

# Orcutt PIONEER

Orcutt News for Orcutt Folks • Orcutt, California • October 2019 • [www.OrcuttPioneer.com](http://www.OrcuttPioneer.com) • Circulation 17,000+

## HS Career Tech Center Nears Completion



Construction of the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District's new Career Technical Education Center and Ag Farm is nearing completion.

The district broke ground on the 25-acre property, which is north of the Elks Unocal Event Center and east of Highway 101, in August 2018. Construction is expected to conclude in January 2020, and instruction

will begin in August.

"Meeting the needs of a growing student population, providing specialized agricultural and career education and investing in new facilities have been strong priorities of our board of education," said acting superintendent John Davis.

Approximately 500 students from Righetti, Pioneer Valley, Delta and Santa Maria high schools will have the opportunity to get

hands-on experience in different trades. Ag students will have 59 animal pens, more than seven acres of livestock corrals and 11 acres of farming land available to them. Currently, the district has one of the largest Future Farmers of America programs in the nation, but many students struggle to house larger animals.

The CTE area will have workshops, classrooms and a pavilion used for machining and forming, construction trades, medicine, culinary arts and more.

Students will be bussed to the location for the duration of two class periods. The program will give them access to some of the same resources that Allan Hancock College and Cal Poly students have in their learning environments to help prepare them for future careers.

"Whether a student is going out in the industry as a worker or going to attend a four-year university, it's all applicable," said Paul Robinson, Director of Career Technical Education.

## The First-Ever Orcutt Boo Fest

Thank you to all who submitted entries for the Boo Fest! Check out the results on page 4.

The land was originally used for crop farming and owned by the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel when the district purchased it for \$3.6 million using C-2004 bond funds. The total cost is estimated to be about \$19.9 million.

"This project could not have been possible without the generosity of many community members and business partners over the years who have supported our programs through donations of time, money and other resources," Davis explained. "The center is something our students deserve and need to improve their future opportunities."

*Jamie Guista reporting*

## Gas Station Proposed At Lakeview and Orcutt Roads



A new gas station is proposed on the southeast corner of Orcutt Road and Lakeview Road.

The station would have eight fuel pumps and be a modern western style in compliance with the Orcutt Community Plan. A commercial building would include a 4,203 square foot convenience store, and the hours of operation would be 5 a.m. to midnight. There was previously a service station on the lot— which is .82 acres — in the 1960s through the 1990s.

"We're intending to replace the previous long-standing gas station with a new updated project and a mini-mart," applicant Brian Tetley explained, adding that the owner is an independent local.

The goal is to offer another option to the area as the nearest gas station is about a mile

away, while others are around two or more miles from the busy intersection.

"It'll really be an asset to the community," he said.

Tetley has been working to address comments from Caltrans. There have been several traffic studies performed which demonstrated a need for improvements to help mitigate any impacts the new station could have. Comments regarding traffic safety include the widening of the north side of Lakeview Road to provide a complete, through and right turn lane, extending the "green" time of the westbound Highway 135 signal, and the installation of signage prohibiting left and through movements on the northbound segment of Orcutt Road.

The next meeting for review is estimated to occur in December, according to Gwen Beyeler, a planner for Santa Barbara County.

*Jamie Guista reporting*

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**Editors:** Steve Southwick

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**Reporters & Photographers:**

Steve Southwick, Stephanie Southwick Hull,

James Jepsen, Rebecca Ross, Michael Shaw,

Jamie Guista, Trenton Kozel

**Contact Phone:**

Business & Advertising: (805) 714-6584

**Postal Address:**

P.O. Box 2545, Orcutt CA 93457

**E-Mail address:**

info@orcuttpioneer.com

**Graphic Art Department**

James Jepsen, Art Director

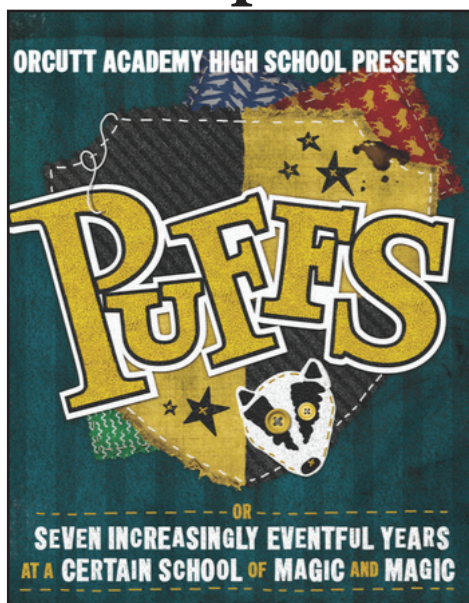
pioneer@jamesjepsen.com

**Webmaster:** Archie Miller

w6alm@aol.com

www.OrcuttPioneer.com

# PUFFS packs magic and laughs at OAHS



This November, Orcutt Academy High School Drama presents PUFFS, a play about 'a certain school of magic' where a boy named Harry attends. This story, however, is not Harry's. This is the story of the Puffs: the group of overly optimistic outcasts who always come in last place for the 'House Cup'. Written by Matt Cox, and presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, this 90-ish minute fast-paced comedy is sure to charm audiences.

The play follows the seven years Wayne Hopkins, a nobody from New Mexico, attends magic school--the same years another, more

famous boy wizard, attends. Adventures begin when Wayne befriends Megan Jones, a goth-wannabe from England, and Oliver Rivers, a math savant from Lompoc. The trio encounter trolls, giant snakes, soul-sucking security guards, a school dance (gasp!), lots of adult butter beverages (double gasp!), and one seriously evil wizard (you may be out of gasps for him, but here it is--triple gasp!). Wayne hopes to make a name for himself and become the hero of the school, but with everyone talking about a boy named Harry, Wayne is left to feel like the supporting character in his own hero's journey.

Orcutt Academy Drama Director Michael Shaw says PUFFS explores the awkwardness and emotions all teens experience during their formative years. He says to be a Puff means to be inclusive, loving, and fiercely loyal, something the cast and crew strive to exude in this show. He adds, "This show is both hysterical and heartfelt. The writing is laugh-out-loud funny and ensures there's a laugh every minute. It also carries an emotional punch that reminds us of the value each person brings to this world."

As a longtime fan of that famous wizard series, Shaw shares he has enjoyed unpacking the play with his students and has tucked a lot of "Easter eggs" throughout the show. Those unfamiliar with the book and film

franchises will also enjoy the show due to its zany characters and 90s pop icon references. Shaw warns some of the humor is directed at older audiences, so it is best to leave younger witches and wizards at home.

Tickets are now available from the OAHS Business office and at Orcutt's Old Town Market. The show runs November 14-16. Tickets are \$10 for regular seats and \$20 for VIP seats. VIP seats include the "intermission experience" where guests will mingle with some familiar characters from the show and enjoy a tasty treat. Seating is limited and tickets will not be sold at the door.

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## Orcutt Schools Update

# Time Is Right for Full-Day K in 2020-2021

**Dr. Debbie Blow, Superintendent, OUSD**

Starting in August 2020, all kindergartners in the Orcutt Union School District will go to school for a full day of instruction.

Our five elementary schools in Orcutt currently employ a "staggered day" kindergarten schedule in which students participate in a half-day of class either in the morning (early session) or from mid-morning through afternoon (late session). In the newly adopted schedule, kindergartners will be in class for the same length of time as their elementary-aged peers in grades 1-6. (Transitional Kindergarten, which is for students who turn five from September 1 through December 2 of the school year, will continue to have a shortened-day schedule.)

In recommending this change to the district board of trustees, staff cited two points.

First, full-day kindergarten has become widely

accepted in public schools. Over 80 percent of school districts in California have extended or full-day schedules for kindergartners, and several studies show that reading and math skills improve in a full-day format.

Second, this move will make our district eligible to receive state funding for kindergarten facilities. The funding could be used to purchase new classrooms or to improve existing classrooms, restrooms, and playgrounds associated with kindergarten.

"Full-day K is important because it provides additional instructional time to address the rigorous academic demands of today's kindergarten curriculum," says Dr. Holly Edds, the district's assistant superintendent of educational services. "It also allows time for developmental play and time for students to further develop social

skills. This is a welcome development for our kids."

Our district is blessed with an excellent group of kindergarten teachers. They are dedicated, talented, and student-centered, and we know they will excel with full-day K as they do with every other task before them. That said, our district is prepared to provide support to our students and teachers so this initiative is successful from the outset. We will be working to manage class sizes and to hire instructional assistants to help kindergarten students. We also will organize a task force of teachers and administrators to lead and plan implementation of the change.

Once implemented, a full-day kindergarten classroom will mirror the staggered-day K class we have now. The difference will be that more time will be available both for direct instruction from the teacher and for the unstructured exploration

and play that 5-year-olds need. Typically, core academics take place in the morning, with developmental activities planned in the afternoon.

"Full-day kindergarten will give kids more opportunities for social interaction," says Kate McNerney, a longtime kindergarten teacher who now is principal of Joe Nightingale School. "It also gives teachers more freedom to work individually with kids."

Parents and families are a critical part of this change. In the months to come, look for our district to share more information with parents and the public about full-day kindergarten. Meantime, we know that lots of people – young and old alike – will look forward to when the kindergarten day is lengthened in August 2020.

"My daughter loves school, and she seems to want more," says Orcutt resident Kiana Aguilera, whose daughter Emerie is a Transitional Kindergarten student at Joe Nightingale School and will be a kindergartner in 2020-2021. "I think Emerie will excel with a full-time school schedule."

Superintendent Dr. Debbie Blow can be contacted by phone at 938-8900 or by e-mail at [dblow@orcutt-schools.net](mailto:dblow@orcutt-schools.net). Follow her on Twitter at @debiblow.

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# First Annual Orcutt Boo Fest

Spooky Season has arrived in Orcutt, and ghouls everywhere are digging up some happy haunts. Based on suggestions sent into the Orcutt Pioneer, our ghost hosts gathered some spine-tingling sights that are sure to enchant you this October.

*Michael Shaw reporting*



The crypt keeper 950 Woodmere Road is dying to see you. This Disney-inspired graveyard is complete with a creepy crypt, spooky trees, and mirthful monuments. Look for the swinging skeleton heads in the trees, and beware of a devilish presence on the roof.



Avast ye, scurvy dogs! "Pirate Town" has returned to 1403 Woodmere Road! Beware of the creepy character in the crow's nest—and guard yer treasure against these cutlass-carrying corsairs. Kids of all ages will love this incredible display.



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**COASTAL VOICES COMMUNITY CHORUS** presents Land of the Free-Home of the Brave! a concert of patriotic music at 2PM November 9, and 7PM November 11, at St. Andrew United Methodist Church, 3945 S. Bradley Rd. Suggested Donation is \$10. Info: CoastalVoices.fun.

**AWARD WINNING TRI CITY SOUND CHORUS**, a chapter of Sweet Adelines International, invites women interested in learning about a cappella and barbershop-style music are welcome to join for 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 held from

6:45PM-9PM on Oct. 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21, & Dec. 5. Christmas concert will be held at 7PM on Dec. 12, with donations earmarked for the student scholarship program. Info: [www.tricitysound.org](http://www.tricitysound.org) or call 736-7572.

**ORCUTT CHRISTIAN CHURCH's** 62nd Anniversary Celebration, November 17, 10:15AM at 204 Patterson Rd. Guest Minister Mike Gunderson, Lead Minister for the Oak Park Christian Church in Arroyo Grande. Bible Study on "What Does the Bible Say About..." Thursdays from 5:30-7PM. Refreshments. Also celebrating the 100th birthdays of Genevieve Williams and Betty Aytes!

### MONTHLY OR WEEKLY EVENTS

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 534** Breakfast 9-NOON on the first Sunday of each month. Public invited. 145 W. Clark Ave.

**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 1) Sun at 4PM in the conference room of the Marian Extended Care Facility at 1530 Cypress Way and 2) Thur at 6PM in the Casa Del Rio Mobile Estates at 1124 N. Suey Rd. Contact Kim at (805) 714-6908 with questions.

**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.santamariaquilters.com](http://www.santamariaquilters.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](http://www.altrusaofthecentralcoast.org).

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

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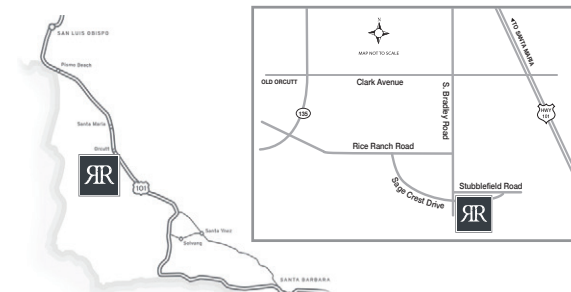
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