

## White & Pink Ribbons Remind Us: Support Local Businesses During Shelter In Place



In recent years, decorative ribbons have been placed around the community to spread hope and celebrate life. Amid the social distancing brought on by COVID-19, an Orcutt store owner is using the method to encourage support for local businesses.

Marty Willey, owner of Company's Coming, began adorning Orcutt trees

and poles with white and hot pink ribbons in March when many local businesses either limited their hours or halted services altogether. Retail shops like Company's Company have had to close their doors to the public, as well as salons, barbershops and gyms. Eateries have had to adjust by only offering takeout and/or curbside pick-up.

"We needed something to remind people to shop small and local during these difficult times and that is what the ribbons represent," Willey said.

When businesses are able to operate normally, the ribbons will be filled with more pink to notify the public.

"When the colors change, we'll all be open for business and looking forward

to serving the community," she said. "We're going to be looking at hard times for a while, so we'll need the support more than ever after all this is over."

Willey has operated Company's Coming, a gift shop featuring baskets, collectibles, jewelry and much more, for 42 years. Despite temporarily closing, she has been fulfilling some orders, thanks to customers' support, and finding unique ways to deliver them. For example, she made Easter baskets and put them in front of the store for pick-up, requesting gloves and masks be worn and people maintain social distance. If social distancing continues through Mother's Day, she may do something similar.

Other retail shop owners — from Vintage Veranda Antiques & Mall, Déjà Vu Antiques at the Loading Dock and A La Carte in Santa Maria — have been

helping distribute the ribbons, which are easily visible while taking a drive or stroll through the area, particularly near businesses in Old Town Orcutt.

Willey is confident the community will get through this, and appreciates all the help members have offered during this time.

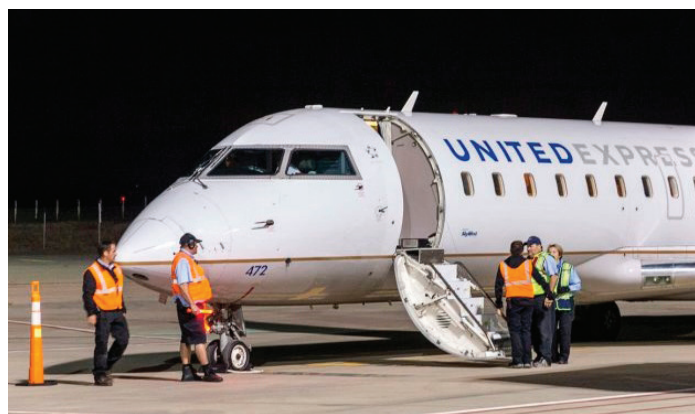
"I think we have an amazing community and we're going to come back better than ever," Willey said.

There will be a grand celebration when businesses open again with details to come, she added.

The best way to stay connected with Company's Coming is through social media and by signing up for emails at [companys-coming.com/email-signup](http://companys-coming.com/email-signup). Many Orcutt businesses are still reachable by phone and staff post updates via social media.

*Jamie Guista reporting*

## COVID Causes Delay of United's Return to SMX, Allegiant Cutting Flights



United Airlines return to Santa Maria has been postponed, while other flights from the city's only airline have been cancelled due to COVID-19 related

issues.

Flights from Santa Maria to Denver, Los Angeles and San Francisco were scheduled to begin being offered by United Airlines starting June 4. The date has since changed to Oct. 1.

"In response to the current change in demand for travel, United is delaying the start of its nonstop service from Santa Maria and Denver, Los Angeles

and San Francisco," said Jonathan Guerin, Senior Public Relations Manager and Spokesman for United. "We remain deeply committed to the service and look forward to offering a convenient way to connect the Santa Maria community to the world very soon."

Chris Hastert, manager of the Santa Maria Public Airport (SMX), explained that there were several factors that led to the decision to change the date, including the limited ability to train and install equipment — which would require people to assemble — and the current lack of demand for flights.

The Oct. launch date is subject to change depending on how and when businesses return to normal, he added.

Allegiant Airlines, the sole airline operating out of SMX, was flying passengers to Las Vegas four days a week, but has since cut routes down to once a week for the remainder of April. As of press time, May is set for two flights a week, and a slow return to three to four flights will follow.

Hastert expects more cancellations due to the temporary business closures in Las Vegas and limited passenger demand.

*Jamie Guista reporting*

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## Meet the Locals Berne Danielsen Model Building is His Passion



Berne Danielsen's home in the Foxenwoods neighborhood of Orcutt is undoubtedly beautiful, yet unassuming. The 94-year old World War II veteran has lived in this home for the past 28 years, and one would never suspect that the rooms inside are filled with museum-quality model boats, airplanes, and

trains. His walls and shelves are lined with books, paintings, furniture, and other masterful works of creation by Danielsen. In a culture of increasing technology, outsourcing and distraction, it is unusual to meet someone with such a developed and refined set of skills. Danielsen is a rare example of a true craftsman from a unique generation, and his life is an inspiration in following personal passion and creativity.

Danielsen began building model trains around age 8 with his father, which led to his interest in engineering. After serving in the Army during World War II at a young age, he earned a degree in Engineering from UCLA. Rather than apply to large firms like Douglas and Boeing where he knew many other graduates would be flocking to for work after the war, Danielsen took a different route. "I decided I would talk to the people who manufactured model railroad equipment in Los Angeles," he said.

After a period at another engineering firm and then working for himself for two years, a friend of Danielsen suggested he talk to the people at Mattel Toy Company. "I went to work for Mattel. I suppose

that was maybe the best idea I ever had, because I stayed there for 22 years, which was a very successful period of time, I thought," Danielsen said. "Mattel was a very small company at that point. It was just growing, and they were hiring like crazy. I was the eighth design engineer they hired," he said. During his career at Mattel, Danielsen worked on toy guns, voice mechanisms, games, Chatty Kathy, Aquanauts, and had charge of Hot Wheels for a time.

Berne had kind words for Ruth and Elliot Handler, the married founders of Mattel who named the famous Barbie and Ken dolls after their own children, Barbara and Kenneth. "Mattel was really an interesting company. The Handlers, particularly for us engineers, made us feel like we were in the family. And you know that makes a big difference, believe me," he said.

It was during his time at Mattel that Berne and his wife Jean started a family of their own. They had three daughters: Laurie, Karen, and Patrice.

As retirement approached, Berne and Jean knew they wanted to move out of Los Angeles, decided on Santa Maria, and never regretted the decision. In the years that followed, Danielsen focused his time and talents on passion projects, which included authoring and illustrating books and building incredibly intricate

*continued on page 7*

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## Local Business Provides Free COVID-19 Sanitizing for Those at Risk

Chuck Armstrong recently said, "I think the idea of being at war is a good metaphor right now, and we must deploy all of our resources to fight this war and literally kill COVID." Chuck is in a unique position to help do just that. He owns Armstrong Solutions, an Orcutt based company that provides pest and sanitizing services on the Central Coast.

According to Armstrong, there's a time to profit and a time to help. He's decided he will take on the challenge of helping by providing his sanitizing service free to those who are most at risk. "We can sanitize food banks, nursing homes, temporary shelters, EMT vehicles, non-emergency and dialysis transportation services, and places where persons with underlying medical conditions reside."

On March 19, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security declared the pest control industry as an essential service. "There are more than 70,000 licensed pest control technician in the United States, and we need to bring these people and their expertise to bear and help flatten the curve on COVID-19," says Armstrong. "We apply patented, EPA registered, environmentally friendly solutions that are safe for people, pets and the environment. Our applications provide long lasting protection that kills and inhibits the growth of viruses (including COVID-19), bacteria, fungi, algae, protozoans and microorganisms that can inhabit spaces where people gather." Chuck said.

He uses a proprietary fogging method that applies a coating of disinfecting solution. He said that this method is much more effective than simply wiping down surfaces, and ensures that all surfaces are covered.

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# State Farm Agent Donna Randolph Transitions Orcutt Office



A few years ago Mike Spears—a long-time Orcutt resident and State Farm agent, retired—which left his office without an agent. Donna Randolph, who has a State Farm office in Santa Maria, was offered a three-year contract for the Orcutt office.

Donna jumped right in and thoroughly enjoyed her expanded work in the Orcutt area. She has contributed to local events and participated in Old Orcutt's Christmas parade for the last few years. Her latest donation is helping the OASIS Senior Center with their annual fundraiser, which has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 quarantine.

The goal for both of her offices has been for them to be run as a traditional "good neighbor" office. Donna and her employees have been known to stop by for home visits to seniors or

others struggling to make it to an office appointment. With her contract coming to an end, Donna will be transitioning back to a solo Santa Maria State Farm office but she is looking forward to continuing to spend time with Orcutt clients and giving them the same quality of care they've always enjoyed.

Donna and her husband share two children and when spending time in Orcutt, they like to hike Orcutt Hill with their dog, Charlie, bike ride to Las Flores Park and wine taste in Old Orcutt.

Michelle Wood reporting



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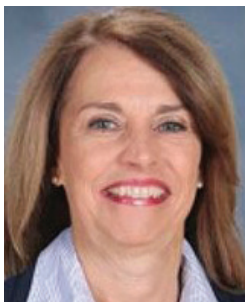
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## Orcutt Schools Update

# District Comes Together in Response to School Closures

*Dr. Debbie Blow, Superintendent, OUSD*

Like other school districts around the country, the Orcutt Union School District is in the middle of an extraordinary moment. At the recommendation of our governor, our schools are closed for the remainder of the school year in order to continue social distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For now through June, our format for instruction will be distance learning, in which teachers interact with students online instead of in person.

This moment has brought out the best in our district, as we have come together to make the transition to online learning and continue vital services for our students and families. This column will detail these efforts.

Our district's move to distance learning began with professional development for teachers and administrators on key elements of online education. Participation was done via the Zoom platform for video conferencing. District teacher leaders presented sessions on how to conduct Zoom meetings with students, how to set up a Google

Classroom, online elements of district-adopted curriculum, and much more.

After discussion among staff, outreach to other districts, and consideration of the demands on students and families, we are pursuing the goal of each student being engaged in online assignments for approximately two hours each school day. Understanding the need for a personal connection during a time when people are sheltering at home, we prioritized teacher-student relationships and asked teachers to regularly reach out to their students. As an acknowledgement that students experience varying levels of home support, we have gone to a pass/fail system for grading with a reasonable expectation for student participation and an emphasis on teacher-student dialogue around learning. And our Technology Department has distributed just under 1,000 devices to date to those who needed them.

On April 20, immediately following Spring Break, Orcutt teachers launched distance learning. This will continue

through the last day of school on June 5.

"Our teachers have really invested themselves into connecting with students," says Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Dr. Holly Edds, whose department organized the shift to online instruction. "This is a learning model we haven't incorporated before, but everyone has rallied to provide support for students and parents. And we all will come out better on the other side of this."

If you are a district parent and have questions about online instruction or what your child needs to do, please contact your child's teacher(s). If you need help doing so, please feel free to contact our Educational Services Office at 805-938-8930.

As we have taken teaching and learning online, we have continued to provide vital services for students and families. Our counselors and psychologists have been ready to help with any emotional or mental health needs that emerge. Our community liaisons have kept in touch with families facing language barriers.

And our Child Nutrition Department has continued to provide free breakfast/lunch food items for students on a drive-through or walk-up basis at four of our school sites on weekday mornings from 10:30-11:30.

"I'm just grateful for our staff for figuring out how to do four drive-in restaurants," says Director of Child Nutrition Bethany Markee, whose employees are providing meals for 1,100 students a day. "The kids are so grateful – it shows how important these school meals are."

As of this writing, there is no way to discern what the future holds. No one can foretell how long social distancing will need to remain and what implications there will be for the 2020-2021 school year. But we do know that the Orcutt Union School District has come together in a most extraordinary circumstance.

"I feel like this has brought us together as a community," says Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSAs) Cher Manich, who with her fellow TOSAs has played a vital role in training and supporting their teaching colleagues. "Everyone is reaching out to help each other. Everyone is learning together. Everyone is putting everything they can into helping our students succeed."

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

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# Danielsen

*continued from page 2*

wooden model boats and airplanes. "The nice thing about being retired is that you can do what you want to do when you want to do it," he said. While describing his process for building the models he said, "All of these are done from scratch, by the way. I researched them, I made drawings, I made the parts out of those drawings, and I put them together." All of his models are to scale, 1:64 to actual size.

When asked what drives his creativity, Berne responded simply that it was fun. "I really don't know. I just enjoy doing it. If I didn't think it was fun, I would never have done it," he said. "The sad part of it really is that my fingers and my eyes won't let me do it anymore. That is the sad part. But I love to sit here and I admire my work sometimes," Danielsen said. "You asked what drove me. I wanted to be doing something. I've been a doer all my life, and I couldn't stop," he said. Berne still lives independently among his incredible collection of work. Although his wife Jean and daughter Karen have since passed, his daughter Laurie lives locally and Patrice in Los Angeles.

*Lindsay Grabau reporting*

## Community Events

To submit your community event, email 50 words or less to [info@orcuttpioneer.com](mailto: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.

**PLEASE NOTE: Many of these events and meetings have been canceled or rescheduled due to County, State and Federal guidelines. We recommend contacting the organization to confirm schedules.**

### SPECIAL EVENTS

OUR LOCAL SANTA MARIA VETERANS' MEDICAL CLINIC has a display case showing items from the Navy, Army, Air Force and Marines. There are no items showing for the Coast Guard and the men and women who gave so much for our freedom deserve to be honored as well. If you can donate UNITED STATES COAST GUARD items, contact Gary Wyatt 805.698.5222 or deliver them to the VA clinic addressed to Gary Wyatt.

RIGHETTI HIGH SCHOOL BAND BOOSTERS is seeking sponsorship from local businesses. This will help support the dedicated students in the Righetti Bands with their continued efforts in field shows and performances. We are looking for donations and would be more than happy to perform in exchange. <https://www.rhswarriorbands.org/>

BENT AXLE CAR CLUB is welcoming new members! Do you have a pre-1973 American-made car and would like to socialize with us (cruising, eating and having fun)? We also put on a car show the 3rd week end of July. We invite you to our monthly meeting on the

2nd Wednesday of the month at the Radisson Hotel in Santa Maria at 6:30 PM Ann McKindley 805-714-6111

CAR SHOW RESCHEDULED 9th Annual St Patricks Day Car Show at St Louis de Montfort Church, Saturday July 11 2020 from 10AM-3PM. Cars, Trucks, Vendors and more. Vendors Wanted! Contact [james@jamesjepson.com](mailto:james@jamesjepson.com) or call 805-878-1739

### 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.

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.

ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLIC AND DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY SYSTEMS meets 1) Sun at 4PM in the Oasis Center Rostein room at 420 Soares Ave, 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.

ALL AMERICA CITY QUILT GUILD meets at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 4380 Orcutt Rd. on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm except March and July. Info: [aacquilters@gmail.com](mailto:aacquilters@gmail.com) or 805-937-4024.

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 534 Breakfast 9-NOON 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 the Book of Joshua at St. Louis de Montfort. Monday Nights 7-8 PM. For more info contact Trent Benedetti 922-4881.

BSA Troop 87 in Orcutt. Enjoy outdoors camping, hiking, fishing, snow & water sports, etc. Scouting provides an opportunity to try new things, build self-confidence, provide service to others, and reinforce ethical standards that improve relationships, family lives, and values. [ron@enginetech-ca.com](mailto:ron@enginetech-ca.com)

Bilingual worship services at Christian Life every Sunday at 2PM, Unity Chapel of Life church located at 1165 Stubblefield Rd, Santa Maria, CA 93455. 719-660-9789.

CAMPING LOVE OF ADVENTURE is a nonprofit single adult camping club. We meet the second week of each month on Wednesday for up to six night or less. For more information contact Elaine 805-937-5357

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## Orcutt Christian Church

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# Thank You!

We wish we had better news for you guys but unfortunately, we will be temporarily closing until further notice. We look forward to the day where we will be back in the shop with you all. In order to do so, we feel that we must close to fully do our part in social distancing (as the next 2 weeks are supposed to be the peak of this pandemic). We love you all so very much and cannot express how appreciative we are. Over the last couple of weeks through everybody sharing on social media, purchasing/sending deliveries to loved ones and sharing such kind messages has shown us how awesome our little community really is. We know we will all get through this!!! Stay safe, stay healthy and we hope to see you soon!

Love- Pam, Claudia, Julie & the whole Cups and Crumbs Staff



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