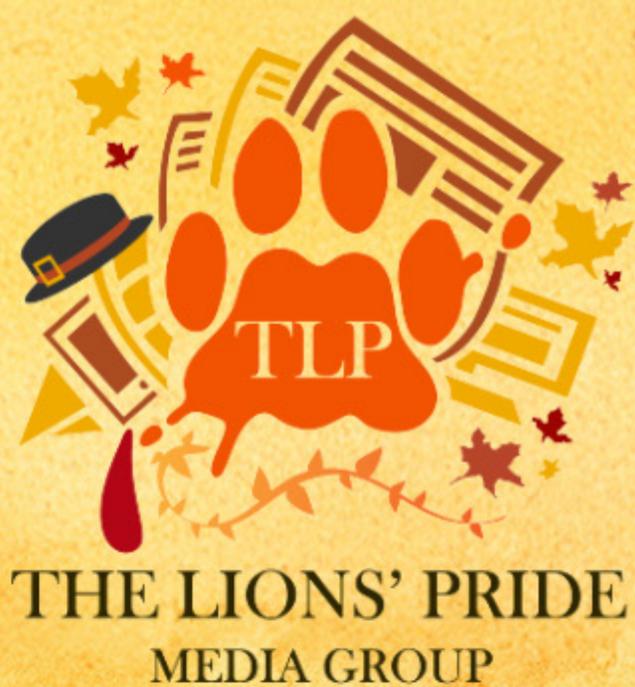


October

2025



Breast cancer awareness through a survivor's eyes: What young adults should know

Katterina Becker

Staff Writer

October is famously known as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The signature bright pink ribbon represents the women and men who have battled this deadly cancer. According to cancer.gov, it is second to lung cancer as the leading death causing cancer.

But when should we start paying attention to potential symptoms? The Cleveland Clinic states that 1 in 196 women between the ages of 15 and 39 get diagnosed with invasive breast cancer every year, and encourages them to start looking for symptoms early rather than trying to prevent the cancer.

Men are not excluded from breast cancer awareness. Unfortunately, The National Foundation for Cancer Research claims that 2,800 men each year are affected by breast cancer.

Dorothy Saska, 73, is a breast cancer survivor from Zephyrhills,

Florida. She was diagnosed in 2008 at 56 years old after discovering an abnormal lump. At first, Saska believed it to be a benign "fatty" tumor, one that she had dealt with before, until the tumor grew from the size of a fingernail to the size of a cauliflower, raising more concern.

Upon getting the tumor tested and receiving a positive result, Saska said that she was in shock because she had convinced herself the tumor was benign based on her experiences and lack of family history with breast cancer.

After going through many rounds of chemotherapy and radiation, Saska believes that "staying strong and having a good attitude helps a lot."

Saska's husband, unfortunately, had gone through cancer treatment prior to her diagnosis.

"I knew that he (her husband) would be healed by the Lord, and I kept that same attitude."

Saska shared some advice for young women and men; it is

important to be ahead of the game and know the risks. Saska stated that "no one is above cancer" and "it attacks all ages." Doing at-home tests consistently and getting a yearly mammogram if cancer runs in your family will lower the risk of cancer being found late in development-making it more difficult to treat.

Websites like nationalbreastcancer.org and cancer.gov list the potential symptoms someone should look out for, such as lumps, color change of the skin, and tenderness, and explains how to perform checkups at home. If something unusual is noticed, please contact your doctor.

There are facilities located near Saint Leo University that can help, such as the Simpson Breast Health Center in Zephyrhills, Florida, Cancer Specialists and Research Inc., and Moffitt Wesley Chapel.

In the words of Dorothy Saska, "We'll figure it out and get through it."



Dorothy Saska encourages young women and men to know the signs of breast cancer. (Photo by Katterina Becker)

Newsroom

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Fall in Florida: Cozy outfits and seasonal fun in the Sunshine State

Brianna Brinker

Campus News Editor

Florida is known to be the hottest state in the United States year-round. The seasons in Florida look a little different when it comes to the rest of the country. However, Florida residents celebrate fall just like the other states with exciting activities, traditions, seasonal clothing, and holiday decor.

Florida doesn't have orange and red trees with crunchy leaves falling, but what Florida also doesn't have in the autumn months is freezing cold weather. During this time, Floridians can style fall-themed outfits without the multiple layers of clothing.

How to style fall outfits in Florida:

In the months of September, October, and November, people get creative with their outfits. In the northern states, people normally wear longer pants, cozy boots, fuzzy socks, puffer jackets, and tights with their skirts. But Florida fall outfits don't require any of that and are just as adorable and traditional!

First, pick out your favorite sweater. To stay on theme, pick colors such as white, brown, burgundy, orange and yellow. Second, pick out a skirt that matches. Fall themes for skirts are plaid, denim, and leather. Third, pick out your shoes. Short

boots without fur are perfect for the season. This outfit is great for Florida with the temperature in the 70s. A light sweater for the breeze, a skirt so you're not hot, and short boots to make it cute and stylish but not sweaty.

Also, accessories are fun to wear in the fall. You don't need scarves or beanies. You can wear bows and headbands in your hair, add a cute brown or burgundy purse, wear gold jewelry, do a braid, and add some clear glasses, then you're ready for the pumpkin patch!

Other options on extremely hot days during the fall in Florida are sweater vests, overalls and overall dresses, plaid dresses, and black ballet flats.

What to do during fall in Florida:

Florida has so many events to add to your October schedule. If you're looking for a fall-filled weekend outside, there are great festivals in the area.

Just fifteen minutes away is the annual Dade City Farms Fall Festival. With Florida being the hottest state, fall time is warm with a slight breeze most days. The activities are enjoyable without shivering. For example, the Dade City Farms Fall Festival has hayrides, corn mazes, and pumpkin patches. These events are common in other states as well but in Florida, the weather is

perfect for these activities.

"My favorite fall activity is to go to the pumpkin patch! Dade City Farms has a fall festival that has pumpkins, farm animals, hayrides, a corn maze, and so many more offerings! It is my favorite tradition," said Lily Glasgow, a junior majoring in nursing.

Another fall festival is at Ananda Farms, about an hour from campus but worth the drive. This is a hidden gem that not too many people know about. They have fall-themed activities like flower bouquet making, with their large flower field that goes on for miles. You and your friends can pick flowers and make your own bouquet.

Ananda Farms also has pumpkin themed food and pumpkin themed drinks. In Florida, you can enjoy an iced pumpkin spice latte instead of a hot drink due to the great weather.

Some northern states see Florida as only having summer weather year-round, but Florida residents love the seasons and how the weather changes. In October and November, you can still go to the beach, where you can paint

pumpkins, have a fall themed picnic, and make jack-o'-lanterns.

Not only does Florida have great festivals, traditions, and activities in October, but Florida has some of the most well-known haunted attractions in the United States. For example, Disney World, Busch Gardens, and Universal Studios all do Halloween-themed nights. People fly down from other states just to experience them.

If the weather is a little too humid or hot, fall can be celebrated in other ways as well, such as scary or cozy movie nights with pumpkin spice snacks and apple cider, decorating your home to match the season, and rewatching your favorite fall shows.

In the months of fall, romanticize this season and live life to the fullest. No matter what the weather is, fall is everywhere, and each day can be exciting. Add little parts of autumn into your daily lives by having a pumpkin spiced coffee in the morning and listening to your fall playlist on your way to school or work. This time of year is a time to smile and enjoy the transition of summer to fall.



A perfect fall outfit for this season. Sweater + Skirt + Boots = Autumn Season (Photo by Brooke Brinker)



Florida has the perfect fall weather for a corn maze! Head on over to the Dade City Farms Fall Festival for more activities! (Photo by Brianna Brinker)



Florida residents have the privilege of being able to paint pumpkins on the beach in November! (Photo by Brooke Brinker)



Boots are the best shoe wear for the fall! Stylish and practical! (Photo by Brianna Brinker)

Phantoms of Pasco: Halloween stories from your backyard

Elijah Penn
Staff Writer

"There's one really creepy story ... about a gentleman in Zephyrhills It was kind of like a Sleeping Beauty story: he exhumed a body. It's a wild story ... and it captured the national attention. The guy was clearly a sociopath," said Madonna Wise.

Wise, a historian, educator, and author excitedly retold some of the creepiest legends that haunt Pasco County. Wise has penned several books across different genres, yet her true passion is local stories told from a personal perspective.

Wise found her passion for history when researching all the records she could find about her great-great-grandfather, who was murdered in a knife fight in Indiana. She and her husband, Ernest "Ernie" Wise, moved to Pasco County in 1974, where she served for forty years in local school districts. She and Ernie recently finished teaching six Osher classes at USF on local history.

In her most recent book, "A Haunted History of Pasco County" (a part of the Haunted America series), she has captured the spookiest stories across Pasco County from tales of gruesome deaths, mysterious apparitions, bloody feuds, and a man who stole the dead body of his love, whom he was forbidden to marry.

A Love that Never Dies

The Key West judge sat stunned as he listened to Georg Karl Tanzler pleading for the body of Elena Hoyos Mesa to be given to him.

Tanzler had stolen Mesa's body and had kept it in his house for seven years before he was caught with the remains. He allegedly attempted to resurrect her with radiation and slowly reconstructed her body as she decayed.

Tanzler immigrated from Germany in 1922 following World War I where he assisted surgeons in reconstructing the disfigured faces of battle-scarred soldiers. Moving to Florida, Tanzler soon found work at Marine Hospital in Key West.

It was there that he met the 19-year-old Cuban girl, Mesa, who was suffering from tuberculosis. To Tanzler, Mesa was the embodiment of a beautiful woman he had fantasized about while still in Germany. He applied himself to curing her malady with radium, the dangers of which were unknown at the time.

His attraction to Mesa only grew and he eventually proposed to her. This alarmed Mesa's father who ordered the 54-year-old Tanzler to stay away from the family.

A Halloween parade in 1931 ended in tragedy when the young woman collapsed and died. Tanzler paid for a mausoleum for her body. It seemed like the end of the ill-fated relationship—but it wasn't.

It wasn't until 1940 that the papier-mâché, piano wire, and cheesecloth body, with its glass eyes, was rediscovered that authorities realized that Tanzler had stolen Mesa's body from the mausoleum sometime after it was placed there.

It was this bizarre chain of events that led to Judge W. V. Albury questioning the sanity of the man before him, charged with grave robbery, who was begging for the body to be returned to him. The judge had no choice but to free Tanzler as the statute of limitations had run out on the crime, and he was found to be legally sane.

Now, without Mesa's body, Tanzler relocated to Zephyrhills to be near his estranged wife. Rumors abounded in the town about the odd German man whose pipe-organ playing drifted down the street. He embraced the rumors, embellishing his back story, insisting on being called Dr. Carl von Consel and claiming to be a count.

In 1952, he was found to be dead in his home. His body had been there around three weeks before a neighbor became worried about his health, having not seen him in weeks, and noticed his full mailbox. He was the only living soul in the house as his wife lived nearby in the city. However, he did not die alone, as a life-sized plaster effigy of Mesa's body was discovered in the home.

In his book "Von Consel", Tom Swicegood speculates that Tanzler may have secretly switched out Mesa's real body for the replica, keeping her true remains for himself. We may never know, as when Mesa's family got her body back, they buried it at a location which has not been disclosed to this day.

"I think he just got too much radiation in his brain," Wise concluded.

Dixon's Demise

The abandoned stagecoach was an odd sight to the four men who were walking along the remote wagon trail that ran from Tampa to Brooksville in 1853. There were no signs of life anywhere, but then the men saw something that made their blood run cold.

The sand was marred with signs of a struggle and blood. Yet this wasn't an ordinary murder—it was predation. The tracks of a Florida panther could be seen.

Personal effects from the stagecoach revealed the unfortunate victim was John Dixon. On edge, the men followed a bloody drag mark from the hill. It led them to a murky swamp where they saw what was left of Dixon's body. They were unable to recover his submerged corpse.

While there were no witnesses to Dixon's terrifying last moments, what had happened could be deduced from the evidence at the scene. Dixon was last seen spending the night at a homestead along the trail on his way to Tampa. Weary, he decided to rest under a tree on the highest point amid the swampy terrain.

It was there that the panther found him, suddenly leaping upon him. The struggle ended quickly, and the panther took its meal before dragging off its kill.

In July 2025, Pasco County had the first recorded Florida panther death in modern history after one was struck by a vehicle in Wesley Chapel, reports the Tampa Bay Times.

While this is great news for the endangered species, there is no denying that panthers are ruthless predators.

Ghostly Guests of the Edwinola

One moment, Seymour Gerowe was working on his dream hotel in downtown Dade City, and the next, he was plummeting thirty feet to his death.

Gerowe of Atlanta bought the Dade City property, where a few months earlier, a previous hotel had burned down, and excitedly began to build a new hotel. He soon became a well-known and respected figure in the community.

It was April 3, 1911, when Gerowe was on a third-floor window ledge pulling out nails left over from scaffolding. One particularly stubborn nail gave way suddenly, throwing Gerowe off balance.

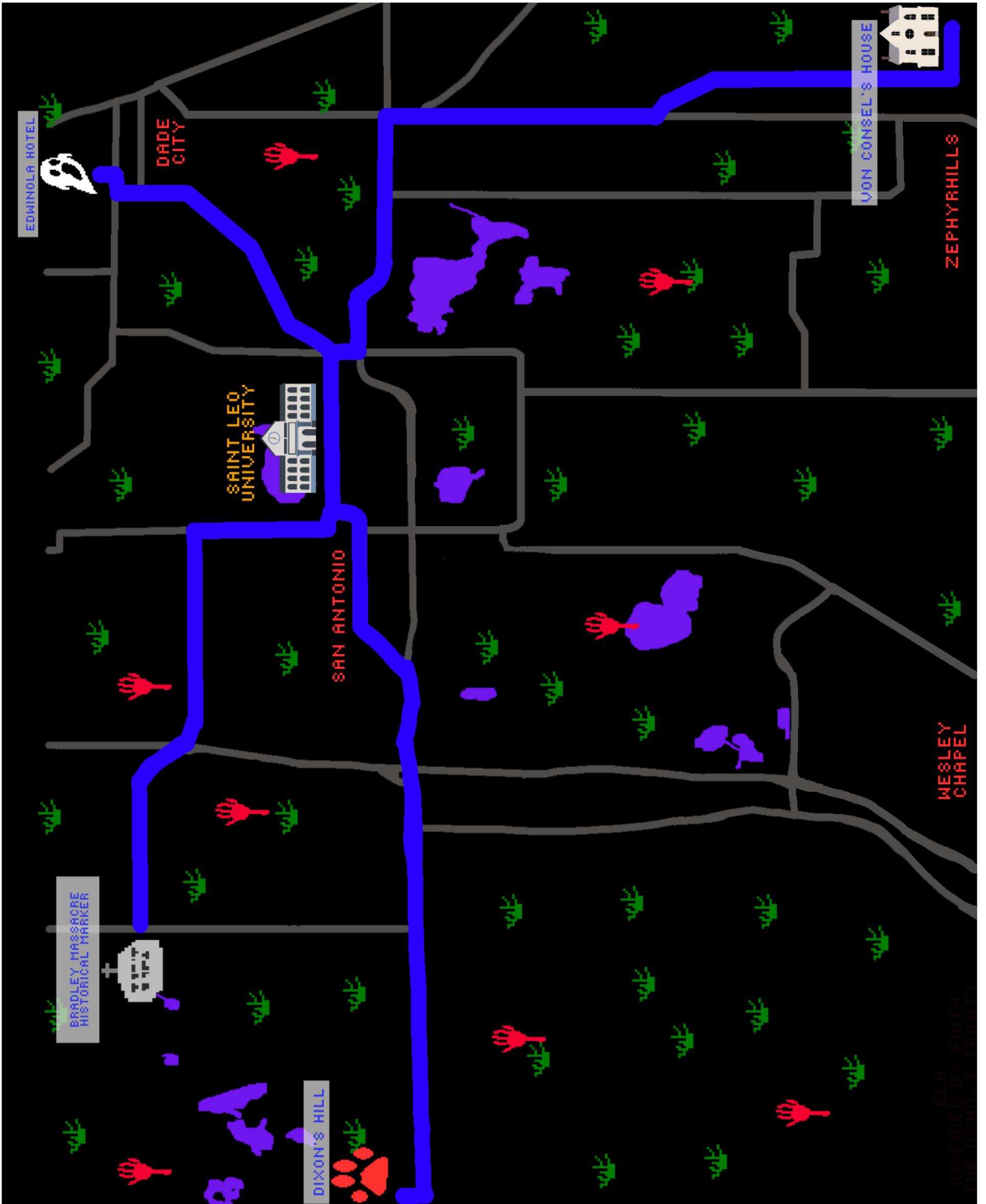
Terror filled Gerowe as he free-fell through the air, trying to somehow stop his fall. His fear was short-lived as he died instantly as his head hit the ground below and his neck snapped.

Ghostly activity has been reported in the Edwinola ever since. An unknown female apparition is reported to haunt the floors, and murmurs and cigar smoke rise from empty rooms. It is also believed that the park in front of the Edwinola was the place of a 1916 lynching of a black man accused of assaulting a white woman. No one was charged for the illegal lynching, so there are only local oral records, but what little documentation that does exist supports the rumor.

To read the full article, head to lionsprideonline.com



Pasco County is no stranger to dark history. Tragedies like the Bradley Massacre have slowly sunk into obscurity as decades pass by, but the mark these stories left on the area remain today. (Photo by Elijah Penn)



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Pumpkin spice prices are going up: Here's why it matters

Sayuri Vargas-Hernandez
Staff Writer

Every fall, students get excited when pumpkin spice drinks and snacks return. Pumpkin spice makes people feel cozy, happy, and ready for the season. A warm latte, a soft muffin, or even a candle with that sweet smell are all part of the fall vibe, but this year, something is different.

Pumpkin spice products like lattes, muffins, and candles are about seven percent more expensive than last year, according to Financial Content Markets by Brandpoint. Students are starting to notice the price change. Some say they'll still buy their favorite fall treats, but others are thinking twice. Why is pumpkin spice getting more expensive?

According to Financial Content Markets by Brandpoint, one reason is that many of the spices used in pumpkin spice come from other countries, and the United States adds extra taxes called tariffs. For example, cinnamon from India or Vietnam can have up to 50 percent tariffs, nutmeg and cloves from Indonesia or Sri Lanka up to 20 percent, ginger from China up to 30 percent, and spices from Jamaica or Mexico up to 25 percent.

These taxes make it more expensive for companies to buy the ingredients, so they raise prices for the customers.

"If the price goes up by a dollar, I'll buy it without thinking twice but if it more than that... I probably won't buy it, but no oth-

er fall flavor can replace it for me. Pumpkin spice is my go-to," said Tamar Olguin Alzate, a senior majoring in clinical psychology.

According to an article from WGN Evening News, some companies also use a trick called shrinkflation, which means they make the product smaller but keep the price the same, so customers get less. Since pumpkin spice is only sold for a short time each year, companies know people will pay more because it feels special and limited.

"Pumpkin spice prices goes up because it's only sold during the fall. Since it's a seasonal product, companies know people look forward to it and are willing to pay more for that cozy, limited-time feeling," said Professor Tonya Mazur, assistant professor of management.

Marketing experts say pumpkin spice sells well because it makes people think of fall, comfort, and happy memories. For international students who may not know, pumpkin spice is a mix of cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cloves, and allspice.

According to Financial Content Markets by Brandpoint, the blend was first made in 1934 to help people bake pumpkin pie. Then in 2003, Starbucks made the pumpkin spice latte, and it became very popular. Now you can find pumpkin spice in coffee, cereal, cookies, candles, and even dog treats.

"I also think that this affects students how they shop, they may look for cheaper options, but less, or treat pumpkin spice as a

special treat instead of a regular buy," Mazur added.

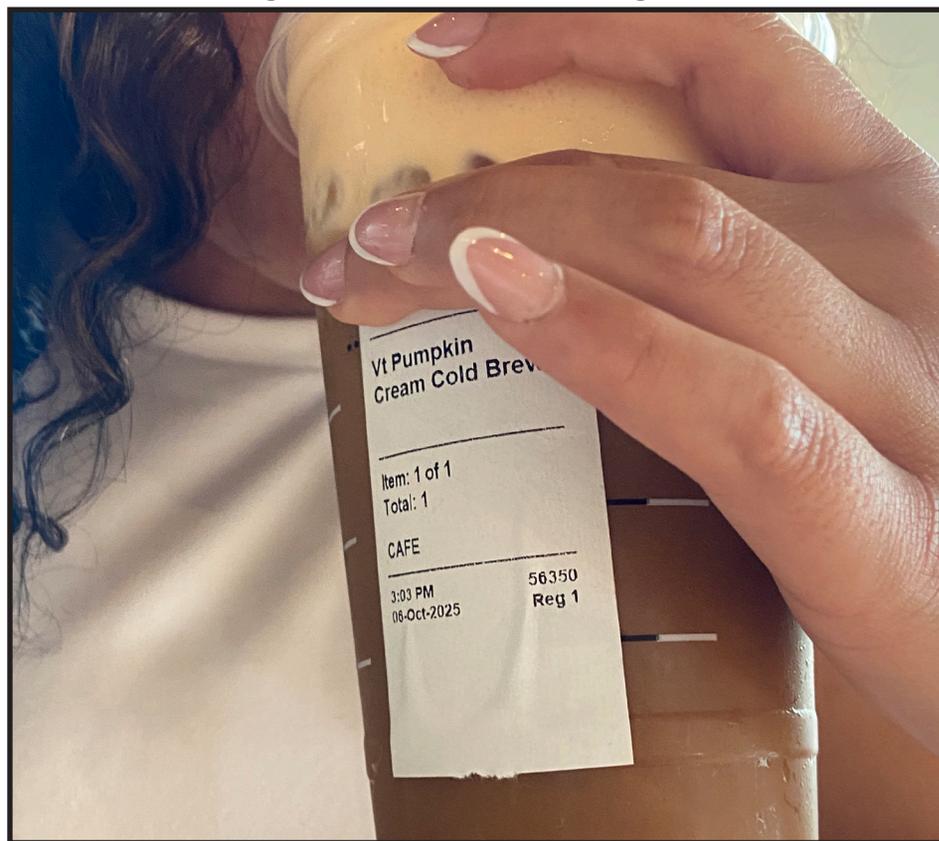
Even though pumpkin spice is a little bit more expensive this year, it still brings comfort and joy to many students and people. For them, it's more than just a flavor, they see it as a tradition that lets them know the fall season is here.

"A pumpkin spice latte just hits different in the fall. I love it when the air starts to cool down, and I've got that warm cup in my hands; it's an instant feeling of comfort. The whole vibe is cozy, calm, and a little magical," said

Olguin Alzate.

Yes, prices may rise due to tariffs, smaller packaging, and marketing, but the feeling of pumpkin spice will remain the same. Students are finding creative ways to enjoy it such as choosing budget friendly drinks, baking at home with friends, or exploring other fall flavors like apple or chai.

No matter how they celebrate, fall continues to be a time for slowing down, feeling grateful, and making lasting memories. Pumpkin spice may cost more, but the happiness it brings is still worth it.



Pumpkin Cream Cold Brew is back this fall, and it's a cozy tradition and one of Starbucks' most popular drinks. People love its smooth, cold brew and sweet pumpkin cream topping. (Photo by Sayuri Vargas-Hernandez)

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FLORIDA'S TOP HALLOWEEN ATTRACTIONS: R

**MICKY'S NOT- SO- SCARY HALLOWEEN PARTY
(WALT DISNEY WORLD)**



(Photo courtesy of Haleigh Degraeve)

Walt Disney World transforms into a happy haunt from Aug. 15 until Oct. 31, and those who are fans of classic Disney attractions like Mad Tea Party and Space Mountain can experience them in a whole new light (or pitch blackness).

Go for a spooky spin with vibrant lights or ride Space Mountain with no lights and eerie music. Or if that's not your cup of tea, trick-or-treat around the park. From 7 pm until midnight, experience shows, dance parties, parades, and so much more starting at \$119 per person. Don't forget to dress to impress and wear your costume around the park—it's a party after all.

**CREATURES OF THE NIGHT
(ZOO TAMPA AT LOWRY PARK)**



(Photo courtesy of Sharlene Dilks)

Zoo Tampa (formerly known as Lowry Park Zoo) offers a new spooky adventure, designed to provide a fun and unforgettable experience for all ages.

Creatures of the Night allows you to come face-to-face with dinosaurs, vampires, ghouls, and trolls in a journey through Mesozoic Mayhem and take a spin on Carousel de los Muertos. On select nights until Oct. 26, after 4 pm, take an adventure into Zoo Tampa for not just light scares, but also encounters with spooky wildlife, see a show, and try some wickedly tasty treats and drinks. Prices start at \$29.95.

**HOWL-
(BUSCH GARDENS)**



(Photo by Faith Skierkowski)

Busch Gardens Howl-O-Scream returned for its 20th anniversary. From Sept. 5 until Oct. 31, uncover the creature in the dark. For just under \$20, experience five fright houses, six scare zones, unexpected scares, themed bars, a "Howl-O-Scream" bar. Looking to get to the top of the lines with Howl-O-Scream Upgrades." The haunted houses are designed to be a pounding experience with actors, detailed special effects, and a memorable night. The doors open at 7 pm, when the park opens to those with a ticket and open to seekers and

ANKED FROM NOT-SO SCARY TO TERRIFYING

OWL-O-SCREAM
(BUSCH GARDENS TAMPA BAY)



(Photo by Faith Skierkowski)

owl-O-Scream has celebrated its 25th anniversary. Until Nov. 1, you can enjoy scares lurking in the woods. Under \$75, you can experience frightening haunted houses, live shows, and much more. To make the fun faster, skip the line at Owl-O-Scream's "Evil Haunted Houses" are intense, heart-pounding experiences filled with live actors, set designs, and special effects creating a truly terrifying atmosphere. The event begins at 7 pm and the park will close its doors with a Busch Gardens Halloween Horror Nights Express Pass. Its doors to thrill-seeking horror buffs.

HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS
(UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT)



(Photo by Faith Skierkowski)

From Aug. 29 until Nov. 2, Universal's Orlando Resorts welcome back their annual Halloween Horror Nights. Face the night once the clock turns 7 pm, unless you dare enter and purchase the Halloween Horror Nights Express Pass for \$200. Brave 10 demented horror houses with names and faces any horror buffs will know. This year, Art the clown can be seen skulking around the park. Be prepared, you may get wet if you enter the Terrier house because he is not clowning around. Due to the intensity of this event, Halloween Horror Nights is not recommended for ages 13 and under.

SCREAM-A-GEDDON HORROR PARK
(DADE CITY)



(Photo courtesy Brenna Schauer)

Looking for something so ghoulishly sinister that you need to sign a waiver for? Check out Scream-A-Geddon; lurking in the woods of Dade City are six menacing, interactive haunted attractions. With five haunted houses, one zombie paintball, and a "Monster Midway", you will definitely need to check out "Bonzo's Beer Garden" to make it through the night. Tickets are an extra \$6 at the box office, so it's best to buy them online, starting at \$29.95. The event will be open until Nov. 8; however, Scream-A-Geddon is not recommended for those under 13 years old, so enter at your own risk. But remember, if you can't handle it, emergency exits are available for those of a fainthearted nature.

From turnip to pumpkin: The origins of a Halloween icon

Alina Rezepova
Staff Writer

With Halloween just a few weeks away, many are already thinking of what fun faces they can carve on their pumpkin this year. But did you know that the first Halloween carvings were not cute at all and were cut out of a turnip?

In the past, people mutilated turnips, making them terrifying to scare away spirits. According to history.com, in the early 17th-18th centuries, there was a popular legend of a figure known as Stingy Jack that originated in ancient Ireland.

Jack got this nickname because of his reputation for constant deception and failure to pay bills. One day, the devil came to Jack, but Stingy Jack tricked the devil into not taking his soul to hell after death.

Years later, after Jack died, he was denied entry into heaven because of his sinful lifestyle and was not allowed into hell because the devil remembered his promise. All the devil did was throw Jack a burning ember.

In order not to burn his hands, Stingy Jack cut a hole in the turnip and placed an ember inside, making a lantern that lit his way. According to the legend, Jack continues to wander the world

with a turnip lantern in his hands to this day.

"It is fun to study how events evolve and change shape over time. Stingy Jack is one of the evil spirits that people would hope to protect themselves from, and scare away, by carving menacing faces into vegetables like turnips and pumpkins and lighting them with a candle, which is largely symbolic," said Dr. Elisabeth Aiken, an associate director of honors and assistant professor of English.

Also, history.com noted that in ancient Ireland, superstitious people began carving scary faces on turnips to ward off evil spirits and Stingy Jack. There was a festival called Samhain, which is celebrated on Oct. 31. It was believed that on this day and throughout Nov. 1, the boundary between the living and the afterlife was blurred, and evil spirits began to roam among the living.

"Samhain was traditionally a Celtic festival to mark the end of the harvest season in late fall. During Samhain, because the distance between the living and the dead is at its thinnest, people would light bonfires and dress in costume to confuse any stray spirit who was wandering through," said Aiken.

In the 19th century, Irish immigrants brought with them the

tradition of carving scary turnips for Halloween. In America, they soon discovered the pumpkin, a vegetable much larger and easier to carve. Its size and hollow shape quickly made it the new symbol of the holiday.

While living next to Americans, the Irish continued to celebrate Samhain; however, during their celebrations, curious children started to imitate the Irish and their "strange" traditions during this holiday. For the children, it was more fun than the belief that "evil pumpkins" scare away spirits, especially Stingy Jack.

Based on National Geographic, by the end of the 19th century, newspapers began to appear that mentioned the "irresistible Irish pumpkin lanterns," and this was associated with elements of folk traditions. This caused a strong reaction among the Americans, and they began to transform this tradition into a more cheerful holiday.

American schools and churches began hosting Halloween parties, adopting traditions from the Irish but making their holiday more fun and family friendly. And thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, the holiday began to become widespread, which led to the fact that ready-made pumpkin

lanterns and costumes began to be sold in stores.

Today, Halloween is one of the most popular holidays, especially in America. Pumpkins, costumes, masks, and parties have become an autumn tradition that is so eagerly awaited, especially by children.

"In elementary school, I really enjoyed celebrating Halloween. Although I do not celebrate it much anymore, it still reminds me of my childhood," said Jacob Wright, a sophomore majoring in marketing.

Over the centuries, the frightening Irish tradition has turned into a fun holiday known as Halloween. As early as September, people start preparing for Halloween, buying decorations, costumes, sweets, and carving pumpkins into faces that can be scary, funny, or even friendly.

"I have been celebrating Halloween since I was a kid, dressing up and going out with my friends to get treats. It is a lot of fun," said Brianna Ortega, a sophomore majoring in sports business.

Who would have known that because of their fear of Stingy Jack, the Irish people would carve scary faces on turnips, which would later turn into a world-famous holiday like Halloween?



The scary pumpkin lanterns are a reference to the fact that people once used them as lights. (Photo by Alina Rezepova)



Skeletons are an important part of Halloween and still remind people where the holiday really comes from. (Photo by Alina Rezepova)



People begin preparing as early as September, buying decorations, costumes, sweets, and plenty of pumpkins to carve. Today, pumpkin faces can be scary, funny, or even friendly. (Photo by Alina Rezepova)

“Who belongs?” Saint Leo professors answer the hard questions on immigration on Constitution Day

Elijah Penn

Staff Writer

On Sept. 17, a panel of four Saint Leo University professors from a range of departments gathered in TECO Hall to answer questions about immigration and national security for Saint Leo University's annual Constitution Day event.

Each year, the organizers of Constitution Day try to pick a topic that is not only controversial, but also timely. For example, in 2022, following the U.S. Supreme Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, Constitution Day focused on the topic of abortion and the 14th Amendment. Last year, the topic was elections.

Now, in the height of the debate surrounding the Trump Administration's immigration policies, the topic chosen for the event was, naturally, immigration and the idea of “Who belongs?”

The panel consisted of Francis “Frank” Orlando, instructor II of political science, Herold Tucker, an adjunct professor of criminal justice and former unit chief for immigration and customs enforcement in Washington, D.C., Daniel DuBois, director of honors and associate professor of history, and Marco Rimanelli, full professor of political sciences and international studies.

Assistant professor of political science, Dr. Austin Trantham, moderated the event, but his tasks started well before the event began. One challenge that Trantham faced was writing balanced questions to stimulate discussion, both about policy and the panelists' experiences. He realized then that those personal stories really made the event resonate with the audience.

The opening question Trantham asked was about how each of the panelists had been personally affected by immigration. Orlando told of being treated differently at school for being from an Italian family, and Rimanelli discussed why he decided to make America his

new home. Tucker talked about his time working with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and DuBois revealed his rich ethnic background.

“I learned so much about my faculty colleagues and their own personal experiences with these topics,” Trantham stated. Orlando told a story that drew laughs where a teacher had told kids in his school, “Don't borrow money from Frankie because his uncles will break your legs if you don't pay him back.”

“I think, you know, having a panelist who is a son of immigrants and having a panelist who is a legal immigrant, really added to the dynamic nature of what we're discussing,” Trantham added.

While the panel members agreed on most of the major points, there were some differences in opinion on specific policies that should be put in place for immigration. Rimanelli did not shy away from discussing the effectiveness of the past three presidential administration's immigration policies.

Tucker answered a question about his thoughts on Alligator Alcatraz and similar facilities, which he saw as “political grandstanding.”

“It's most important for me,

for the students to be able to hear from faculty having a civil discourse and ... how some of the panelists disagreed with each other on certain aspects of the topic, but ... they can still engage in meaningful conversation,” Trantham said, tying in the University's value of “Respect.”

“Each year, I think what the Constitution Day program allows is the University to unite in a spirit of intellectually engaging conversation while continuing to demonstrate our core value of Community and how we really are better together than we are apart,” Trantham said. He expressed excitement for next year's Constitution Day event and encouraged students to attend it for another relevant discussion.

Matthew Efem, a political science sophomore, found this year's topic to be particularly relevant to current times. It was Efem's first time attending Constitution Day. He found the event to be very engaging.

“I learned quite a lot of valuable information regarding it,” Efem said.

“I would like to learn a little bit more when it comes to immigration ... It was very interesting when

it comes to the process of immigration, and ... from what I've heard from the panel, that it was very convoluted when it comes to the process, so looking into that, and how immigration actually works ... is very interesting to me,” Efem said.

What really stood out to Efem was the idea of belonging. He remembers the panelists discussing that those who belong are “those people that really are willing to give up everything that ... they knew and loved to become someone better.”

The event was a very informative one for all who attended, students and staff alike. Even after the panel had ended, the discussion had just begun. Several students remained behind to ask the panelists their opinions on questions that they hadn't been able to get to in the limited time of the event. They were able to have a more personal dialogue about topics like birthright citizenship, national security, and whether immigration should be limited.

The event gave students new insights into modern issues and a greater understanding of “Who belongs?” and what it means to be an American, whether someone was born here or not.



Each speaker took turns answering the questions that were asked by the moderator or the audience. Questions covered topics like assimilation to Alligator Alcatraz. Left to right: Austin Trantham, Frank Orlando, Herold Tucker, Daniel DuBios, Marco Rimanelli. (Photo by Elijah Penn)

Harvest of Hidden Words

A cozy challenge: Find each fall word in any direction

By: Madison Wilson, Editorials Editor

T	W	W	G	D	B	R	E	R	I	F	N	O	B	P	J
S	G	O	T	U	R	K	E	Y	R	E	T	A	E	W	S
E	D	H	R	M	B	N	N	R	O	C	A	P	Z	L	F
V	V	G	O	C	Y	C	I	C	C	V	U	I	A	L	F
R	E	N	S	S	E	H	A	K	O	M	J	J	M	E	H
A	D	I	Y	P	T	R	J	N	P	S	Y	S	G	A	A
H	U	F	K	Z	C	S	A	K	D	M	T	F	U	V	U
Y	T	F	O	J	P	F	I	C	C	Y	U	U	H	E	N
Y	I	U	O	F	G	N	K	B	S	O	F	P	M	S	T
N	T	T	P	C	P	A	F	E	M	C	B	O	H	E	E
R	A	S	S	I	T	N	M	U	T	U	A	W	N	K	D
F	R	S	E	E	L	P	P	A	J	Z	X	M	E	W	Z
K	G	I	C	R	A	N	B	E	R	R	Y	V	E	B	T

Pumpkin

Harvest

Autumn

Leaves

Acorn

Stuffing

Turkey

Cranberry

Bonfire

Scarecrow

Gratitude

Costume

Spooky

Haunted

Candy

Cobweb

Apple

Sweater

Ghost

Pumpkin Pie

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Reflecting on his legacy: Assistant Basketball Coach Daniel Waln

Elijah Alvarado

Sports Editor

Following the sudden loss of Assistant Men's Basketball Coach Daniel Waln on July 16, 2025, the Saint Leo University community reflects on his legacy.

Waln joined the Saint Leo basketball staff in Nov. 2024 with years of coaching experience. Waln was a big part of the university, and he touched the hearts of his players and surrounding community in so many ways.

"We are heartbroken by the sudden and tragic loss of Coach Waln," stated Marcel Lazenby, director of athletics, recreation, & wellness, vice president of athletics. "We will miss him deeply, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends, and all who have the privilege of knowing him."

In the short time Waln was with the basketball program, his dedication to this program leaves a mark on what the Saint Leo men's basketball team has in store for this upcoming season. This offseason the coaching staff worked tirelessly to rebuild the roster due to losing 11 guys between the transfer portal and graduation.

Saint Leo Men's Basketball Head Coach Spencer Henke does

not shy away from giving credit to coach Waln for his contributions in this process.

"Coach Waln 'Dub' was such a huge part of our program even though he was only with us a little less than a year. He bought into what we were trying to build the moment he got to campus and has his fingerprints all over our new look roster," said Henke.

Waln was more than just a coach. He looked at ways he could make an impact and build relationships with his players and community beyond the game of basketball. He wanted the best for everyone he came across along the way.

"He had a unique ability to always be present and make you feel like you were the most important person in the room at all times," said Henke. The passion Waln shared in his presence and impact he had on anyone he connected with over time created a boost of self-confidence.

"I think this gave those who he impacted a sense of belief in themselves, but also in the fact that he was always going to be there when you needed him," stated Henke.

Waln always had a positive personality, and it showed. He always believed that goals could be

accomplished, no matter the challenge, meeting every challenge with a unique and unwavering response.

Waln was always willing to help in any way possible, especially in ways that brought attention to Saint Leo and the men's basketball program. This highlights more characteristics about the type of person he was: selfless, driven and relentless.

"To pinpoint one moment is very difficult as Coach Waln was such an unbelievable individual, so the moments are endless. But, one moment that really stood out to me was this summer when he willingly took time to give each high school team at our team camp a tour of facilities out of his love for Saint Leo," said Henke. "This shows how selfless he was to start with, but also how driven and relentless he was to constantly promote our program—allowing us to be in the mix with the best players around."

Waln's legacy will always be honored for his dedication to the basketball program, Saint Leo University, and the entire surrounding community. His legacy will continue to spread throughout the program, beyond the court.

"Coach Waln and his family will forever be a part of our program. We will honor him throughout

the year as a team and play each game knowing he is watching over us," said Henke.

While Waln may be missing in the locker room and on the bench, his spirit and legacy will live on the court and in the hearts of his players and fellow coaches and all who were affected by the sudden passing.

"I continue to pray and wish all those who were impacted by Coach Waln's death well and hope they know that we represent them as well each time we take the floor," said Henke.



Pictured is Daniel Waln, a man whose true passion was in everything he did and his love for the game of basketball. (Photo courtesy of Saint Leo Athletics)

DANIEL WALN
1990-2025

Coach Waln's legacy will live on forever and the support from the community continues. (Photo courtesy of Saint Leo Athletics)

New opportunities for female athletes: Saint Leo University introduces a flag football program

Elijah Alvarado

Sports Editor

Saint Leo University has announced the launch of a women's flag football program, scheduled to begin in spring of 2026, joining a number of successful athletic programs offered by the university. As interest in flag football continues to grow nationwide, this new addition by the athletic department is a major step in providing opportunity for female athletes.

Eli Taliaferro has been named as head coach. Coach Taliaferro brings a load of experience and knowledge in women's flag football, having spent years around the sport and working with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Marcel Lazenby, director of athletics, recreation, & wellness, vice president of athletics, shares his excitement for Taliaferro and speaks very highly of him.

"Coach Taliaferro's expertise and dedication make him the perfect fit to lead this new chapter in Lions Athletics," said Lazenby.

Making the decision to join the Pride was a clear path for Taliaferro as Saint Leo standards match with his very own standards and

allow his history within the sport to make an impact in starting this brand-new program.

"When I saw Saint Leo, knowing Saint Leo was a Catholic university and a flag football job, it was kind of a no-brainer," explained Taliaferro. "It seems like things were unfolding the way they were supposed to."

Having the opportunity to set the standard for this program as it is built from the ground up gives Taliaferro a clear and bright future. This adds to the excitement and was a key part of his decision to pursue the head coach role. Taliaferro emphasized the connection he and Lazenby have had since day one is one of the key reasons he feels the job was right for him.

"When I met with Marcel, we hit it off right away," said Taliaferro. Lazenby's vision for the program aligns with Taliaferro's, and he expresses confidence that they can build a successful future for the university and its female student athletes.

"He has that insight to see where the sport's going and know we have the opportunity to put together a really strong program

as it moves into the NCAA here in the next couple years," said Taliaferro. He also explained the culture Saint Leo possesses is the same culture he wants within his team. It's now a matter of him maintaining that culture.

"The culture I would want to build with a flag football program is already in place at Saint Leo as a school and so now all I have to do is go in [and] build the culture, manage it, and have that championship mindset," said Taliaferro.

He remains excited about the opportunity and expresses his love for the sport and that trend is one that spreads across the entire Saint Leo athletics department.

"I get to go in and coach a sport I love, and I don't have to worry about turning the program around, we get to build it in the image of all the other successful Saint Leo programs," said Taliaferro. The visioned culture he is looking to have in this program ties in with the Saint Leo core values and is aimed at providing a successful future for their players.

"Adhering to the values that Saint Leo has is the most important thing," said Taliaferro, "I don't want

to just coach good athletes, I want to coach good people." He explains the lessons he hopes his players take from this program are intended to lead them to success not only on the field, but also off the field.

"I want to know that the lessons they're learning through the program are putting them in a better place when they leave and they go off into the world post-college," said Taliaferro.

Taliaferro expresses appreciation for the amount of support he and his staff have received from the university and the surrounding community. They plan to show appreciation by giving back to the community, by hosting camps and free clinics for various age groups.

As the program moves forward and prepares for a highly competitive and exciting open season and future: Taliaferro gives a preview of what the Saint Leo fans can expect.

"They can expect [a] high level of competitiveness and players with a lot of heart," said Taliaferro. "We'll be one that goes out there, and we'll compete well with anyone we lineup against."



Flag football makes its appearance at Saint Leo University and Head Coach Eli Taliaferro is ready to get to work. (Photo courtesy of Saint Leo Athletics)



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