

The Artists' Group workshops upcoming

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

The Artists' Group has several upcoming workshops. The cost per class is \$35, which includes all supplies and canvases needed for the painting. Light refreshments will be served. All workshops will be held in the Artists' Group Studio, located inside the Hotel Jacaranda in downtown Avon Park. For more information or to register, please visit the studio or call 863-784-7346.

On Wednesday, Nov. 15, between 1 and 4 p.m., Louise Weis will be doing an acrylic workshop "Autumn Leaves."

Wednesday, Dec. 6, between 1 and 4 p.m., Nancy Adams will be doing an oil painting class,



Louise Weis' "Autumn Leaves."

"Joy to the World," while Weis will lead an acrylic workshop on Wednesday,

Dec. 13, between 1 and 4 p.m. to paint "Christmas Tree."



Nancy Adams' "Joy to the World."

COURTESY PHOTO

SFSC salutes those who served at Veterans Day Program

By MARC VALERO
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — It was cloudy skies, but a clear message at the South Florida State College Veterans Day Program on Friday morning that U.S. military veterans served with pride and commitment to their country whose citizens honor their efforts and sacrifices.

SFSC District Board of Trustees Chair Timothy Backer offered the welcome to those in attendance in front of the flagpoles at the Highlands campus.

"The good Lord has blessed us with a fantastic day to celebrate our veterans," he said.

Backer noted there are over 21 million veterans in the United States with more than 9 million of them over the age of 65.

"We celebrate and

thank all of America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country and willingness to serve and sacrifice for us," Backer said. "But, our commitment to honoring veterans should not just be on Veterans Day. It should be all year round.

"The flag still stands strong, firm and beautiful due to the enormous efforts and sacrifices made by millions of veterans. We salute them and honor them. Let us remember the sacrifices made by our military so that we can have a safer life. No amount of appreciation will be sufficient to honor them.

Two SFCC students spoke of their experiences of serving in the military — U.S. Air Force veteran Kaelyn Fort and U.S. Marine Corps veteran Christopher Wingate.

Fort said the Air Force became her home away

from home.

"No matter what I did or where I went, I quickly realized I will always have a family. Being in the military has given me more brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers than I could ever ask for."

Wingate noted the Marine Corps values of "honor, courage and commitment" came to mind as he prepared his speech, which were the values in-bedded in him many years ago. Other values such as duty, sacrifice and selflessness and many others also came to mind.

"But, these values didn't quite capture what it means to be a veteran," he said. "What truly captures the meaning of being a veteran is pride."

Pride in knowing they have answered the call to those in need, Wingate said.

"Pride in having served



MARC VALERO/STAFF

The Avon Park High School Air Force JROTC presents the colors at the Veterans Day program on Friday morning at South Florida State College, Avon Park.

along with the bravest men and women our great nation had to offer and pride in knowing those who gave their lives were not lost in vain," he said. "This Veterans Day we hold our heads high and remember that, although we may no longer wear the uniform, the pride we share will remind us that we are now and forever will be — veterans."

Local VW Club awards SFSC student with a scholarship

SPECIAL TO THE HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — Joseph Hines, a student in South Florida State College's Automotive Service Technology program, recently received a \$500 scholarship made possible by the VW Club of Highlands County through a donation to the SFSC Foundation.

In early 2016, after 15 years of retail and

management experience, Hines decided to re-enter college to provide a better future for his family. He plans to enter the automotive industry with a "can do" attitude, no matter where he begins his career and hopes to become a lead technician or even enter management if the opportunity becomes available.

"Years from now, I will be able to show

my children that hard work, determination, and perseverance will always build you up and make you a better person," Hines said. "I plan to teach my family what I have learned and show them the importance of continuing higher education after graduation. They don't need to go through the struggles I endured after originally leaving college

after only a few classes over a decade and a half ago."

"We are so grateful to the VW Club of Highlands County for its generous donation to our Automotive Service Technology program at SFSC," said Jamie Bateman, executive director, SFSC Institutional Advancement, who oversees the SFSC

Foundation. "We have so many amazing students like Joseph. When an organization like this donates toward a student's education, it makes a huge impact in their life. We're proud of Joseph and know that with his drive and determination, he will be successful in this industry."

The SFSC Foundation, Inc. is a private, nonprofit

corporation that encourages individuals and organizations to make gifts and grants to SFSC. Each year, the SFSC Foundation transfers gift and investment income to SFSC to support campus priorities, such as scholarships, building projects, and the initiatives of specific programs. To donate to the SFSC Foundation, call 863-453-3133.

SFSC's Corporate Education offers fall and spring courses

SPECIAL TO THE HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

South Florida State College's Corporate Education Department is offering a variety of classes for the fall and spring term.

In the Commercial Vehicle Driving course, participants learn Department of Transportation (DOT) rules and regulations, safety, vehicle systems, safe vehicle operation, and logs, and other legal topics of trucking and transportation. This eight-week course provides quality instruction on a short-term basis to prepare students for the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) examination and entry-level employment within the industry. The CDL examination is administered by SFSC as part of the program. The course is offered Monday through Thursday, Dec. 11 through Feb. 6, Crews Center, Highlands Campus. The cost \$3,500, and the course number (CRN) is 11468.

In the Nursing Assistant Certification course, participants learn competence,

compassion, confidence, conscience, commitment, and culture. Develop specific knowledge and skills to become a professional nursing assistant. Receive rigorous training, individualized instruction, and practice in the clinical environment. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have acquired the technical and academic knowledge needed for employability. The course is offered Wednesdays, Jan. 3 through Feb. 13. The cost is \$999, and the course number (CRN) is 21361. Contact hours are 120. Contact CareerSource Heartland for information on financial aid assistance at 863-385-3672 ext. 340.

South Florida State College, in conjunction with the Online Training Institute, offers online insurance pre-license, insurance designation and insurance continuing education courses. The courses offered under Insurance Pre-license and Insurance Designation are State approved and comply with state education requirements for licensure. Upon successful

completion of the course and final examination, participants names will be sent to the Florida Department of Insurance fulfilling the required course pre-requisite.

The courses offered under the Continuing Education category are all state-approved insurance continuing education courses. Study when you want 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, self-paced courses with guided learning and instructor, start and stop as often as needed. All courses are completely online; no software install or run. The courses are offered through SFSC Online Training at sfsc.oltraining.com. Receive immediate access to courses when you purchase online using credit/debit, or Paypal.

Register for classes in Building B, on the Highlands Campus or any SFSC campus or center. For more information on this or any other Community Education classes, contact Corporate and Community Education at 863-784-7388 or email CommunityEducation@southflorida.edu

Scott reappoints Wright to SFSC Board of Trustees

By **MARC VALERO**

STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — Gov. Rick Scott announced recently the reappointment of Joe Wright to the South Florida State College District Board of Trustees.

The press release stated, Wright, 61, of Avon Park, is the president of V&W Farms Inc.

He received his bachelor's, master's and juris doctorate from the University of Florida. Wright is reappointed for a term beginning Nov. 9, 2017 and ending May 31, 2019.

The appointment is subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

The SFSC website notes that Wright was appointed to the board in 2011 and represents Highlands County.

He has been the president of V&W Farms of Delray Beach since 1988, and president and board chairman of Southeast Milk Inc. since 1997.

Wright has been a member of the board of directors of the National Milk Producers Federation since 1997. He has been a member of the board of managers for Gustafson's L.L.C. and NAD L.L.C. since 2004 and 2005, respectively. He was director and vice president of Florida Dairy Farmers.

A lesson in jazz



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Emanon from left: Doug Andrews, Stan Mulder, Rocky Tatarelli, Frankie Tatarelli, Manny Patino, Martin Rimaldi and Dave Naylor.

Emanon shares its musical experience with students

AVON PARK — Take seven creative musicians and the music charts of timeless standards, and the result is toe tapping jazz from Emanon.

The group's members come from diverse backgrounds but communicate wonderfully in the universal language of music.

Emanon offered a brief performance, along with a question and answer session, recently in the Green Room behind the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts.

A few students attended the session. They had few questions, but were all ears for the songs Emanon performed and the talk about jazz music.

The group's keyboard player Doug Andrews spoke of the behind-the-scenes planning in



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Manny Patino takes a solo on his six-string electric bass guitar.

getting everyone on the same musical page.

He spoke of the preparation

involved the first time he performed with a new member or group.

He was coming from Nevada, Andrews said. "I sent him a few charts ahead of time a couple of days ago and he has looked at them and we just talked through the stuff we are going to do.

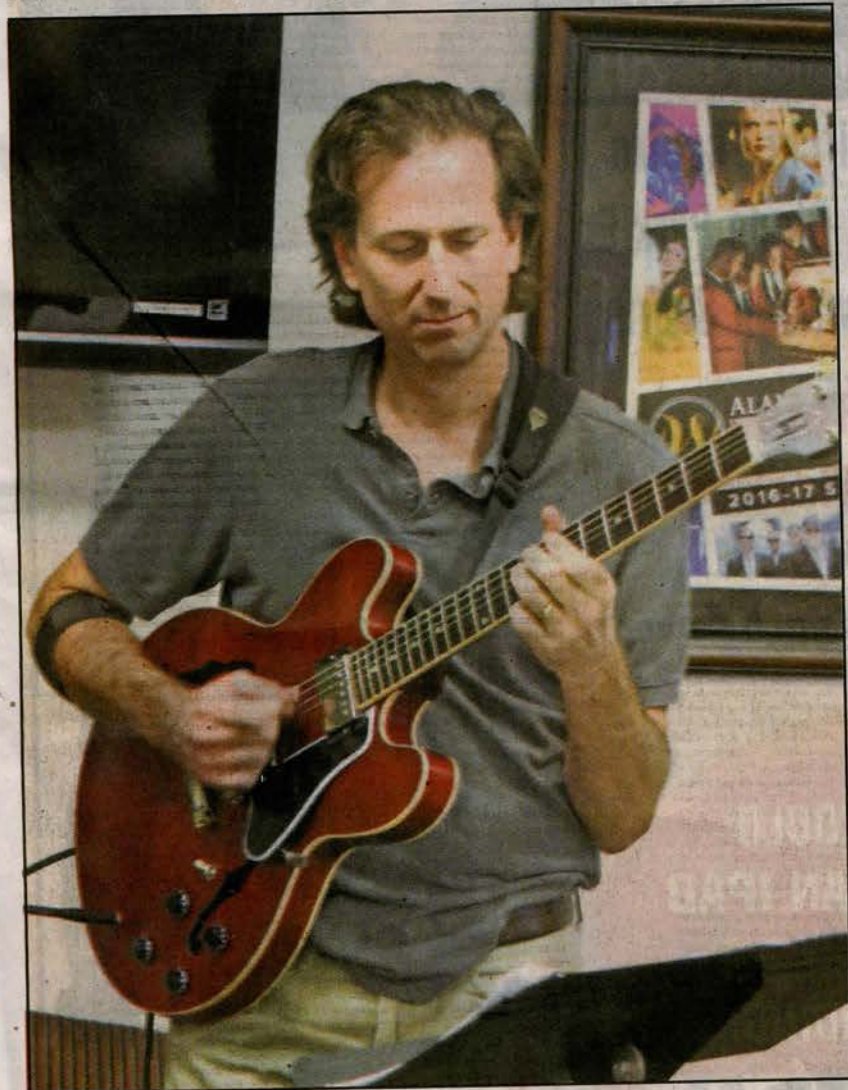
"That is one of the things with jazz musicians is that we are pretty good, pun intended, at improvising - you know going 'on the fly' and we will do that while we are playing, there will be constant communication, not necessarily vocally. We all listen to each other."

As he mentioned in class, Andrews said, there is a communication between musicians. If one band member plays something, the others will pick up on it and add to it.

The group kicked off with a swing tune — Duke Ellington's "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," and proceeded to demonstrate different styles of jazz such as a bossa nova version of "S Wonderful" and a jazz/funk take on "Summertime," from "Porgy and Bess."

A student asked how they decided to become musicians.

Some of the answers were "the music chooses you," and "you do it for yourself and then you get with other musicians to make



Emanon guitarist Martin Rimaldi.

MUSICAL

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the music happen. It's a lonely life for many people.

Trumpeter Dave Naylor noted that music is communal art.

Andrews, who cofounded Emanon with Naylor six years ago, teaches music appreciation on SFSC's Highlands Campus.

His name will sound familiar to many longtime residents: For years, Andrews headed up SFSC's Cultural Programs department, booking performing acts and managing its theater productions until his retirement in 2013.

The members of Emanon are: Dave Naylor, trumpet; brothers Frankie Tatarelli, alto sax; and Rocky Tatarelli, tenor sax; Manny Patino, bass guitar; Martin Rimaldi, guitar; Doug Andrews, electric piano; and Stan Mulder, drums.



MARC VALERO/STAFF

From left: Brothers Rocky Tatarelli and Frankie Tatarelli on the tenor and alto sax, respectively.

Scott's budget offers a boost for SFSC and Highlands schools

By **MARC VALERO**

STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Governor Rick Scott's proposed budget would provide a boost in student funding for Highlands County District Schools and about a 3 percent increase for South Florida State College, but the Legislative session will likely result in some changes from the proposal.

Assistant Superintendent of Business Operations Mike Averyt said he was aware of Governor Scott's proposal to boost student funding by \$200 per student, which would be a \$2.5 million increase for the district.

The governor's proposal is always higher than the Legislature's

BUDGET

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budget, which doesn't always follow the governor's plan, he noted. "So until we see what comes out of the Legislature we don't get too excited."

Scott's budget proposal totals \$87.4 billion and includes \$180 million in tax cuts and increased education spending.

Scott is calling for a \$200 increase in per-student funding for Florida's pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade school system. The proposal would

increase per-student spending to \$7,497, a 2.74 percent increase.

The \$770 million increase, which would cover the cost of an additional 27,000 new students, includes \$534 million in increased local property tax revenue. House leaders have characterized the rise in local property tax collections as a tax increase, calling for the tax rate to be rolled back to reflect the increase.

Scott's budget would restore a \$30 million cut in the current budget for state and community colleges and would include a \$30 million increase. It would provide a total of \$120 million in performance funding for the 28-school system.

Scott's budget does not include a tuition increase for state colleges or universities. Scott supports legislation that would permanently cover full tuition and fees for the highest-performing Bright Futures scholarship recipients and allow them to attend summer school.

South Florida State



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Governor Rick Scott's proposed budget, if approved 'as is' by the Legislature, would provide a 3 percent increase in state funding for South Florida State College.

College Vice President of Administrative Services Glenn Little said the Legislature, the House and Senate, will look at the governor's budget and then proceed with their budget process. So the governor's proposal will likely not be the final budget.

SFSC is very pleased

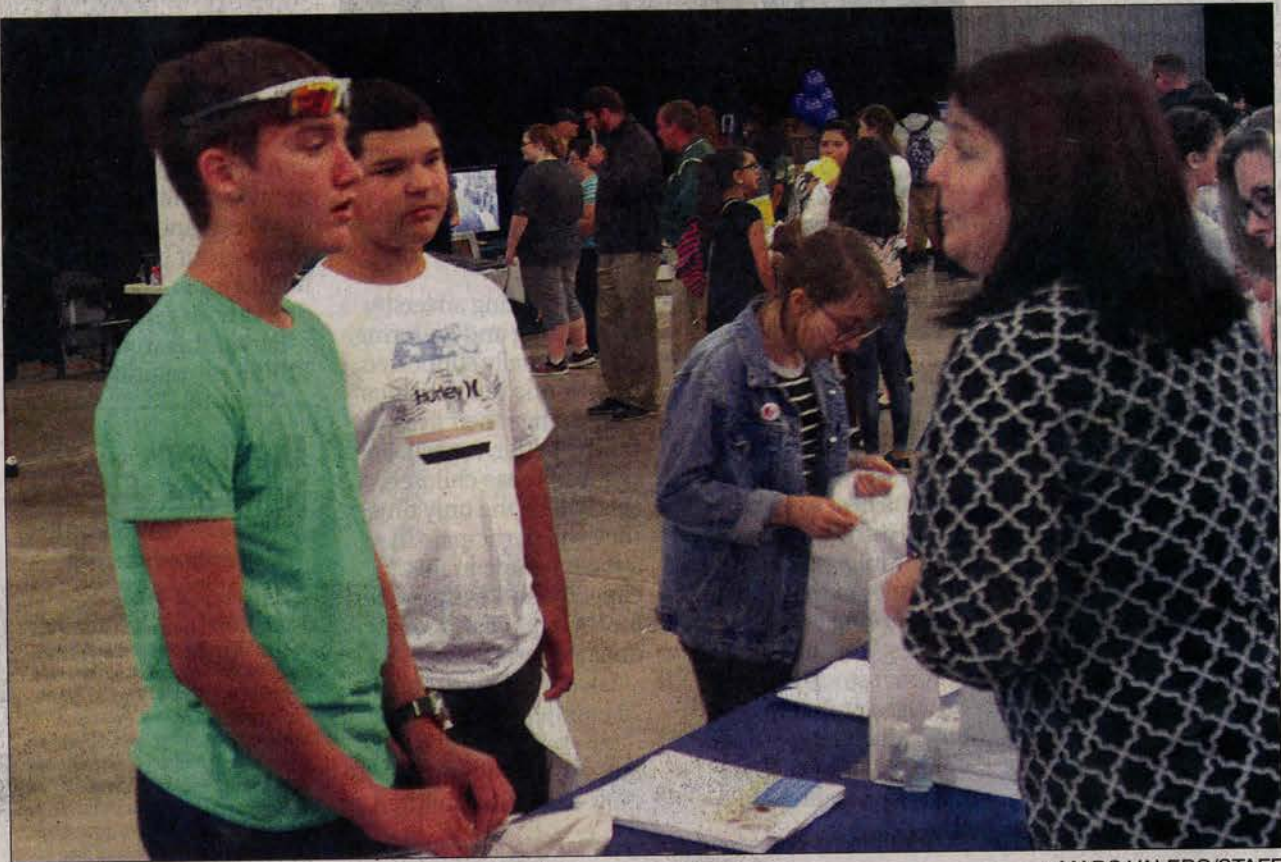
with the governor's budget, which offers about a 3 percent increase in state funding for the college, Little said. Scott is still holding the line with no increase on tuition and fees, which is good for students and parents.

Scott also put a little more money, increasing

\$10 million to \$14 million, in industry certification that will be shared among the state colleges, he said. SFSC would receive an additional \$25,000 to \$40,000 if it maintains its level of industry certifications.

The News Service of Florida contributed to this report.

Exploring the possibilities



MARC VALERO/STAFF

From left: Sebring High sophomores Justin Barrett and Anthony Colon speak with Allison Huggins of CliftonLarsonAllen, which offers accounting, financial and business services.

Leadership Highlands career fair highlights employment options

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Highlands County high school students got a glimpse of their possible future in the workplace during a career fair Thursday that was organized by the Leadership Highlands Class of 2017.

Many businesses and institutions participated in the event, which was held at the Highlands News-Sun Center in Sebring.

The participants spoke with students about their careers and offered informational handouts and small giveaways.

Some display tables had demonstrations or visual components related to the careers they represented.

In a bit of an engineering challenge, offered by Cool and Cobb Engineering Co., Avon Park, students attempted to stack washers as high as possible within a bowl of sand.

"It is a great opportunity for high school students



Students listen to a representative from Swaine & Harris P.A. Attorneys at Law on Thursday at the career fair sponsored by the Leadership Highlands Class of 2017. The event was held at the Highlands News-Sun Center.

to get an interest or get an idea of what they want to do in their future," said Sebring High junior Nyah Bonhomme.

Sebring High sophomore Justin Barrett was impressed by the size and scope of the event.

"It is a lot more than I thought it was going to be," he said. "It is very

interesting with all of these careers coming down in one place just to share information with everybody."

Sebring High sophomore Anthony Colon said, "It's actually really interesting; there are a lot of booths around for everyone to look; it is really cool."

Florida Hospital Director of Quality and Patient Experience for Health Partners Sandi Bernardo said at the career fair they can show students all the careers that work in hospitals, along with doctors and nurses, that they are not aware of.

FAIR

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"We are really enjoying the kids and giving them a little peek at some of the different careers," she said.

Highlands County Economic Development Manager Taylor Benson conducted an informal survey, which had students thinking about Highlands County and the future.

She had students write on a post-it note what they love about Highlands County and what they would like to see in the future in the county.

Leadership Highlands Class of 2017 President Garrett Roberts said the Leadership Class wanted to get all the ninth- and 10th-graders

together to expose them to the different types of careers that are available to them in Highlands County.

"Before they start making behavioral mistakes and before their grades are bad, the concept is 'if you can see it, you can achieve it,'" he said. They hope students will start working toward some kind of a goal at a young age when they still have the ability to make a career decision.

Many businesses, institutions and agencies participated to show students the broad range of careers that are available to them, Roberts said.

The first round with Sebring High School's ninth- and 10th-graders was so successful that they are bringing their 11th- and 12th-graders as well, he said. "It has been a great success with everybody I talked to."



MARC VALERO/STAFF

ABOVE: Avon Park High juniors Marquasha Brown and Keesh Gholston pose with a prop from Highlands County Economic Development.

RIGHT: From left: Florida Hospital Director of Quality and Patient Experience for Health Partners Sandi Bernardo instructs Lake Placid High sophomore Vanessa Ramirez on a CPR simulator.



Jacaranda in the holiday spirit

By **SHARON WEATHERHEAD**
CORRESPONDENT

The roaring 20's was a perfect time for the Hotel Jacaranda to be born in Avon Park. The land boom was bringing tens of thousands of people to experience the lifestyle Florida had to offer.

Avon Park's "gracious lady" is listed on the National Historic Register. It's surprising that this landmark is still a well-preserved piece of Florida history. When you enter the lobby, you actually take a step back in time, to a period where elegance and tradition are more important than the latest technology.

Photos line the walls with pictures of famous past guests including actor Clark Gable, baseball great Babe Ruth, comedians George Burns and Gracie Allen and Al Capone of gangster notoriety. Their presence is still felt in the quiet hallways.

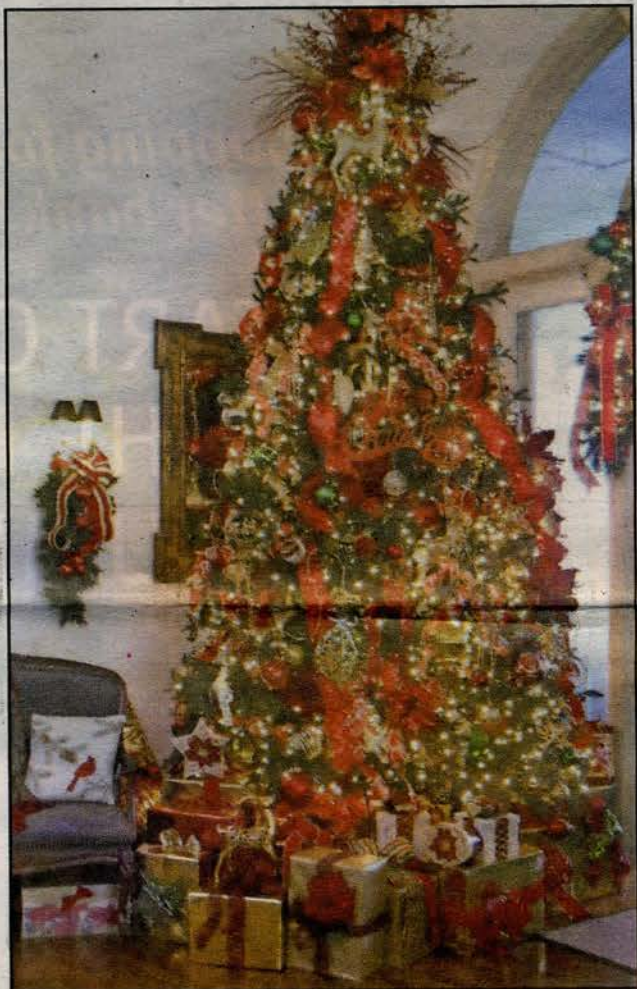
The hotel decorations, especially during the holidays, are the creations of three ladies in the Hartt Family. Joan Hartt, Shelly Parton and Sheila Hartt dress up the lobby, dining room and arcade creating a wonderland of enchantment, excitement and quiet elegance.

The ladies refer to the Jacaranda as a "piece of heaven" according to a recent interview on Bay News 9 (Hernando County). They are always looking for new things to add, and the decorations keep growing every year. It is a treasure from another era. A new addition in the atrium is full-size antique sleigh.

The Joan Hartt Grand Lobby was named for the family matriarch who



The Nutcracker display in the Hotel Jacaranda.



The 15-foot tree in the Grand Lobby.



SHARON WEAHTERHEAD/CORRESPONDENT

Santa in the atrium.



The fireplace in the lobby of the Hotel Jacaranda.

SPRIT

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leads the decorating team every year. She is much-loved by the hotel staff as they watch the ladies transform the lobby into something truly special.

The 15-foot tree in the lobby is an incredible sight. Twinkling lights and elaborate displays warmly welcome visitors. The arcade area has a snow scene with carolers in an old time setting. And Santa is there as well, his display full of presents for everyone. The new sleigh is there and even has a reindeer.

The hotel was built by John Raab and Harry Winters and was designed by William Heim. The construction began in 1923 and was completed in 1926. It got its name from a very special 150-year-old Jacaranda tree had to be removed to make room for the hotel.

Some other interesting facts include that the hotel was home for hundreds of young military pilots in training during World War II, from 1941-1945. Other guests included members of the St. Louis Cardinals who came to the area for baseball spring training in the late 1920s.

The hotel is currently owned by the South Florida State College Foundation, Inc. It operates as a hotel, restaurant, banquet facility, educational institution, college residence facility, office and commercial business space.

The hotel offers great food with its specialty being their impressive buffets. Through a partnership with SFSC, culinary students perfect their talents by training in their modern kitchen.

Please check their online menu for days and times of operation and



Carolers in the atrium at Hotel Jacaranda.

prices at www.hoteljac.com or call 863-453-2211.

They are located at 19 East Main Street.



VoicePlay to rock Alan Jay Wildstein Center

Soaring to fame on NBC's "The Sing-Off" and two sold-out national tours of "The Sing-Off Live!," the enormously entertaining five-piece a cappella group, VoicePlay, is set to rock South Florida State College's Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, Highlands Campus, in Avon Park, on Saturday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. in the season opener of the Florida Hospital Trending Now Series. The performance is sponsored by Drs. Audwin and Patrice Nelson.

"This is a really fun show for kids," said Cindy Garren, director, SFSC Cultural Programs, "and youth tickets are only \$10."

Much more than a concert, VoicePlay is a theatrical experience that magically recreates the orchestrated sound of an entire musical production with nothing but the human voice. Alternating between eras and styles to showcase the quintet's amazing vocal feats, each show is laced with inventive and hilarious on-stage theatrics. With over a million YouTube views for their cover of "The Phantom of the Opera," and their collaborations with Disney,



COLOSSEUM MEDIA PHOTO

VoicePlay will be at SFSC's Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, Nov. 18.

the group has played a part in the surging popularity of contemporary a cappella.

What began as a street corner barbershop act has evolved into an internationally acclaimed touring sensation with six national tours and video-entertainment brand. The cast of VoicePlay has taken the timeless sound of vocal music and turned it completely on its head.

Geoff Castellucci, one of the founding members of VoicePlay

said, "We find that a cappella music tends to be pretty relatable to most audiences. Everyone is familiar with it in one form or another, whether that's Motown, or a guy singing on a street corner. Everyone can relate to the voices and harmony. Making that leap has pretty much already been done for us. We want you to walk away from our show saying that was amazing and then, 'Oh yeah,

VOICEPLAY

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it was a capella.”

Tickets for VoicePlay are \$22 to \$30. Student/child tickets are \$10. For more information, videos and to order tickets online, visit www.sfscarts.org. The SFSC Box Office is located on SFSC's Highlands Campus, at 600 West College Drive, Avon Park. To contact the SFSC Box Office, call 863-784-7178.

The Florida Trending Now Series features five family-friendly, contemporary performances. Upcoming performances are *The Nutcracker*, *Black Violin*, *Mutts Gone Nuts* and *Snowkus Pocus*. Subscription packages are \$95 to \$121. Group rates are also available.

SFSC presents over 35 national and internationally touring artists at the 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts and the 250-seat SFSC University Center. SFSC offers a Matinee Series for adults at leisure, Young People's Theater Series for school performances, Jazz Series, Trending Now Series of contemporary, family shows, and the popular Artist Series. Group rates and subscriptions are available online and at the SFSC Box Office. Upcoming performances include *The Phantoms...Unmasked* on Nov. 30; *The Nutcracker* on Dec. 5; and Grammy Award winner Petula Clark on Dec. 10.