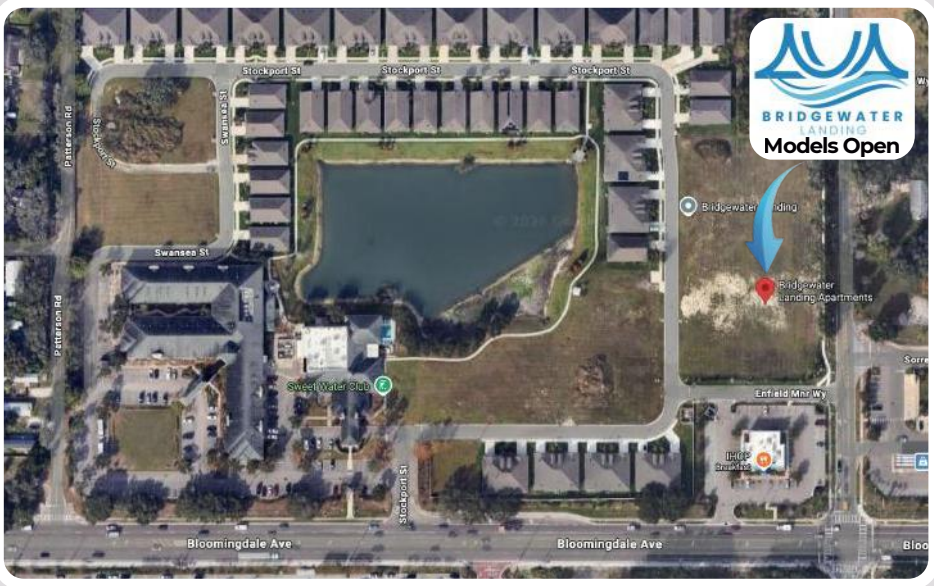










NOW LEASING

BRIDGEWATER LANDING

Discover carefree living in our welcoming 55+ apartment community. Enjoy spacious homes, modern conveniences, and a friendly atmosphere where neighbors become friends. With beautifully maintained grounds and a location close to shopping and dining, you'll find the perfect blend of comfort, independence, and connection.

1&2 Bedroom **Water Included** **In Unit Washer/Dryer**

813-934-2204 | leasing@bridgewaterlandings.com

SH
SUNRISE HOMES
building a brighter tomorrow

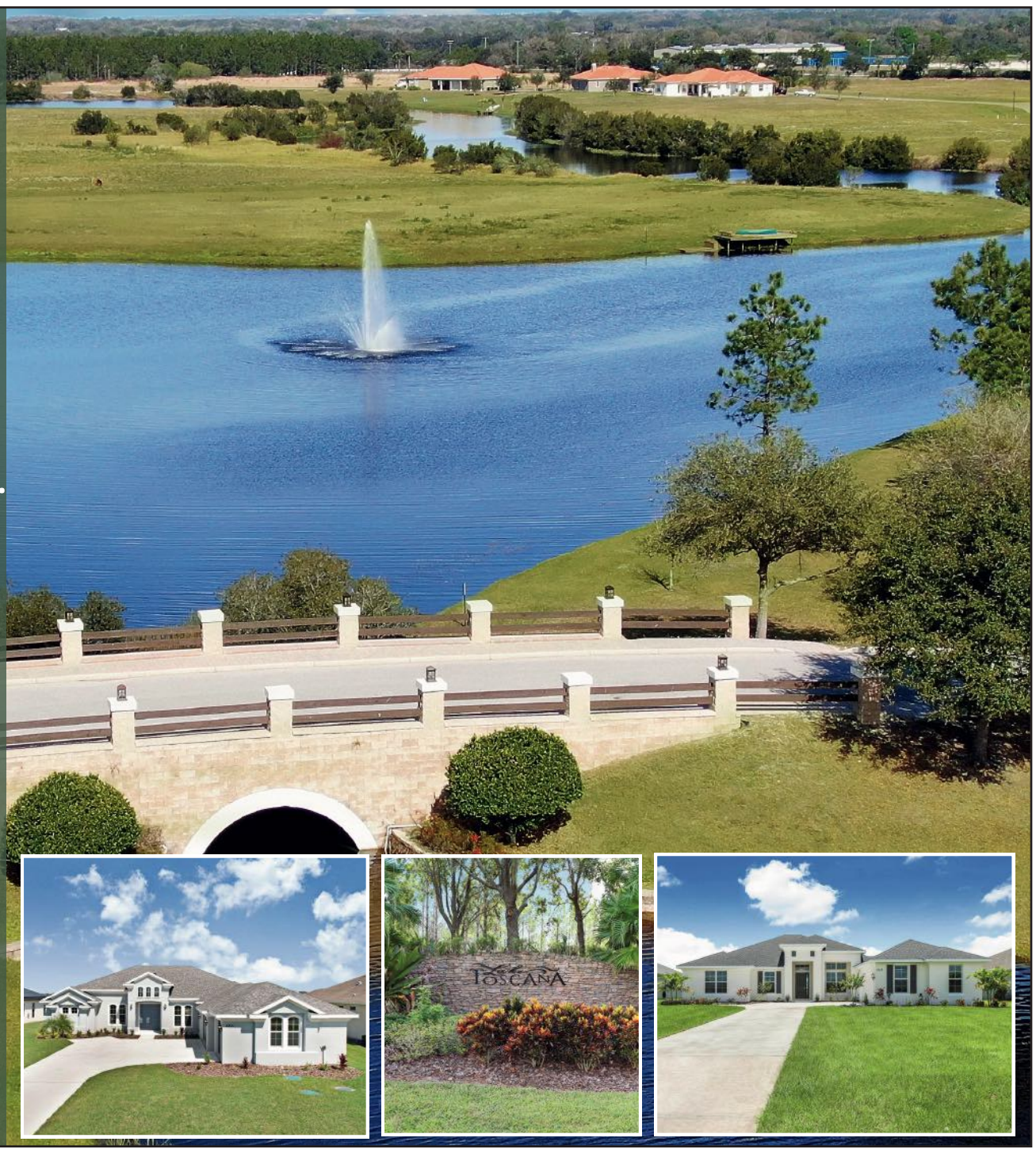
Final Opportunity in Lake Toscana

Only 5 opportunities remain.
$50,000 off your design selections*

1/2 acre lots, semi-custom homes, lake or conservation views on every lot

813-934-2206

Visit Our Model Home
5333 Lake Venice Dr
Wimauma, FL 33598



Bloomingdale/FishHawk June 2026 Vol. 25, Iss. 6

Sponsored by: Osprey Observer — Your Community Newspaper



Edited by: Jenny Bennett

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.

Fast Casual Italian Restaurant Opens

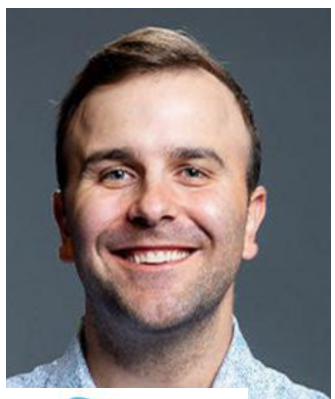
Mister Pasta's Build-Your-Own Pasta Bar is a fast-casual Italian experience where you're in control. Start by choosing your favorite fresh-made pasta, pick from its house-made sauces, load up on unlimited fresh vegetables, add your choice of proteins like grilled chicken, meatballs, steak, shrimp or lobster and then watch as your custom creation is cooked to perfection right in front of you. Fresh, fast and made just the way you like it. It also does catering for weddings, parties, office or corporate events. Mister Pasta is located at 11681 Boyette Rd. in Riverview. Visit www.misterpasta.com.



Little Fins Pediatric Dentistry Opens

Little Fins Pediatric Dentistry has recently opened at 16637 FishHawk Blvd, Ste. 105, in Lithia.

It provides specialized dental care for infants, children and teens including preventive care, restorative dentistry, emergency dentistry, sedation dentistry, frenectomies and limited orthodontic care. Little Fins Pediatric Dentistry is focused on keeping children's teeth and gums healthy from infancy through the teen years. It combines routine care, treatment and child-friendly techniques to support growing smiles and make dental visits comfortable for kids.



Visit its website at https://littlefinsdental.com/ or call 813-454-0821 for additional information.

Sunset Estate Liquidations

Founded in 2026, Sunset Estate Liquidations was created to support seniors and their families during important life changes, particularly during estate transitions. Recognizing a need for trustworthy, streamlined services for estate sales, it built the company to provide guidance every step of the way. Sunset Estate Liquidations takes a personalized approach to every project, tailoring its services to meet the unique needs of each client during their estate transition, whether it involves conducting an estate sale or managing a professional estate liquidation.



Sunset Estate Liquidations is located at 4057 Forecast Dr. in Brandon. Call 813-460-1647 or visit its website at https://sunsetestateliquidations.com/ for additional information.

Canine Cabana Celebrates 18 Years With Ribbon-Cutting

Since 2008, Canine Cabana has been a trusted haven for pets, offering award-winning care in a state-of-the-art facility spanning over 3 acres. It decided to celebrate this landmark with a multichamber of commerce ribbon-cutting event. With a mission to enhance the lives of both dogs and their owners, Canine Cabana provides a safe, active and healthy recreational environment. Premium services include overnight accommodations, enriching dog day care, positive training and professional grooming. Canine Cabana believes in providing the best and safest activities in the area.



Located at 9708 Carr Rd. in Riverview, Canine Cabana offers day care, lodging, training, grooming and bathing services. Visit www.caninecabana.biz or call 813-672-9663.

Center For Prestige Skin Innovations

The Center for Prestige Skin Innovations, located at 915 S. Parsons Ave., Ste. B, in Brandon, recently celebrated joining the Brandon and Riverview Chamber of Commerce with a ribbon cutting. The Center for Prestige Skin Innovations provides a soothing escape from the stresses of daily life that'll leave you feeling recharged and refreshed. From the moment you walk through the doors, you'll be embraced by a calm, peaceful atmosphere that allows you to unwind, recharge and be refreshed. It offers a wide array of luxurious treatments to renew your body and spirit, including facials, massages, permanent makeup and others. Visit https://prestigeskininnovations.com/ or call 813-543-6636 for additional information and to make an appointment.



COUNTY SPRING ACADEMIC CHAMPS: COMPTON WINS 4A STATE TITLE

By Nick Nahas

Hillsborough County recognized several individual athletes and teams for academic and athletic success during this past spring season.

Lennard High School won the girls flag football Class 4A State Championship, defeating Park Vista 12-6 to claim the school's first-ever state championship.



Hayden Compton from Durant High won the 4A Para-Athlete Division – 400 Meter Dash (1:12:15).

"It means everything to me to help bring the first state championship to Lennard High School," said running back Willow Rager. "Being able to make history with this team is such a special feeling because we knew we were representing our school and community every time we stepped on the field. It's something we've worked toward all season, and I'm so proud of what we accomplished together."

The Newsome High School baseball team earned the FHSAA Class 7A Academic State Championship with a 3.59 cumulative team GPA. The FHSAA Academic Team Champion program recognizes teams with the highest cumulative grade point averages in each classification. To qualify, teams must achieve at least a 3.0 unweighted GPA.

Hayden Compton from Durant High School won the 4A Para-Athlete Division – 400 Meter Dash Wheelchair (1:12:15).

"I'm proud of the accomplishment, but I'm also focused on continuing to improve my times and compete at bigger meets," said Compton. "For me, it's proof that the hard work is paying off and that I'm continuing to improve as an athlete. I will remember how much I improved from last season to this season, including taking 21 seconds off my 800m time, and the hard work it took to get there."

Luca Torres-Sigler of Spoto High School claimed the 3A Boys Tennis – Singles title.

"I felt a sense of accomplishment knowing that all of my hard work had finally paid off," said Torres-Sigler. "Winning this title makes me feel very proud of what I have accomplished. In addition, not too many fellow tennis players can say, 'I am a state singles champion.' That is very cool."

Torres-Sigler prepared for this tournament by training three times a week at the Eric Dobsha Tennis Academy with high-level juniors and collegiate-level athletes. He also played in several warm-up tournaments leading to the state finals.

"My goals for next season are to be competing at a level that high collegiate division schools take an interest in and hopefully get recruited to play in a Division I or Division II school," said

Torres-Sigler. "Another goal of mine is to lead my team to the state championships next year."

BUCHANAN ANNOUNCES 2026 SERVICE ACADEMY APPOINTMENTS

Staff Report



Recently, Congressman Vern Buchanan announced that 16 of the students he nominated have received an appointment to a U.S. Service Academy.

"I would like to congratulate these exceptional young men and women on earning appointments to our nation's prestigious U.S. Service Academies," said Buchanan. "This achievement reflects their hard work, leadership, character and commitment to serving our country. It is a tremendous honor for these students, their families, their mentors and our entire community. I wish them continued success as they begin this important journey in service to our nation."

Each year, members of the U.S. House and Senate nominate high school seniors in their districts and states for admission to the U.S. Air Force, Merchant Marine, Military and Naval academies. Applicants who meet strict qualifications are interviewed and recommended by a nonpartisan Service Academy Board appointed by the congressman. The U.S. Coast Guard Academy does not require a nomination to be accepted.

The following students nominated by Buchanan received an academy appointment for the fall:

Hillsborough County:

- Caine Cokkinias, Newsome High School, appointed to the U.S. Military Academy.
- Reid Freda, Lakeland Christian High School, appointed to the U.S. Air Force Academy.
- Tyler Stargardt, Newsome High School, appointed to the U.S. Air Force Academy.
- Hunter Wilk, Newsome High School, appointed to the U.S. Military Academy.
- Caitlin Nguyen, Riverview High School, appointed to the U.S. Merchant Marines Academy.
- Micah Pubillones, homeschooled, appointed to the U.S. Air Force Academy.
- John Wheaton, Newsome High School, appointed to the U.S. Merchant Marines Academy.
- Rory Jones, Newsome High School, appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy.
- Lazariyah Rashae Aranda, Naval Academy Prep School, appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy.
- Levi Ward, Georgia Military College, appointed to the U.S. Air Force Academy.

The U.S. Service Academies are four-year post-secondary institutions that combine educational excellence with military officer training. Students accepted to the academies receive a free four-year education in return for a commitment to serve five years in the active-duty military after graduation.

Great Golf! Family Friendly! Welcoming Atmosphere!







SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION OPEN!
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE!

River Hills Country Club offers championship golf, newly renovated greenside bunkers, great dining, Adult & Junior programming! ***TEXT/CALL to schedule a tour or a tee time!***
(813) 693-1531 OR email mmartin@riverhillscountryclub.com

Contact us to learn more and schedule a tour!

TAX COLLECTOR INTEGRATES TOLL CLEARANCE INTO ONLINE REG. RENEWAL

Staff Report



The Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office and Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority (THEA) recently announced a new partnership that allows customers to clear outstanding THEA tolls and renew their vehicle registrations in one seamless online transaction.

The integration, available through the Hillsborough County Tax Collector's website, eliminates the need for customers to contact multiple agencies or make repeat trips to complete their registration renewals.

Previously, customers with unpaid THEA tolls faced a multistep process. They had to contact THEA by phone or online, pay the outstanding balance, wait for the payment to process and then return to the tax collector's website or visit an office to complete their registration renewal. The process often resulted in delays, multiple attempts and additional office visits.

Now, customers can resolve outstanding tolls and renew their registrations immediately through a single online transaction.

"This partnership with THEA is a great example of how collaboration between agencies drives innovation in government service delivery," said Hillsborough County Tax Collector Nancy Millan. "By working together, we've eliminated unnecessary barriers and made it as easy as possible for customers to do business with us. No more phone calls, no more juggling multiple websites, no more driving to an office — just one seamless online transaction."

Millan noted that the tax collector's office already offers a similar integration with Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX), creating a comprehensive solution for customers who need to clear tolls from either agency.

Greg Slater, executive director and CEO of THEA, said many drivers are unaware they have unpaid toll balances until they attempt to renew their vehicle registrations.

"This innovative partnership with the Hillsborough tax collector streamlines the process so customers can quickly resolve unpaid tolls and complete their registration without delays," said Slater.

The integration was made possible through collaboration between the Hillsborough County Tax Collector's Office, THEA and technology partner GrantStreet Group. Once a toll payment is processed, registration renewal holds are automatically removed, allowing customers to complete the process without waiting.

Key benefits include immediate toll clearance and registration renewal, 24/7 online access, elimination of multiple websites and phone calls and fewer trips to tax collector offices.

The new service reflects the tax collector's continued focus on improving customer service through technology and partnerships. Customers can access both THEA and CFX toll clearance services while renewing vehicle registrations online at www.hillstaxfl.gov. For more information, visit the website or call 813-635-5200.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE.



Join us for our
Alzheimer's Support Group for Caregivers

At Ambiance at Brandon, we understand the journey of caring for a loved one with memory loss—and the importance of having support along the way.

We offer Dementia & Alzheimer's Support Groups for care partners and families in our community, providing connection, encouragement, education, and understanding in a compassionate environment focused on Creating the Best Day Possible.

Available both in person and virtually.

AMBIANCE AT BRANDON
1320 Oakfield Drive // Brandon, FL 33511

THIRD TUESDAY OF
EVERY MONTH AT 6:30 PM

FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF
EVERY MONTH AT 2:00 PM

Questions?
Please call Jill at 813-607-6880.

alzheimer's association

Scan the QR code to visit our Events Page to learn more about upcoming support groups and community events.

Ambiance at BRANDON
ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE
by Providence Senior Living

Creating the Best Day Possible™
1320 Oakfield Drive // Brandon, FL 33511
813-607-6880 // Sales@ambiancebrandon.com
AmbianceBrandon.com
Assisted Living Facility #PENDING



SOUL CIRCUS COWBOYS COME HOME TO BRANDON FOR CHARITY FESTIVAL

By Brian Bokor





Inside Morrisound Recording Studio: Frank J. Myers, Rick Morgan, Billy McKnight, and Jim Morris during a recent recording session in Tampa. (right)

Before the Billboard-charting albums, national tours and collaborations with Grammy-winning songwriters and platinum-record producers, Billy McKnight was playing quarterback and middle linebacker for the Brandon Broncos while attending Nativity Catholic School in East Hillsborough County.

Years later, the Soul Circus Cowboys frontman became a familiar face at Nativity Novemberfest, where the band regularly drew large hometown crowds and helped create what McKnight once described as a "complete Brandon reunion."

Now, McKnight is bringing that same spirit to the upcoming Chris Rocks the Vote Music Festival benefiting Forgotten Angels and ECHO.

The festival is scheduled for Saturday, June 27, at the Forgotten Angels ranch, located at 3604 Little Stearns Rd. in Valrico, as part of Chris Ciulla's honorary mayor campaign supporting the two nonprofits. The honorary mayor race is a community fundraising competition where donations and ticket purchases count as votes supporting local charities.

Forgotten Angels supports young adults aging out of foster care, while ECHO assists local families and individuals facing financial hardship throughout the Brandon area.

"We couldn't be more grateful for having the Soul Circus Cowboys supporting Forgotten Angels and the kids we work with," said Cindy Tilley, founder of Forgotten Angels. "The funds they are helping us raise will help save the lives of youth in our community."

Forgotten Angels and ECHO work closely together to support local individuals and families facing difficult situations throughout the community.

The event will feature live music, food trucks and family activities, including performances by Wade Williams, Sidney O'Sullivan, Clay Bo, Sons of the South and Soul Circus Cowboys.

Despite years of touring and recording, McKnight said his connection to Brandon and Valrico has remained constant throughout his career, especially his longtime relationship with Raccoons Bar & Grill, where he performed even before moving to Nashville, Tennessee, in the 1990s.

"Three times a year, I always go back to where I came from," McKnight said. "I play there Thanksgiving Eve, once in the spring and again near the end of the year."

McKnight said football was originally his main focus growing up in Brandon before eventually turning his attention toward music after his athletic plans changed.

Soon afterward, he auditioned for a friend's band.

"His band wound up going with me and we got on Star Search," McKnight said.

That early exposure helped lead McKnight to Nashville in 1994, where he spent nearly a decade learning the music business.

"Nashville was like a college to me," McKnight said.

After returning home to Florida, McKnight formed Soul Circus Cowboys in 2009.

The band has since become one of the region's most recognizable country rock acts, sharing stages with nationally known artists, including Big & Rich.

Their 2016 album, Tailgate Country, reached No. 25 on Billboard's Top Country Albums chart.

Soul Circus Cowboys also gained regional attention during the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' 2020-21 Super Bowl season after releasing the fight song "We're Going to Buc You Up."

Along the way, McKnight built relationships with respected music industry veterans, including Grammy-winning songwriter Frank J. Myers, who won the 1995 Grammy Award for Best Country Song for co-writing the hit "I Swear."

McKnight said Myers first took interest in him after hearing him perform the song "High and Low."

"He heard me sing 'High and Low' and said, 'We want to meet him,'" McKnight recalled. "Then we met, and he said, 'OK, we're going to develop you.'"

"If you want to be the best, you've got to work with the best," McKnight said.

That philosophy eventually led to collaborations with additional respected music industry names, including Jim Morris of Morrisound Recording, the internationally recognized Tampa recording studio associated with multiple platinum-certified records.

The band recently released its newest single, "Something Stronger," and did a May 18 music video premiere on the American Country Network (ACN).

Despite the success, McKnight said giving back locally still comes first.

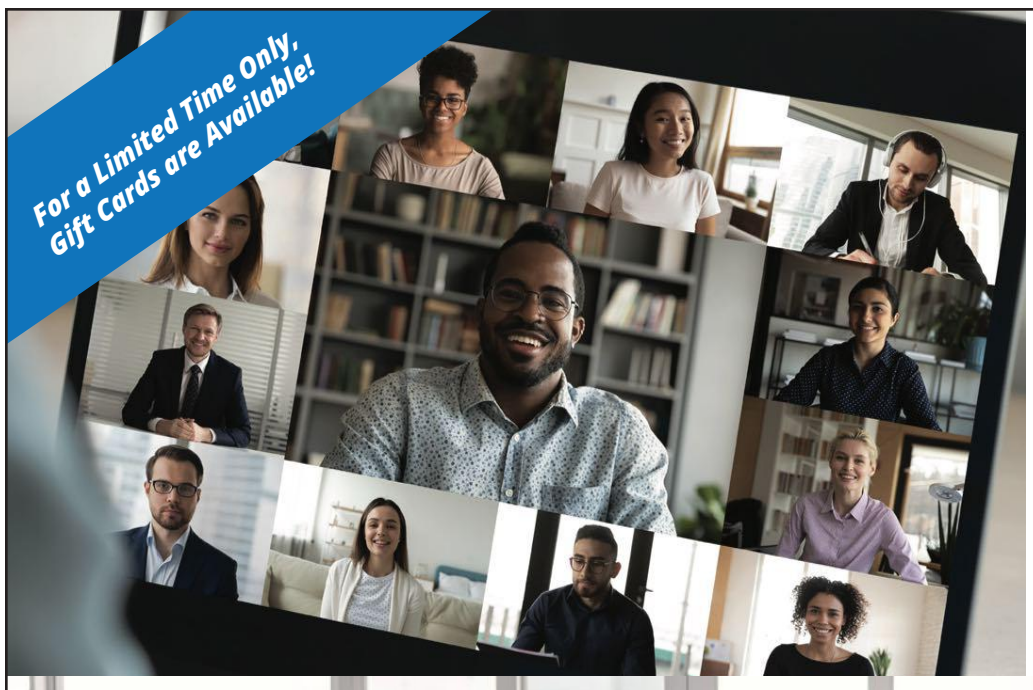
"Let's make this a Brandon reunion," McKnight said. "Come out and do some good for our neighborhood like we always do. When a Brandonite goes down, or one of our bikers goes down, we get together and put things like this event together to help out.

"Quote me — it's something I've said for years: Come on out and let's help other people out. This is more than just a concert for us."

Tickets for the June 27 festival are scheduled to go on sale on Monday, May 25, with general admission tickets priced at $25 and VIP tickets available for $50.

For event details, follow the Chris for Mayor 2026 Facebook page www.facebook.com/chrisformayor2026. Visit https://linktr.ee/chrisformayor to find ticket information and purchase.

Questions can also be directed to Forgotten Angels at ctilley@forgottenangelsflorida.org or by calling 813-812-0120.





There's never been a better time to quit with Group Quit

*Tobacco Free Florida's Group Quit Sessions (in-person or virtual) now offer participants $25 - $125 in gift cards for their attendance.**

Group Quit offers free, expert-led in-person or virtual sessions for all Florida residents regardless of insurance status. Upon class completion, participants are eligible for nicotine replacement therapy such as patches, gum, or lozenges.**

Pre-registration required

Call USF AHEC Program today at:
813-974-7889

*while supplies last
**if medically appropriate for those 18 years of age or older

Learn more about all of Tobacco Free Florida's tools and services at TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/QuitYourWay.

AHEC USF AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER PROGRAM

Florida HEALTH | Tobacco Free Florida .com

ASSET LOCATION: THE OVERLOOKED LEVER IN TAX-EFFICIENT INVESTING

Staff Report



The team at Payant Wealth Management in Sun City Center encourages clients to align investment and tax strategies for long-term financial success.

When it comes to building long-term wealth, most investors focus on what they own—stocks, bonds, funds, and alternatives. But an equally important question is where those assets are held. This concept, known as asset location, can have a meaningful impact on after-tax returns, yet it's often overlooked in portfolio construction.

Asset location refers to strategically placing investments across different account types—taxable accounts, tax-deferred accounts (like traditional IRAs or 401(k)s), and tax-free accounts (such as Roth IRAs). Each type carries its own tax treatment, and aligning investments accordingly can help reduce unnecessary tax drag.

For example, income-generating assets like bonds or high-turnover funds may be better suited for tax-deferred accounts, where interest and short-term gains are sheltered from annual taxation. Meanwhile, growth-oriented investments—such as equities with potential for long-term appreciation—can be ideal for taxable or Roth accounts, where capital gains benefits or tax-free growth may be realized.

The difference may seem incremental year to year, but over time, tax efficiency can significantly improve overall portfolio performance. In fact, minimizing taxes is one of the few "controllable" factors investors have, alongside costs and discipline.

Yet many investors unknowingly hold tax-inefficient assets in the wrong accounts, creating avoidable tax liabilities. This is where comprehensive planning—and ongoing coordination between investment strategy and tax considerations—becomes essential.

Ask yourself: Does your advisor talk to you about asset location?

Are your investments positioned with taxes in mind, or simply allocated based on risk alone?

How tax-efficient is your plan?

True financial planning goes beyond selecting investments—it involves integrating tax strategy, retirement goals, and portfolio design into one cohesive approach. Reviewing asset location regularly, especially as tax laws or personal circumstances change, can help ensure your portfolio is working as efficiently as possible.

In today's environment, where every basis point counts, thoughtful asset location isn't just a technical detail—it's a strategic advantage.

Payant Wealth Management is located att 1653 Sun City Center Plaza, Sun City. Visit www.payantwealthmanagementgroup.com or call (813) 633-7333.

'ART OF READING' PROGRAM OPENS CHALLENGE FOR ALL AGES

Staff Report



The Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative is inviting residents of all ages to turn the page on summer boredom by joining its annual Summer Reading Challenge, with registration opening Monday, May 25.

Part of the 'Art of Reading' initiative, the program encourages children, teens and adults to log their reading throughout the summer while earning prizes and digital badges along the way. Participants can begin tracking their progress starting Monday, June 1, using the Beanstack Tracker app or website.

Jason Rogers, programming manager, said the challenge is designed to combat the 'summer slide,' a common learning loss students experience when school is out.

"It is intended to keep families and the community reading throughout the summer, when reading and learning tends to slow down a bit," Rogers said.

Children and teens, ages 0-18, are challenged to read for a total of 24 hours, while adults are encouraged to complete four books. Along the way, participants can earn incentives at registration, midway and upon completion, including books, badges and themed items. Some prizes have been provided by the Tampa Bay Sun Football Club.

In addition to milestone rewards, participants will be entered into grand prize drawings for items such as tickets to ZooTampa at Lowry Park and tech prizes, including AirPods Pro, a Nintendo Switch Lite and an Echo Show. Prize drawings will take place on Saturday, August 1, with winners having until Monday, August 31, to claim their items.

The program also includes partnerships like 'Reading with the Rays,' where youth can pick up a game card at their local library branch to track reading progress baseball-style. Completed cards can be redeemed for prizes and a savings voucher at Suncoast Credit Union locations.

Additionally, readers can participate in 'Score Through Stories,' another incentive-based program that rewards reading time. Rogers noted that hours logged count across all programs, giving participants more chances to win.

While the program emphasizes youth literacy, Rogers said adults play a critical role.

"It's so important for us to keep our minds engaged so that we are constantly learning," he said. "We're constantly making a better community and a better society."

To sign up and learn more, visit https://hcplc.org/summer.

Home Clean Services, Inc.
Reliable & Trustworthy Cleaning Service
We Care About The Details
Customer Satisfaction Guaranteed
Window Cleaning Services Available
Call Us For A Free Quote
813-843-0763
HomeCleanServicesInc.com
20+ Years Of Experience | Bonded and Insured

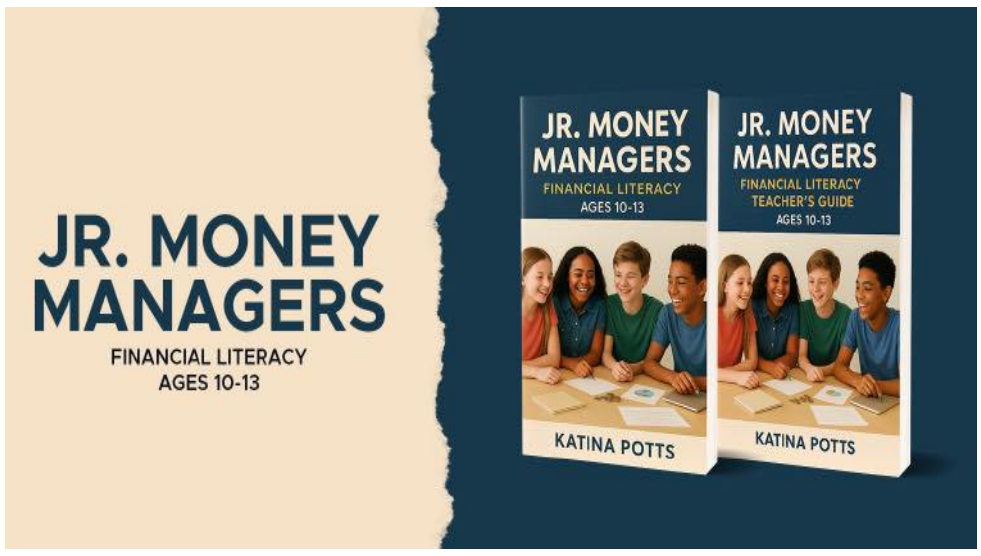
FAMILY MEALS
(Serves 4 to 6-Take Out Only)
All meals include: Yellow or white rice, black beans, onions, salad & dressing, bread and a 2 liter soda
LA SEPTIMA CAFE
$49.95
YOUR CHOICE OF PROTEIN:
Picadillo (2 lbs)
Ropa Vieja (2 lbs)
Lechon Asado (2 lbs)
Bistec Milanesa (4)
Breaded Palomilla Steak (4)
Pescado a la Rusa Fillet (4)
Baked Chicken (4 leg quarters)
(813)685-0502 | 702 W. Lumsden Rd. Brandon | www.laseptimacafe.com
Mon - Sat 11 am - 8 pm Closed Sunday
30 Years in Brandon!

CUSTOM HAIR
For the hair you've always wanted!
Since 1969
Thin Hair?
• FREE CONSULTATION!
• EUROPEAN HUMAN HAIR TOPPERS, WIGS & BLENDS
• NON-SURGICAL BONDING options for active men & women
• Chemotherapy and Alopecia Specialists
• Largest In-Stock Selection in Tampa Bay
• Non-Surgical Hair Replacement for Men
THE LOOK YOU WANT, WITHOUT THE SOUTH TAMPA PRICE!
CLEARWATER MALL 727-725-1052
BRANDON 813-651-9484
TAMPA 813-932-5327
customhairtampabay.com • APPOINTMENT ONLY PLEASE

Davenport's DAILY DELIGHTS
Too Hot To Cook? Let Us Do the Cooking For You!
Scan to order online
Find Us On Facebook @Davenport's Daily Delights

JR. MONEY MANAGERS LAUNCHES TWO-DAY SUMMER FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOP FOR YOUTH

Staff Report



Parents and youth leaders looking for a meaningful, skill-building summer experience now have a powerful new option. Jr. Money Managers, a dynamic financial literacy program, is offering a two-day summer workshop designed for children ages 9-13, equipping them with real-world money skills in a fun, engaging environment.

Led by Katina Potts, a former personal financial advisor and former financial analyst, this workshop goes beyond theory to teach practical financial habits that children can apply immediately. With a strong background in finance and a passion for education, Potts brings both expertise and relatability to every session.

What sets Jr. Money Managers apart from traditional summer camps is that the workshop comes directly to homeschool groups, churches and youth organizations, creating a convenient and personalized learning experience in a familiar environment.

Participants will engage in interactive lessons covering:

- Budgeting and money management.
- Saving and goal setting.
- Smart spending habits.
- Real-life financial decision-making.

The program requires a minimum of six students and delivers nine to 10 hours of instruction over two days, ensuring both depth and engagement.

The cost is $75 per student, which includes the cost of the books. For nonprofits with 10 students or more, it is $50 per student.

This workshop is designed to give young learners a strong financial foundation early in life, helping them build confidence, responsibility and lifelong money management skills. The workbooks are also a companion set (teacher and student editions) available for purchase on Amazon.

To schedule a workshop or learn more, contact Potts at 813-863-1047 or katinapotts@gmail.com.

PRO ATHLETES LEAD TAMPA DYNAMO YOUTH SOCCER CAMP IN RIVERVIEW

By Nick Nahas



The Tampa Dynamo FC organization, along with Shrader Athletics, is hosting a soccer camp from June 22–26 at Summerfield Soccer Park in Riverview.

The camp is headlined by Indianapolis Colts kicker Spencer Shrader and women's pro soccer player for Lyon, Korbin Shrader. The Tampa Dynamo FC - Shrader Athletics Summer Soccer Camp is directed by Sophie Shrader and assisted by veteran coach Peter Gutsche, college recruiting coordinator at Tampa Dynamo FC.

The U7 – U16 camp cost $290 per camper and goes from 8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. daily, with an optional parent and player Q&A from 11:30 a.m.– noon.

Sophie Shrader grew up in the Tampa area and started Shrader Athletics while attending Newsome High School. At Newsome, she set the goal–scoring record as a sophomore, and again as a junior. She played college soccer at USF and University of Tampa, and trained with PSG and Manchester City. She has run these soccer camps consistently for the past three years and is the sister of Spencer Shrader.

"What inspired me to start Shrader Athletics was a simple mindset — soccer is fun. I've always believed sports should be something kids genuinely enjoy, while also being a way to teach important life lessons like teamwork, discipline and confidence," said Sophie.

Spencer Shrader played soccer at Tampa Dynamo FC and multiple sports at Newsome High School. He then played football at USF and Notre Dame, before taking his talents to the NFL with multiple teams. He is currently on the Indianapolis Colts roster and is recovering from an injury. His experience in soccer and football will give insight to campers.

"I'll get to apply what I've learned throughout my sports journey to help kids become physically and mentally tougher and have an appreciation for sports," said Spencer. "I'm also excited to speak to the parents and encourage them and acknowledge them for the sacrifices they make for their children. It will be an honor to give back and share these lessons with the students."

U.S. Women's National Soccer Team gold medalist and pro soccer player for OL Lyonnes in France, Korbin Shrader, is Spencer's wife. The couple met through Notre Dame University where they both played in college. She was a First-Team All-American at Notre Dame. She looks forward to mentoring new players.

"I'm really excited to pour into the next generation," said Korbin. "I want to share what I've learned so they can succeed not just in sports, but in life. My goal is for them to leave inspired, growing, and becoming better people both on and off the field."

For registration or more information on the camp, visit shraderathletics.com/dynamo-summer-soccer-camp-2026.

PATRIOT ARMS & OUTFITTING
est. 1997
BRANDON'S LEADING RETAILER OF PREMIUM FIREARMS & ACCESSORIES
(813) 651-2767
Patriot Arms & Outfitting
www.patriotarmsonline.com
Patriot Arms & Outfitting
"Specializing in Premium Firearms and Accessories"
113-H EAST BRANDON BLVD
BRANDON, FL 33511
PATRIOTARMSONLINE.COM

Angel FOUNDATION FL
Angel Hearts Lifting Up Families in Crisis
Save the Date!
Evening of Hope
Celebrating 20 Years
Honoring the Past...Carrying it Forward
October 9, 2026 The Regent
AngelFoundationFL.com

Free
MOM & BABY CLASSES FOR GROWING FAMILIES
FREE to attend
Virtual & in-person options available
Led by trusted healthcare professionals
Scan the QR code to learn more & register
UPCOMING CLASSES
Maternity Tour
Tuesday, June 9 | Saturday, June 20
Wednesday, June 24
Childbirth Preparation
Saturday, June 6 | Saturday, June 20
Prenatal Yoga
Thursday, June 25
Breastfeeding 101
Tuesday, July 7
Childbirth Prep (2-part class)
Monday, July 13
We offer many other free classes and seminars designed to support your overall health and wellness.
844.630.5295
HCA Florida Brandon Hospital
119 Oakfield Drive, Brandon, FL 33511

CONGRATULATIONS TO AREA HIGH SCHOOL VALEDICTORIANS & SALUTATORIANS

Compiled by Taylor Wells



Valedictorian
Mariel Custodio
Bell Creek Academy
GPA 8.98
Plans to Attend
University of Florida



Salutatorian
Sofia Acebedo Ciro
Bell Creek Academy
GPA 8.36
Plans to Attend
Columbia University



Valedictorian
Jayla Easmon
Bloomingdale High School
GPA 8.44
Plans to Attend
University of Central Florida



Salutatorian
Connor Bledsoe
Bloomingdale High School
GPA 8.20
Plans to Attend
Florida State University
Honors Program



Valedictorian
Andrew O'Toole
Durant High School
GPA 7.88
Plans to Attend
University of Florida



Salutatorian
Joshua Jones
Durant High School
GPA 7.50
Plans to Attend
University of Florida



Valedictorian
William Skiver
Foundation Christian
Academy
GPA 7.31
Plans to Attend
Harding University



Second Highest GPA
Raymond Preston
Adams V
Foundation Christian
Academy
GPA 7.11
Plans to Attend
University of Miami



Valedictorian
Yali Gordin
Newsome High School
GPA 11.52
Plans to Attend
University of Florida



Salutatorian
Casey Ayres
Newsome High School
GPA 11.24
Plans to Attend
Georgia Institute of
Technology



Valedictorian
Brayan Perez-Granados
Strawberry Crest
High School
GPA 7.92
Plans to Attend
University of Florida



Salutatorian
Sadie Gibson
Strawberry Crest
High School
GPA 7.42
Plans to Attend
University of
South Florida

Class of 2026



Valedictorian
Ashank Saravanan
Strawberry Crest High
School (IB Program)
GPA 10.09
Plans to Attend
University of Florida



Salutatorian
Varun Gajjar
Strawberry Crest High
School (IB Program)
GPA 9.96
College Selection
Undecided







Christian Voice



Grace Notes

Wildflowers Or Weeds
By Debora Coty

One of my favorite childhood memories is frolicking in the open field just down the dirt road from our rural yard on sunny summer mornings. The field was like a fairyland to me, filled with hundreds of vibrant yellow buttercups that were oh-so beautiful when gathered into a bouquet and delivered to my delighted mama as a fistful of love.

While she carefully slid their clumsily child-broken stems into a crystal flower vase, Mama always made a wonderful fuss over my sweetness that matched that of the 'wildflowers' I brought her, motivating me to gather another bundle the next day.

Ah, beloved memories surrounded those faithful buttercups. They were a precious part of my childhood.

And then one day I discovered that buttercups (and their magical, wish-granting cousins, the dandelions) were considered mere weeds by the rest of the world. Weeds! People actually mowed them down and considered them a nuisance to well-manicured lawns.

I was flabbergasted! What were they thinking? What loveliness and awe they were missing!

Even now, whenever I see buttercups as an adult, I get a warm, fuzzy feeling inside and can't help but smile at the blessing they bring me. Does it really matter whether they're called weeds or flowers if they're a blessing to you?

As a grown-up, I've learned that monikers can be incendiary if weaponized. Aren't we seeing that play out in our current society and political arenas? People are emphatically more complex than fauna, yet we tend to mentally sort them into simplistic categories and render judgment on their worth based on whether — in our opinion — they're weeds or flowers.

But to our Omnipotent Creator, each and every one of us is a unique flower of immeasurable value, whether we're in a tended garden or a wild unkempt landscape. None are worthless. All are beautiful in His eyes. And thankfully, He still pops up happy buttercups to spread beauty in unexpected places!

"Look how the wildflowers grow. ... God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields," (Matthew 6:28, 30 CEV).

Debora M. Coty is an inspirational speaker and award-winning author of over 40 books, including the bestselling Too Blessed to be Stressed series. Visit with Debora anytime at www.DeboraCoty.com.

RICH AND BLESSED AND GENEROUS



"Precious treasure remains in the house of the wise. But the fool devours it." — Proverbs 21:20.

I am no expert in either architecture or design, but there is something about Orlando's 'The Mall at Millenia' that grabs me. I especially appreciate the way the light interacts with the space and the glass and the steel and the other materials.

The other thing about Millenia is the crazy concentration of classy, expensive, exclusive and beyond-expensive stores. All the major design labels, all the unaffordable jewelry and watches and handbags and perfumes, all the top-tier anchor department stores.

Just for fun, we wandered into Banana Republic. I picked out a pair of pants, a nice comfortable shirt, a light linen jacket and a pair of casual shoes. It was a relaxed and classy outfit but came in at well over a thousand dollars!

I am not denying this is high-quality clothing. But no, of course I didn't buy any of it! Regardless, we enjoyed sauntering around, window shopping and people watching, trying to decide if the couple who actually did purchase merchandise at the Banana Republic were also the ones who pulled up to valet parking in the Bentley.

We did make one purchase — it was a sandwich at the Chick-fil-A in the food court.

The verse from Proverbs talks about the difference between good stewardship and letting our resources go to waste (it's a useful prelude to Christ's teachings around abundant life). Not just money but also our talents and gifts and blessings. The sad thing about the character in the latter half of the proverb is how they don't realize that — if they are thoughtful and faithful — they can enjoy their blessings without losing them, and be generous too.

This is the invitation of the gospel. Not to asceticism but to abundance, abundance within the framework of faithful, generous, reasonable, Christ-centered living.

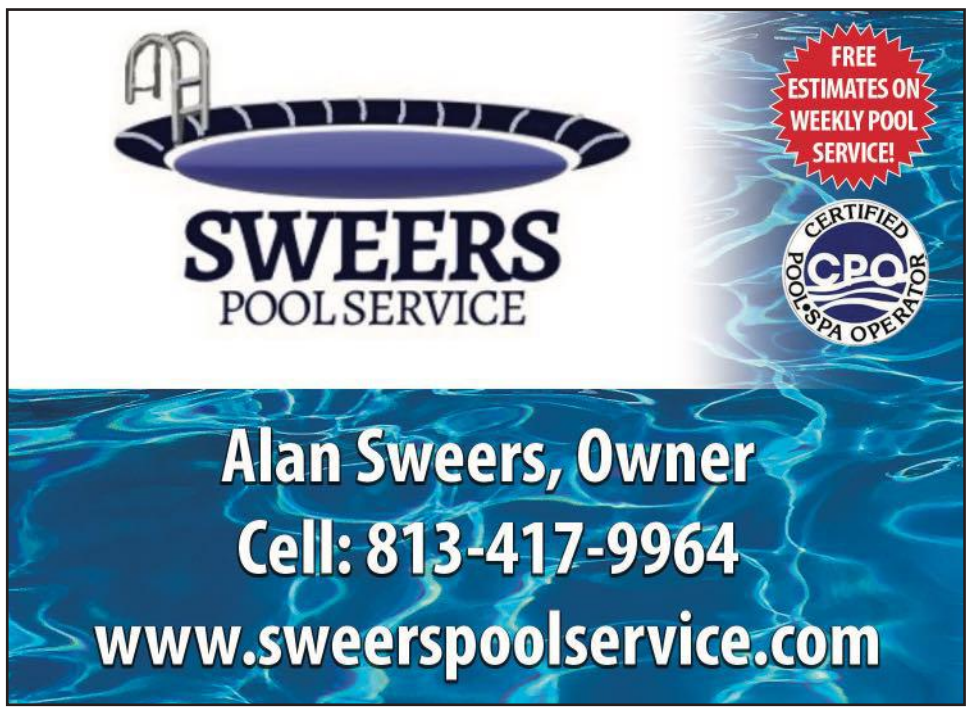
"Do good, be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for [your] selves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that [we] may take hold of the life that really is life." — 1 Timothy 6:18-19.

The life that really is life! — DEREK



Derek Maul has written for many news outlets, including the Tampa Tribune, The United Methodist News Service, All Pro Dad, FOCUS Magazine, Newsweek, USA Today, The Christian Science Monitor, Presbyterians Today, Guideposts, Chicken Soup for the Soul and many other publications. Read Derek Maul's daily blog posts at www.derekmaul.wordpress.com.









UNITED WAY SUNCOAST NAMES BUCS EXECUTIVE KOURTNEY SANCHEZ AS CEO

Staff Report



The United Way Suncoast Board of Directors has selected Tampa Bay Buccaneers executive Kourtney Sanchez as its next CEO, effective Monday, June 1.

Sanchez brings a wealth of experience to United Way Suncoast, having most recently served as the Bucs' chief impact officer. In that role, she helmed the NFL franchise's community team, overseeing all philanthropic strategies, growth and implementation for local and national programs and partnerships. Additionally, she served as the executive director of the Glazer Family Foundation and the Glazer Vision Foundation, partnering with the family on all of their personal philanthropic initiatives.

"Kourtney brings an exceptional amount of leadership experience and development acumen to United Way Suncoast," United Way Suncoast Board Chair Sara Nichols said. "Her work across several organizations helped her rise from a pool of nearly 300 applicants compiled by the Winner Partners search firm during our four-month national recruitment process."

"Kourtney matched her record of accomplishment with an energetic approach and innovative ideas needed to continue leading United Way Suncoast into its second century of service," said Nichols. "It's her experience and insight that won the board over."

A third-generation Tampa Bay native, Sanchez has combined more than a decade's worth of experience in the nonprofit sector with an educational background that includes degrees from the University of Florida and Duke University and a certificate in leadership from Harvard University.

"I'm excited about joining the United Way Suncoast team and helping this talented group build on its 102 years of success," Sanchez said. "I am passionate about uplifting our community. Through my previous nonprofit work, I've witnessed the power individuals and organizations have in curating positive social change.

"Inspired by that experience, I'm confident I can blend what I've learned about philanthropic and for-profit strategies to support our mission work."

In addition to her work with the Bucs, Sanchez has also proven herself by successfully handling roles in community engagement, strategic planning, communications and fundraising.

She previously worked in development roles for AdventHealth, the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation, the American Heart Association and the Pediatric Cancer Foundation.

"I know what it's like to approach funders and donors as a fundraiser," Sanchez said. "And I know from working with the Bucs how funders like to be approached. I don't look at fundraising as transactional. It's about building and maintaining relationships."

Sanchez replaces former United Way Suncoast CEO Jessica Muroff, who left in January to lead the Community Foundation of Sarasota County as its CEO.

For more, visit the website directly at www.unitedwaysuncoast.org.

CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY ON TAMPA RIVERWALK

Staff Report



Celebrate America's 250th anniversary this Independence Day on Saturday, July 4, along the Tampa Riverwalk in partnership with the City of Tampa at Liberty by the Bay, one of Tampa Bay's largest Fourth of July celebrations. Thousands of residents and visitors are expected to gather downtown for a full day of patriotic festivities, community spirit and waterfront entertainment.

Guests can enjoy live music and entertainment, family-friendly activities, food vendors, the Tampa Riverwalk's signature Boat Parade and Water Ski Show, a spectacular 250-drone light show honoring America's 250th birthday and a dazzling fireworks display over the Hillsborough River. The event offers something for all ages and provides a memorable way to celebrate the nation's historic milestone.

Boat registration is open now.

Register your boat for $20.26 in honor of 2026 and America's 250th celebration. Registration is required to participate in the boat parade.

Registration includes an invitation to the Captain's Party, a boater swag bag, registration numbers, a registered boater pennant flag, fireworks viewing, a chance to win the Most Patriotic Trophy and opportunities to win additional prizes.

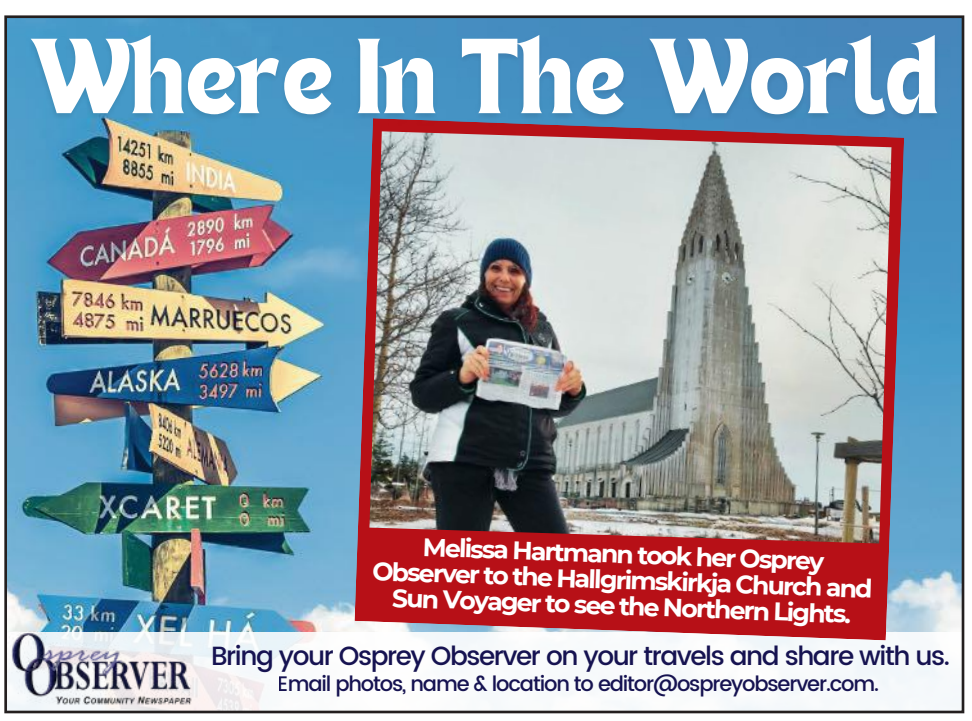
Businesses and organizations interested in supporting this landmark community event are encouraged to explore sponsorship opportunities. Interested in sponsoring Fourth of July activities? Email info@thetampariverwalk.com.

For additional information about sponsorship opportunities, visit the Tampa Riverwalk website at https://thetampariverwalk.com/file_download/inline/ce59b7dd-3614-4dc2-8f14-c4fe639cb246.

petal & sage
BOTANICAL BACKDROPS
Your celebration, in full bloom.
Now Booking Summer Events!
Weddings | Showers | Birthdays | Events
Floral Wall Installations
Elegant | Modern | Unforgettable
813-365-9525 | petalandsagewalls.com

SCHOOL of ROCK
VALRICO
DRUMS, KEYS, GUITAR, BASS, VOCALS
Call : 813-397-8828
Schedule your FREE trial now
Spots are filling up fast!
NOW ENROLLING
Ages 4- Adult

Mainstream Boutique
Follow for store hours, updates and events
813-643-0090
11232 Sullivan St, Riverview
WINTHROP
PRIVATE SHOPPING EVENTS & GIFT CARDS AVAILABLE



LOVE'S TIRE & SERVICE CENTER MARKS 30 YEARS IN VALRICO

By McKenzie Brown



The Love family celebrating 30 years of commitment to our community.

Love's Tire & Service Center is celebrating 30 years of serving Valrico and the surrounding communities, marking three decades as a family-owned business built on trust, hard work and lasting relationships.

Owners Scott and Gay Lynn Love purchased the Valrico shop on April 1, 1996, beginning what would become a 30-year journey in the automotive industry. The date may have been April Fools' Day, but the commitment was no joke. Before becoming owners, Scott Love had spent 16 years working for Charles Brazzeal, who owned two Goodyear Tire & Auto Repair locations. In 1994, Brazzeal transferred Scott Love from Tampa to the Valrico location, where he prepared him for ownership before eventually selling him the store.

That purchase launched more than a business. It began a family legacy. Gay Lynn Love joined her husband at the shop, often bringing their two daughters, Peyton and Chloe, with her while they were still young. What started as a husband-and-wife operation soon became a second-generation family business.

Today, both daughters work alongside their parents, as does their son-in-law, Ty Sullivan. Together, they now serve the children and grandchildren of many longtime customers, creating a rare full-circle moment for the family and the community they have served for decades.

Over the last 30 years, Love's Tire & Service Center has remained steady through some of the country's most challenging times, including 9/11, the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic. Through every hardship, the Love family credits faith, loyal employees and longtime customers for helping sustain the business. Several employees have been part of the team for decades, including two who have worked there for more than 20 years.

During the company's recent 30th anniversary celebration, the Loves were asked what has meant the most to them over the years. Their answer was immediate: the people.

From longtime employees to loyal customers, the relationships built over the past three decades have been the heart of the business and the foundation of its success.

Located at 1701 E. SR 60 in Valrico, Love's Tire & Service Center continues to provide trusted tire sales and auto repair services to Valrico, Brandon, Seffner and nearby communities, carrying on a 30-year tradition of treating customers like family. Visit www.lovesautorepair.com.

MACBETH & CHEESE ANNOUNCES NEW THEATER HOME IN BRANDON

Staff Report

Brandon Performing Arts, also known as MacBeth & Cheese, is proud to announce its expansion into Brandon with the acquisition of a new performance space located at 225 E. Brandon Blvd., next to the Fox and Hound. Renovations are currently underway to transform the venue into an intimate and immersive theater space that will serve as the organization's primary home.

This new location marks a major milestone for the growing community theater, which will continue producing performances in Ruskin while establishing Brandon as its central hub for live entertainment, education, and creative programming.

"We've always believed in building something that truly belongs to the community," said Amy Windle, president of Brandon Performing Arts. "This new space allows us to expand that vision, bring more stories to life and create a place where people can experience theater in a powerful, up-close way."

Coming off its recent production of Detective Columbo and the highly successful run of A Few Good Men, the organization continues to build a reputation for high-quality, award-winning productions. Its performance of A Few Good Men earned multiple honors across the local community theater circuit, including Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director, Best Co-Director, Best Costume Design and Best Production.

"With this new venue, we're not just growing, we're leveling up," said Camille Hashem, co-founder of MacBeth & Cheese. "We're excited to bring even more ambitious productions to the stage and give our audiences an experience that feels both professional and personal."

The upcoming season will feature the original thriller Murder Denied this September, followed by Murder on the Orient Express, It's a Wonderful Life for the holiday season and Romeo and Juliet, among others.

In addition to theatrical productions, the new Brandon venue will host acting classes and improv training led by Joe Davison, known for his work on Stranger Things and his current role in Sorority of the Damned. These programs are designed to support performers of all experience levels while fostering the next generation of local talent.

The space will also serve as a community-driven entertainment venue, offering comedy shows, open-mic nights and special events.

Enhancing the theatergoing experience, the neighboring Fox and Hound will provide food and beverage service, creating a unique dinner-and-show atmosphere for guests.

Brandon Performing Arts has a strong history of producing diverse and engaging performances, including Deathtrap, The Odd Couple, Alice's Wonderland, Murder on the Nile and Steel Magnolias, showcasing a wide range of storytelling that continues to resonate with audiences throughout the Tampa Bay area.

With renovations underway and an exciting season ahead, Brandon Performing Arts/MacBeth & Cheese is set to become a cornerstone of the Brandon arts community.

For updates, show announcements and ticket information, visit the website at https://macbethandcheese.com/.



ROB FITNESS
Personal Training Studio

Weak & Out Of Shape...Now Stronger & More Athletic



I started with at RobZFitness, at age 14, for a few reasons. The first was my doctor informed me that my cholesterol was high and I needed more exercise to help lower it. Next, I knew it was what I needed to do to in order to look and feel my best. I had recently started watching WWE (wrestling) and wanted a fit body like those athletes. Lastly, I was ready to change, but had been unsuccessful with staying committed on my own. I asked my mom to bring me to a "jacked" trainer. Since my dad trained with RobZFitness with great results, it only made sense to also bring me there.

November 2025 is when I first started at Rob and committed to 12 sessions up front. I started using a fitness watch to track my heart rate and calories burned to help me stay motivated. RobZ advice to never skip breakfast and make sure I consumed enough protein in a day, made all the difference. I went from hardly ever eating breakfast to always drinking a protein smoothie in the morning.

Before I started training with RobZ, I felt weak and out of shape. Now, I feel so much stronger and more athletic. After 3 months I have dropped my cholesterol from 217-154 and I have lost 20lbs, lost 11.2% of body fat and gained plenty of strength. I improved my overall fitness for boys my age from 15% to 64%. My clothes are looser and I need to buy smaller pants. I have lost 3.23" in my chest, down 3-4" around my waist and hips. I am also more disciplined and efficient throughout the entire day no matter what I'm doing. I am excited to keep going on my fitness journey as I continue to build more muscle and confidence.

– *Chandler Beattie (14 years old)*

813.571.3700

www.RobZFitness.com

16315 FishHawk Blvd, Lithia, FL 33547

HCA BRANDON AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS, INCLUDING TWO $20,000 AWARDS

Staff Report



Madeline Estabrook
Bloomingdale High



Shayla Commons
Brandon High



Izabel Wiltz
Lennard High



Aditi Menon
Middleton High



Emma Kasting
Newsome High



Bradon Martis
Riverview High



Claudia Maguire
Riverview High

HCA Florida Brandon Hospital recognized seven high school seniors from across Hillsborough County with college scholarships totaling $45,000. Five students received the HCA Florida Brandon Hospital Healthcare Achievement Award, worth $1,000 each, and two students received the HCA Florida Brandon Hospital and Physicians Healthcare Scholars Award, worth $20,000 each. Students from approximately 30 public and private high schools, as well as homeschooled students, were considered.

"Each of these students shared their personal 'why' behind choosing health care as a future profession," said Dr. Anthony Furiato, emergency room physician at HCA Florida Brandon Hospital. "Their dedication, hard work and diverse career goals will enrich the health care community. Some are inspired by loved ones who received life-changing care, while others are drawn to specialties such as anesthesiology, occupational therapy and cancer treatment. HCA Florida Brandon Hospital and our medical staff are proud to collaborate in recognizing this outstanding group of future health care leaders."



HCA Florida Brandon Hospital and Physicians Healthcare Scholars Award

The HCA Florida Brandon Hospital and Physicians Healthcare Scholars Award is a highly competitive $20,000 scholarship jointly funded by HCA Florida Brandon Hospital and its medical staff. Recipients must plan to attend the University of South Florida.

Recipients:

- Bloomingdale High School: Madeline Estabrook
- Middleton High School: Aditi Menon.

Hospital leaders will present the award to Estabrook and Menon during their respective school awards ceremonies.

The HCA Florida Brandon Hospital Healthcare Achievement Award recognizes students for strong academic performance, extracurricular involvement and a demonst rated interest in pursuing a career in health care. Each recipient received a $1,000 scholarship.

Recipients:

- Brandon High School: Shayla Commons
- Lennard High School: Izabel Wiltz
- Newsome High School: Emma Kasting
- Riverview High School: Claudia Maguire and Bradon Martis.

Members of the HCA Florida Brandon Hospital leadership team will present the Healthcare Achievement Awards to each student.

All scholarship recipients submitted essays describing how they hope to make a difference through a career in health care.

For more information, visit https://www.hcafloridahealthcare.com/locations/brandon-hospital.

Cleaning Services
by Bay Area Clean Team
• Commercial/Residential Services
• Free Estimates
• Family Owned & Operated
• Licensed, Bonded & Insured
Serving: Brandon, Lithia, Fish-Hawk, Seffner, Riverview and surrounding areas
"Cleaning the world one Location at a time"
(813) 263-6643

Kids R Kids Learning Academy
CAMP VIBE
Your Summer. Your Style. Your Fun.
EXCITING TRIPS PLANNED!
• Sea Screamer Dolphin Cruise
• Dino world
• FL Air Museum
• Airosphere
• Planeterium at Mosi
• Ringling Circus Show
• Pin Chasers Bowling
• Rotary Playground at Hernando's Landing
Vibe Create · Vibe Blitz · Vibe Carnival · Vibe Ocean · Vibe Build · Vibe Legends · Vibe Film · Vibe Earth · Vibe Cook · Vibe Groove
WEEKLY VISITS (included in tuition):
• Amazing Athletes
• Clearwater Aquarium
• FOAM Parties
• Water slides
• Brainy Bots (Coding & Robotics)
Weekly rate includes all meals and field trips.
CIRCA FISHHAWK
5815 Kids Crossing Drive
Located between Stowers Elementary & Mosaic
813-797-5497
www.krkcirca.com
CHC432384
Register NOW for FREE Fall VPK 2026-27

ESCAPE TO THE EXTRAORDINARY
TICKETS ON SALE NOW
Support your Florida Orchestra today
FloridaOrchestra.org/donate
THE FLORIDA ORCHESTRA
Michael Francis, Music Director
FloridaOrchestra.org | 727.892.3337

NEW SEASON, NEW POSSIBILITIES

Helping Buyers & Sellers Make Moves with Confidence!

THE #1 RESIDENTIAL RESALE AGENT IN LITHIA, VALRICO & HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY



5820 AUDUBON MANOR BLVD
5BR/3BA/3CAR + OFFICE + POOL/SPA
$850,000



5702 TERNPARK DR
4BR/4BA/3CAR + BONUS + OFFICE + SOLAR HEATED POOL/SPA + OUTDOOR KITCHEN + CABANA + FIRE PIT
$1,075,000



16303 DUNLINDALE DR
6BR/6BA/3CAR + OFFICE + BONUS + WINE CELLAR + POOL/SPA + OUTDOOR KITCHEN
$2,250,000



111 ALAFIA ESTATES LN
3BR/3BA/3CAR + OFFICE + 5.11 ACRES
$1,200,000



5913 FLATWOODS MANOR CIR
4BR/3.5BA/2CAR + OFFICE + POOL + .84-ACRES
$849,000



1227 RAINBROOK CIR
4BR/3.5BA/2CAR + POOL/SPA
$600,000



5301 MATCH POINT PL
3BR/2.5BA/2CAR + OFFICE + BONUS
$575,000



5907 CHURCHSIDE DR
4BR/4BA/3CAR + OFFICE + BONUS + POOL/SPA
$885,000



3810 TURKEY OAK DR
4BR/3BA/3CAR + OFFICE + POOL/SPA + OUTDOOR KITCHEN
$725,000



6069 SANDHILL RIDGE DR
3BR/2BA/2CAR + SCREENED LANAI
$390,000



6073 SANDHILL RIDGE DR
2BR/2BA/2CAR + DEN + SCREENED LANAI
$359,000



13706 OSPREY FERN LN
5BR/4BA/3CAR + BONUS + POOL/SPA
$825,000



4302 FAIRCOURT DR
5BR/4BA/3CAR + OFFICE + BONUS + MEDIA + POOL/SPA + OUTDOOR KITCHEN + WATERFRONT
$1,025,000



5821 JASPER GLEN DR
4BR/3BA/2CAR + FIREPIT
$519,900



4609 COMPASS OAKS DR
5BR/3BA/3CAR + IN-LAW SUITE + POOL/SPA
$685,000



2617 ALLWOOD AVE
3BR/2BA/2CAR + OFFICE + POOL
$475,000

DELIVERING RESULTS YEAR AFTER YEAR

BRENDA WADE
KELLER WILLIAMS SOUTH TAMPA
Top Producer
2002-2025

Direct: 813-924-8677
Office: 813-655-5333
Brenda@BrendaWade.com
www.BrendaWade.com
1709 Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico, FL 33596

