



THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

VOL. XLIII



ISSUE 6



JUNE 2023



WWW.BLOOMINGDALE.LIFE

THIS MONTH

CONGRATULATIONS Class of 2023!

FATHER'S DAY IDEAS
Page 6

BNA SCHOLARSHIP
WINNER
Page 7

LITHIA PINECREST
IMPROVEMENTS
Page 8

YARD OF THE MONTH
Page 9

BSHS TRACK RECORDS
BROKEN
Page 13

BSHS BASEBALL AND
SOFTBALL WIN DISTRICTS
Page 14

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for details

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3509 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, FL 33596 - (813) 681-2051

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**Tampa Bay
Times**

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3509 Bell Shoals Road - Valrico, Florida 33596 - (813) 681-2051

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BNA Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office.

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Laney Balis

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Bobbi Ferraro

BNA BRIEFS

BNA CALENDAR

Tuesday, June 13, 7:00 p.m. / BNA Meeting/ 3509 Bell Shoals Road / Community is invited to come and meet the BNA Board! Call 813-252-0252 or email bl.neighbor1@gmail.com for information.

Thursday, August 3/ 7 p.m. Bingo Night at Bullfrog Creek Brewery to benefit Seeds of Hope Food Bank. Bingo Card Sales begin at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 9 / Community Garage Sale

Sunday, December 3 / Santa Visit

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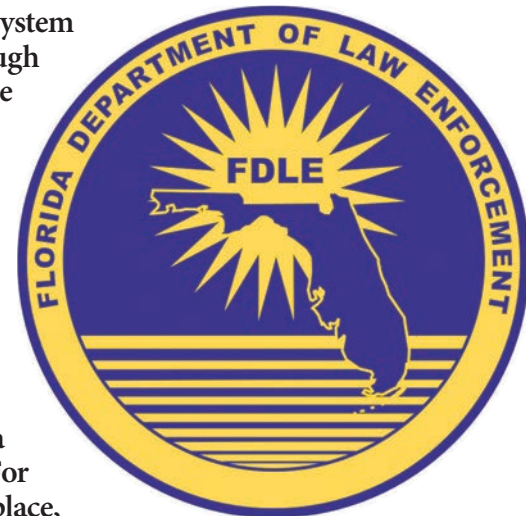
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Navigator Leadership Academy Hosted Under the Sea Art Show

By Jane Owen

On April 27, students and families from Navigator Academy of Leadership stepped out of the doldrums of life and into an under the sea art show experience.

The Under the Sea Art Show, spearheaded by Navigator's elementary art teacher Heather Adkins, featured artwork from every grade level (K-8th), art-based activities in the cafeteria, local student-focused vendors, and food trucks. The main feature of the night was the Glow Room that took over two months to create.

The Glow Room highlighted the unique animals in the oceans. Neon mediums – paint, crayons, oil pastels and markers – made the room come to life. Grade levels learned about various sea animals such as sea turtles, jellyfish, puffer fish, stingrays, fish, coral reefs. Mixed media art, everyday materials found at home and recycled materials such as CDs, paper towel rolls and plastic bottles were used to create the display.

Principal Rebecca Valdes said the art show provided a way to showcase the students art and allow them to be proud of their work.

"The Art Show is always a success and could not

be possible without our teacher leaders guiding the way. This year the showcase is the show was the Glow Room! It was an amazing room where all K-8 students joined together to create one work of art!" Valdes said.

According to Adkins, the inspiration of the art show was multifaceted. She teaches a love of art and how science and math can be part of it.

"Art is everywhere! My goal everyday is to make art fun and engaging for my students as well as to see them see art in even the smallest things," Adkins said. "My background is in math and science so if there is any way to incorporate it, I do."

Part of the mission of the Navigator Academy of Leadership is a cross-curricular integration of science, math, art, reading and technology. For the Under the Sea Art Show, students spent weeks reading and learning about maritime science and math elements like shapes, lines and symmetry.

The Navigator Academy of Leadership is located at 1101 Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico. For more information, visit: navigatoracademyvalrico.com.

L-R Principal Dr. Rebecca Valdes, Elementary Art Teacher Heather Adkins, Middle School Art Teacher Samantha Patterson, and Vice Principal Danielle Blaxton



Canine Cabana Celebrates 15 years

On May 1, Canine Cabana celebrated 15 years with a double ribbon-cutting ceremony with the Greater Riverview and Valrico FishHawk chambers of commerce. Clients, both furry and non-furry, enjoyed food and festivities including Florida Foam Factory.

Canine Cabana is co-owned by Angie Pickren and Kendall Duncan, a Bloomingdale East resident.

Canine Cabana offers drop-ins and appointments for most services, whether you are a regular or a new family. For more information, visit caninecabana.biz or call 672-9663(WOOF). Canine Cabana is located at 9708 Carr Rd. in Riverview.



Alafia's Spring Carnival is a Community Success!

By Amanda Ragan

Fundraisers and schools go together like peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in a school lunch sack! From bake sales to bingo nights, school PTAs work hard to bring in additional financial support to help cover a variety of expenses. Alafia Elementary however, has taken the traditional school fundraiser to a new high with their Spring Carnival.

This year the Spring Carnival was held after school on Friday April 28th at Alafia Elementary School. The carnival consisted of a variety of inflatables including, a bungee run, football field goal challenge, an obstacle course race, bouncy horse races, giant soccer darts, and my personal favorite, the hungry, hungry, hippo bungee ball challenge. In addition to the fun inflatables, there were food trucks, silent auction items, raffle baskets, and games and prizes. The cost of admittance was \$10 for the 1st child, \$5 for each additional child, and adults were free!

Justine Thompson, a member of the PTA, who helped organize and run the event, said she loved that "this year's carnival was so much bigger than last year's, both in size and turn out! It was just such a positive experience to see the entire community come out and have a good time together."

The PTA spent four months working on the event, focusing specifically on bringing in more inflatables and food trucks. The hard work paid off, the carnival was a huge hit with children and adults alike! In addition to all the fun it brought, the carnival raised money that was used for teacher appreciation week, the 5th grade field trip and "beach day," and to help cover the cost of the school agendas. If you would like to become active with / or donate to the Alafia PTA please visit <https://alafia.memberhub.com> or email AlafiaPtaPresident@gmail.com.



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Ways to spend the day celebrating Dad: Father's Day 2023

By Amanda Ragan

From the dad jokes that fill our lives with laughter and eye rolls, to the millions of big and small Mr. Fix-It projects that get completed or ...at least saved for later, Dads work hard for us, all year long! So if you haven't yet made plans to celebrate Father's Day on June 18th, we have a few ideas to help you show Dad just how much he is appreciated.

Share Donuts With Dad

Start the morning off right by picking up some of Dad's favorite gourmet donuts at Duck Donuts.

Grab a Drink With Dad

BullFrog Creek Brewing will once again be doing their Diddy for Dads special. The all day promotion provides buy one, get one FREE on their Diddy German Pilsner.

Go Golfing with Dad

If the dad in your life is an avid golfer, you have some amazing options to pick from! You can buy a round at Bloomingdale or Diamond Hill, or you can reserve a virtual tee time at 1 Stop Golf Shop, and choose from a selection of golf courses from around the world.

Make Some Memories

If dad loves to get out and about, there are several fun things happening across the Bay Area on Father's Day.

Henry B. Plant Museum

Dad's get free admission to the museum all day.

Busch Garden's Summer Nights

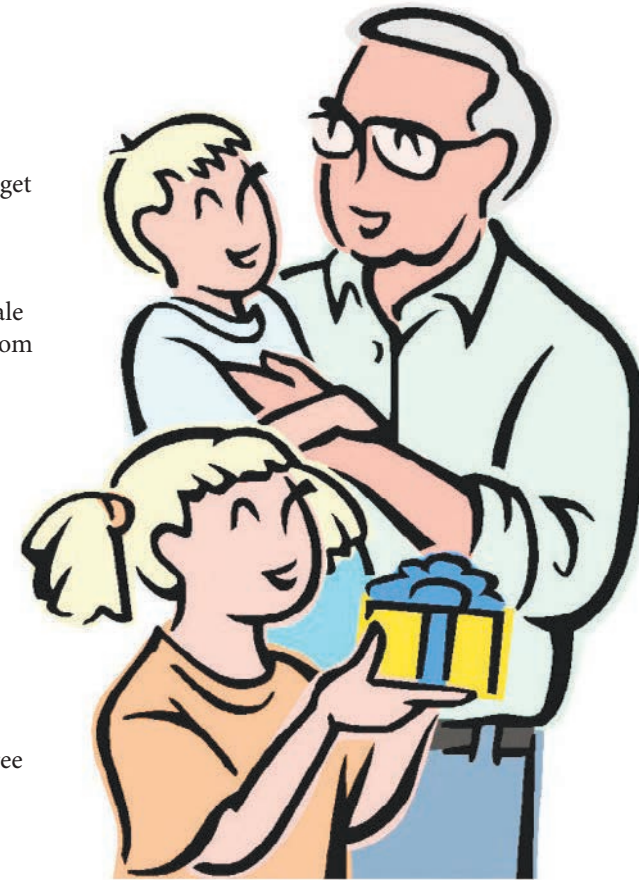
Busch Garden's is once again implementing their extended hours. The park will be open until 9:00 pm on Father's Day.

10th Annual Richard's Father's Day Walk & Jog 2023

Kicking off at 8:00 am at Ulele, families can jog or walk the 5K along the Tampa Riverwalk. Children 12 and under are free and all proceeds benefit the Moffitt Cancer Center.

The registration cost for anyone 13 and older is \$30.00.

<https://raceroster.com/events/2023/73503/richards-fathers-day-walk-and-jog-2023>



JUNE CALENDAR

- **June 6:** D-Day, WWII
- **June 7:** National Chocolate Ice Cream Day
- **June 14:** Flag Day
- **June 18:** Father's Day
- **June 19:** Juneteenth
- **June 21:** Summer Solstice
- **June 21:** National Selfie Day

JUNE WEEKLY EVENTS

- **Fishing Week, Week 1**
- **Email Week, Week 2**
- **Flag Week** – the week that Flag day falls on
- **Lightning Safety Week** – Last full week of Month
- **National Flag Week** – the Week of Flag Day on June 14
- **National Gardening Week** – First full week of month

JUNE OBSERVANCES AND FUN FACTS

- The longest day of the year (Summer Solstice) is in June.
- In 2021, Juneteenth became a Federal holiday. Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States. The formal name is *Juneteenth National Independence Day*. It is sometimes referred to as *Emancipation Day* or *Freedom Day*.

Gabriella Counterman is 2023 BNA Scholarship Winner

By Michelle Colesanti

Congratulations to Bloomingdale resident Gabriella Counterman, who was recently awarded the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association's (BNA) \$2,000 BJ Stelter Scholarship Award!

The scholarship honors BJ Stelter, who passed away in 2019 after having served the Bloomingdale community for 14 years as the second principal of Bloomingdale High School.

Gabriella recently received her homeschool diploma. While earning her degree at home, she took additional classes at Bloomingdale High School and Hillsborough Community College.

She was involved in the JROTC at Bloomingdale High School, where she had the opportunity of being the 2022-2023 group commander and was a member of the National Honor Society.

She also attended the Culinary Arts program and got ServeSafe Certified (a food and beverage safety training and certificate program administered by the U.S. National Restaurant Association).

Outside of academics, Gabriella has been pursuing competitive dance for the last eight years. It is her passion, as she enjoys performing on the stage.

She will be attending Valencia College in Orlando in the fall and plans to pursue her bachelor's in health sciences. She would like to attend medical school to earn her doctorate.

"I hope many years in the future to own my own practice in chiropractic care," Gabriella said.

Gabriella is thankful to the BNA for this opportunity and added, "Being awarded this scholarship has given me a sense of pride for the hard work, dedication, and volunteering that I have put into the community that I care so much about. This is also offering me the opportunity to pursue higher education with financial freedom."



BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL DISTRICT

JUNE BSD UPDATE

Bloomingdale Special District Works Hard for our Community

By Kristine Schroeder, BSD Community Relations

The District Trustees have been working hard to set the budget for fiscal year 2024. The final draft budget for FY 2024 was completed at our May meeting. Residents are invited to attend the public hearing to finalize the budget June 12, 2023 at 6:15 p.m. at the district offices at 3509 Bell Shoals Road.

In other news, the board voted to approve new Summer banners for the community light poles. The red, white and blue decorative banners were scheduled to be installed at the end of last month. Trustees also agreed to include Spring banners in 2024 that will be installed after the holiday décor and lighting comes down in January next year.

The Bloomingdale Special District holds regular monthly meetings the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at their office on Bell Shoals Road. The public is always invited to attend.

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Hundreds Attend Meeting to Give Input on Lithia Pinecrest Improvements

By Michelle Colesanti

Those living in Bloomingdale are all too familiar with traffic issues plaguing Lithia Pinecrest Road. Residents here as well as other areas along the corridor constantly deal with delays, especially around school dismissal and rush hour. The road has received an “F” rating for many years, but little has been done to alleviate problems.

Suzy Watts, President of the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association (BNA), is concerned about residents having a safe way to evacuate should the need arise.

“We currently have daily accidents on Bloomingdale Avenue, and weekly on Lithia Pinecrest. This is an unsafe area, and we are surrounded by two unsafe roads,” she noted.

On May 23, a public input meeting was held at the Bloomingdale Regional Library. Several hundred area residents stopped by to learn about the Lithia Pinecrest Road PD&E study and talk about issues with county representatives and discuss future improvements to the road.

The study will identify and evaluate potential improvements to Lithia Pinecrest Road from Fishhawk Boulevard to Lumsden Road and Bloomingdale Avenue from Culbreath Road to Pearson Road. The total project length is 7.5 miles.

Alternatives to the current road situation may include widening, access management improvements to incorporate turn lanes onto side streets, intersection analysis to evaluate roundabout alternatives and other intersection configurations, improved pedestrian, and bicycle accommodations, including shared-use paths, a connected sidewalk system, buffered bike lanes, mid-block crossings, and more.

The project development is due for completion in late 2024, but the preliminary design, land acquisition/final design, and construction completion are still to be determined.

The total cost estimate for the project is \$200 million. Project development is \$4 million and is currently funded. The design will cost \$10 million and as of now, is unfunded as is \$40 million for land acquisition and \$146 million for construction.

Danny Alvarez, Florida House Representative for District 69 attended the open house.

“As State Representative, I wanted this road built three years ago. My push and priority are to get it done as fast as possible. The county has negligently ignored the east side without any reason, but it’s time that we let that go; it’s time we fixed that road and yesterday is not soon enough,” said Alvarez.

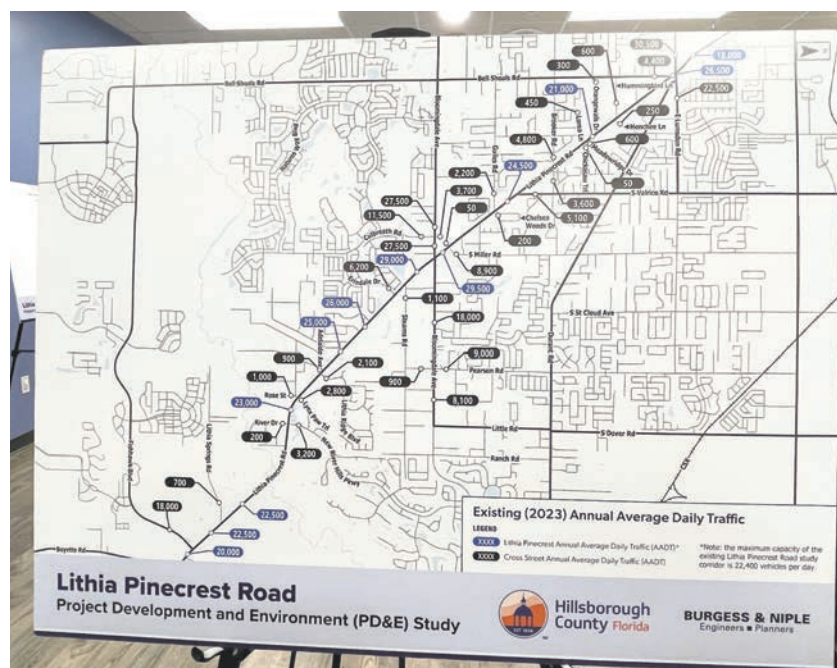
There is no quick solution, and Alvarez noted that even if it were funded today, it still would be a couple of years until the road got built. This is just the first phase. The county will ultimately have to decide on the plan. He noted that once it goes out to bid, we are talking about the road expansion taking five years.

According to Ryan Gill, Hillsborough Soil & Water Vice Chair and Supervisor, another important issue that needs to be looked at during the planning phase is the importance of what future impacts will be made on Florida’s natural resources. The Alafia River runs right through the area, and this must be taken into consideration.

County Commissioner for District 4, Michael Owen, noted that there will be another meeting in about five months to showcase a few different scenarios for road improvements.

Asked why this process is so time-consuming, Owen said, “This is all about money; it’s all financial. We didn’t create a corridor here, so we must buy the land. The land is what is expensive. So, the likelihood is that we are going to be widening in some places and not in others and doing roundabouts at some subdivisions and getting creative from Lumsden to Fishhawk Blvd. and that’s the reality.”

For more information, visit <https://publicinput.com/u1720#0>.



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Alafia 5th Grade Graduation & Clap Out Ceremony

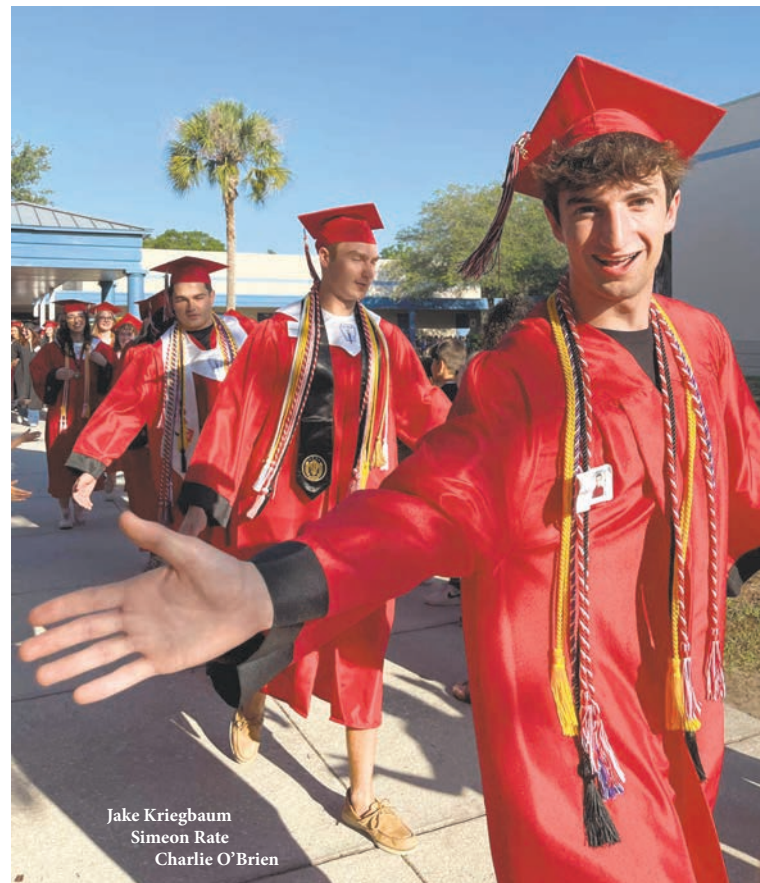
Photos & Article by Amanda Ragan

Parents, students, and teachers lined the hallways of Alafia Elementary as the graduating 5th grade class walked the halls for the last time. There were plenty of smiles, tears, and hugs as the 5th graders said goodbye to the school that many had spent the last six years at. Parents had signs and flowers raised high, as the students walked out in their graduation hats, as the graduation procession played softly in the background. The Bloomingdale Gazette would like to congratulate all of the graduating 5th graders, and we can't wait to see what you will accomplish in middle school!



Cimino Elementary Hosted Senior Clap Out

By Jane Owen



On May 22, Cimino Elementary hosted a Clap out for 2023 graduating Seniors who had attended the school. Seniors walked through the courtyard and were celebrated by clapping elementary students and teachers. High fives were given and pictures were taken. The seniors had a question and answer session with 5th grade students in the auditorium and finished the morning's celebration with refreshments and a slide show in the media center.



Jake Kriegbaum
Simeon Rate
Charlie O'Brien

Emily Svehla

Congratulations Class of 2023!

Bloomingtondale's Class of 2023 has an impressive résumé. Over 60% of its senior's heading off to college! The class has earned over \$17 million dollars in scholarships and has completed over 16,000 hours of community service.

The class of 2023 had an impressive sports season! Softball, girls' basketball, girls' cross country and cheer teams were all top three District GPA winners for the entire county. Bloomingtondale won district championships in girls' soccer, girls' basketball, baseball, softball, and wrestling; the cheerleading team and wrestling teams won a regional championships. Bloomingtondale had State qualifiers from cross country, swim, wrestling, track, and cheer... and the cheerleaders qualified to participate in Nationals! The Winter Guard team placed in a few competitions and the band, chorus, and orchestra programs all earned superiors in their music performance assessments.



Send in your Graduation Photos for the July Issue!

The Gazette wants to help you celebrate graduation moments, including pre-k through college graduations, Alafia and Cimino clap outs, formal pictures, parties, and more!

Send in your photos or selfies to inbloomingtondalenews@gmail.com by June 21.

At a minimum, identify those in the photo from left to right, the school graduating from, and the plans of the graduate. Photos need to be no less than 600x600 resolution, but preferably 1 mb or better for best results. We will do the rest!



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Burns Flag Football Excelled and Made County Playoffs

Burns Middle School flag football played in the county playoffs on May 3. They had an undefeated season and lost by one in the playoff game.

“It was a very hard loss on us as some of these girls have only lost a game twice in three years and both times were in the championship. They have gone 24 and 2 in the last three years and won the championship last year. We lost to Coleman Middle School with a score of 7 to 6. I have never been prouder of these girls than last night they never gave up and are a true dream to coach. I wish we could have pulled it off.” Coach Rob Wycka



BHS Athletes Sign to Compete in College



About 1 out of 13 high school athletes go on to play a varsity sport in college. In other words, only little over 7% of high school athletes compete in college. Without a doubt, it is a huge accomplishment.

On May 3, thirteen Bloomingdale High School athletes signed National Letters of Intent to compete at the collegiate level.

Softball: Megan Jones Ortiz and Livia Velasco

Soccer: Emily Gundin and Alejandro Pinzon

Wrestling: Nate Overman

Volleyball: Kayla Mason

Basketball: Aissatou Diallo

Football: Kendall Jones and Aiden Willis

Lacrosse: Zach Collins

Track and Field: Tomonique Gay, Thomas Schilling and Brandon Turner





BSHS Students Break Track and Field Records

Bloomington High School Track and Field has arguably had the best year in high school history. For the first time, the team took 10 athletes to the State Championships. In addition, Bloomington school records were broken this year!

Thomas Schilling (Senior)

3200 – 9:44.96

Makenna Mach (Junior)

800 – 2:16.16

Ze’Kira Snow (Senior)

100 -- 12.05 | 200 -- 25.10 | Long Jump -- 18’ 7.25” = 5.67m

Boys 4x100 – 42.18

Derek Owens (Senior)

Michael McGee (Senior)

Mekhi Thomas (Senior)

Christian Bodnar (Senior)

4x400 – 3:21.18

Simon Castillo (Sophomore)

Michael McGee (Senior)

Derek Thomas (Senior)

Christian Bodnar (Senior)

Simon Castillo (Sophomore)

400H 1:00.05



(L to R) Thomas Schilling, Makenna Mach, Ze’Kira Snow, Simon Castillo, Michael McGee, Mekhi Thomas, and Derek Owens.

Not in the picture is Christian Bodnar

Tampa Bay Times

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BSHS Baseball and Softball Win District Championships!



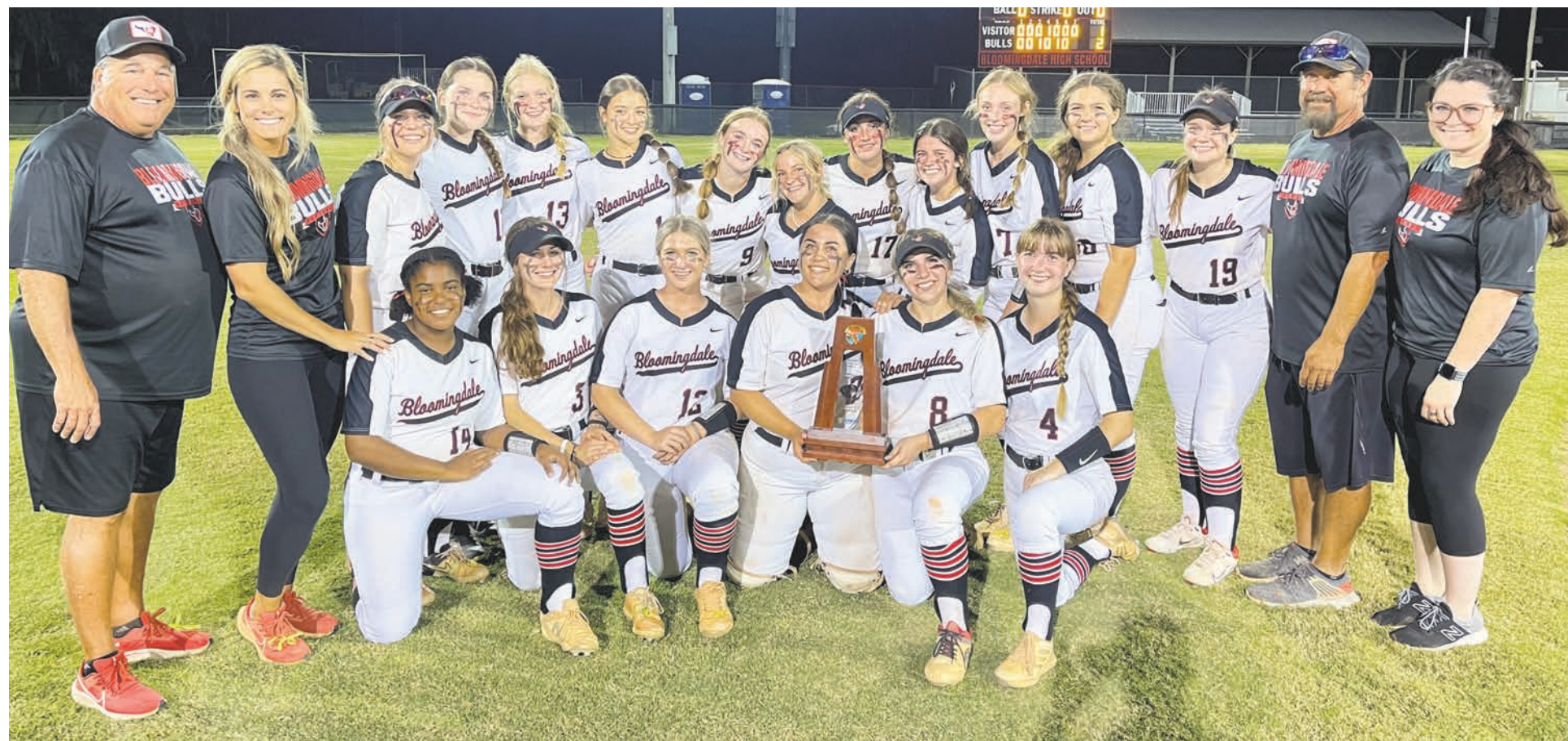
The BSHS Baseball finished with a 17-9 record

“This was a very special team that really found themselves a crossroads during spring break when we lost two of our best and most experienced seniors in Trey Wilson and Dawson Harman for the season. The team could’ve cashed it in or they could’ve rallied together. Thanks to great leadership from all of the seniors including Trey and Dawson, they rallied together and did something very special together. I’m so proud of them for not giving up on each other.”

Coach Wilken

Bulls Softball Coach Named Federal Division Western Conference Coach of the Year

A huge congratulations to our head coach, Leah Pemberton! She was named the Federal Division Western Conference Coach of the Year. In her 4th season as head coach she led the Bulls to a 14-7 regular season record and earned her second district championship in back-to-back years.



“I am so unbelievably proud of this team, the fight that these girls have, and the determination to get better each and every day. We have had our fair share of ups and downs this season, but through all of that we have figured out who we are and how we have to play as one in order to be successful. This is a very tough region, and for us to be able to get to the next level we have to take it game by game, inning by inning, out by out, and pitch by pitch. As long as we still have outs on the scoreboard I still have confidence that there is a chance we can win. It feels so good to be back to back district champions, but we don’t want to stop here. We know how it feels to lose the Regional semi finals, and we don’t want to go through that again. The potential this team has is endless, and we know that we have to play up to that for our best shot to win.”

Coach Pemberton

6th Annual Running of the Bulls Tramples Expectations

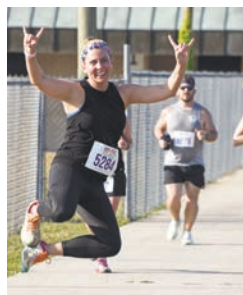


After 2 years away, Bloomingdale's Running of the Bulls 5k returned to Bloomingdale High School on May 20. Around 400 people were in attendance, running, walking and cheering. New this year was a ½ mile fun run. Kids ran two laps on the track while the Bloomingdale drumline marched on the field. Organizers reported the race was the most profitable one in the 5k's history. Acropolis Greek

Taverna and The Jeep Depot were the 5k's Title Sponsors. Many, many other businesses sponsored the race as well—business donations reached over \$12,000! Jordan Frazee, Bloomingdale's Band Director, is tremendously grateful for the community support.

"I am beyond impressed with the support from our Bloomingdale community. This year's 5K had an amazing turnout and I look forward to continuing the tradition of this fun event for years to come. Thank you to all who attended and I hope to see you next year!" Frazee said.

Check the Running of the Bulls Facebook page @bloomingdalebulls5k and the band website (www.bloomingdaleband.com) for pictures and information about next year's race!



Hurricane Season is Here, Be Prepared

The six-month hurricane season in Florida starts on June 1st and ends on November 30th.

Hillsborough County government includes extensive hurricane preparation information on their website, including a Disaster Preparedness Guide: www.hillsboroughcounty.org/residents/stay-safe

Before the Storm:

Make sure your family has a disaster supply kit. Sign up for the HCFL Alert system. Know your evacuation route. Think about options for your pet. Register for a special needs shelter. Protect your property from flooding.

During the Storm:

Follow flooding safety precautions. Download HART Emergency Evacuation Bus Route

After the Storm:

Report damage and concerns. Check TECO Outage Map. Get information on storm-related yard debris removal.

Get Connected. Stay Alert.

HCFL Alert is Hillsborough County's official mass notification system to keep everyone informed about emergencies. Register at HCFLGov.net/HCFLAlert. Follow Hillsborough County's official social media accounts @HillsboroughFL on Facebook and Twitter, and sign up for Nextdoor, for official information and updates during emergencies.

This Hurricane Season
En esta temporada de huracanes

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