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## NORTHEAST NEWS

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### Twistee Treat brings ice cream architecture to New Tampa

**Photos**



A new Twistee Treat ice cream outlet plans to open by the end of the month at the northwest corner of Bruce B. Downs and New Tampa boulevards.

By Kenneth Knight | Tribune Staff

Published: April 11, 2013

When it comes to iconic ice cream stands, it is hard to top Twistee Treat.

The Orlando-based chain captures the nostalgia of the 1940s and '50s in a retro-style building shaped in the form of a soft-serve ice cream cone.

That slice of pop culture is coming to the northwest corner of Bruce B. Downs and New Tampa boulevards this month.

Excitement about the opening of the kitschy ice cream shop is growing, said Corey Balzer, president of Twistee Treat USA.

"We have probably had a minimum of 400 people who have applied to work there," Balzer said. "It's been awesome."

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Construction of the ice cream stand began several weeks ago next to the Bank of America in the Publix/New Tampa Plaza parking lot.

At 28 feet tall and 20 feet wide, the fiberglass ice cream shaped building has caught the attention of passers-by.

It's not typical of the architecture sprinkled throughout the suburban-style community lined with stately homes, gated neighborhoods and gleaming professional office towers.

But it is a topic of conversation, and that's exactly what Balzer wants.

The ice cream stand is opening in time for the summer rush on the frosty treat.

The business will employ about 25 people, who will serve customers at walk-up windows and motorists at a single drive-through lane.

It will specialize in assorted combinations of ice creams. The menu also will include a fat-free and lactose-free pineapple sorbet and a fat-free, sugar free vanilla flavored ice cream.

The company serves real ice cream with 10 percent butter fat, which makes the ice cream "really creamy," Balzer said.

Three years ago, Balzer and his business partners bought Twistee Treat in an effort to save a company that enjoyed its heyday in the 1980s, shortly after the chain launched.

The original company was founded in North Fort Myers in 1983 as a franchised chain of ice cream shops. In 1989, the original founder retired and the company went into bankruptcy in the early 1990s.

But Twistee Treat never faded away. It continued on with franchise outlets in the United States and Canada.

Balzer and his business partners own five outlets in West Central Florida, including the New Tampa location.

Balzer said his company plans to build seven Twistee Treat outlets by the end of year, including two new Hillsborough County locations on Fletcher Avenue and Sheldon Road.

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