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PIONEER

Orcutt News for Orcutt Folks • Orcutt, California • October 2025 • Circulation 17,000+

Historic Union 76 Gas Station at Corner of Clark Avenue and Broadway in Old Orcutt Under New Ownership



Paul and Marilyn Enstad celebrate their retirement and sale of Orcutt 76.

For nearly 35 years, Paul and Marilyn Enstad have pumped gas, done smog checks and auto repairs at their service station under the iconic Union Oil 76 sign at the intersection of Broadway and Clark in Old Town Orcutt.

The Enstads have announced their retirement. In mid-September escrow closed transferring ownership to Norman Hannoum of Santa Clarita. The service station will be rebranded as Old Orcutt Kwik Stop. Hannoum operates Kwik Stop stations in Mojave, Crestline and San Bernardino. The new owner says he is blessed to have stumbled into Orcutt. "It's a beautiful city; the weather and beaches are amazing."

The new manager, Ghais Sweed (nickname "Gus"), is originally from Redondo Beach and has moved into the area. He says the station will

continue offering smog certifications, oil changes and vehicle repair. He is at the station daily supervising personnel and cultivating business. "I am thoroughly enjoying Orcutt," he exudes. "The Orcutt community is so welcoming. I'm enjoying the people, the weather, the beach and of course, my new job."

The Enstads purchased the station in 1994, although the station was initially built in the mid-1950's. From the 1960's to the mid-1990's, the station was owned by Danny Simkins of Santa Maria whose name is legendary in the world of auto racing. Simkins was a 10-time Santa Maria Speedway track champion and had more than 100 career wins

throughout California. According to the Simkins Facebook page and early editions of the Lompoc Record, "the loss of his right leg to cancer in 1989 didn't deter him from his passion for driving as he continued to win one race after another, using a modified gas pedal. Dan died of cancer in November of 1993, one month after winning his record 10th Santa Maria Speedway Track Championship." The garage behind the station, where hundreds of smog certificates have been issued over the years, is where Simkins built and rebuilt his winning cars.

Both Paul and Marilyn Enstad were born in Minnesota. After technical school, Paul served in the Navy in the Gulf of Tonkin for four years during the Vietnam war; his background is in farm construction, sales and service while



Ghais Sweed, nicknamed Gus, in a 1931 Model A Ford, is manager of the former Union 76 gas station now Kwik Stop at Broadway and Clark Avenue.

Marilyn was a bookkeeper. After the farming recession of the early 1980's, the couple moved to California where Paul looked for sales and construction work. The couple wanted to settle in a community with a population between 40,000 and 80,000.

"When I drove through Old Town Orcutt, I thought I was back in Minnesota," he says. "Seeing wells pumping oil from Cat Canyon to the Orcutt Hills, I was reminded that the gas and oil production in Santa Barbara County was the major industrial driver like it was in North Dakota where I spent my youth."

In the early 1990's he managed and eventually purchased the Shell station at Clark and Bradley in Orcutt. In 1994, the couple purchased the Union 76 station.

The Enstads quickly became involved in the early organization of the Old Town Orcutt Revitalization Organization (OTORA), with the mission of "preserving the heritage and small-town charm of Old Town Orcutt." The still active volunteer group works to organize, design, promote, and restore Old Town Orcutt's commercial district.

The current staff at the station is being retained, many of whom have been with the station for decades. A testament of the respect and care the Enstads had for their employees is demonstrated in the length of service of the current staff. Always cheerful local historian Dena Earing-Ripoli has been serving people for 31 years; Leanne

Babcock 15 years, Jared Jones 21 years, mechanics Bill Brooks and Steve Gunton 20 and 15 years respectively, Chris Vargas 15 years and Jerry Morales 2 years.

In wrapping up their four decades working in Orcutt, Enstad reminisces, "We would like to thank all the great folks of Orcutt, from Rhonda MacDonald, who introduced us to the gasoline business 42 years ago, to every customer, every employee, everyone we have met. We love you, Old Orcutt. This will be a big change for this community, and it will be a big change for us too; thank you so much." He adds, "You drive by the same old building day after day after day. But in the end, it's probably going to be OK."

Steve Southwick reporting

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Meet Brittany Cinnamon – She Could be Your New Best Friend



Brittany Cinnamon is a 5-month-old spayed German Shepherd pup with a sweet, happy, and playful spirit. She has a striking face with bold markings, and the most adorable ears that fold over at the top though they perk right up when she's excited by toys or treats!

Cinnamon is eager to please and has a gentle temperament that makes her a joy to be around.

She came in as a stray with her sibling in mid-September and is now ready to find her forever home. Come meet this lovable girl at 548 W. Foster Road, Santa Maria, between 10 AM and 6 PM, Tuesday through Sunday.

ID# A547961 – Brittany Cinnamon is waiting for you!

Help Needed to Make Orcutt Christmas Parade a Success



For the last six decades the Orcutt Christmas Parade, featuring Santa Claus and between fifty and seventy-five entrants, has wound its way through Old Town Orcutt entertaining hundreds of parade goers.

Preparations are underway for the Saturday, December 13th annual holiday event. Steve Strachan, president of the Old Town Orcutt Revitalization Association (OTORA) with assistance from the Orcutt Lions Club, is organizing the event.

"We really need volunteers," he explains, "This is an all-volunteer event. We need people to help with traffic, parking, and assisting parade goers. We can't do the parade without assistance."

The parade route will be different this year. It will begin at Naughty Oak Brewing near Clark and Broadway, turn right on Broadway to Rice Ranch Road and end at Dyer St.

If you or your organization can offer a few hours, please give April Huckabey a call at (805) 698 1983 or e-mail neuroboxingsantamaria@gmail.com.

Volunteers will be trained at two meetings the week before the parade. Strachan says volunteers just need to attend one of those meetings.

The Orcutt Volunteer Fire Department initiated the annual Christmas parade in 1961. Strachan says the event is getting bigger each year. "That's why we really need volunteer help from the Orcutt community," says Strachan.

Last year's parade was rained out. "That won't happen this year," Strachan insists, "Rain or shine, we will have a parade."

After the parade, the Lions Club will host lunch for all volunteers.

Steve Southwick reporting

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County and City Work Together to Build a New Library for Orcutt



The sign outside the current Orcutt Library welcomes patrons. The library will move to a new space to be built adjacent to the proposed Oasis Center.

“An Orcutt stand-alone library has been a long time coming. The community surely deserves it,” says Dawn Jackson, director of the Santa Maria Public Library. She is excited about the announcement by Fourth District Supervisor Bob Nelson that the County has approved land purchases near the Orcutt Creek where the library will be located adjacent to the proposed new Oasis Center.

Jackson has led the Santa Maria Public Library for 13 years. Over the last few years, representatives from the city library, the Friends of the Orcutt Library and local “stakeholders” as she calls them, have been meeting to formulate space needs and suggestions to better

serve the 32,000 Orcutt residents.

The need for a stand-alone public library and an expanded senior center has been a priority for a long time. In 1997 when the County approved the citizen-developed Orcutt Community Plan, a document designed to provide a blueprint for future development. Quoting from the document:

Orcutt’s library is the only library in the county occupying rented space. The Community Priority Facilities Plan envisions constructing and owning an expanded library for Orcutt, which could also contain needed community-meeting rooms.

The existing Luis Oasis Senior Center

is housed in a modular unit located on land owned by Orcutt Union School District adjacent to the district offices. The facilities are inadequate for even the current demand, and an increasing number of seniors relocating to the Orcutt area will exacerbate the situation.

Funding for the new library will come from private donations, including \$2 million dollars from the late Penelope Hartnell, contributions by the County and, with assistance from Congressman Salud Carbajal, \$2 million dollars from the \$1.7 trillion federal budget signed by President Biden two years ago.

As plans for the new library develop, Jackson says she and her staff will continue working with the Orcutt Library Building Committee to determine ways the new facility can best serve the Orcutt community. The committee, composed of Betty Gunn and Carol Gregor of the Friends of the Orcutt Library, Supervisor Bob Nelson’s office and community member Jim Bray, has been meeting quarterly for the last several months.

Carol Gregor explains the group is looking for ways the library can meet the needs of the community, “from birth to our senior years. I am hoping the library will be intergenerational. Currently, parents are requesting a toddler program; we do not have room in our small library. We need room

for after school tutoring and adult programming. In our collaboration with Oasis, I envision children reading to seniors and visa versa. The center will support community members of all ages.”

Jackson explains the Orcutt library, like libraries in Guadalupe, Los Alamos and Cuyama, are administered by the Santa Maria Public Library. The County determines funding, allocating \$9.15 for each resident. For the current funding year, the population was estimated at 31,731. An additional \$110,765 in cannabis funding was added, along with a \$55,000 rent supplement, for a total funding amount of \$456,104 for Orcutt this year.

The \$10,000 monthly rental payment for the Orcutt Plaza location will be saved when the new library is operational.

Carol Gregor says members of the Orcutt Building Committee are thankful for the leadership of Fourth District County Supervisor Bob Nelson, “We are grateful to Supervisor Nelson and his staff for their continued efforts for a much-needed permanent Orcutt library.”

The Supervisor says he is hopeful “dirt can be turned” for the new library by next fall.

Steve Southwick reporting



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Orcutt Mineral Society: The Artistry of Rocks

The Orcutt Mineral Society (OMS) was founded in 1958 and is one of Orcutt's longest lived interest groups. It is named for William Orcutt, our town's namesake and the geologist who discovered oil in the Orcutt hills and the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles, "one of the most significant fossil finds in paleontology history," says the OMS bulletin.

OMS has 60ish members and meets every second Tuesday at Orcutt's Oasis Center. Its mission statement is recited at the beginning of each meeting:

“The collection and lapidary treatment of and to stimulate interest in rocks and minerals. To gain knowledge of the methods and procedures for collecting, identification, classification, cutting, polishing and mounting of rocks and minerals for display. To promote good fellowship and proper ethics in the pursuit of the lapidary arts.”

All are welcome to this very friendly affair which includes members sharing their collections, recollections and skills as well as expert speakers who come to educate the group about a wide range of lapidary subjects.

Its most recent meeting focused on



the success of its August annual three day event held at Nipomo High School. The show included over 75 dealers with an estimated 3000 people attending. Besides selling beautiful stones for collections, jewelry and art purposes, there were many demonstrations and an entertaining kid's booth.

Throughout the meeting lottery numbers were called with people winning rock specimens.

The group plans to visit the Owens Valley to see volcanic rock petroglyphs, and the Alabama Hills, where they have been filmed.

Besides trips and educational opportunities, OMS's community service includes "Adopt a Highway," scholarships in geology and earth sciences and donations to good causes.

The 'Roc Doc,' Wayne Mills is available at meetings to identify members' rocks, using chemicals and a lifetime of knowledge to make his assertions. Mills wears the OMS red vest, covered with club badges and medals. A member of the club since 1994 with over 6 years as president, he says his obsession began at 13 when his uncle gave

him a box of rocks. Mills spent 10 years as a Caltran's Paleontological Coordinator and recently won first prize from the national branch of OMS, The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies for a mineralogical poem he wrote.

Orcutt resident and OMS secretary Joey Nichols is an avid rockhound who spends vacations backpacking and hiking to find rock specimens. "Meetings are like a big family. We're all just a little unique. It's a way for all of us to come together and share our passion."

Wes Lingerfelt is the oldest member, in his late eighties, and is the most knowledgeable, says Nichols. He runs a business with a machine that transforms rocks into spheres. People can go to his house, use his workshop

and buy stones from his giant rock pile for 25 cents a pound.

Orcutt resident Margaret Henson, a 20-year member, says her grandfather had a rock shop. She got her first amethyst geode at 5 years old. Her house is now filled with rock displays and she learned to make 8 inch “rock trees” at the club. She describes OMS as her extended family. “You feel welcome there. A lot of us have been members for a long time and we try to help each other with anything about rocks.”

To contact the Orcutt Mineral Society, visit OMS-INC.ORG or come to the meeting at the Oasis Senior Center at 7PM, the second Tuesday of the month.

Katy Jacobson reporting



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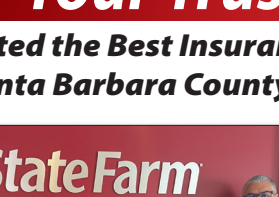
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Second Lieutenant James K. Kunkle went through P-38 training in Santa Maria and was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross during WWII.



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Orcutt Schools Update

Students, Schools Benefit from a Supportive Community

Dr. Holly Edds, Superintendent, OUSD



We've said this before and will say it once more: The Orcutt Union School District would not be what it is without its caring community. When we work with our partners in the Santa Maria and Los Alamos valleys, our students win.

This month, I have several examples of how students profit from engagement with their community.

We start with the Old Orcutt Chalk Festival, the annual community celebration of the arts organized by the Orcutt Children's Arts Foundation (OCAF). The September 27 event drew thousands of visitors to Broadway and Union Avenue in Old Orcutt for chalk art, live entertainment, children's activities, vendors, food trucks, and more. From the music performed by the Orcutt Academy High School (OAHS) Band to the chalk artistry of students young and old, our schools made a strong stamp on the Festival. Thanks to OCAF and the many local organizations and volunteers involved with this special undertaking!

Our two schools in Los Alamos, Olga Reed and Orcutt Academy K-8, fielded a popular entry in the town's annual Old Days Parade September 28. Led by Principal Cher

Manich, students enjoyed walking down Bell Street to cheers and applause from the huge crowd of onlookers. The OAHS Band also was part of the parade. Kudos to the Los Alamos Valley Men's Club, organizer of Old Days, for highlighting local students!

Thanks to the Santa Maria Valley YMCA, fourth graders in our district this fall once again are participating in lessons in swimming and aquatic safety. Data from fourth-grade parents show that 25-30 percent of our students have little to no experience in the water, so this program can be life-changing, even life-saving. We thank our friends at the Y for continuing to offer these lessons.

Some of our elementary schools are sending fifth graders to STARBASE, a program at Vandenberg Space Force Base that engages students in numerous activities integrating science, technology, engineering, and math. For many of our students, STARBASE marks their first time on a military base.

For the third year, our district's sixth graders have DARE from soldiers with the California Army National Guard. Over a 10-lesson series, students are educated on

the dangers of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use and importantly are learning about making decisions -- specifically, how to make good decisions in situations when they are pressured to do the wrong thing. Our students respond well to their soldier instructors.

Two of our elementary schools, Patterson Road and Pine Grove, are participating in an afterschool flag football league organized by the Santa Maria-Bonita School District. Classroom teachers Sabrina Kitchen of Patterson Road and Ron Maderas of Pine Grove are coaching -- big thanks to them and our friends at Santa Maria-Bonita for making this opportunity possible for students!

Love on a Leash, a local nonprofit devoted to promoting pet therapy, has brought dogs for visits to Lakeview and Orcutt junior high schools this fall. School morale goes up when students can see their furry friends!

On October 3 OAHS took its junior class to Allan Hancock College's 20th annual Career Exploration Day. Students explored various career options by talking to professionals; they also toured multiple

Hancock departments. What a way to inform and inspire students -- we are so grateful for our close ties with Hancock.

Later this month, our district is hosting California Highway Patrol Officer Maria Barriga for a reprise of her popular parent education presentation, "Protecting Our Children: Online Safety and Human Trafficking Awareness." Office Barriga will be speaking with parents via Zoom on Wednesday, October 29, from 6:00-7:00 p.m. Please check our district website for a specific Zoom link.

To sum things up, I cannot imagine a community any more supportive of public education than ours. On behalf of the Orcutt Union School District, here's thanking our many friends and partners out there for their important contributions to students and schools."

Superintendent Dr. Holly Edds can be contacted by phone at 938-8900 or by e-mail at hedds@orcutt-schools.net. She can be followed on Twitter at @hce101.

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Special Events

FRIENDS OF THE ORCUTT LIBRARY BOOK SALE: November 1st, 10am-1:30pm. Books, DVDs, CDs, Games and more! All proceeds go to support your local Orcutt Library.

SANTA MARIA COIN & COLLECTIBLE SHOW, November 1, 9AM to 4PM, Elwin Mussell Senior Center. No admission charge. Sponsored by the Santa Maria Coin Club. Sport cards, beanies & more. Free coin appraisals. Coins bought & sold.

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Orcutt Community Halloween Haunts

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212 Fleming Ln

#2 FAIR OAKS FRIGHT NIGHT
560 Fair Oaks Dr
Open 4 Days
10/25, 26, 30, 31
DUSK-10:00PM
@FAIROAKSFRIGHTNIGHT
on FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, TIKTOK

#3 BATTLE OF THE UNDEAD
3500 Hadley Way

#4 THE HAUNTED MANSION
3861 Hillview Rd
@NIGHTMAREONDICKINSON ON FACEBOOK

#5 CREEPY CEMETERY
330 Harsin Lane

#6 THRILLER AT THE HOMESTEAD
4201 Woodland

#7 SKELETON GRAVEYARD
950 Woodmere

#8 THE DOLL HOUSE
1346 Woodmere

#9 NIGHTMARE ON DICKINSON ST
1420 Dickinson
Open 10/30 + 31
Dusk-10:00PM

#10 TRICK OR TREAT
4718 Tiffany Park Cir

#11 TRICK OR TREAT
1570 Jensen Ranch Rd

#12 STEWART HOLLOW
5698 S Bradley Rd

#13 DISNEY SPOOKTACULAR
510 Dale Way

#14 TRICK OR TREAT
945 Old Mill Ln

Legend:
= FREE HAUNTED HOUSE
= TRICK OR TREAT

Want to be featured next year? E-mail
Pics/Info to orcuthalloween@gmail.com



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Or
Call The Office At: **805-934-2488**

New Patients Will Need To Complete A New Patient Packet, Which Can Be Found On Our Website.
Dawesfamilymedicine.com/patient-forms.
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*We Are Not Accepting Medicare Advantage Plans At This Time

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www.OrcuttChristian.Org

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 If winner does not have an Instagram account, they will
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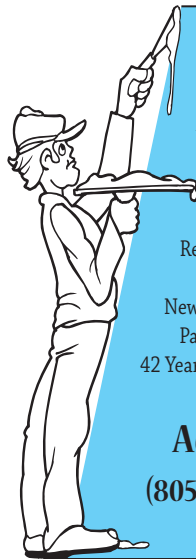
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