

MOFAC plans Lunch and Learn

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC) presents "Lunch and Learn: Arts in the Parks" from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5 in Building G, Room 101, SFSC Highlands Campus.

Mollie Doctrow, artist and MOFAC curator, will share her experience as an artist-in-residence at Petrified Forest National Park.

Lunches are \$5 each, and includes one six-inch sub cold cut combo and a bottle of water.

To place your order, call 863-784-7195, leave a message with how many lunches are needed, and pay when you pick up.

SFSC to host Veterans Day Remembrance

AVON PARK — South Florida State College will host a Veterans Day remembrance ceremony to honor the men and women who served their country in war and peace. The ceremony begins at 10:45 a.m. Nov. 11, at the flagpoles on the Highlands Campus.

The public is invited to join SFSC administrators, faculty, and students for this annual ceremony.

Eric Christensen, a retired commander in the U.S. Navy and professor of physics, will serve as the master of ceremonies. Cary Pigman, a member of the Florida House of Representatives, will deliver the keynote speech. Rep. Pigman, an emergency room physician at Florida Hospital Heartland Medical Center, served in the U.S. Army and the Navy.

The Avon Park High School Air Force Junior ROTC color guard and the Knights of Columbus Color Corps will lead a Remembrance Walk through the Highlands Campus at the conclusion of the program.

Visitors will find the flagpoles adjacent to the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, accessible through entrance 3 on College Drive.

For information, contact Michael McLeod at mcleodm@southflorida.edu.

Thursday, November 5, 2015

SFSC offers Certified Crop Adviser seminars

AVON PARK — South Florida State College will offer two continuing education seminars for Certified Crop Advisers on Thursday, Nov. 19 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., on the Highlands Campus, Building T, Room 20.

A 5 contact hour nutrient management seminar will run 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. A 5 contact hour integrated

pest management seminar will run 1-6 p.m. Certified Crop Advisers may earn 10 contact hours by attending both seminars or 5 contact hours for attendance at either the morning or afternoon session.

Registration includes a working lunch and snacks. Registration deadline is Friday, Nov. 13.

For more information, or to request a registration packet, contact Lorrie Key at 863-784-7033 or at CorporateTraining@southflorida.edu.

SFSC offers stained glass workshop in December

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK —

Learn how to create a beautiful stained glass window with local artist Coye Brenner-Mann, an expert in mosaic media.

The two-session workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fridays, Dec. 4 and Dec. 11 in Building A, Room 16, at South Florida State College, Highlands Campus.

The workshop will introduce participants to the art of stained glass. Each participant will design and create an 11-by-14-inch stained glass window. Participants are encouraged to bring simple designs and ideas to the first session, although pre-made patterns will be available.

The cost of the two-session workshop is \$75 per person and

includes all materials. Participants are asked to bring a packed lunch.

Participants can download a registration form at mofac.org/education and email it to SubmissionsMOFAC@southflorida.edu or mail it to SFSC MOFAC, 600 W. College Drive, Avon Park, FL 33825. Call 863-784-7195 or 863-784-7240.

SFSC News



COURTESY PHOTO

Lorrie Key, left, director of corporate and community education at SFSC, recently appointed Neil Simpson as ambassador for the annual Heartland Games for Active Adults.

Ambassador appointed for Heartland Games

AVON PARK — South Florida State College has hosted the Heartland Games for Active Adults for the past two decades to promote physical fitness, good health and a competitive spirit among adults age 50 and older.

The 2016 games will be held in venues across the Heartland between Jan. 20 and the end of March. For the sixth year, Lorrie Key, director of corporate and community education, will be in charge of the games.

Key recently announced the appointment of Neil Simpson as the 2016 games ambassador. Simpson has competed in pickleball at the Heartland Games and was chosen to help promote the games because of his media, sports and business contacts in the area, the college said.

“Working together, Key and Simpson hope to create interest in the upcoming games which

will include archery, bowling, cycling, golf, pickleball, volleyball, racquetball, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, and more,” the college said.

Details regarding dates, venues and registration procedures will be announced in the coming weeks.

Library participating in International Games Day

AVON PARK — South Florida State College’s library and over a 1,000 libraries around the world will celebrate the eighth annual International Games Day from Your Library noon to 5 p.m. Nov. 20 in Building Y at the Highlands Campus.

In addition to a wide variety of board games and events suitable for the whole family, the library will host its first annual Epic Twister Competition.

The competition is played on a custom-built oversized board and contestants must survive

tournament-style elimination rounds to compete for the SFSC Twister Championship. Each round will feature faculty and staff calling the moves.

International Games Day at Your Library is an international initiative supported by the American Library Association, the Australian Library and Information Association and Nordic Game Day.

For more information, visit www.ilovelibraries.org/article/international-games-day-2015.

Starting Your Business seminar offered in Avon Park

AVON PARK – Ever wanted to start your own business but not sure how to get started? The Florida SBDC at University of South Florida, located at South Florida State College, will host a Starting Your Business seminar at South Florida State College, Corporate and Community Education Room T24, from 2-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18.

From how to determine feasibility and legal structures to the types of license you'll need, this seminar covers all the essentials that will help you get started. This seminar is customized for start-ups in Highlands, DeSoto, and Hardee counties, including the cities of Avon Park, Lake Placid, Sebring, Arcadia and Wauchula.

Call 863-784-7405 to reserve a seat. Refer to CRN 11390. Cost is just \$10 and includes seminar materials. To find out more about Florida SBDC at USF no-cost business consulting and low-cost seminars, visit online at www.SBDCTampaBay.com.

event sponsored by the Avon Park Ministerial Association. Several local churches and organizations will be participating in the service. A Community Choir will be led by Jim Lanier. The Thanksgiving meditation will be given by Pastor Scott McLean, Christ Lutheran Church.

An offering will be received to support the Church Service Center, 198 Rowe St. This ministry serves those in need with food, clothing and assistance.

SFSC offers stained glass workshop

AVON PARK — Learn how to create a beautiful stained glass window with local artist Coye Brenner-Mann, an expert in mosaic media.

The two-session workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fridays, Dec. 4 and Dec. 11 in Building A, Room 16, at South Florida State College, Highlands Campus.

The workshop will introduce participants to the art of stained glass. Each participant will design and create an 11-by-14-inch stained glass window. Participants are encouraged to bring simple designs and ideas to the first session, although pre-made patterns will be available.

The cost of the two-session workshop is \$75 per person and includes all materials. Participants are asked to bring a packed lunch.

Participants can download a registration form at mofac.org/education and email it to SubmissionsMOFAC@southflorida.edu or mail it to SFSC MOFAC, 600 W. College Drive, Avon Park, FL 33825. For more information, call the SFSC Art Department at 863-784-7195 or 863-784-7240.

Concealed Weapons course set

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College Criminal Justice Academy (CJA) is offering a Concealed Weapons Permit course. This course is required to carry a concealed weapon in Florida. Topics to be covered include Florida Statutes, use of deadly force, carry restrictions, and live fire exercises. The course will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. The cost of the course is \$55.

For information, equipment list, and maps to the range contact Richard Morey, training coordinator, at 863-784-7285 or visit www.southflorida.edu/publicservice. Register at any SFSC Campus or center, pre-registration is required.

‘Most happy’ to return to his first love — singing

‘Happy Days’ star Donny Most to open for Jay Leno

BY MARC VALERO

Highlands Today

AVON PARK — Delaying his return to college for a shot at more acting auditions helped Donny Most land the role of Ralph Malph on the iconic TV comedy “Happy Days.”

Most will be opening for comedian and TV host Jay Leno on Nov. 19 as South Florida State College celebrates the renaming of its performing arts venue now known as the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for

the Performing Arts.

From his home in Los Angeles, Most talked with Highlands Today about his initial interest in singing to his acting career and his swing back to singing jazz and American standards.

Most’s interest in singing and performing was spurred when he saw “The Jolson Story.” He was 9 at that time.

At age 13, he took singing lessons in Manhattan. That led to an invitation to join a professional

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Donny Most opening for Jay Leno

Where: Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, South Florida State College

When: Nov. 19 at 7 p.m.

Tickets: Tickets available at the box office, which is open Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and one hour before the show.

More information:

Contact the box office at (863) 784-7178 or online at www.performances.southflorida.edu

Most

From Page 1

group of singers aged 14-16, and he performed with them one summer in hotels and night-clubs in the Catskill Mountains, Most said.

Most then discovered singer Bobby Darin, which increased his interest in performing.

"I first saw him in a movie called 'Come September' and he sang a song in it, and I remember asking my mom, 'Who is this guy?'" Most said.

Then, while browsing through a bin of albums in a drug store, he found the album, "This is Darin."

"I took the album home and went crazy over it and loved every single song and sang along

to it," he remembered.

When he was 18, Most saw Darin perform live at the Copacabana in New York.

Meanwhile, at the suggestion of his father, Most took acting classes and got an agent.

He went to many auditions, which led to steady work in television commercials and bit parts on television shows, Most said. He had some close calls, but didn't land any parts, in his auditions for Broadway plays.

After his junior year in college, Most went to California over the summer where he got an agent. He quickly landed guest starring roles on TV shows such as "Police Story," "Emergency" and "Room 222."

Most said he was ready to return to college for his senior year in Pennsylvania, but his agent

said he had momentum going and should take six months off from school.

Most stayed in California and several months later he auditioned for "Happy Days."

"I went through several auditions and then a screen test and that led to me doing the show," Most said.

The show was a mid-season replacement and ran for 11 seasons, he noted.

Most portrayed Ralph Malph in the family sitcom set in the early rock 'n' roll era of the mid-1950s to early 1960s. It initially aired from 1974 to 1984 on ABC.

Most was on the first seven seasons and left the show when his contract ended.

"Ron Howard and I left at the same time, but then the show ran for four more seasons after

we left," he noted.

After leaving "Happy Days," Most continued acting for many years, including guest starring roles on TV, television movies, feature films, independent films and theater. He directed three independent films.

Most also had a recurring role on "Glee."

About two years ago he felt compelled to go back to his first love of singing jazz standards, "the great American song book," Most said.

In the 1970s and 1980s that type of music was looked upon as your parents' or grandparents' music, he said. But, the jazz and swing era music has seen renewed popularity with artists like Dianna Krall, Michael Buble and Tony Bennett performing with Lady Gaga.

With his musical director and a jazz orchestra that ranges from seven to 17 musicians, Most has performed in jazz clubs in Los Angeles and New York.

"Now a week from Thursday, I am opening for Leno at South Florida State College in the performing arts center that they are renaming," Most said. "I love this music and the great arrangements and the great musicians."

Tickets are available for the Donny Most and Jay Leno performance, set for 7 p.m. Nov. 19.

Box office hours are Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and one hour before show time.

Contact the box office at (863) 784-7178 or go online to www.performances.southflorida.edu.

mvalero@highlandstoday.com
(863) 386-5826

SFSC celebrates 50 years with '50s sock hop

By **KIM LEATHERMAN**
CORRESPONDENT

LAKE PLACID — Bobbie socks, Brylcreme, ponytails and poodle skirts were the theme of the night as the Lake Placid campus of South Florida State College hosted an old fashioned sock hop Saturday evening. SFSC sponsored the sock hop.

"The staff and administration came up with a good way to celebrate," said Jamie Bateman of the SFSC Foundation. "They did a great job with the decorations and food."

Scores of guests arrived donning their '50s finery and twisted and shouted



This group of friends took a break from dancing to pose together and make new memories during the sock hop Saturday evening at the SFSC Lake Placid Center's gymnasium.

down memory lane. The men wore jeans with white T-shirts with the obligatory pack of smokes or gum rolled into the sleeves, shades of James Dean and the Fonz. Women wore poodle skirts, bobbie socks and saddle shoes or jean knee-knockers and shirts with bandanas around the neck. Many took the sock part of the hop literally and danced in their argyles.

Lotela Gold set fire to

those saddle shoes with hits from the 1950s and 1960s. The music pulled guests from the bleachers out onto the dance floor.

"I came out to reminisce," said Fran Rolston. "This was a great idea for the college to celebrate their 50th anniversary." Rolston joined her friend, Terry Daisey, who stated that she was looking for Elvis.

Elvis was indeed in the

building. His silhouette and likeness were on the walls as decorations and Lotela Gold played his music.

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Kim Leatherman/Highlands Sun

Phil and Jane Bateman take a spin down memory lane as they dance to the music of their younger years.



A large cake was decorated as part of the sock hop to help celebrate South Florida State College's 50th anniversary.



Kim Leatherman/Highlands Sun

Lotela Gold kept the joint jumping as they played music from the '50s and '60s.

Left: Irene Swanson proved she still had mad skills with a hula hoop.

SOCK



Left: A 'soda shop' had drinks and goodies with prices we haven't seen since the '50s.

From combat zone to SFSC college professor to gifted singer/songwriter

By **TOM MEISENHEIMER**
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — Adam Martin joined the Army in 2000 and served in combat zones in Iraq. "When I got home safely in 2004 it was a hard adjustment for me. For therapy I started to write songs and self taught myself to play the guitar," he reminisced.

Today, with his friend and mentor Dave Hale who plays bass guitar, their little band named "Blackbird Anthem" plays gigs throughout Highlands County. The duo entertained customers at The Music Box Cafe on Main Street in Avon Park last Friday.

"I met Dave at SFSC (South Florida State College). He played a big part helping me develop as an artist," Martin said. "He has a long history in music and plays multiple instruments."

You can catch Blackbird Anthem back at The Music Box on Friday, Nov. 20 and they will be in Lake Placid at Dock 633 on Friday, Dec. 11 from 8 to 11 p.m.

A question often asked of upcoming musicians is, "What is your 'real' job?" Martin, who has a master's degree in organizational management, a graduate certificate in marketing and an MBA, is a professor at SFSC where he teaches a full load of business classes.

Martin has been married for 20 years and has two daughters. His 14-year-old daughter was the true test of his talent. "I brought her to a recording studio with me last summer and we



had a back-up band," he said. "After she heard me sing, she proudly told me, 'Dad, that's good music.' That, he said, made his day.

His music conveys an image of American life -- the joys and the pain. His songs are often gritty and rugged, telling the stories of love, loss, heartache and the affects of war. His first song, "I Had To Go," is about war and his stint in Iraq. Another song named "Streetlights" was inspired by his mom, telling him

when he was a boy, always to be home by time the streetlights went on.

Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings were his heroes. His favorite band was "Counting Crows." So it was appropriate to name his band "Blackbird Anthem."

"Anthem signifies music being music and ours is a blend of so many genres. Our sound blends, rock, country, folk and blues," Martin commented.

Martin and Hale are beginning to advertise for additional musicians to join their band. They recently hired a full-time band to record an album. They would like to add a drummer and other instruments. A saxophone player joined in recently at The Music Box and it was a nifty blend.

Hale was tape engineer at Woodland Studios in Nashville, ran sound for Charlie Daniels and played bass for rising star Shelby Dressel. Martin performed at Tootsie's Orchid Lounge and the Country Music Hall of Fame and opened for Daniel & The Lion. They plan to pick up more engagements out of Highlands County, but for now don't miss the chance to catch these original guys at the Music Box on Main Street in Avon Park and at Dock 633 in Lake Placid. You will be in for a treat.



Tom Meisenheimer/Highlands Sun

Adam Martin is co-founder of 'Blackbird Anthem', one of the newest musical acts in Highlands County. The band will play at the Music Box restaurant in Avon Park on Nov. 20 and in Lake Placid at Dock 633 on Dec. 11.

SFSC offering Christmas wreath class on Thursday

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Community Education Department is offering a two-hour holiday Christmas wreath workshop from 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 19.

Instructor Ladonna Rodriguez a professional florist will teach participants about proportion, depth, color scheme, preferred placement, and the mechanics involved in creating a permanent wreath.

The Theme is

"Ho-Ho-Ho" and the color scheme is red, white and green. The wreath is approximately 22-24 inches in diameter.

Participants need to bring a pair of wire cutters, all other supplies are included.

The cost of the workshop is \$99, and the course number (CRN) is 11537.

Register in Building B at the Highlands Campus or any SFSC campus or center. For more information, contact Community Education at 863-784-7388 or email

communityeducation@southflorida.edu.

Lost fort to be topic of lecture at SFSC

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — The mystery surrounding the location of Fort Shackelford will be the topic of the next Kissimmee Valley Archaeological and Historical Conservancy lecture at South Florida State College.

Annette Snapp, an archeologist with the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Seminole Indian Museum, will be the conservancy's speaker at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 19, in Building G, Room 101, on SFSC's Highlands Campus. The public is invited at no cost.

Snapp will talk about the findings from an archaeological exploration that set out to locate Fort Shackelford, a Third Seminole War-era fort built on the edge of the Big Cypress National Preserve, but whose precise location remains shrouded in doubt. The talk will also cover the Seminole tribe's efforts over the years to protect important cultural resources.

The U.S. government constructed forts throughout the southern half of Florida in its decades-long war with Seminoles. Fort Lauderdale and Fort Myers endured to grow into cities. But



Courtesy photo

Annette Snapp, an archeologist with the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Seminole Indian Museum, will be the conservancy's speaker at 7 p.m. Thursday.

Fort Shackelford's precise location remains unknown, more than 100 years after its destruction. Snapp earned her doctorate in museum ethnography at Oxford University. She also studied applied anthropology and archaeology at the University of South Florida. For the last 20 years, Snapp has worked as a professional archaeologist in Florida and other southeastern states.

In 2013, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki museum appointed Snapp its operations manager. The museum, located in Clewiston, is home to more than 30,000 artifacts where visitors can learn about the Seminole people and their culture.

The talk is one of a series at SFSC sponsored by the Lake Placid-based conservancy. For more information, call Anne Reynolds at 840-3995.

SFSC's Library to celebrate International Games Day

AVON PARK — Join South Florida State College's Library and over a thousand libraries around the world from noon to 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 20 for the eighth annual celebration of International Games Day@ Your Library.

The SFSC Library is located at 600 W. College Drive, Building Y, Highlands Campus, Avon Park.

In addition to a wide variety of board games, and events suitable for the whole family. The library will

announce their First Annual Epic Twister Competition.

The competition is played on a custom built oversized board, contestants must survive tournament-style elimination rounds to compete for the SFSC Twister Championship.

Visit <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/article/international-games-day-2015> or contact Claire A. Miller at 863-784-7305 or MillerC@southflorida.edu.

SFSC News

Bridge, euchre added to Heartland Games for Active Adults

AVON PARK — For the 2016 Heartland Games for Active Adults, sponsored by South Florida State College and held Jan. 23 through the end of March, bridge and euchre will be offered for the first time.

They will be added to the schedule of sports, including archery, bowling, cycling, golf, racquetball, shuffleboard, swimming, tennis and track and field. It is hoped that with these additions, the games will appeal to even more residents ages 50 and older. Competition in each event is by age and gender.

Bridge and euchre will both be hosted at Tanglewood in March. Resident card sharks quickly stepped up to coordinate the games. Pat Reich will be in charge of bridge, while Evelyn Humphrey and Sandy Haka have agreed to oversee the euchre competition.

For 20 years, residents of Florida's heartland have been invited to maintain a healthy lifestyle by participating in the Heartland Games for Active Adults. SFSC's Community Education Department coordinates the games each year.

Visit www.southflorida.edu/heartlandgames for more information.



COURTESY PHOTO

A crew works to install the new "W" sign on the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts at SFSC.

New signage emblazons SFSC theater

AVON PARK — A sign crew recently put the finishing touches on new signage for South Florida State College's theater. Removal of previous signage started on Nov. 2. The crew has since hoisted a 10-foot-wide circular sign emblazoned with a cursive-style "W" atop the building's west-facing façade and added new lettering next to the sign.

On Oct. 1, South Florida State College announced a new name for its performing arts venue. Formerly known as the SFSC Theatre for the Performing Arts, it took on a new name to recognize local businessman, Alan Jay Wildstein, for a major gift to SFSC's \$10 million capital campaign, the Partnership Project. Now known as the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts at SFSC, the 1,460-seat theater com-

plex needed new signs to match its new name.

"The work is complete and we're ready for Jay Leno," said Cindy Garren, director, SFSC Cultural Programs.

To celebrate and honor the donor, the theater will present an inaugural performance featuring acclaimed television late night show host, admired stand-up comedian, and pioneering car builder and mechanic, Jay Leno.

The performance will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday.

Donny Most, best known as Ralph Malph from the television program "Happy Days," opens the show. Most is currently touring the country with his jazz sextet performing standards from the Great American Songbook.

Tickets start at \$55 and are available online at sfs-carts.org or by visiting the SFSC Box Office in front of the theatre.

Renaming process complete for SFSC Theatre

Jay Leno to christen newly named venue with Nov. 19 show

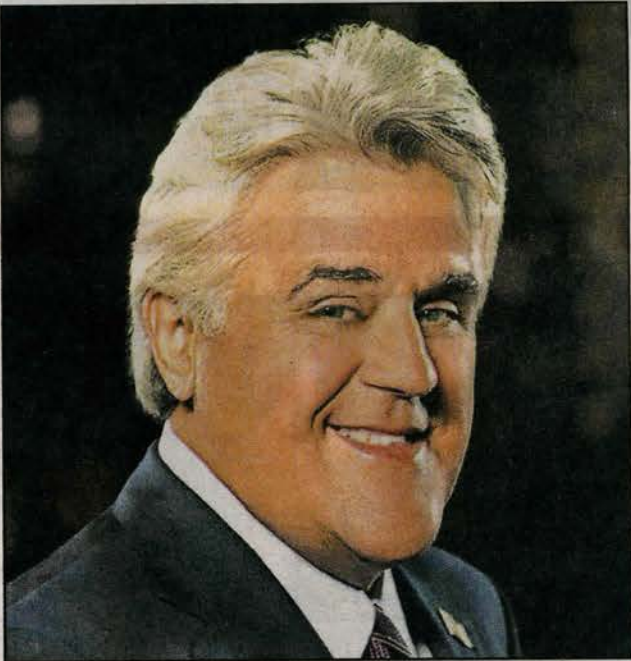
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-SUN

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To celebrate and honor the donor, the theater will present Leno as its inaugural performance. The acclaimed television late night show host, admired stand-up comedian, and



NBC photo by Mitchell Haaseth

Jay Leno will appear Thursday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m., at South Florida State College's 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts.

pioneering car builder and mechanic will be perform Thursday, Nov. 19, at 7 p.m.

Donny Most, best known as Ralph Malph from the television program "Happy Days," opens the show. Most is currently touring the country with his jazz sextet performing standards

from the Great American Songbook.

Tickets for the performance start at \$55 and are available online at sfscarts.org or by visiting the SFSC Box Office in front of the theatre.

The Box Office is open Monday through Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.



Courtesy photo

Crews works to attach the 'W' to the front of the South Florida State College Performing Arts Center to finish the process of naming it in honor of Alan Jay Wildstein.

■ COLLEGES: **SFSC Skins Game**

Playing for skins, higher education

Inaugural SFSC golf fundraiser draws big field

By **JAMES TAYLOR**
CORRESPONDENT

SEBRING — A total of 57 golfers hit the course last Saturday to help higher education.

And, judging by the turnout and money raised, the inaugural South Florida State College Skins Game at the Sun 'N Lake Golf Club's Turtle Run Course in Sebring was a big success.

SFSC athletic director Rick Hitt said that the money raised in the two-person scramble will benefit the college's athletic program and help student-athletes in a variety of other ways.

Hitt said a total of 22 teams participated, with 12 of the team

SKINS GAME

Following are the winners in the South Florida State College Skins Game last Saturday at the Sun 'N Lake Golf Club's Turtle Run Course in Sebring:

- **1st flight** — Steve Ready, Gary Newcomb, 63.
- **2nd flight** — Cullen Lovett, Corbin Hoffner, 69, match of cards.
- **3rd flight** — Scott Hitt, Jim Doty, 66.

taking home skins.

"It has been a very enjoyable day and we had a nice first-year turnout," Hitt said. "Weather has been fantastic and I am real grateful for the opportunity to do it and the folks that played in it."

Steve Ready and Gary Newcomb took first place in the first

SKINS | 10



James Taylor/News-Sun

From left, Mike Styles, Ian Phillips, Travis Kennedy and Rick Whidden compete in the inaugural South Florida State College Skins Game last Saturday at the Sun 'N Lake Golf Club in Sebring.



Photos by James Taylor/News-Sun

Steve Ready watches as Gary Newcomb sinks a birdie from 30 feet on Hole No. 2 in the SFSC Skins game at Sun 'N Lake Golf Club's Turtle Run Course in Sebring. The duo won the first flight championship.

SKINS

FROM PAGE 1

flight, scoring a 63 and picking up skins on the 2nd, 11th and 12th holes. Andrew Seeman and John Sedlock scored a 66, while picking up a skin on Hole No. 17.

In the second flight, Cullen Lovett and Corbin Hoffner scored a 69 and won on a match of cards over Tommy Lovett and Lisa Lovett. The Lovetts picked up a skin on Hole No. 3.

Scott Hitt and Jim Doty finished first in the third flight with a score of 66, while Harold Hitt and Chad Long finished second with a 70. Harold Hitt and Long won skins on the 16th and 17th holes.

In the closest-to-the-pin contest, Matt

Devlin took first place in the first flight; Ian Phillips, first, second flight; and Reed Heath, first, third flight.

"We are real appreciative of the Sun 'N Lake group and (head professional) Andy Kesling; they have been hospitable and done a great job helping to put this together for the first time," Rick Hitt said.

"I am thankful to our college president, Dr. Thomas Leitzel, who welcomed the group this morning," Rick Hitt said, "(and) our student-athletes who came out to help

with bags and sold some 50/50 tickets and things like that."

Though none

student-athletes golfed in the event because they were there to help support the event, Hitt said that nine SFSC alumni did participate and that was nice to see.

"We hope to grow it year after year," Rick Hitt said, "and expand the tournament in both size of the field and the amount of players in the future."

Hitt also said he was very grateful for the 22 teams that participated and was thankful for the tournament sponsors: SFSC Board of Trustees, John C. Polk, Inc., Chip Smooth Enterprises and Coca-Cola.

The second annual South Florida State College Skins Game is scheduled for Nov. 19, 2016, Hitt said.

— *News-Sun Sports Editor Jeff Gardenour contributed to this story.*



RICK HITT

of the SFSC



Rick Whidden hits an approach shot during the SFSC Skins Game last Saturday at the Sun 'N Lake Golf Club in Sebring.



Mike Styles sinks a short putt during the SFSC Skins Game last Saturday at the Sun 'N Lake Golf Club in Sebring.

Big Brothers Big Sisters gets new coordinator

Two board members and a mentor manager also named

BY JAY MEISEL
Highlands Today

SEBRING — In past years, Shawn Beumel has worked as a teacher in Highlands County and a manager for the Florida Department of Children Services.

Now, she's become the community resources director for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands/Hardee counties after having worked at a job that did not directly involve children.

"I needed a break," she said, but she believes her new position is "probably where I belong."

Along with Beumel are two new board members — Kimberly Batty-Herbert, the dean of arts and sciences at South Florida State College; and Birdy Whitehouse, the property manager of Highlands Ridge Holdings.

Batty-Herbert said she wants to help with programming and fundraising and help create new programs. Whitehouse wants to help the program in any way, including fundraising and finding new volunteers.

Both Batty-Herbert and Whitehouse said their main goals are to help promote the organization and find more "big brothers" and "big sisters," to serve as mentors. Both are also big sisters with the organization.

Currently, they have 68 youth matched with big brothers and big sisters. Of those, 64 are in Highlands County and four in Hardee County.

There are also 64 children waiting to be matched with



COURTESY PHOTO

From left are Jessica Messner, Shawn Beumel, Kimberly Batty-Herbert and Birdy Whitehouse, all of whom are taking on new duties with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands/Hardee counties. Messner is the mentor manager for the organization and Beumel is community resources director. Batty-Herbert and Whitehouse have been named new board members.

mentors. Sixty of those are in Highlands County.

Jessica Messner, a new mentor manager, previously worked as a case manager at the Highlands Youth Academy.

She said she works at increasing outreach to the community because so many youth need big brothers and big sisters.

The youth are referred to the organization by a variety of sources, she said. Sometimes, single parents contact them about their children needing a mentor, she said. Other times, the Florida Department of Children and Family Services or the Juvenile Justice System make

the referral, she said.

Sometimes recruiting big brothers and big sisters is hard because people believe there's a much larger time commitment than is actually required, Beumel said. The big brother/big sister can just spend some time helping the student with a subject in school, she said.

Anyone interested in becoming a big brother/big sister can call (863) 402-9001 or send an email to jyoung@bbbssun.org or visit the office at 279 U.S. 27 N, Sebring. It is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

jmeisel@highlandstoday.com
(863) 386-5834

Jay Leno comes to SFSC Theatre

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

AVON PARK — Acclaimed TV late night talk show host, stand-up comedian, best-selling children's book author, corporate speaker, TV and movie voice-over artist, pioneering car builder and mechanic, and philanthropist Jay Leno will appear Thursday, Nov. 19 at 7 p.m. at South Florida State College's 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, Highlands Campus.

Tickets, priced at \$55, \$70, \$80 and \$98, are available online at www.sfscarts.org

or by calling the SFSC box office at 863-784-7178. Ample free parking is available.

Leno, who dominated late-night television ratings for two decades, has returned to television with a new weekly, one-hour CNBC primetime series, "Jay Leno's Garage." The series covers all things automotive including classic cars, super cars, restoration projects, road tests, investments, and the inner workings of the car collectors' market.

"Jay Leno's Garage" explores the world of cars, never forgetting

that it's the people behind the wheel who provide the real stories. Leno will travel the country on the hunt for the car world's most radical rides and highlight the passion and the stories behind them.

Honored by the Television Academy with an Emmy for "Outstanding Comedy, Variety or Music Series" Leno is the recipient of the People's Choice Award and a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. He is also the first person to drive the pace car of all major NASCAR events.

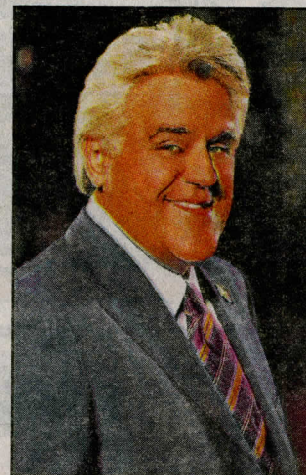
Opening the performance is Don Most, who is best known for his co-starring role as Ralph Malph on the long-running television series "Happy Days."

Most is currently touring the country with his jazz sextet performing standards from the Great American Songbook. The Hollywood Times calls his show "first rate" and "hotter than July." Recently, Most was seen in a recurring role on the hit TV show, "Glee," as well as starring roles in the indie film, "The Yankles," and "Chez

Upshaw," starring Kevin Pollack and Illeana Douglas.

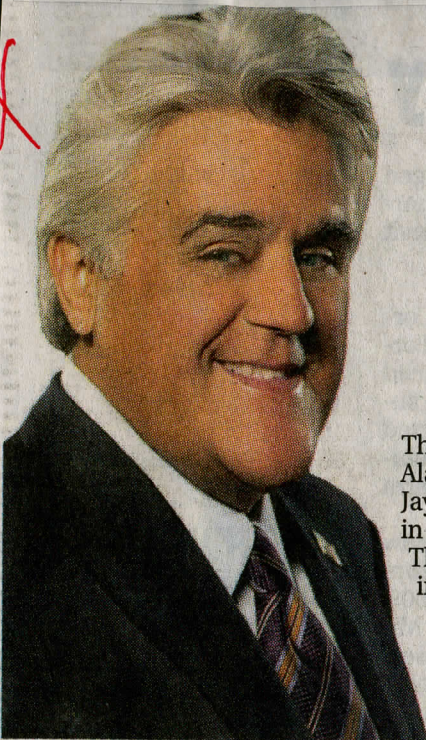
SFSC presents a cultural arts series of performances from November through April. Upcoming performances include The Midtown Men on Dec. 5; Blue Suede Shoes on Jan. 9; The Willis Clan on Jan. 23; The Buddy Holly Story on Feb. 4; Ballroom: South Beach Style on Feb. 16; Saturday Night Fever on Feb. 24; and Bobby Vinton on March 22.

For season information and videos, visit www.sfscarts.org.



NBC photo by Mitchell Haaseth

Jay Leno will appear Thursday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m., at South Florida State College's 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts



Jay Leno

Leno delivers laughs at SFSC special event

BY MARC VALERO

Highlands Today

AVON PARK — A capacity crowd turned out Thursday evening to recognize businessman Alan Jay Wildstein and see legendary funny man Jay Leno and “Happy Days” actor Donny Most in an event highlighted by the official naming of The Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts at South Florida State College.

College President Thomas Leitzel said it was a “thrill” to recognize Wildstein and his family for the opportunity they provided to the college through the Partnership Project.

The project is already at the halfway mark

of its goal to raise \$10 million, he said.

“The reason why we are there at the halfway point is due to the generosity of a very special gentlemen that we will be celebrating tonight,” Leitzel said.

Wildstein thanked the college’s administration and noted the support of his family members in his partnership with the college and the South Florida State Collage Foundation.

“I am so proud to be part of the school,” he said. “I am so proud to be part of this community.”

Leno and Most joined Wildstein and the Wildstein family at center stage where they pressed a

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Leno

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button that retracted a drape revealing the "Wildstein Center" lettering and "W" logo above the stage.

When Leno took the stage, he delivered nonstop laughs with the classic comic timing and gestures he has honed from years as a stand-up comedian and about 20 years as host of "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

The presidential race offered comic fodder with comments about Jeb Bush, Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton.

He quipped the Elton John Foundation honored Clinton as the candidate who looked the most like Elton John.

Leno offered plenty of laughs with his take on America's obesity epidemic and the high-calorie, fast-food offerings that include a hamburger with a cheese steak piled on top.

He poked fun at prescription drug commercials, sports and performance-enhancing drugs, airport pat-down searches and current events.

The first part of his nearly 90-minute performance featured the quick hit jokes similar to his Tonight Show monologues.

Then he segued into funny stories about his childhood and his parents.

"Happy Days" actor Donny Most, who opened for Leno, took the audience back in time to the music of the swinging jazz vocalists of 1940s and 1950s.

Backed by an eight-piece band of top-notch musicians, Most sang tunes like Frank Sinatra's "I've Got You Under My Skin," displaying the classic nuance and phrasing Sinatra employed on the up-tempo song.

On the quieter side, Most performed "It Had to Be You," in a soft-jazz style backed only by piano, and stand-up acoustic bass, guitar and drums, with the drummer using brushes.

Most's musical director joined in later on the tenor saxophone.

Steve Ashley said he enjoyed the show.

"I have always liked Jay Leno," he said. "When he was on TV, I used to watch him just about every night."

"Tonight, his show was just as good as when he was on TV. It is amazing how he can come up with all of those stories and ad lib like that."

Most was very good, Ashley said. "I wasn't expecting that," he said. "That was a good way to start the program."

Heartland Games for Active Adults sponsors sought

AVON PARK — The 2016 Heartland Games for Active Adults is seeking businesses and individuals to join with South Florida State College as sponsors. Sponsorship levels are \$1,000 for gold, \$500 for silver, and bronze is \$250. The games takes place throughout Highlands County the months of January, February, and March.

Alan Holmes of Edward Jones was first to sign on as a gold sponsor, followed by Newsom Eye Center. Silver sponsors already recruited include Florida Hospital, Dr. Thakkar, and Dr. Patel, according to newly appointed Games Ambassador Neil Simpson.

For information, or to sign on as a sponsor, contact Simpson at 863-382-8349 or nsimp76@gmail.com, or contact games coordinator Lorrie Key at 863-784-7033 or lorrie.key@southflorida.edu.

Xcel gearing up for year

Volleyball club still accepting players for the season

BY RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Special to Highlands Today

AVON PARK — Xcel Volleyball Club held player evaluations Saturday in the South Florida State College gym. Xcel is a non-profit organization and a developmental and competitive volleyball club for young girls ages from 8 to 18.

The idea behind the club is to give players an opportunity to play in the traditional offseason.

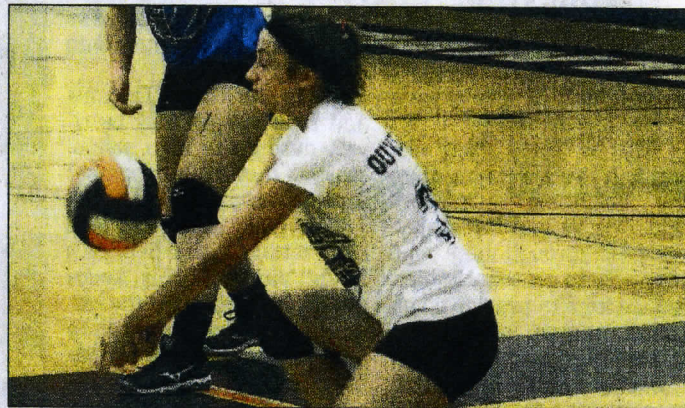
"We do this to keep our girls in shape and to keep them playing year-round," said Charlotte Bauder, Xcel assistant director, who is also coach of Lake Placid. "I like it because it gives me an opportunity to have some of my girls back from previous years. I attribute that to a lot of the success we have had in the last three years in the county. I've had a majority of my high school players play for Xcel or another volleyball club."

Saturday was a day of evaluations to determine which team players would be placed on.

"Before we put any girls on a team they have to come here

and get registered so we know who is interested," said Kim Crawford, executive director, who also serves as the coach for the South Florida State College Panthers. "Xcel rents this gym facility from South Florida State College and this is where we will have all our practices. Practices are usually Monday thru Thursday and they are always in the evening."

Practices will begin Nov. 30 and Crawford said there is still time for players to register by contacting her at crawford@xcelvolleyball.net or (863) 835-2377. There is also information **VOLLEYBALL, Page 2**



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Gabby Ouverson goes low to make a dig during Xcel Volleyball Club's evaluation day on Saturday.

Volleyball

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on the club's website at www.xcelvolleyball.net.

"This is Xcel's third season and I've been here from the beginning," Crawford said. "We've had three players pass through here who were able to get scholarships. We are here to provide a volleyball program for girls who want to play."

Bauder said the opportunity to play against players that they normally see is enjoyable.

"The tournaments are a lot of fun and filled with a lot of action in a short amount of time," she said. "They can play up to seven games in a day. They get a lot of playing time and experience. They get to play a lot of other people other than just this area and the area that we always play. They get to meet people and it is just a great experience."

Lake Placid's Melina Oxer has been with Xcel before and said it is a great experience.

"Xcel is a club team that has several teams in different age groups, and we travel around to play other teams in Florida," she said. "We go to tournaments and it is just a great bonding experience."

She said the evaluations can be a bit nerve-racking for new players, but you quickly get over it.

"This can be a little intimidating at first for the new girls, but once you get to know everybody the coaches are amazing and the players are open and are very welcoming," she said. "The coaches and players become like part of your family. Playing year-round definitely helps me when I play for Lake

Placid High School. It is important to play year-round so you always have your hand on the ball."

While the Green Dragons and Blue Streaks may be rivals during the high school season, they come together for club season.

"I'm really excited, I love club season," said Sebring's Emily Vickers. "This keeps me in shape through the off-season and builds my skills to help me when I play for Sebring High School. Xcel is just a big family. We are all really close and the tournaments are so much fun. There is never any drama on any of my teams, which is always fun."

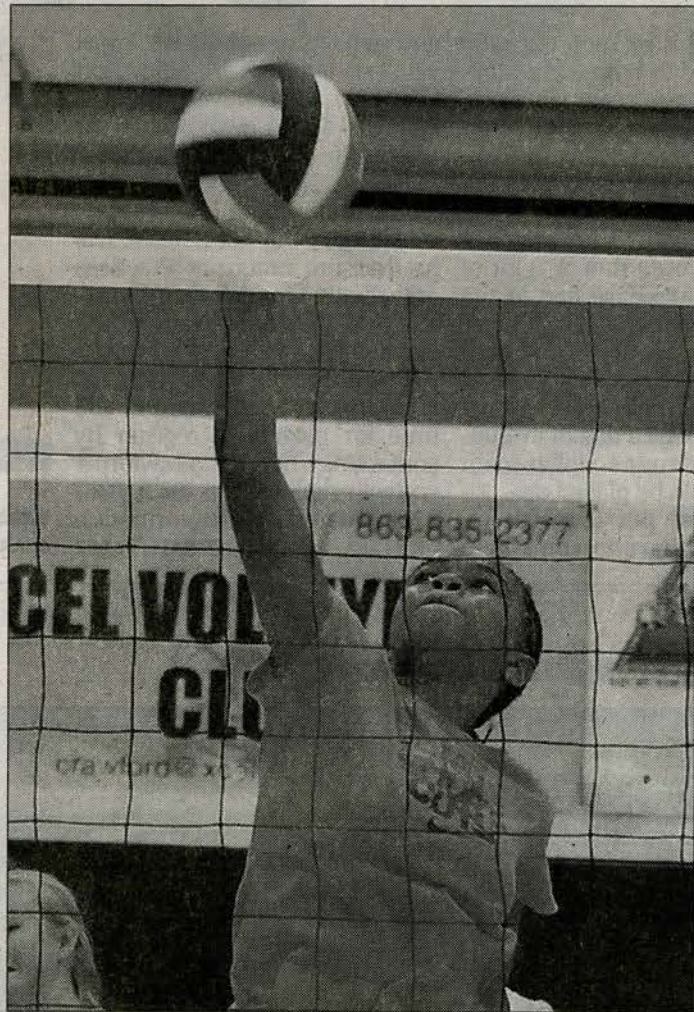
Vickers said working with Crawford was a pleasure.

"She is always at all the events and helps us all the time," she said. "She knows what the college recruiters are looking for and always lets us know new techniques and things like to improve our game. I'm sure I will learn something new this season."

Kenya Hodge, who is a coach at Frostproof High School, wanted her daughter, Jayla Greene, to have the opportunity to play on a club team.

"I was looking for a club for my 12-year-old daughter and Xcel was highly recommended," Hodge said. "I'm hoping that this program will teach her more skills. I am her coach, but I'm her mom as well, and sometimes she gets overwhelmed with me, so with someone else she does much better. I think Xcel will help her in that perspective and build the skills she needs to continue playing and to excel in the game."

Bauder said working with a college coach like Crawford also gives her insight to what college coaches are looking



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Jayla Greene goes up for a spike during Saturday's Xcel Volleyball Club evaluations at South Florida State College.

for, which will definitely help when it comes to getting her players on a college team.

"I'm excited to be working with coach Kim Crawford again," she said. "We coached together for six or seven seasons before I started coaching at high school level. Being able to work with her again is great and being able to learn the college aspect for recruiting and things like that. With our relationship, I've learned so much in the past few years on what I need to for my girls to get them to the next level."

Bauder was also hopeful that having a volleyball club locally would get more younger players interested in the sport.

"This program is for girls to start playing volleyball at a younger age and for volleyball to be more well known," she said. "A lot of girls don't know about volleyball and don't start until middle school, and that is almost too late. This is the place for them learn the fundamentals and to have fun."

The club season will last into May.



Courtesy photos

Members of South Florida State College's inaugural women's cross country team, from left, Savannah Walter, Grace Miller, Cali Gumpel, Alexis Armstead and Julia Soto, advanced to and finished 25th in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I Championships this season. Below, right: South Florida State College's Cali Gumpel, in black running pants, races during this month's NJCAA Division I Women's Cross Country Championships in Fort Dodge, Iowa. All five SFSC runners completed the race in bitter cold conditions.

Thankful to be a Panther

First-year team
finishes 25th
nationally

By JAMES TAYLOR
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — A special group of runners and coaches have a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving.

Just three months after being introduced as South Florida State College's first women's cross country team, Savannah Walter, Grace Miller, Cali Gumpel, Alexis Armstead and Julia Soto ran their way into history when they helped the Panthers finish 25th in the National



Members of South Florida State College's women's cross country team relax for a moment at this month's NJCAA Women's Cross Country National Championships in Iowa.

Junior College Athletic Association Division I Women's Cross Country Championships in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

The team, which is used to running the flat courses of Florida,



SFSC CROSS COUNTRY

- **What:** South Florida State College women's cross country team.
- **Season:** First.
- **Coach:** Krista Schult.
- **Runners:** Savannah Walter, Grace Miller, Cali Gumpel, Alexis Armstead, Julia Soto.
- **Claim to fame:** Finished in the top 25 in the Coaches Poll and placed 25th in the National Junior College Athletic Association Division I Women's Cross Country Championships this month in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

PANTHER

FROM PAGE 1

braved biting cold temperatures and hilly terrain to crack the top 25. It was a stunning finish for a first-year program that fielded only five runners all season, but made it to the final meet of the year.

"First and foremost, I want to say thank you to the ladies on the team," said SFSC coach Krista Schult. "They have set the bar extremely high for what is going to be expected in years to come."

The Panthers made a statement at Nationals. Schult was impressed by how there was only 1 minute, 12 seconds that

separated the Panthers' first and fifth runners.

"If you looked at all the other teams in the top 25, we had one of the smallest spreads between first place and fifth place," Schult said. "So, though their times were not what we hoped they would be, they ran really well as a team."

Miller led the way, finishing 77th with a 5K (3.1 miles) time of 20:25. Armstead finished 133rd (21:12); Walter, 140th (21:17); Gumpel, 145th (21:21); and Soto, 163rd (21:37).

"I've always been told that your first time going to states/nationals will never be forgotten," Miller said. "I found this true for high school and I most definitely find it true for college.

"Nationals was such a thrill, and I am so thankful to have had the opportunity to run with four of my best friends and teammates in Iowa," Miller said. "I've made countless memories this season, and I can only imagine what next season will be like."

Though the season is over, Schult is not resting. With nine of 10 slots confirmed for next year's team, Schult admits the bar has risen for SFSC.

"We had to be in the Coaches Top 25 poll to be considered qualified and we squeaked in at 25," Schult said. "So, obviously, next year our goal is not to just squeak by. Let's make it more of a statement, like top 20."