

Orcutt ★ Elections Issue ★ FREE PIONEER

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Statewide General Election on November 6

Orcutt Has Three Local Races: Two School Boards and Airport District

In this issue, we have asked the candidates from each of the local races to submit a 200 word statement addressing why they are running and what are the most pressing issues facing their district. Below are the responses

from each of the candidates in their respective races. Each statement appears in the same order the candidate's name will appear on the ballot.

Please remember to vote on November 6;

for information regarding the election, to see where your polling place is or for any other questions regarding your vote status, visit the Santa Barbara County Elections office's website at www.sbcvot.com.



Laurel Ciervo



Shaun Henderson



Melanie Waffle



Eric Melsheimer



Mark Steller

Orcutt Union School District

Five candidates are looking to fill the three open seats on the Orcutt Union School District Board of Trustees. The district includes six elementary schools, two junior high schools, one high school and an independent study K-8 program.

Candidates are listed in the order that they appear on the ballot.

Laurel Ciervo Educator/Counselor/Parent

I have been an educator and parent in the Orcutt community for the past 10 years. During that time, I've worked as a school counselor, a school administrator, and as a director of curriculum and student services. I have experience serving on a board, and served on the Strategic Planning Committee for OUSD. My vision for OUSD is "Educating the Whole Child." It is imperative that there is a support system for the increasing number of students who are feeling uneasy and unsafe at school. We also need to educate students for the 21st century through thoughtful uses of technology and relevant career technical education by collaborating with community partners. Great ideas are not limited to the folks working at the schools. One of the ideas

that I would like to see implemented is wellness centers on the high school and junior high campuses. It would be a location where the counselor, school psychologist and hopefully some outside support agencies could target support for students who are struggling with anxiety, depression and stress. Students who are experiencing high levels of uneasiness will not be successful in school. I want to use my experience to be a voice for all stakeholders.

Shaun Henderson Banking Officer/Parent

I have extensive experience in business management. I have handled large budgets with profit and loss statements. My experience also includes facility management and human resources.

My children have attended this school district for over 19 years and I have built relationships with the district staff. I have volunteered in this community as a member of the school site council and coaching my children in sports. I also have been involved with the board of YMCA, Rotary Club, American Heart Association and my homeowners association where I'm Treasurer.

As a School Board Trustee I will pledge that

Kids Come First in everything that I do. I will insure they have the right environment with safety/security being an emphasis. We need to continue with remodeling all schools to have one point access. We need to also make sure we keep class sizes capped for safety. I will insure the right experience with a great curriculum with added enrichment and technology. We need to assure all schools offer arts and music. We also need to continue to add technology so all children can excel on devices. I will keep watch on the financial wellbeing of the district budget and Measure G funds.

Melanie Waffle Business Manager/Parent

My name is Melanie Waffle and I am a proud parent of children in the Orcutt Union School District. I have been the Manager of my family business, Next Day Signs, for over 15 years and am very familiar with making critical decisions. I have BA degree in Social Science from Chapman University after attending Cal Poly and graduating from Allan Hancock College. I have also coordinated a Non-Profit and was a CA State Certified Counselor focused on low income mothers.

I devote time volunteering for the Santa Barbara County Animal Shelter with my daughter, as well as the Santa Barbara County

Stand Down. I act as a Board Member of SOAAR and am the Orcutt Academy K-8 PTSA Merchant Partner Chairperson. I have also served on the Orcutt Youth Softball Association Board as Treasurer.

Student safety, use of Measure G funds and transparency of the budget processes are priorities for me; my knowledge, skills and abilities make me qualified to address these and other important issues on the board. My varied expertise will help foster effective communication among the valued community, teachers, staff, parents & students and aid in impactful outcomes within our schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eric Melsheimer Engineer/Business Owner

I believe in the importance of public education and am proud of Orcutt's excellent schools. My daughters have both grown up in the Orcutt schools and have benefited from excellent teachers, a committed staff and a supportive community.

For the past 20 years I have been involved in our schools and community. I have served on Advisory Boards for Cal Poly and Allan Hancock. I am on the Measure G Citizens Oversight Committee and currently serve as President of the Orcutt Children's Arts Foundation.

I graduated from California public schools and from Stanford University. I have worked as an engineer in aerospace and am currently CEO of Melfred Borzall. I have worked as an instructor at AHC. As a business owner and employer, I understand the necessity of education to prepare students for 21st century jobs and to be contributing citizens.

The Orcutt community showed its support for education by passing Measure G, a \$60 million bond to improve Orcutt school facilities. I feel my background in engineering, construction, management and finance will be beneficial to support the District's management of these activities to ensure our students get the maximum benefit from this investment by our community.

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Distribution 17,000+ :

15,091 in mail

1,998 delivered to businesses in
the Orcutt area

Publisher: Gerrit Hull

Editors: Steve Southwick

& Stephanie Southwick Hull

Reporters & Photographers:

Steve Southwick, Stephanie Southwick Hull,

James Jepsen, Rebecca Ross, Michael Shaw,

Jamie Guista, Trenton Kozel

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Business & Advertising: (805) 714-6584

Postal Address:

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Webmaster: Archie Miller

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Santa Maria Public Airport Board of Directors



Jim Bray



Steven Brown

The Airport District board of Directors manages the Santa Maria Public Airport and the surrounding grounds. Currently there are five members who sit on the board, and there is one seat open for a short (2 year) term. There are two candidates for this seat.

Candidates are listed in the order they appear on the ballot.

Jim Bray

Public Relations Professional

In July, I retired from the oil and gas industry after 42 years of service, 24 years here in Santa Maria. I am also a retired Army Lt. Colonel, with 28 years active and reserve service. I wanted to pursue a new focus for my energy, enthusiasm and love of our community on something in which I care a great deal -- our Santa Maria Airport. With one of the largest land area airport districts in the state, I believe there is a great potential to serve this community

through growing airport businesses, expanding airport facilities for the future, and promoting the district for development opportunities to attract local high paying jobs. We do this by branding SMX as not only the destination choice for north Santa Barbara County for both commercial and general aviation, but also pursuing ways to grow the economic potential for the airport. The tremendous

success of the recent Central Coast Airfest shows not only the interest in, but the great potential for the Santa Maria Airport. Please check my website at brayforsmx.org for information on my background and why I am running for the board. I would appreciate your vote on November 6th.

Steven M Brown

Appointed Incumbent

I was five when I rode in my father's airplane for the first time. I remember the feeling I had as he took off and we left the runway, from that day I has hooked; I absolutely love to fly. It is that passion that led me to flight school in 1976. Since, I have piloted all over America and consider Santa Maria Airport my home.

As a local business owner who has served the Central Coast for over 30 years; I'm invested in my community and my airport. It is the culmination of these things that has

led me to begin this journey on the board. I feel strongly that my knowledge, skills, and abilities will allow me to excel in this position.

A paramount role of any organization is to connect with the community you serve. This simple philosophy has served me well in business and has helped me provide the highest level of service to the Central Coast. My desire to maintain this position comes from wanting to give back to the community that has given so much to me.

I believe an important issue facing the district is getting another commercial carrier to serve our community.

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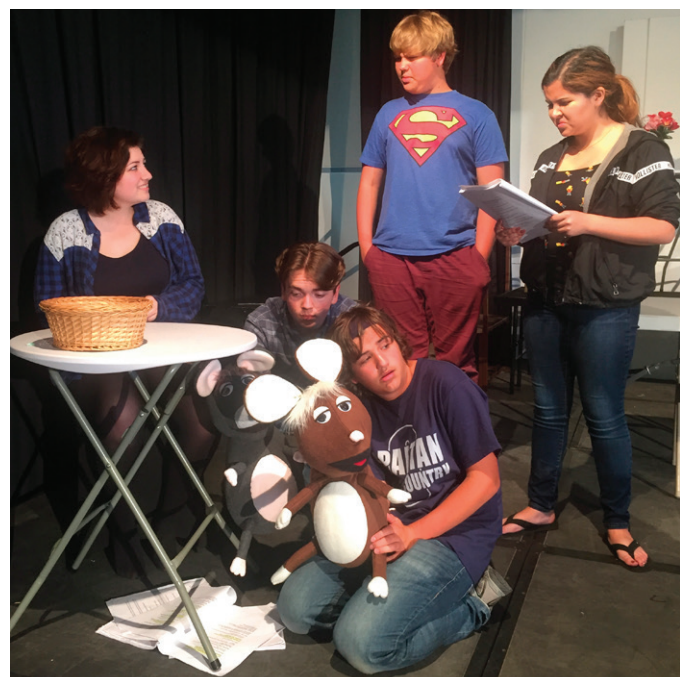
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OAHS Drama takes on *The Witches*



boy and his grandmother in a world with secret covens of child-hating witches. While it sounds quite dramatic, the book has a lighter tone because it features Dahl's trademark wit and whimsy. Director and drama teacher Michael Shaw says this adaptation will be no different.

Shaw shares, "I grew up with Roald Dahl's books." This is a sentiment many people can relate to, and the play hopes to stay true to that. "Most of our set is made of loose,

whimsical black and white doodles drawn freehand on large boards. They have a certain dark playfulness about them, which will hopefully bring theatergoers back to Dahl and Blake's original work that many of us grew up with." He also explained that in contrast to the set, the play features bold and colorful costume design and muppet-styled puppets made in part by Orcutt-based artist Rachael Fernandez. All this captures the

essence of the original book.

Shaw points out that it's the student actors that make the play great. "Our leads and ensemble bring fun, quirky qualities to the characters..." This lends itself wonderfully to the style of the show and will allow these student artists to shine.

Tickets are available in the Orcutt Academy Business office; \$10 for regular admission and \$20 for VIP admission. VIP seats include the "intermission experience" where guests meet and mingle with the cast while enjoying a tasty snack. Shows are November 8 at 7 PM; November 9 at 7 PM; and November 10 at 4

PM and 7 PM. Seating is limited, so tickets will not be sold at the door. Shows and box office located at 610 Pinal Ave.

Trenton Kozel reporting

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This November 8-10, the Orcutt Academy High School Drama Class will stage Roald Dahl's "The Witches", adapted by David Wood with special arrangement by Samuel French, Ltd. The production plans to showcase the students' talents while creating an experience the entire community can enjoy.

The Witches is a fantasy novel written by Roald Dahl and illustrated by Quentin Blake. It takes place in Norway and follows a young

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for Orcutt School Board

- Strong business and managerial background
- Proud **parent** of two recent Orcutt graduates
- Long history of **supporting education** on the Central Coast
- Member of Measure G Citizens Oversight Committee
- President of Orcutt Children's Arts Foundation

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Orcutt Union School District

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Mark Steller
Small Business Owner

My lifelong association with the Orcutt Union School District and this community is my strongest qualification. I attended Orcutt schools, and all four of my children were students here. My wife and I own two Orcutt businesses, Old Town Market and Déjà Vu Antiques, and I am president of the Old Orcutt Merchants Association and very involved in the community. I have supported our schools for years. From Principal for a Day to junior high school community interviews to the Measure G campaign committee, I have been there for our district and was named its business partner of the year in 2015.

As trustee, I will work to expand the collaboration between our district and local businesses on opportunities for students with career and workforce preparation. I will advocate for the district's plans to lease Key Site 17 for senior housing, as this would be a win for both schools and community. I will seek continued progress with technology – our kids and teachers deserve nothing less than the best devices and applications. I will be a good listener, seeking input from all. And I will make doing right by students the basis for every decision. Kids really do come first!

Santa Maria Joint Union High School District

This district encompasses four high schools, Righetti, Delta, Santa Maria and Pioneer Valley. The first two, Righetti and Delta, are in the Orcutt area. There are three seats available and four candidates.

Candidates are listed in the order they appear on the ballot.

Dominick Palera
Incumbent

In November 2014, after a thirty year career with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department, I was elected to my first term on the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Board. My administrative experience as a retired Sheriff's Commander has enabled me to bring a unique perspective to the board. School safety has remained a priority. Improvements have been made. SRO's have been added, additional security hired, training for staff has taken place and campuses remain closed.

Our community has shown its support with the passage of several bonds. With that bond money, the district is in the process of adding 38 classrooms and modernizing existing classrooms at ERHS and building a Career Technical Education Center to serve all students. A future project will be the remodeling and modernization of Santa Maria High School.



Dominick Palera



Diana Perez



Carol Karamitsos



David Basket

To improve our education results, I supported the addition of culturally proficient courses. I supported the district implementation of alternatives to suspension and expulsion. I am fully committed to looking at ways to improve the eligibility of students to attend 4 year colleges and universities. (A – G requirements)

I hope to continue and support all of these endeavors as a Trustee.

Diana Perez
Incumbent

It has been an extraordinary experience to serve on the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Board. Since 2014, the

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Mark & Wendy cherish their grandkids Ireland and Daelyn

Santa Maria Joint Union High School District

continued from page 4

district has implemented a historic number of greatly needed improvements. To name a few; new buildings and classroom space at both Righetti and Santa Maria High Schools. A new Performing Arts building at Pioneer Valley High School and in progress, a new Career Technical Education Center projected to serve 500 students with hands-on, vocational programs to develop skills in high-paying careers. We have improved access to the internet, provided students computer tablets and collaborated with Allan Hancock College to provide a number of college courses on each campus. We hired 22 credential high school counselors and three university counselors to support students with college and career pathways. We've increased opportunities in sports, clubs, fine arts, and music. Moving forward, I'm interested in improving A-G course completion rates, increasing tutorial services, providing teachers additional support, be that materials, equipment or supplies. In addition, I'd like to explore new lunch menus with healthier choices, increase AVID sections, and university field trips. I hope you will reelect me this November to continue to build the best school district to serve our students.

Carol Karamitsos
Incumbent

I have been on the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Board for

12 years. During this time, schools have struggled through trials due to insufficient funding during the California recession. With Governor Brown, the funding model for schools has shifted to more local control and to augment those districts needing equitable funding. Our SMJUHSD has created opportunities for students' academic experiences and extracurricular activities and has matched programmatic changes with new facilities and modernization of existing facilities. I decided to run for a fourth term to assist in ongoing efforts. The Career Technical Education pathways and the new CTE site provide critical enhancement for our students' academic experience.

I am committed to public education as the best means to provide our children with the resources needed to reach their goals. High school students mature due to their efforts as well as the work of our hard-working teachers, support staff, and administrators. The Board's direction for comprehensive, inclusive policies and practices for students and the commitment to adequate funding provides the framework for the students and staff. I am hopeful that we can develop ways of getting every student involved in an extracurricular activity, including athletics, clubs, tutoring, mentoring, community service, and peer support groups. Society benefits from a civically-engaged populace. High school is the perfect place for students to grow into that role as adults.

David E. Basket
Aviation Professional

Dave is building an international aerial firefighting organization based in Santa Maria. Dave has more than 40 years of classified and unclassified, military, defense and commercial project development experience. In the US Army, as a decorated combat pilot in VietNam then Army and FAA Flight Instructor, Dave was selected as combat aviation headquarters unit commander. Post Army he was responsible for acquiring, delivery and support of Russian military aircraft and equipment to the US Department of Defense. He managed a project that won a ranking as one of the best managed defense programs. Working with the "New Russia" he helped upgrade medical, industrial, and US government backed "greener" mining operations in Siberia and a long running health care Joint Venture in Kazakhstan. Dave founded, operated closed Pacific Skyway, a regional airline with a perfect safety record. He holds aviation licenses in several countries including a US A&P, Flight and Ground Instructor and Airline Transport Pilot. Born in California, his education includes a high honor degree in Aerospace Management. He is proud that all three of his children graduated from Santa Maria schools are successful tax paying citizens.

Contact: David.Baskett@Gmail.com

Righetti's Black Box Theatre Is A Haunted House On Oct 27 & 28

A dark and mysterious "Haunted House" is ready for kid friendly thrills and adult goosebumps October 27th and 28th.

Righetti High School Drama Department's first annual "Haunted House" event will transform the Black Box Theater into the spookiest venue in Orcutt, where costumed tour guides are sure to entertain all visitors.

Kid-friendly matinees are from 3-5PM. Evening tours, from 6-9PM, are for those who truly want to be terrified. \$5 entrance donation.

Students say they want to connect with the community they love and provide a safe and family-friendly event for all to enjoy.

"I'm so excited to be able to incorporate every aspect of the theatre into one event, and, in a way, showcase my love for both set design, directing, stage managing and acting," said Warrior Drama Club Treasurer Karma Stodola.

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Save the Date for Holiday Festivities in Old Orcutt



Old Orcutt Christmas Tree Lighting

The holiday season will soon be upon us, with twinkling lights, holiday decorations and the sound of Christmas carols in the air, the spirit of old Orcutt will be shining. On November 30th from 5-8PM. the 5th annual Old Orcutt stroll will fill the streets.

Originally the brainchild of Merry Feliz, owner of Vintage Veranda Antique Mall, this event has grown to a fun filled family event in conjunction with the Orcutt Christmas tree lighting at 7PM at the Orcutt Lions Club. Luminaries will light the way as strollers enjoy the carolers, face painting and refreshments. There will be a hayride pulled by a vintage tractor that will taxi shoppers from one end of town to the other. The shops, restaurants and wineries will all be open late.

The annual Old Town Orcutt Christmas Parade will be held on Saturday, December 8 starting at noon, rain or shine, and will march down Clark Avenue. Registration for the parade will be open from Nov 1 - Nov 28. The parade lineup will be announced Dec 4th. For more info or to volunteer, call Kathryn Scott at 805-863-2842 or kat@krse.biz. Register for the parade at orcuttchristmasparade.org.

Come kick off the holiday season and enjoy the home town spirit of Old Town Orcutt!

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Community Events

To submit your community event, email 50 words or less to info@orcuttpioneer.com by the second Wednesday of the month. Be sure to include, in this order, the name of the event, location, time, a short description and contact information.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Fundraiser BBQ for OAHS Boys Cross Country and Football, Saturday November 3, Lions Club, Old Orcutt on Broadway, 11-2PM. Pre-sale tickets available: Cross Country, contact Marian 805-863-6633. Football, contact Sarah 805-423-5747. \$10 chicken dinner with fixin's. Drinks and desserts available.

4TH Annual Craft Boutique Saturday, November 10th, Masonic Family Center, 700 Lakeview 9:00am - 7:00pm. Showcasing Local Crafters and Artists in the area and good variety of items for sale! Sponsored by the Order of the Eastern Star, Friendship Circle. Call Raina at 805-478-4193.

Tri City Sound Chorus, a chapter of Sweet Adelines International, invites women who love to sing to join them for the Christmas season. Women interested in learning about a cappella, barbershop-style music are welcome to join in on the season-end rehearsals and Friends & Family Christmas Show, held at Lutheran Church of Our Savior, 4725 S. Bradley Road, Orcutt. There is no cost to participate. Rehearsals will be held from 6:45 to 9PM. Thursday Oct. 25, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 29 & Dec. 6. The Christmas concert will be held at 7PM on Dec. 13 with donations earmarked for the student scholarship program. www.tricitysound.org or call 736-7572.

Lezlie's Showcase of Talent, January 13. Holding auditions for singers, dancers, musicians etc. Call 805 268 5403. First place prize is \$500 dollars cash. www.Lezliesshowcaseoftalent.com.

MONTHLY OR WEEKLY EVENTS

50+ CLUB LUNCHEON, at St Louis De Montfort Church Hall at 11:30AM on the second Thursday of the month. Event is catered with nominal charge. For reservations call Irene at 934-2511.

ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLIC AND DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY SYSTEMS meets Sundays at 4PM in the conference room of the Marian Extended Care Facility at 1530 Cypress Way off of Palisades and Main. If you have questions, contact Kim at (805) 714-6908.

AA (or Alcoholics Anonymous). If you want to drink, that's your business. If you want to stop, that's ours. Meetings Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 6:30PM Orcutt Presbyterian Church. General information and other meeting times and places, 925-3782.

ALL AMERICA CITY QUILT GUILD meets at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 4380 Orcutt Rd., on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM. except March and July. Info: www.santamariaquilts.com or 937-4024.

ALTRUSA OF THE CENTRAL COAST meets at Noon on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month. Altrusa is an international non-profit organization of men and women that strives to make our local communities better through leadership, partnership and service. For more information and meeting location call our president at 805.835.7627 or go to our website: www.altrusaofthecentralcoast.org.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 534 Breakfast 8-11AM on the first Sunday of each month. Public invited. 145 W. Clark Ave.

AMERICAN LEGION POST Veterans BBQ in Orcutt, 145 W. Clark Ave. 11AM-3PM or until sold out on the third Saturday of each month.

ALL YOU CAN EAT BREAKFAST at OASIS Senior Center, 420 East Soares, Old Orcutt on the second Saturday of each month 8-10AM: Adult members \$5, Non members \$7, Children under 10: \$3.

BIBLE STUDY on I & II Corinthians at St. Louis de Montfort. Monday nights 7-8:30PM. For more info contact Steve Stanley 937-1353; Trent Benedetti 937-9625.

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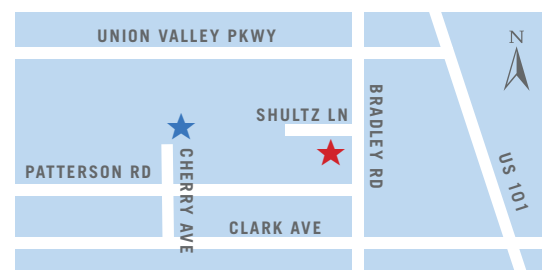
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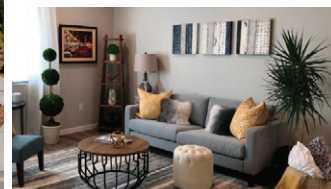
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