

A Master's Touch Up — Artist restores mural on SFSC campus

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — Artist and South Florida State College alumnus Keith Goodson started work Friday to freshen up the Tower of Enlightenment — the artistic centerpiece of the campus that began its existence as a cylindrical cooling tower.

The Tower is located between Building B, the SFSC Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC), and the Learning Resources Center (LRC).

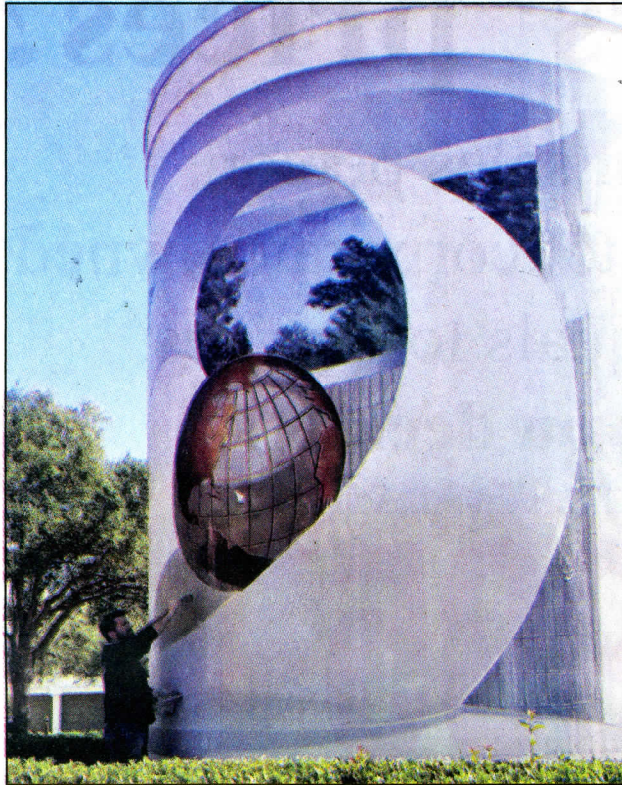
Before he started the restoration, Goodson said he now uses a new type of paint that is made for scenic work.

"We use this at Universal Studios or theme parks, this paint is specifically designed for high traffic areas, the Florida weather and it's UV resistant," he said. "It's very durable. Every year we go by it is more progressive in the paint industry."

He uses a high quality sealer, which determines how long a work will last, Goodson said.

The challenge with the cooling tower is that it is constantly wet on the inside, which seeps through the structure and separates the paint from the wall because the paint can't adhere to the moisture, Goodson explained. The moisture stays trapped because the sealer is so good.

Goodson said it will take him about three weeks to peel off the



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Keith Goodson starts work Friday on touching up his mural on the Tower of Enlightenment on the South Florida State College Avon Park Campus.

damaged areas, reseal it with primer and then paint over it again. He did the same process five years ago.

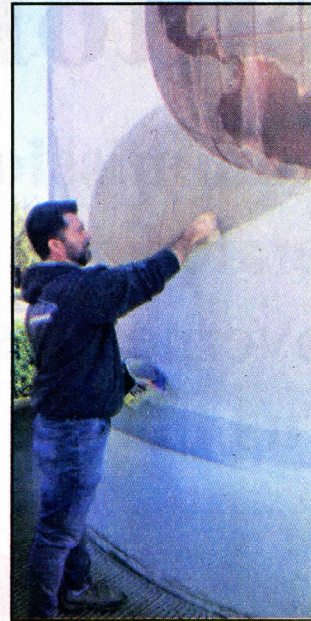
According to SFSC, for several years, the cooling tower had been covered with red tiles.

The three hurricanes that hit Highlands County in 2004 destroyed about one-third of the tiles. A decision was made to paint the cooling tower white rather than replace the tiles. It then became the canvas for the artistic work we know today.

In late 2006, Goodson began work on painting the Tower of

Enlightenment. It was commissioned by Dr. Norm Stephens, then SFSC president, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of SFSC. The Tower was officially dedicated in a ceremony on March 27, 2007.

Goodson was the perfect choice for the job as he had created many of the murals seen around Lake Placid. But the Tower was a particular challenge for Goodson, as he'd never created a mural covering a continuous wall around a circular tower. Goodson also designed the College's current seal.



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Keith Goodson shows where moisture seepage over time causes the paint to peel on the mural on the Tower of Enlightenment at the South Florida State College Avon Park Campus.

He combined abstract and realistic images to present a message about SFSC's mission and purpose in fostering and inspiring humanity's creativity and eternal quest for knowledge.

Goodson said, "The mural is a depiction of my interpretation of the pursuit for wisdom and truth. We are always on a journey of discovery. It is in our nature to look beyond what we can see and strive for the substance of things unseen. Such is faith — faith to know that we are a part of something far greater than we can comprehend or imagine."

School District, SFSC monitoring coronavirus reports

Public Health Emergency declared by State

By MARC VALERO

STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — Information on the coronavirus is being monitored by the School Board of Highlands County and South Florida State College, as Governor Ron DeSantis has declared a public health emergency with two cases of the virus having been confirmed in Florida.

The School District issued a letter to parents on Friday prior to the announcement of two suspected cases in

the Sunshine State.

“We know that parents and staff are concerned about the possibility of it spreading,” Superintendent Brenda Longshore stated in the letter.

For information, visit the Florida Department of Health website at www.floridahealth.gov or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov, the letter advised.

“At this point, our primary focus is on flu prevention,” Longshore stated. “We will continue working with the

Department of Health on proactive measures to address contagious diseases and will provide additional information as it becomes available.”

South Florida State College reports it is “proactively monitoring” the news and information concerning the coronavirus and its impact on the state of Florida.

“We continue to share information with the SFSC community as it becomes available. The college has not canceled or postponed any programming

or events at this time, but we will follow the lead of the Department of Education should anything change,” according to Melissa A. Kuehnle, SFSC director, Institutional Communications.

The two cases of coronavirus that have been confirmed in Florida are in adults in Manatee and Hillsborough counties. Both of whom have been placed in isolation.

DeSantis said state labs that are now

VIRUS

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set up in Jacksonville, Tampa and Miami to test for the virus and produce results within 24 to 48 hours. Previously, tests had to be done in federal labs and results might not be known for three to five days.

DeSantis on Monday reiterated that the risk of the novel coronavirus in Florida "remains low," despite acknowledging that two residents have tested positive and that the state is anticipating more cases in the future.

As of Monday, a total of 23 people had been tested in Florida for the virus, known as COVID-19, and the state was awaiting test results on another 18 people.

"We are anticipating there will be additional positive tests," DeSantis told reporters in Tampa outside a Department of

Health testing laboratory, while stressing that overall, "I would just tell people the risk remains low."

The Manatee County case involves a man in his 60s who has not traveled abroad to any of the countries considered hot spots for the virus. He is a patient at Doctors Hospital of Sarasota and is in isolation, according to a memo the hospital sent Sunday to some of its physicians.

The Hillsborough County case involves a woman in her 20s who returned from northern Italy, the site of a large outbreak of the virus. DeSantis said the woman had a roommate while abroad but said the roommate was not a state resident and that he didn't have any additional details.

The Hillsborough County woman is isolated at home, according to Florida Department

of Health Secretary Scott Rivkees.

The CDC currently recommends community preparedness and everyday prevention measures be taken by all individuals and families in the United States, including voluntary home isolation when individuals are sick with respiratory symptoms, covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue and disposal of the tissue immediately thereafter, washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers with 60%-95% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available and routinely cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects to increase community resilience and readiness for responding to an outbreak.

The News Service of Florida contributed to this report.

March 4, 2020

SFSC designated Military Friendly college

AVON PARK — South Florida State College has been designated as a Military Friendly School by VIQORY, a service-disabled, veteran-owned business that issues the longest-running, most comprehensive review of college and university services provided to military and veteran students.

Each year, VIQORY establishes the list of Military Friendly Schools from the results of public research and the data-driven survey that is submitted by each institution. This year, 1,693 schools filled out the



survey and each school was ranked according to the data that was collected.

"South Florida State College takes a serious commitment to providing top quality services to our active duty military students as well as our veterans," said Dr. Timothy Wise, SFSC's

dean of student services. "We are proud to once again be recognized for our commitment to them."

SFSC provides veterans with academic advising and counseling for all programs and degrees. Veterans are able to sign up for courses the first day of registration regardless of how many hours they have earned. The Cashier's Office offers veterans and/or their dependents utilizing VA benefits a deferment for tuition fees. The Cashier's Office grants veterans a 60-day deferment from the time classes start to

pay their fees. This allows veterans to enroll into courses without having to pay up front.

"Being prior military myself and knowing that our institution is Military Friendly, it really makes me proud," said Robert Hampton, SFSC student services advisor and veteran school certifying official.

As part of the college's outreach to veterans, SFSC accepts a variety of educational benefits provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs. Those benefits range from the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which provides financial

support for education to individuals who have at least 90 days of aggregate service after Sept. 10, 2001, to Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program Chapter 31 for veterans who suffered a service-connected disability that limits their ability to work or prevents them from working.

Along with providing educational opportunities, the college also offers interactive tools to assist them with career planning, counseling, and job placement efforts at the Career Development Center.



COURTESY PHOTO

Special STARS athlete C.J. McCall-Chandler winds up to throw out the first pitch for the South Florida State College baseball game against Kalamazoo College on Saturday in Avon Park.

SFSC honors Special STARS at baseball game

Special to the Highlands News-Sun

AVON PARK — Special STARS athletes were honored guests at the South Florida State College baseball game this past Saturday afternoon in Avon Park.

More than 60 athletes from Highlands and Hardee counties braved the cool weather to enjoy a tailgating party before the game as they ate lunch and socialized.

Special STARS athlete C.J. McCall-Chandler, age 9, of Avon Park, was selected to throw out the first pitch for the game. She is involved in the Special STARS equestrian and swimming



COURTESY PHOTO

Special STARS athlete William Dickson, from Hardee County, was pushed around the bases by one of the SFSC baseball players after the game. Special athletes got a chance to run around the bases afterward.

STARS

FROM PAGE 1B

programs and loves to dance. Coach Rick Hitt presented her with an autographed baseball that featured all the players names.

Although the Panthers lost against Kalamazoo



COURTESY PHOTO

Special STARS athletes and the SFSC baseball team gathered around home plate to cheer special athlete Herb Adkins on as he crossed home plate.

College, the Special STARS athletes went down onto the field to show the team that they were still number one in their eyes. SFSC baseball players ran around the bases with the Special STARS athletes and posed for pictures.

Special STARS is a sports and recreational program for children and adults with disabilities in Highlands, Hardee and southern Polk counties.

Area Youth Perform In 'Cinderella' At SFSC

By **DEBORAH BELL LATTER**

Special To The Herald-Advocate

South Carolina Ballet returns to the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts at South Florida State College (SFSC) with a magical production of Cinderella on Saturday, March 7 at 7 p.m.

Part of the AdventHealth Trending Now Series, the ballet tells the best-loved fairy tale of love and jealousy in a lush production that is ideal family entertainment.

"The stepsisters in this ballet are hysterical," said Cindy Garren, director of cultural programs at SFSC. "Plus, we have local dancers that have been rehearsing for weeks who will join the professional dancers on stage."

Cinderella was composed by Sergei Prokofiev during World War II. It was first performed by the Bolshoi Ballet in 1945.

Cinderella is conceived and directed by William Starrett, artist director of South Carolina Ballet. From his start at San Francisco's Ballet Celeste and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, through appearances as a principal for the Joffrey Ballet and as a member of American Ballet Theatre under the direction of both Lucia Chase and Mikhail Baryshnikov, to guest appearances with over 40 of the world's most renowned ballet companies, Starrett's talent as a dancer has earned rave reviews from coast to coast as well as a medal at the very first U.S. International Ballet Competition in Jackson, Miss.

Today, Starrett's formidable reputation revolves most often around his choreographic and directorial accomplishments.

As director and primary choreographer for the past 28 years, he has created or staged over 50 works—including 16 original, full-length ballets, 10 classical full-length ballets, and 16 original narrated one-act ballets for children—in locations throughout the United States and Europe.

Starrett is determined that no one—not

even fathers dragged to the performance—will be bored, so there are lots of surprises.

"The two ugly stepsisters are actually performed by men," he said. "They are more actors than dancers, so we have the contrast of the beauty of the fairies and the hysterical stepsisters."

Tickets can be purchased online at sfs-cARTS.org, by phone at 863-784-7178, or in person at the SFSC Performing Arts Box Office on the campus of South Florida State College located at 600 West College Drive in Avon Park.

Local Cast For Cinderella

Cinderella Attendants: Trista Gilliard, Mayleen Gonzalez, Paige Jayna, Reagan Lenihan, and Taylor Leiden.

Ballroom Attendants: Makenna Smith, and Ashley Anderson.

Merchant Assistant: Faith Padgett, Kaitiana Reyes, and Rossalyn Schooley.

Dragonflies: Sophia Shaffer, Sofiya Balikowsky, Carly Vega, and Bailey Toney.

Gift Givers: Ariana Bhandare, Talina Oronez, Olivia Heston, and Anjali Way.

Clocks: Sofiya Balikowsky, Desiree Bassett, Chloe Berlin, Anika Bhandare, Abigail Brinling, Alyssa Coultier, Amelia Heston, Braelynn Hillman, Aubrey Scheipsmeier, Sophia Shaffer, Bailey Toney, Carly Vega, Whytni Adams, Adrienne Ayala, Brooke Blackburn, Ellie Brinling, Emily Clogston, Audrey Coultier, Shayla Farrow, Gabriella Gonzalez, Haley Grace, Sophia Heston, Brylee King, Kattie Mannis, Gabriella Marin, Abigail O'Meara, McKenzie Pletcher, Zoe Pletcher, Karis Register, Aubrey Scheipsmeier, Camille Schwartz, Rossalyn Schooley, Sarah Smith, and Annandora Ramkissoon.

Deborah Bell Latter is the coordinator of internal communications at South Florida State College and can be reached at 863-784-7251 or Deborah.Latter@southflorida.edu.

3/5/2020

Panthers sweep Saints in double header



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College's Jane'a Mobley is greeted by her teammates at home plate after hitting her walk off homerun in the bottom of the seventh against Santa Fe.

Lake Placid graduate led Saints with three homers



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

Santa Fe's Dontaysha Gobourne, Lake Placid High School Graduate, trots home after winning the second game at one in the seventh inning.

By **JIM TAYLOR**
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — On a breezy night in which the wind was blowing out straight to center field, the South Florida State College Panther snapped a six-game losing streak with a pair of wins over the Santa Fe State College Saints to avenge a pair of losses five days earlier.

The Panthers held off a late-inning rally by the Saints to hold on to a 7-6 win in the first game and created a moment to be remembered to stave off extra innings with a walk-off home run to win the second game 2-1. With the wins, South Florida State College improved to 9-15 on the season.

In Game 1, Santa Fe took a 1-0 lead in the second inning after the Saints produced a run off a lead off

walk and a pair of errors.

The Panthers answered in the bottom of the fourth inning, opening the inning with a single by Allison Wagle and doubles by Jane'a Mobley and Corrin Flajole with Wagle and Mobley scoring on Flajole's to put the Panthers up 2-1.

South Florida State College expanded their lead to 4-1 when Flajole and Baileigh Ehrlich both scored on a double into left field by Hannah Eden.

The Saints quickly answered in the top of the fifth off the bat of Lake Placid graduate Dontaysha Gobourne, who hit a two run homer over the center field fence to cut the Panther's lead to one at 4-3.

walked, Mobley blasted a three run homer over the center field fence as the Panthers stretched their lead to 4 at 7-3.

The Saint scored once in the sixth to make the score 7-4 and Gobourne hit her second two-run homer in the seventh with no outs to slice the Panther lead to one, 7-6.

Panther starting pitcher, Taylor Currie got three of the next four batters out, two by strikeout, preserving the 7-6 win. Currie pitched a complete game and struck out 12 for the win.

Mobley led the team in the first game with two hits and three RBIs. Flajole and Eden each had two RBIs.

The second game was a pitching duel between Santa Fe's Gobourne and South Florida State



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College second baseman Payton Pilon (2) throws to first for the out after a backhanded grounder and preventing the base hit opportunity from reaching centerfield.

PANTHERS

FROM PAGE 1B

College's Baylee Haggard in which both pitchers combined gave up only three runs on five hits.

The Panthers scored in the second inning to take a 1-0 lead when Kelly

two outs and later scored on a wild pitch.

The next four innings, neither team could make any offensive headway against Gobourne and Haggard as the score remained 1-0 in the Panther's favor heading into the seventh inning.

With one out in the top

hitting her third home run in the two-game set to tie the second game at 1.

That tie lasted one pitch in the bottom half of the seventh. Mobley ended the game with a mammoth home run over the center field fence that from the moment of the

doubt that the game was over with the Panther's prevailing 2-1.

The Panther's only had two hits for the game, Ulatowski's triple and Mobley's game winning walk-off home run.

Haggard pitched seven innings, giving up three hits and one run while



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College pitcher Baylee Haggard releases and watches the ball head toward the catcher. Haggard held Santa Fe to 3 hits and 1 run for the win.

The Panthers will try to build on the momentum State College and are back at home on Tuesday

SFSC students show their spirit during College Week

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — College Week at South Florida State College features fun and games, pizza and a lot of school spirit.

The Dodgeball tournament on Tuesday in the Panther Gym had 15 teams competing with the team of Ricky's Angels 2.0 winning. Ricky's team included mostly members from the college's baseball and cross country teams.

Student Life Coordinator Andy Polk said they tried to mix it up and make the athletic teams compete against each other early so they can knock themselves out of the competition and give everybody else a chance.

On Monday it was the opening ceremony and the "minute to win it" games to see, for example, who could pull tissues out of tissue boxes the fastest.

"The students came up with all the games on Monday so it was really cool

to see them do that," Polk said. There were around 110 students participating on Monday and about the same number on Tuesday.

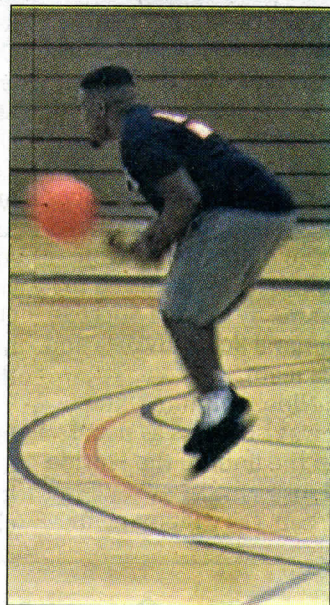
There are about 185 students participating in College Week as their class schedules allow, he said. Some can't make it every day.

The College Week activities on Wednesday include trivia and a scavenger hunt and on Thursday its and obstacle course and closing ceremony with awards on the Intramural Field.

"They usually get pretty fired up for dodge ball and the last day," Polk said. "It's a lot of fun; a lot of fun before spring break."

College Week is SFSC's spirit week and it occurs before spring break every year. The student clubs vote on what events they would like to participate in and then form teams for fun and friendly competition.

College Week is sponsored by the SFSC Student Government Association (SGA).



MARC VALERO/STAFF

An SFSC student takes one in the gut during the College Week dodge ball competition Tuesday afternoon in the Panther Gym.

3/11/2020

Panthers power past Kats

South Florida shutout Erie, 10-0

By JIM TAYLOR
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK – The South Florida State College Panthers won their third game out of their last four with a 10-0 decision over Erie Community College from New York on Thursday night at Panther Field in Avon Park to improve to 17-13 (2-4) on the season.

The Panthers pounded out twelve hits and Myles Caba and four other pitchers combined to give just four hits and no runs in the win.

After two scoreless innings to start the game, the Panthers generated a big five run inning in the bottom of the third with four hits, three hit batters and an error on Erie Community College.

Tate Hansen got the momentum rolling for the Panthers with a one out single into center field and subsequently stole second base, which ended up being a mute point as Shane Magrann was hit by a pitch to reach first.

Hansen would score on Hunter Wilder's single into right field to give the Panther's a 1-0 lead with Magrann reaching second. Magrann would steal third and Wilder would steal second, which led to Brian Perez being the second Panther batter to be hit by a pitch to load the bases.

Mike Bessell drove in Magrann and Wilder with a single into center field to make the score 3-0 in favor of the Panther with Perez advancing to second, then to third on a stolen bases and scoring on an error to stretch the Panther lead to 4-0.

Case Hannum capped off the scoring with a single into right field that drove in Bessell to make the score



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College's Hunter Wilder slide safely into third base.

5-0 after three innings.

South Florida State College added three more runs in the bottom of the sixth as Carter Dahl reached first on a swinging third strike that was also a passed ball and reached second a single by Casey Asman into center field.

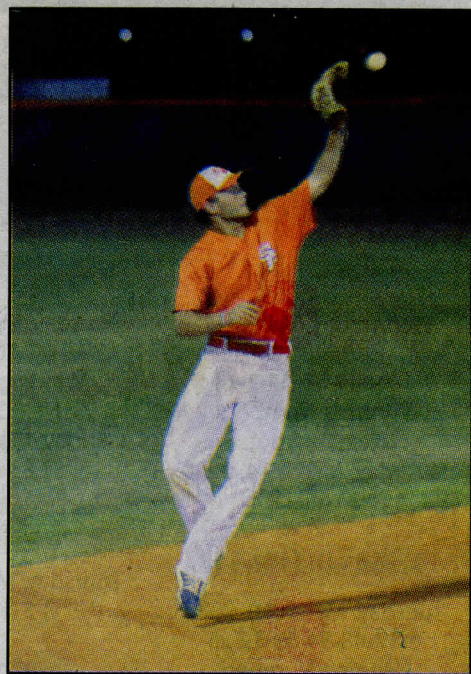
Wilder singled into center field to drive in Dahl as the Panthers widened their lead to 6-0 and Perez followed to load the bases after being hit by a pitch.

South Florida State College made it 7-0 on a sacrifice fly into left field by Bessell. Wilder made the score 8-0 scoring on a ground ball to first base by Zeddrick Burnham to conclude the scoring in the sixth inning.

The Panthers scored twice more in the eighth inning as Trey Fields and Leeandro Alfonzo led off with back-to-back singles and Nico Saladino drew a walk to load the bases. Hannum doubled into left-center field to drive in Field and Alfonzo to make the final score 10-0.

Hannum led the Panthers with three hits and three RBI's with Bessell driving in three runs on two hits.

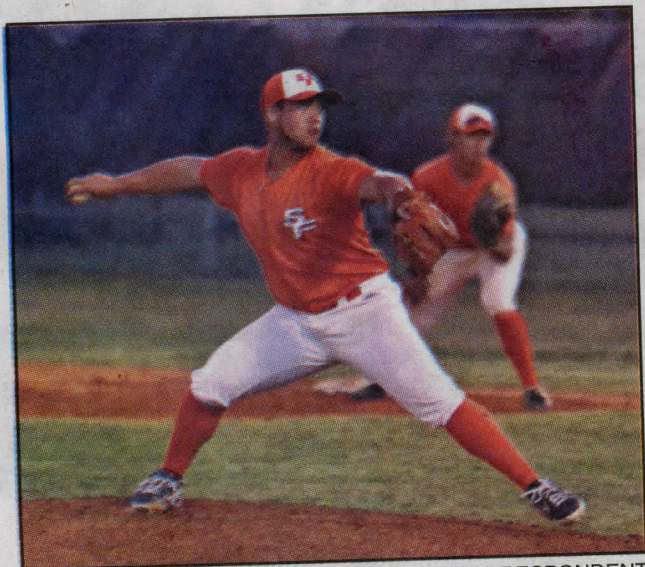
South Florida starting pitcher, Caba, threw five innings of shutout ball with



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College Shortstop Nico Saladino has no problems handling a soft line drive against Erie Community College.

only two hits allowed. Dawson Young, Jack Keeler, Blayne Huter and Saladino



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College's Dawson Young pitching in the sixth inning.

PANTHERS

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each pitched an inning of scoreless ball in the win.

The South Florida State College Panthers has joined all other state college athletic programs

and has suspended their athletic program for the spring sports effective immediately and will extend until Saturday, March 28. All home games for baseball and softball will be postponed and rescheduled for a later date.



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College's Brian Perez gets drilled in the back

HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

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YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1919

SFSC Board approves Trustee Emeritus title for Lambert

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — The South Florida District Board of Trustees honored a fellow board member, Kenneth Lambert, with the title of Trustee Emeritus and with an endowment in his name.

Due to a serious illness, Lambert has been unable to attend the board meetings since October.

At Wednesday's meeting of the Board, District Board of



LAMBERT

Trustees Chair Tami Cullens said, "We would like to honor Mr. Lambert. As we all know he has such a great, great love for the college."

In a recent phone conversation with SFSC President Thomas Leitzel, Lambert said "make sure you are doing everything right for the students," Cullens said.

"So no matter where he is in his life and how difficult it

is, we still know he thinks of others first," she said.

With the Board's approval they would like to give Mr. Lambert the special recognition of "Trustee Emeritus" so in perpetuity he will always be a trustee for South Florida State College, Cullens said.

"And, we would also like to have 'The Kenneth A. Lambert Memorial Endowment,'" she said. "We would like to have something there to that for years to come. Mr. Lambert would not be forgotten at the

college. His hand print, his footprint, his journey with all of us will always be out there."

Executive Director, Institutional Advancement Jamie Bateman said the endowment would provide financial support for SFSC projects with financial needs that are not met from the general fund of the budget.

The initial goal is to reach \$100,000 in donations, she said.

The Board of Trustee unanimously approved the title of Trustee Emeritus for Lambert

and the endowment in his name.

Cullens said earlier in the meeting that according to a statute, it is the duty of the Board Chair to notify the governor in writing whenever a board member fails to attend three consecutive regular board meetings as it may be grounds for removal.

"Since Mr. Lambert has been unable to attend our meetings since October, because of the

BOARD | 2A

BOARD

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statute, no matter what our hearts feel, we have to follow exactly what it says," she said. "As of this meeting, Dr. Leitzel [SFSC president] and I will be notifying the Governor's Office that Mr. Lambert ... has not been able to attend our meetings. I imagine we will explain why."

SFSC remembers Trustee Kenneth Lambert

Special to Highlands News-Sun

COURTESY OF SFSC

AVON PARK — South Florida State College District Board of Trustees Member Kenneth Lambert, who represented Hardee County, passed away Sunday evening after a long illness.

He joined the South Florida State College (SFSC) District Board of Trustees in November 2011.

During his tenure, he took on the task of chair of the committee charged with the search for a new college president that resulted in hiring Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel in 2013.

Lambert was elected chair of the board, serving throughout the

2013-14 academic year. As a trustee, Lambert relished participation in college events and could be seen at performances at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, participating in numerous graduation ceremonies, and joining in festivities associated with SFSC's 50th anniversary celebration.

"Mr. Lambert's great love has always been at the forefront of his position as a trustee at South Florida State College," said Tami Cullens, board chair. "Our college has benefited under his leadership and drive by making a difference for each person that sets foot on our campuses. South Florida State College's District Board of Trustees are honored to



LAMBERT

has been an influential force and a strong advocate for supporting the academic mission of the college," said Dr. Thomas Leitzel, president of SFSC. "His love for SFSC was exceptional."

In 2019, SFSC paid tribute to Lambert's service by installing an honorary bench adjacent to Building F on the Highlands Campus. The inscribed message on a stone next to the bench reads: "Dedicated to honor

serve with a man as phenomenal as Kenneth A. Lambert." "Since joining the board, Mr. Lambert

SFSC Trustee Kenneth A. Lambert and all others who embark on a journey to achieve lofty dreams." This passage expresses the aspiration that Lambert had for the students, staff, and faculty of SFSC.

On Wednesday, March 11, Cullens introduced a special recognition for Mr. Lambert with the unique designation of Trustee Emeritus, so he will always be recognized as a trustee for South Florida State College. The board approved the request unanimously.

In addition, Cullens announced the Kenneth A. Lambert Memorial Endowment. "We would like to have something that ensures Mr. Lambert will not be forgotten at this college, and his

handprints, his footprints, and his journey with all of us will always be remembered and there will always be something that recognizes him."

Jamie Bateman, executive director for institutional advancement at SFSC, continued to explain the details of the Endowment. "Gifts given will provide financial support for SFSC to meet needs and fund projects that cannot be met by the general operating budget," she explained. "The goal is to reach \$100,000. We felt that this Endowment would be recognized by the community who may want to support, get behind, and help because of the love and admiration that Mr. Lambert had for the college."

The creation of the Kenneth A. Lambert Memorial Endowment was also approved unanimously by the DBOT.

Lambert graduated from SFSC in 1980 with an Associate in Arts and went on to earn a Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Relations/Image Management from the University of Florida in 1983.

Lambert and his wife Eileen married in 1985 and have three sons — Ryan, Grayson, and Carter. Wauchula is home to Lambert, where he and brother Bill grew up. Although much of his professional career focused on marketing, he worked with his mother, Doris, in her real estate business, Lambert Realty.

March 19, 2020,

KENNETH ALLEN LAMBERT

Oct. 1, 1960 – March 15, 2020

Former Wauchula Mayor, Realtor Succumbs To Cancer

By **TOM STAIK**

Of The Herald-Advocate

Kenneth “Kenny” Allen Lambert, a fixture in Wauchula government for two decades, died Sunday, March 15, at his home.

He was 59.

The city commissioner and one-time mayor of the City of Wauchula, succumbed to a prolonged battle with brain cancer.

As a public servant, Lambert was active in politics as a member of the local Republican Party, was the former mayor of Wauchula, and currently served as a Wauchula city commissioner. He was the driving force behind Wauchula’s transition from a strong mayor to a commission/manager form of government.

His two decades of public service left a lasting legacy.

“He was that threshold in quality,” said Olivia Minshew, assistant Wauchula city manager. “You had to rise to his level. He also had the highest level of professionalism and staff always had to ask themselves ‘What’s his question going to be?’”

Lambert joined the South Florida State College (SFSC) District Board of Trustees (DBOT) in November 2011. He was elected chair of the board and served throughout the 2013-14 academic year.

“Since joining the Board, Mr. Lambert has been an influential force and a strong advocate for supporting the academic mission of the College,” said Dr. Thomas Leitzel,

president of SFSC. “His love for SFSC was exceptional.”

Lambert’s service to SFSC was recognized in 2019 with the installation of an honorary bench adjacent to Building F on the Highlands Campus. The inscribed message on a stone next to the bench reads: “Dedicated to honor SFSC Trustee Kenneth A. Lambert and all others who embark on a journey to achieve lofty dreams.”

Lambert was unanimously voted Trustee Emeritus at the college last week and The Kenneth A. Lambert Memorial Endowment was established in his honor.

“Gifts given will provide financial support for SFSC to meet needs and fund projects that cannot be met by the
See LAMBERT A2



LAMBERT

Continued From A1

general operating budget,” said Jamie Bateman, executive director for institutional advancement at SFSC. “The goal is to reach \$100,000. We felt that this Endowment would be recognized by the community who may want to support, get behind, and help because of the love and admiration that Mr. Lambert had for the College.”

Born on Oct. 1, 1960, to William R. and Doris S. Lambert, of Wauchula, Lambert was a 1978 graduate of Hardee High School.

He graduated with an associate of arts degree from the then South Florida Junior College (now South Florida State College) in 1980. He went on to attend the University of Florida, where he was a mem-

ber of Florida Blue Key Honorary Fraternity and Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity. He graduated the University of Florida in 1983 with a bachelor of applied science degree in public relations.

Lambert and his wife, Eileen, married in 1985. They have three sons—Ryan, Grayson, and Carter.

“Kenny was about family,” said Terry Atchley, Wauchula city manager. “His passionate focus was always about his boys. And he and Eileen took in a young man a few years ago who was without family and he just became a part of their family.”

With Christian values instilled as a youth, Lambert went on to become a leader at First Baptist Church of

Wauchula, his home church. He is remembered for his performances as a featured singer at numerous weddings, funerals, political events and holiday programs as a member of a men’s quartet, choir member, and soloist.

Lambert’s professional career included ownership as a broker/partner with his mother, Doris, at Lambert Realty in Wauchula.

He also had professional stints at regional banks including Atlantic Bank and First Union Bank, and he had a noted career with Harte-Hanks as an advertising executive. He was also a managing member of Summit 105 LLC.

Lambert and wife, Eileen, owned Cooper’s Wayside Flowers in Wauchula for many

years.

Lambert is survived by his wife of 34 years, Eileen Metheny Lambert; three sons, Ryan (Kaylee Bell), Grayson (Kaylee Brummett), of Wauchula, and Carter Lambert, of Exmore, Va.; mother, Doris S. Lambert, of Wauchula; brother, Bill Lambert (Marie); and sister, Lynn Bennett (Randy).

A memorial service will be held at 1685 Louisiana Street on Friday morning at 9 a.m. with the Rev. Joe Butler, and Deacons Marcus Shackelford and Doyle Carlton III presiding. Live-streaming to be announced by family or via the First Baptist Church of Wauchula.

Arrangements were by Roberts Family Funeral Home.