



# THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION SINCE 1980

Vol. XLIII



ISSUE 7



JULY 2023



WWW.BLOOMINGDALE.LIFE

THIS MONTH

## New Banners Make Community Debut

Thank You, BSD!

Story on p. 4



Photo: Joy Boisselle

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*BNA MUSIC BINGO FUNDRAISER*  
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PLEASE RECYCLE

**CLASS OF 2023**

**Graduation Extravaganza**  
pp. 7-12



**WINNER**

2013, 2014, 2016, 2018 & 2019

Hillsborough County Neighborhood Recognition Award  
Best Communications Newsletter Category

“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity, there is beauty, and there is strength.” *Maya Angelou*

THE AWARD-WINNING

# BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

## YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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**Jane Owen**

*Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette*

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

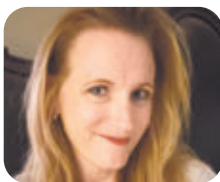
**Design/Layout:** Chris Pascucci, NTZ Studios ([ntzstudios.com](http://ntzstudios.com))

**Staff Writers:** Michelle Colesanti & Amanda Ragan

**Student Reporter** Edward De Freitas



**Joy Boisselle**  
*Guest Editor*



**Wendy Knipp**  
*Guest Editor*

The official publication of the BNA since 1980, delivered free to Bloomingdale residents on the first Wednesday of each month.



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*Community Publications Manager*

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Tampa Bay  
**Times**

**THE BNA** **BLOOMINGDALE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**NEW ADDRESS: P.O. Box 6313, Brandon, FL 33508 - (813) 681-2051**

**Email:** [Bl.Neighbor1@gmail.com](mailto:Bl.Neighbor1@gmail.com) **Website:** [www.Bloomingdale.Life](http://www.Bloomingdale.Life)

**Follow on Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/Bl.Neighbor1](http://www.facebook.com/Bl.Neighbor1)

BNA Board meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library, 1906 Bloomingdale Ave, Valrico, FL 33596.

**President:**  
Suzy Watts

**Vice President:**  
Sean Donahue

**Treasurer:**  
Grace Lewis

**Directors at Large:**

Laney Balis

Kalyn Dukes

Bobbi Ferraro

# BNA BRIEFS

### Times They Are A'Changin'!

While we no longer have an office location, we are still here to serve you! Our phone numbers are the same - 813-681-2051 and 813-252-0252. Our email and website are the same - [bl.neighbor1@gmail.com](mailto:bl.neighbor1@gmail.com) and [www.bloomingdale.life](http://www.bloomingdale.life). Our new mailing address for inquiries, membership and general correspondence is BNA, P.O. Box 6313, Brandon, FL 33508.

### A Note from BNA President Suzy Watts:

The BNA is thankful for the ten years we shared an office with the Bloomingdale Special District. While we no longer have an office, we will continue to focus on helping our neighbors with questions or concerns by phone or email.

Our office manager, Donna Jankowitz, is a great resource for general information and directing neighbors to county services. We will continue our events including our Bunny and Santa visits which we also use to support Seeds of Hope through food donations and fundraisers, Annual Clean Up, and Neighborhood Garage Sale. Check our website and Facebook pages to stay in the know!



The BNA's last meeting at the Community Office. Pictured l. to r. Board members Sean Donahue, Kaylin Dukes, Bobbi Ferraro, Suzy Watts, Laney Balis and Office Manager Donna Jankowitz.

Our monthly meetings are moving to the Bloomingdale Library. We have a bigger meeting room and convenient parking. I welcome all neighbors to stop by and find out more about our wonderful community.

### New BNA Meeting Location at the Bloomingdale Regional Public Library!

Come find out what you can learn at a BNA Meeting and how you can be a part of positive community change! Discussions include how to improve county code reporting, fun events upcoming and how to volunteer, crime stats courtesy of our community deputy, community service hours for our youth, and more. We need you to get involved to make our community even better!

## BNA CALENDAR

**Tuesday, July 25, 7-8 p.m. / BNA Meeting /** Bloomingdale Regional Public Library - McLean Family Community Room / Call 813-252-0252 or email [bl.neighbor1@gmail.com](mailto:bl.neighbor1@gmail.com) for information.

**Tuesday, August 22, 7-8 p.m. / BNA Meeting /** Bloomingdale Regional Public Library - McLean Family Community Room / Call 813-252-0252 or email [bl.neighbor1@gmail.com](mailto:bl.neighbor1@gmail.com) for information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**TONIGHT!** July 5, 7 p.m. / **Summer Nights Valrico Ninja Warrior Night** with obstacle courses, inflatables and a color run (wear white!). / Centerpoint Church, 1720 S St Cloud Ave, Valrico, FL, 33594/ Summer Nights are free events for teens, 6th-12th grade.

**Sunday, July 9, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. / The Exotic Brunch Car Meet /** Bullfrog Creek Brewing Co., 3632 Lithia Pinecrest Rd

**Wednesday, August 2, 7 p.m. / Summer Nights Food Truck Park- with discounts, games and giveaways. /** Centerpoint Church, 1720 S St Cloud Ave, Valrico, FL, 33594/ Summer Nights are free events for teens, 6th-12th grade

**Thursday, August 3, 6:30 p.m. / Music Bingo Fundraiser Benefiting Seeds of Hope sponsored by the BNA /** Come join the fun at Bullfrog Creek Brewing Company! Food donations would be greatly appreciated! All proceeds will help local hungry families. Call 813-252-0252 or email bl.neighbor1@gmail.com for information.



**Music Bingo Fundraiser**  
Benefiting Seeds of Hope  
(Bloomingtondale Food Bank)

**Thursday, August 3, 2023**  
Ticket sales start at 6:30 p.m.  
**Bingo starts at 7 p.m.**  
Bullfrog Creek Brewing Company  
3632 Lithia Pinecrest Road, Valrico, FL 33596

It's a fun night listening to music and marking your bingo cards as the songs play.

- \$20 for 5 rounds of bingo with great prizes
- Food donations for our local food bank will be collected
- Bullfrog has an expanded menu and a new food truck and as always wonderful brews

BLOOMINGTONDALE  
Bloomingtondale Neighborhood Association  
www.Bloomingtondale.Life f Bl.Neighbor1

## THE BNA IS HIRING A PART-TIME OFFICE MANAGER! THIS IS A REMOTE POSITION!

Work at home from the comfort of your couch! We are looking for a detail-oriented, motivated self-starter to assume our office manager position as soon as possible. Candidates should be adept in Microsoft office including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, social media platforms and WordPress. Customer service experience is a plus as you will be the voice of the organization answering emails and phone inquiries from residents, realtors, and county agencies.

The BNA will conduct interviews and background checks before selecting for the position. Ideally, the employee will start in July and transition with our departing office manager in August. Submit resumes to bl.neighbor1@gmail.com no later than July 15. Contact Mrs. Jankowitz at 813-681-2051 for information.

### JOIN THE BNA!

Just \$35 annually helps keep our community programs going. Please send your membership in today and be part of making Bloomingtondale a great place to live! **Membership can be paid through PayPal!**

Scan this QR Code or visit <https://bloomingtondale.life>  
At the bottom of the homepage, click Membership.



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<p><b>PLUMBING</b></p> <p>MAINTAIN</p> <p><b>PLUMBING INSPECTION</b></p> <p><b>INCLUDES:</b> - Inspection of Safety Features - Dye Testing of All Toilets - Inspection of All Exposed Piping - Inspection of All Sink Drains - Inspection of Emergency Shut-Off Valves &amp; More</p> <p><b>\$69</b></p> <p><b>MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE</b> Not available for same-day or weekend service. Not a repair service. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Not available on past services. See dealer for details.</p> <p>Bimngd10220 <b>IERNA's   813-324-1304</b></p>	<p><b>PLUMBING</b></p> <p>REPAIR</p> <p><b>SAVE ON NEXT REPAIR</b></p> <p><b>up to \$40 OFF</b></p> <p><b>MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE</b> DISCLAIMER - Cannot be combined with any other offer. Based on 20% discount of total repair bill, up to \$40 maximum. Does not apply to service call fee, past work or estimates. See dealer for details.</p> <p>Bimngd10220 <b>IERNA's   813-324-1304</b></p>	<p><b>PLUMBING</b></p> <p>REPLACE</p> <p><b>NEW H.E. WATER HEATER</b></p> <p><b>SAVE up to \$250</b></p> <p><b>MUST PRESENT COUPON AT TIME OF SERVICE</b> Cannot be combined with any other offer. Total savings varies on equipment; \$150 savings on standard electric/gas water-heater, \$250 savings on GE Hybrid Heat-Pump water-heater. Cannot be applied to past purchases or estimates. See dealer for details.</p> <p>Bimngd10220 <b>IERNA's   813-324-1304</b></p>

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# Bloomingtondale Special District Office Moves to New Home

By Michelle Colesanti

The Bloomingtondale Special District (BSD) has relocated from its former Bell Shoals Road location to Erindale Road near the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office substation. The new office opens today, July 5. Visitors are welcome Monday to Thursday from 8 a.m. - noon.

According to Tom Leech, President of the Bloomingtondale Special District, "The new location on Erindale Road puts us inside Bloomingtondale in a quieter location that also provides easier access for community residents. The space is slightly larger, but the location was the driver, not the office size." He also cited increased costs, security and safety concerns around the former property as reasons for the move.

Bloomingtondale has become a thriving community since development began in the 1980s. No other community provides such a welcome retreat from the busy highways in so dramatic a way as Bloomingtondale, and this is what the BSD strives to maintain.

Bloomingtondale is a desirable place to live. Leech, who has been on the board for 8 1/2 years, says that the BSD protects the community's common areas and keeps the area beautiful. It does this through proactive management of community infrastructure while being good stewards of constituent tax dollars.

Leech said, "It is sad that so many residents do not realize that we are an arm of Hillsborough County and that a portion of their property taxes goes directly into the community via the BSD. We are not an HOA and have no authority over the HOAs or the subdivisions. We manage the common areas from the walls to the street, excluding the sidewalks."

The budget for fiscal year 2023 is approximately \$1.1M. A special tax of \$170 is levied on each home in our community for the maintenance of common areas, community entrances, and landscaping. The tax is collected with the Hillsborough County Tax Bill.

Board meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. All meetings are open to the public.

The BSD's new location is 3652 Erindale Road. For information, call 813-684-6667 or visit [bloomingtondale.mydistrictwebsite.com](http://bloomingtondale.mydistrictwebsite.com).

# BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL DISTRICT



The Bloomingtondale Special District moved to a new location at 3652 Erindale Road.  
Photo: Michelle Colesanti

## Heat Kills! Courtesy Hillsborough County



Protect your pets from the heat & ensure they have ample access to water to avoid dehydration.

When going on walks, it's important to remember that hot pavement can burn their paw pads. Check sidewalk temps with your hand or foot - If it's too hot for you, it's too hot for them!

# PROTECT YOUR PETS

## Signs of Dehydration

- EYES**  
Sunken & Dry
- MOUTH**  
Dry, sticky gums  
Dry nose
- BEHAVIOR**  
Lethargy  
Reduced energy levels  
Disinterest
- SKIN**  
Lack of elasticity

Sidewalk Temperatures	
Air °F	Asphalt °F
77°F	125°F
Skin destruction can occur in 60 seconds at 125 °F	
	131°F
An egg can fry in 5 seconds at 131 °F	
86°F	135°F
87°F	143°F

# YARD OF THE MONTH

**KATLIN FORD**  
1339 MONTE LAKE DRIVE, VALRICO



The Yard of the Month is sponsored by Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale and Campo YMCA.

Send Yard of the Month nominations to: bl.neighbor1@gmail.com or call 813-681-2051. Winners receive a \$25 Gift Card to Ace Hardware of Bloomingdale and a 1 month family membership, plus join fee to the Campo YMCA.

THE AWARD-WINNING

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# Visit Zoo Tampa For Family Fun and Education

Article and Photos by Michelle Colesanti

ZooTampa's origins began in the 1930s and through the years, it has been known by many names, but most of us remember it as Lowry Park Zoo. In 2018, it was rebranded as ZooTampa and I recently returned with my grandchildren and we absolutely loved it!

ZooTampa is a great place to see animals from other parts of the world, such as the golden lion tamarin, the African painted dog, and the Angolan colobus monkey. More important is that your visit, especially for children, can be used as a teaching tool as to the importance of protecting each animal's habitat.

"I am tremendously proud of ZooTampa's involvement in efforts protecting wildlife locally and globally," said Dr. Cynthia Stringfield, Senior VP of Animal Health, Conservation & Education.

Plan to arrive early to visit a popular attraction, Expedition Wild Africa Safari. Here you travel aboard custom-built open-air vehicles to see up-close, the animals that call the Habari Preserve home such as giraffes, zebras, and elephants.

Wallaroo Station is popular among children. Along with wallabies and koalas, kids can enjoy play areas and cool off in splash pads or enjoy a few rides such as the Tasmanian Tiger Coaster and the Overland Express Train. Near the entrance is the Jungle Carousel and Roaring Springs, a water ride perfect for cooling off.

Throughout the day, zoo personnel offer chats and demonstrations where you can connect personally with some of the zoo residents including the Gharial crocodile, African penguins, Giraffes, Rhinos and more. Visit <http://zootampa.org/visit/my-zoo-day/#wildlife-connections> for times and locations.

Conservation is a top priority for ZooTampa. Over the last 20 years, teams have rescued and rehabilitated more than 500 injured, sick, and orphaned manatees. More than 280 of them have been reintroduced into Florida waters. Florida panthers are rehabbed too and the zoo is home to three that are unable to survive on their own in the wild.

"With our conservation work in our backyard with Florida manatees and panthers and globally with our partners, the zoo is uniquely positioned to help protect wildlife through the expertise of staff, the contributions made to science, and the special moments guests experience that also forge empathy and resolve in taking action to help protect the future of wildlife. The collective impact is truly inspiring," added Stringfield.

ZooTampa has been recently named USA Today's #6 in the nation for the best zoo. It was also rated #4 for best zoo exhibit for its manatee critical care center. If you have Disney+, check out the four seasons of National Geographic's "Secrets of the Zoo: Tampa" to get additional insight behind the scenes.

General admission ranges from \$35.95 - \$45.95, but many add-ons and memberships are available, all of which help support not only the animals on site, but also the zoo's conservation and rehabilitation efforts. ZooTampa is located at 1101 Sligh Avenue, Tampa. Parking is free! For information, visit <https://Zootampa.org>.



Visit Zoo Tampa to enjoy the exotic animals you might not otherwise see. Learn about the rehab and conservation efforts provided by zoo staff while visiting.

# CLASS OF 2023

Many thanks to all who provided photos especially Guidance Counselor Laura Hogg.

## Congratulations to BSHS's Top Scholars

Courtesy of Dr. Marcos Rodriguez

### Valedictorian Jacob Delikat

2023 Valedictorian Jacob Delikat is a National Merit Finalist, an AP Scholar with Distinction, and was selected as a candidate for the US Presidential scholarship program. His current GPA is a jaw dropping, Bloomingdale record-breaking, 10.12. His schedule included more than 25 dual enrollment courses and 17 AP classes.



A technology powerhouse, Delikat earned certifications in word, excel, PowerPoint, visual design, Photoshop, and InDesign, but he also was presented with The Object Oriented in Programming award (University of Texas). He founded the computer programming club, was a member of the Robotics club, and achieved a first-place finish in the Hackathon C++ Computer Programming contest.

Academics are a priority but so is his service to his school and community. As a member of clubs like BETA, SAVE Promise, Peer Tutoring, and Best Buddies, Delikat readily volunteers his time to those less fortunate than himself. A player on the Varsity Tennis team, he helped teach others in the Tennis for Fun organization. He has also contributed his efforts to various causes, including Incredibulls, PB&J Ministry, Feeding Children Everywhere, the Special Olympics, and Homeless Feed.

A born leader, our world needs dynamic, inventive trailblazers like Jacob! As president of both the Science National Honor Society and JD Global Non-Profit Organization, his extensive leadership skills are evident. During school, he has also served as Science National Honor Society vice president, Yearbook Copy Editor, both Secretary and Treasurer of the Mental Health Awareness club, and was a member of Freshman Steering. Amazingly, he also manned the front desk at the Delikat Family Practice, where he was employed throughout high school.

A masterful multitasker, he ensures that his voice and ideas are heard; never riding the sidelines, always at the forefront.

### Salutatorian Alexa Brown

National Merit finalist and MIT bound, 2023 Salutatorian Alexa Brown's impressive course load consisted of more than 15 dual enrollment courses and 17 AP classes. Certified in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Excel, she is an exceptional student who possesses the motivation and maturity to succeed in any arena.



In addition to her enviable academic history, she was involved in many different aspects of campus and the community with extensive leadership capabilities and experiences. As National Honor Society Treasurer, When We All Vote Captain, and Collegeboard Ambassador, she helped organize and implement various initiatives. She made multitasking look easy as she seamlessly fit in her swim instructor job and her role as Head Captain of the Swim Team.

Volunteering is important to Brown as she is BETA club secretary where community service is one of the main focuses. Additionally, she has volunteered with Metropolitan Ministries, helped local elementary schools, participated in parking lot clean ups, and donated her time and talent coaching swim lessons.

She is an AP Scholar with Distinction and has earned an AP Capstone Diploma, the Seal of Biliteracy, and the Sunshine State Scholar Award. As a valuable member of both the math bowl team and the African American History Brain Bowl Team, she helped clinch multiple victories.

Brown is an all-around fabulous student: hard working in academics and sports, involved in extracurricular activities and community service, an admirable leader, and just a superb human being!

## Congratulations to Bloomingdale's HCPS Scholar Athletes, Alexa Brown and Logan Young!

**Alexa Brown - 9.52 GPA, salutatorian, attending MIT, 4 year varsity swimmer, captain and state qualifier**

**Logan Young - 8.39 GPA, ranked 4th in class, attending Florida honors medical school, 4 year soccer, MVP and team captain**



# CLASS OF 2023



**Josh Avila, Tyler O'Connell and Logan Thomas**



**Brianna Hardaway**



**Cimino Clap Out**  
**Charlie O'Brien (UCF), Dariya Bagley (UCF), Jake Kriegbaum (UCF), Paige Zugay (FSU), Kyra Knapp (FSU), and Dakota Rhodes (USF)**



**Dawson Harman**



**Kimora Foster**



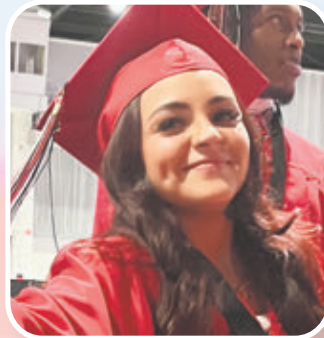
**Rylee Mcguire and Isabelle Lynch**  
 Graduating Alafia Elementary



**Back Row: Connor Hacker, Charlie O'Brien, Jake Kriegbaum, & Kate Daigle. Front Row: Sarah Katt, Jenna O'Neil, and Isabella Larson**



**Angelynn Garcia**



**Gisella Giagrande**



**All in the Family: Bloomingdale Grads Kyle Knapp (2011), Ryan Knapp (2014), Evan Knapp (2017), and Kyra Knapp (2023). Kyra is keeping up the family legacy and attending FSU like her brothers and parents!**



**Demetrius Daniels**



**Jackson Nichols**  
 Bloomingdale HS / UF



**Marley Glidden**



**Tominique Gay**



**Adrianna Robinson**  
 USAF Bound



**Grant Earl Peters**  
 VPK @ VELC





**Dakota Westinghouse**



**Lucas Highsmith**



**Julian Gonzalez**



**Drew Lykins**



**Tessa Pignataro**  
BS from UF, Attending USF for  
Doctorate of Physical Therapy



**Owen Donahue**  
BSHS Grad, Polk State College  
for Commercial Pilot Training



**Josh Goodwin (USF) and Kyra  
Knapp (FSU) with their Cimino  
2nd grade teacher Lynna Dees**



**Sea of Red, Go Bulls!**



**Melody Womack**



**Sam Castillo**



**LaMsuri Howard**



**Fahey Bostick**



**Charlie O'Brien**



**Lorenzo Acevedo**



**Abby Patton, Go Bulls!**



**Jackson Nichols (UF),  
Emma Baumann (UF),  
and Simeon Rate  
(USAF Academy).**



**Molly Donahue**  
Valencia College Baking & Pastry Mgmt. Grad on to Walt Disney World



**Mikiese Boone**

# CLASS OF 2023



**Cimino Clapout: Scout West, Kyra Knapp, Josh Goodwin, and Zack Fisher**



**Kyleigh Walton**



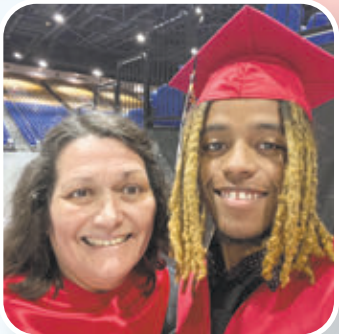
**Kyra Knapp and Bloomingdale Valedictorian Jake Delikat**



**Angelynn Gonzalez**



**Zachary Miner**



**Renaldo Wallace**



**Anabel DeJesus**



**Jon Owen**  
BSHS 2019, Seattle Pacific University, BS in Physics



**Thomas Owen**



**Charlie O'Brien**



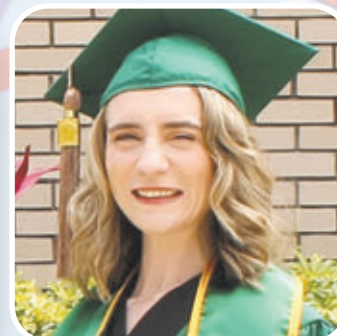
**Skyler Storch**



**Caleb Guerra**



**Brandon Denson**



**Ashlynn Davies**  
USF, Marketing Degree



**Nathaniel Bowlin**



**TyReese Moore**



**Laura Hogg and Grads**



**Angel Garcia**



**Anailah Perez**



**Bianca Figueroa and Thomas Owen**



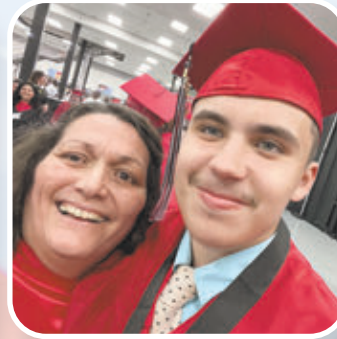
**Amber Ocasio**



**One Happy Grad!**



**Conor Moore**



**Aiden Mt. Pleasant**



**Nicholas Lago**

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# CLASS OF 2023



**Terreya Rogers**



**Michael McGee**



**Emily Svehla**



**Nathaniel Overman**



**Kameryn Saffold**



**Julian Ortiz**



**Ruben Lopez**



**Carlos Torres**



**Evan Murray**  
Pepin Academies



**Ryan Smith**



**Jessica Sanchez**



**Jacob Kriegbaum (UCF), Rylee Brown (UF), Kaylee Pekar (UF), and Ryan Mothershed (US Naval Academy)**



**BSHS Cimino Clapout**



# AMC Theatres Offer Summer Deals

By Edward De Freitas, Student Reporter



Are you looking for a way to entertain your kids and stay cool this summer? How about getting out on your own and catching a flick? Look no further, AMC Theatres have you covered with Summer Movie Camp.

The Summer Movie Camp program is back for the first time since 2019 and is open to everyone. July through August, select AMC Theatres will screen a wide range of family-friendly movies for \$3 on Wednesdays and \$5 on Saturdays between 11 a.m. and noon.

This includes Brandon AMC, located at The Regency, 2496 W. Brandon Blvd. Included are 14 different films this summer, ranging from family favorites to recent award-winning hits.

In addition, AMC also offers 30% off matinee tickets (before 4 p.m.) every day. For information, visit [www.amctheatres.com](http://www.amctheatres.com).

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# WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD



## Skill Samurai Coding and STEM Academy

Article and Photos by Amanda Ragan



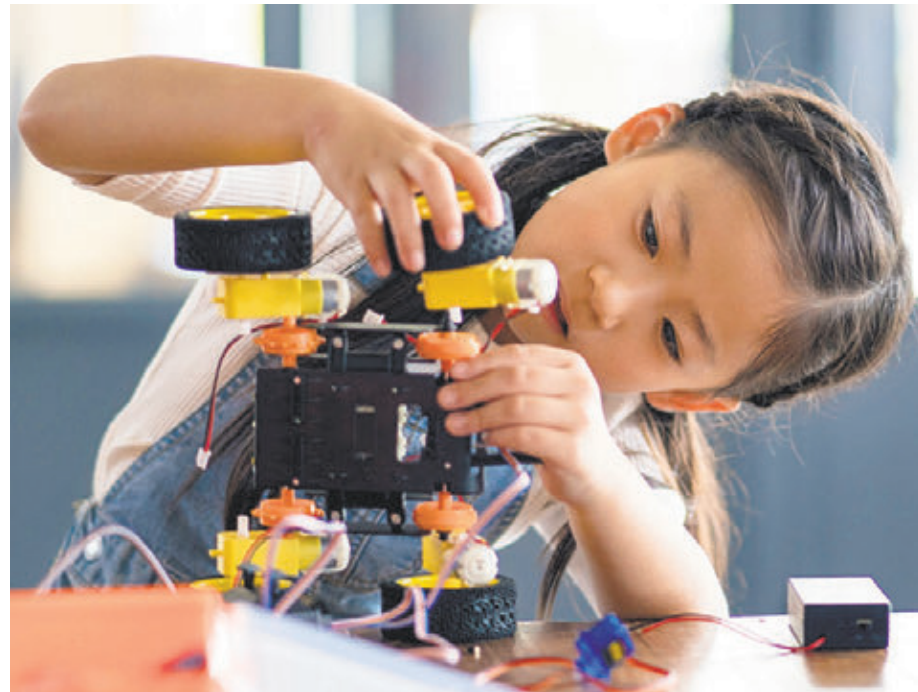
Deborah and William Steele have lived in this community since 2006 and recently saw a growing need for children to have more exposure to technology. With more than 50 years of IT experience between the two of them, along with extensive backgrounds in cybersecurity, engineering, and military service, they were the perfect couple to fill that need and open Skill Samurai Coding and STEM Academy.

Deborah explained “Technology is becoming as important as reading and writing in a child’s education.”

Skill Samurai offers children ages 5 - 18 in-person STEM experiences in coding, robotics, game development, 3D printing and more. Deborah said that while most students can find STEM and IT based tutorials online, their “brick and mortar facility allows kids, who share the same interests, the opportunity to bond over shared passions.”

In addition to making friends and learning new STEM based standards, she added, “Skill Samurai can also help students approach thinking as logical building blocks that can become a foundation that carries over into other areas of interest and study.” Thus, Skill Samurai aspires to not only teach students a new skill, but they foster a growth mindset rooted in hands-on engagement and discovery. Skill Samurai is excited to be introducing Singapore Math Code this Fall, which has been linked to increased math scores among students.

Located at 931 E. Bloomingdale Avenue in Bloomingdale Square, full and half-day camps are currently being offered through the summer in addition to normal after school and evening classes. For information, call 813-761-2832 or visit <https://skillsamurai.com/fl-brandon>.



One of the many robotic kits at Skill Samurai.



## Attention Foodies: The Brandon Food Truck Park is Open!

Article and Photos by Amanda Ragan

If you have driven down Lithia Pinecrest Road recently, you may have noticed the food trucks parked on the southwest corner of Lumsden and Lithia Pinecrest. This is not a monthly market or festival, but rather a new start up by Owner David Chan that will allow the community to come together and experience an ever changing and evolving menu through a rotation of food trucks. From coffee and donuts to island food and icees, the Brandon Food Truck Park aspires to entice both vendors and hungry patrons to what will hopefully become a neighborhood staple.

Perhaps one of the greatest advantages is the fact that there is something for everyone! Walking through the park I was able to sample fresh kettle corn from Family Kettle, an Italian ice from Brooklyn’s Italian Ice (made from fresh fruit juice rather than syrup), and custom gourmet boiled peanuts where you can choose your flavor and toppings from Rob’s Way Gourmet Boiled Peanuts.

Of course, I had to finish off the outing with something sweet, so I had a beignet from the Daily Beignet! Talking to the food truck owners, it became clear that this venture is one that they are very excited about, as it provides a consistent location and customer base compared to the occasional festival or market. Robert and Jennifer Dodd, owners of Rob’s Way Gourmet Boiled Peanuts even helped owner Chan hang lights in the food truck park, explaining that they are just “so excited for a place like this to exist!”

The Brandon Food Truck Park is open 7 days a week, but Friday through Sunday is when you will see the biggest variety of trucks. Chan stated that his goal is to eventually have a steady rotation.

On a recent visit, I met Eric and Nika, and their beautiful German Shepard, Levi. In addition to enjoying a basket of warm beignets from The Daily Beignet, the couple was able to sit at a picnic table with their leashed pup and enjoy breakfast together. It was a picturesque testament to the vision Chan has for the park as a whole.

“Food brings people together, and we hope that this can be a fun hang out spot that brings hard working and innovative business owners together with their community.”

For info, visit [www.facebook.com/BrandonFoodTruckPark](http://www.facebook.com/BrandonFoodTruckPark). Or if you would like info on any the trucks listed above, check out their Facebook page or see their contact information below.

Family Kettle | 863-660-5094

Brooklyn Italian Ice | 813-573-3453

Rob’s Way Gourmet Boiled Peanuts | 813-857-5257

The Daily Beignet | 813-380-3966

Brandon Food Truck Park | 813-252-1089



The Daily Beignet (Eric, Nika, Levi the dog)



Robs Peanuts

# Congratulations to Bloomingdale's Track Teams!

2023 marked a "record" year for Bloomingdale track athletes. Ten athletes qualified for state finals, the highest number in school history. The FHSAA Track State Finals took place May 17 - 20 at University of North Florida in Jacksonville.

Pictured from left to right:

Wisney Cherident (Senior) - 4x800 relay

Brandon Witherow (Sophomore) - 4x800 relay

Thomas Schilling (Senior) - 4x800 relay

Makenna Mach (Sophomore) - 800 meter

Ze'Kira Snow (Senior)  
100 meter dash and long jump

Simon Castillo (Sophomore) - 4x400 relay

Ennrick LaFrance (Senior)  
4x100 relay and 4x400 relay

Michael McGee (Senior)  
4x100 relay and 4x400 relay

Mekhi Thomas (Senior) - 4x100 relay

Derek Owens (Senior)  
4x100 relay and 4x400 relay

NOT PICTURED Devin Douglas (Senior)  
4x800 relay

Way to go Bulls!



# Athletics Registration

Students interested in athletics must complete all paperwork and be cleared prior to participation. Please find athletic paperwork and Students interested in athletics must complete all paperwork and be cleared prior to participation. Please find athletic paperwork and instructions here: Athletics / Student Forms ([hillsboroughschools.org](https://hillsboroughschools.org))





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BY THE BRENDA WADE TEAM

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