



SANTA ROSA HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Spring, 2026

Vol.39

Issue 2

The mission of the Santa Rosa High School Foundation is to serve as a charitable organization to unite Santa Rosa High School alumni, parents, faculty, staff and interested community members in order to provide financial support for SRHS programs and students, and to preserve and document the history and traditions of SRHS.

SANTA ROSA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT STRIVES TO CORRECT ITS COURSE

Santa Rosa High Will Continue, Battered But Far From Broken

By Don Cambou

After two school years filled with passionate debate, fiscal necessity, and the closure of six campuses, on May 13, the Santa Rosa City School District presented its final 2026 -2027 recommendations for staff cuts. The recommendations call for the remaining 17 campuses, including Santa Rosa High, to see a reduction of just over 17 counselors and psychologists, just over 15 administrators, and almost 61 teachers in order to remain financially solvent. Those numbers reflect partial positions, as well as full positions, thus the words like “over” and “almost.” With these cuts, the District will avoid state receivership, during which time a state official, who would have no connection to the District’s problems and priorities with local schools, would make cuts with a possibly very heavy hand, in order to balance its budget. Furthermore, with the District’s current cuts, it hopes to move closer to “right sizing” itself. In the 2012 – 2013 school year, the District had over 15,400 students. Next school year the total student number will be under 12,000 – hence, the need

for “right sizing.” The last school year saw over 100 staff positions cut. The coming school year is projected to see approximately the same number of cuts.

Will some of those District final recommendations numbers change? Yes. Some already have, but incrementally. Will the 2027 - 2028 school year see cuts as large as the last two? Probably not.

And what does it all mean for Santa Rosa High? Last school year saw grades 9 through 12 begin with close to 1450 students. This school year, grades 9 through 12 are projected to begin with almost the same number. But grades 7 and 8 last school year started with close to 480 students. This school year, that number is projected to be just under 400. So the new SRHS 7 through 12 high school is projected to start the next school year with around 1850 students, compared with last school year’s combined total of around 1930. SRHS may see a loss of around ten teachers -- roughly one per department, and perhaps three counselors and mental health workers. The school will have

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THE LEGACY OF THE WILL ROGERS ROOM

by Mike Daniels,
SRHS teacher 1978 - 2005

You can't stop a teacher when they want to do something. They just do it.

Holden Caulfield in
The Catcher in the Rye

The contract between faculty and the district in Santa Rosa City Schools mandates an area must exist for teachers to work during their preparation hour. Since the mid-1970s, that area in one specific place at Santa Rosa High became a noon hour retreat, an oasis where instructors could eat and mingle with colleagues.

On the upper floor of the main building, at the end of the hall, is this space. A few years ago, a principal posted a sign labeling the area “Will Rogers Room.” Here’s how the name came about and a look at what transpired there.

In 1978 a proposition for the California ballot, the Briggs Initiative, intended to remove and prohibit employment for all certificated faculty identified as homosexual. It wasn’t really clear how that identification was

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Mary Orsborn Beseda
President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Mary Orsborn Beseda '74

Since our last newsletter, the SRHS Foundation has been busy dispensing support to Santa Rosa High School.

The SRHS Foundation and SchoolsRule Sonoma County funded a trip to to the Exploratorium in San Francisco for 215 Eighth Graders (see photo). Some of the kids

had never been to San Francisco. The kids were so excited about the event that they wrote thank you notes to SCOE and the Foundation.

This year the Foundation awarded 58 Scholarships totaling \$149,825.00. Our Scholarship Committee worked hard to make this happen. The Scholarship Committee is comprised of Monica Baldenegro, Kristine Erken, Nadine Smedshammer, Donna Doyle and Tony Negri. On April 29th they did what is called a "Reveal" to the recipients and their families, via Zoom. They also presented scholarship certificates to each student on Senior Awards Night at SRHS on May 14th. The work isn't done yet. Now the checks will be created and once each student shows they have enrolled in a college or Vocational School, they will then pick up their check at SRHS. Some of the scholarships do not require enrollment in a two or four year college.

Through May of this year, the Panther Project Fund has awarded grants totaling \$81,758 in requests from staff, teachers, department heads and clubs. The PPF Committee meets on the first Friday of each month, starting in September and ending in May. We are currently meeting at 6:30AM at the I-Hop Restaurant on 4th Street. Below



Eighth graders have fun with science at S.F.'s vast Exploratorium

is a highlight of a few of those requests:

- Golf Cart for Admin., includes new seats, battery & a strobe light. This will assist them on the 40-acre campus, especially when there is an emergency!
- SRHS Choir performing at the Giants Game
- Supplies for the PB & J Club
- Girls Basketball Uniforms
- FFA State Conference
- Best Buddies Field Trip to the movies

As Alumni and supporters of the Foundation, we should be very proud of what we have accomplished!

The Polenta Feed is a wrap! It was a very successful event and couldn't be done without the support of our Board Members, volunteers, and the businesses who generously donated for the live/silent auctions, raffles & wine for dinner! The Polenta Committee who starts the organizing process in November is comprised of the following Board Members: Paulette Gomes, Chair; Donna Doyle, co-chair; Mary Beseda, Ilona Williams, Rhonda Loop, Tony Negri, Mike Bucchianeri, Paddy Coreris, and Brian Mecchi. Net funds generated from the Polenta Feed go directly to Panther Projects for the 2026/2027 school year.

Next up is the 25th Annual Golf Tournament on Friday, June 19, 2026, at Bennett Valley Golf Course, plus our 9th Annual Show & Shine Car Show on October 3, 2026, at SRHS!

On behalf of the SRHS Foundation, we would like to thank our Members, Alumni and Friends for their continued support throughout the year!

"Once a Panther, Always a Panther"

SRHS Foundation Directors

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Monica Baldenegro '95 | Carol Langford Daniels '85 |
| Mary Orsborn Beseda '74 President | Veronica Stoops Haas '69 |
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| Paulette Guaspari Gomes '68 Ass't Treasurer | |

* Founding Director

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS GUIDELINES

Article submissions are invited. Limit letters to no more than 150 words. Article ideas should be submitted to the newsletter editor in advance for approval. All submissions are subject to editing and become the property of the Foundation. Please submit letters and articles in Microsoft Word if possible. Submissions are also invited to Panther Patter. Contact us at newsletter@srhsf.org.

two and a half vice principals, rather than last year's four. Hopefully, ArtQuest Dance is the only class that will be entirely cut next year, although some CTE (Career Technical Education) classes – like those offered by the shops – will probably offer fewer “sections”. Think of a “section” as one specific, scheduled class. Some other classes may offer fewer sections as well.

Tough times? Yes. Disaster? No.

If “misery loves company” the entire District can take cold comfort in the fact that since the 2015 – 2016 school

year nearly 40% of California's public school districts have seen enrollment fall by more than 10%. And the Brookings Institution estimates public schools nationwide could lose between 2.9 million and 6.6 million students over the next 25 years, with the sharpest declines expected before 2035. The belief is that falling birth rates, migration away from cities, and expanding private school voucher programs are driving the trend. Sound familiar? In large part, these are the same reasons that are causing the Santa Rosa City School District's predicament.

The Legacy of the Will Rogers Room, continued from page 1

to be determined, but the initiative was in the end rejected by voters.

The SRHS faculty cared not about private orientation, only about good, effective teaching. Considerable discussion at the time in this room surrounded the Briggs Initiative, particularly the dangers it would portend for the future were it to pass. In a particularly lighthearted discussion one day, someone said, “Well, you know Will Rogers said he never met a man he didn't like.” The name stuck. The room had a name.

It's important to know that the SRHS faculty has historically enjoyed a reputation of quality in its teaching and its knowledge and educational preparation. Masters degrees, doctorates, Fulbright scholars and other marks of achievement served as evidence of that reputation. Because of this, at least in part, the faculty was also known to hold its administration accountable for appropriate decision making. The faculty, because of its experience and ability, understood what was administrative nonsense and what was best for SRHS and its student body. Various administrators came to appreciate this and therefore trod carefully and consulted certain tenured faculty before acting. These certain teachers were regulars in the Will Rogers Room.

The occupants of the room varied from year to year, primarily — at least as far as regular occupants. At times there was standing room only, the place was so popular. Both male and female faculty always enjoyed pleasant company and conversation there during the morning break and at lunch.

Consistently, the room provided a hospitable and friendly respite from the classroom and intelligent conversation on any number of topics. Politics, philosophy, health, family, finances, even education might dominate conversation on any day. Not that solutions were always found, but the discussion and the advice were always lively and informative. Faculty with a thin skin — even SRHS has had a few over the years — did not enjoy a stay there, where nothing and no one were sacred but everyone was certainly welcome.

Many and various items hang on the walls, items as various as the faculty who hung them. Artifacts concerning Will Rogers, of course, are there as are newspaper clippings and other items the hanger found interesting enough to share. Free speech reigned there.

It's never been directly stated, but district office and school administration, improperly feared that certain discussions took place there that they weren't privy to and attempted to suppress the room itself. Once, a campus administrator removed tables and the artifacts from the walls and rearranged the seating. Those changes made work impossible during a preparation hour, changes that clearly violated the contract. A successful grievance was filed, and the room was restored.

Any number of events transpired in the W.R. Room, but perhaps none more enjoyable than Monday Night Football wagering. At noon on Monday bets were discussed and placed on the game scheduled for that night. Not on the game's outcome but on the game itself. For example, bets might be placed on the yards of the opening kickoff, the number of passes in the game (including or not including incompletes or interceptions), fumbles, running plays, timeouts and on and on. Bets didn't exceed a buck or two. On Tuesday, when it was time to call in the bets, discussion could be as bizarre as the bets. “The number of timeouts? Why would I bet on something as dumb as that? I'm not gonna pay.” Oh, great fun and a great release of classroom tension!

Before technology made it impossible, betting of a more serious nature took place on payday. Back then, paper paychecks were issued at the end of the month and each check contained seven numbers. The gambler selected his best five as a poker hand and threw a dollar in the pot. The winning hand gathered the pot but had to contribute it to buy a round at a watering hole after classes on Friday. Even more fun!

The Will Rogers Room on the SRHS campus thrives still today, offering a fifty-year legacy of respite and restoration for teachers from the sometimes stresses of the classroom. The room also offers evidence that teachers do indeed have a humanizing side.



ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER RECORD NUMBER OF FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

By Don Cambou

Santa Rosa High's May 12 Awards Ceremony saw a record number of 58 Foundation Scholarships, totaling \$149,825, awarded to graduating seniors. All of the scholarships exist "in perpetuity," meaning that the principals that created them are never touched. The scholarships reflect the yearly earnings on the Foundation's scholarship corpus, or pool of money. They exist as part of the Foundation's permanent endowment.

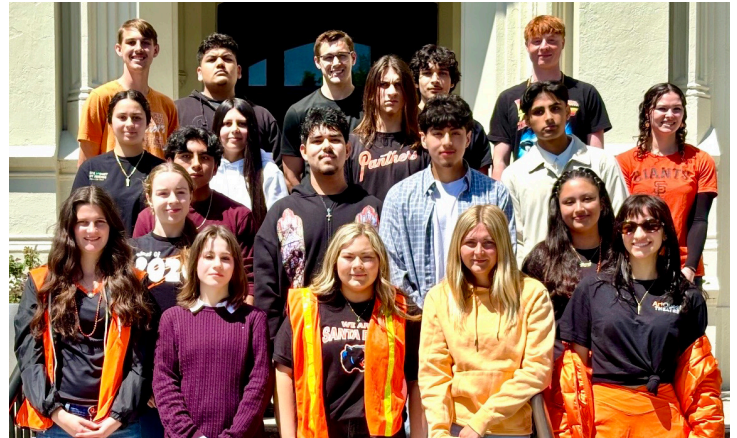
Foundation members Monica Baldenegro, Kristine Erken, and Nadine Smedshammer work closely with

SRHS Department Chairs to find the right recipient for each award. Since all of the scholarships exist "in perpetuity," each must begin with an endowment of at least \$10,000. This year welcomes the fifth scholarship to be created through a donation from a living donor.

If you are interested in developing a scholarship in honor of a loved one, a group, or an individual, please contact Monica Baldenegro at mbrockssrhs@gmail.com or donations@srhsf.org.

JAMES FLECK SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS - 2026

| Scholarship | Student | Amount |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| ArtQuest | Kailash Wood | \$4,150.00 |
| ArtQuest | Dalia Bugica | \$4,150.00 |
| ArtQuest | Nina Ohlstrom | \$4,150.00 |
| Career Technical Edu | Emma Verdu | \$4,150.00 |
| Career Technical Edu | Roberto Briceno | \$4,150.00 |
| Career Technical Edu | Riley Piehl | \$4,150.00 |
| Counseling | Alejandro Jarquin | \$4,150.00 |
| Counseling | Enjal Parajuli | \$4,150.00 |
| Counseling | Jonathan Stephenson | \$4,150.00 |
| Counseling | Aldrick Martinez Cruz | \$4,150.00 |
| English | Sharon Cabrera DeLeon | \$4,150.00 |
| Math | Jason Dennis | \$4,150.00 |
| PE | Daniel Mills | \$4,150.00 |
| Resource | Anel Contreras | \$4,150.00 |
| Resource | Margarita Garcia Ruiz | \$4,150.00 |
| Resource | Daniel Hernandez Davila | \$4,150.00 |
| Science | Jesse Jimenez | \$4,150.00 |
| Social Science | Sabrina Cody | \$4,150.00 |



Fleck Scholarship Recipients

| Scholarship | Student | Amount |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Social Science | Nikol Naumik | \$4,150.00 |
| Visual & Performing Arts | Nessa Cecil | \$4,150.00 |
| Visual & Performing Arts | William Philp | \$4,150.00 |
| World Language | Antonio Rivera | \$4,150.00 |

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS - 2026

| Scholarship | Student | Amount |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Berta Wiggins | Riley Piehl | \$850.00 |
| Betty Jean Gong | Andrea Rosas Arreguin | \$500.00 |
| Bruce Mecchi | Weston Mohr | \$1,150.00 |
| Chuck Kracker | Kendall Stephenson | \$900.00 |

| Scholarship | Student | Amount |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Cristian Valencia Figueroa | Malaya Edwards | \$500.00 |
| Dennis and Ruth McGill | Cooper Kelsey | \$3,400.00 |
| Emmett O'Neill Social Science | Spencer Lillo | \$500.00 |

| Scholarship | Student | Amount |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Gary Rasche | Jordan Cassels | \$1,975.00 |
| | Jordan Walton | \$1,975.00 |
| | Lillyana Conway | \$1,975.00 |
| | Roberto Briceno | \$1,975.00 |
| | Jonathan Stephenson | \$1,975.00 |
| | Olivia Lewis | \$1,975.00 |
| Henry & Doris Matteri | Emma Verdu | \$525.00 |
| | Isaac Swann | \$525.00 |
| Jack Kellar "Lucky Jade" | Kailash Wood | \$1,100.00 |
| | Maggie Ward | \$1,100.00 |
| Jerry Poncia | Antonio Rivera | \$500.00 |
| Lisa Nilsen | Catarina Ottolini | \$500.00 |
| Lorenzo Solis | Kyra Curtis | \$500.00 |
| Marie Hindringer Kelly | Liliana Vera | \$3,900.00 |
| | Miley Allen | \$3,900.00 |
| | Heriberto Vargas Vega | \$3,900.00 |
| | Jennifer Gonzalez Chavez | \$3,900.00 |
| | Nataly Tafolla Morales | \$3,900.00 |
| Mark E. Noonan | Alejandro Jarquin | \$850.00 |
| Pat Gallagher | Holden Gage | \$1,475.00 |
| Paul Huntzinger | Muruelle Teri | \$1,000.00 |
| | Nikol Naumik | \$1,000.00 |
| | Valeria Hernandez Correa | \$1,000.00 |
| Peter Slusser | Ava Heun | \$575.00 |
| | Karely Barragan | \$575.00 |
| Robert Clell McKinney | Eden Kraut | \$500.00 |
| Sandra Husby Spencer | Lili Burbank | \$3,400.00 |
| | Emma Verdu | \$3,400.00 |
| Bill & Gayle Robotham | Riley Piehl | \$850.00 |



Memorial Scholarship Recipients

THE BILL AND GAYLE ROBOTHAM SCHOLARSHIP

By Don Cambou

The Foundation's newest scholarship honors the lifelong partnership of two proud SRHS graduates: Bill and Gayle (Gambogi) Robotham. Bill was a junior at SRHS when he met ninth grader Gayle. They married in 1961, the year Gayle graduated from our high school. Their marriage lasted 63 years, until Gayle's death in 2024.

Bill worked as grocery clerk at Park Auto market across from the SRJC on Mendocino Avenue, until he went to school at San Jose State University to study business and accounting. He became a CPA and worked for Pisenti and Brinker in Santa Rosa for an astonishing 60 years.

Gayle was the heart of their home — a devoted mother, a fantastic cook, and, by all accounts, a fierce competitor on the tennis court and golf course (Bill will be the first to admit she usually won!) Together, they raised two adopted children and traveled the world, from Europe to South America to fishing adventures in Panama.

During Bill's 60 years as an accountant, he worked closely with many people in the agriculture industry and watched it continue to thrive here in Sonoma County. It was Bill and Gayle's shared wish to give back by supporting a student who, like the people Bill admired throughout his career, will help carry the agriculture industry forward. Bill reached out to the SRHS Foundation with a desire to establish a scholarship to do that in 2025. His \$20,000 donation created a scholarship that will exist in perpetuity. The yearly earnings on his donation will fund the scholarship. It's fitting that the scholarship bears the names of both Bill and Gayle. The memory of their lifelong partnership will continue for many decades to come through a scholarship that will be awarded to countless SRHS students focused on agriculture.

PERSPECTIVES FROM STUDENTS THROUGH THE SANTA ROSAN NEWSPAPER

By Don Cambou

THE FENCE

By Russell Wettle

Dumb fence
Ugly fence
No like fence

Fence is so ugly
Because it chain link
School forced to have fence
Because board decision stink

Fence cruel and evil
Fence commit crimes
Fence so dystopian
Bring oppressive times

Fence commit sins
Fence is so mean
Fence is most useless
I have ever seen

We are told we don't need
Chick-fil-A or Taco Bell
So we have closed campus
A special kind of hell

Students are told
School food is fantastic
But our school food taste
Like asbestos and plastic

No one like fence
Because it torture babies
It have COVID and measles
And also have rabies

Levi Jones say
Fence is "eyesore galore"
School already have issues
We don't need any more

Big stupid wall
It just make no sense
So I libel and slander
The dumb ugly fence

Part 1: SRHS Now Has a Fence

It's hard to miss it. A 722 foot long wrought iron fence that runs along Mendocino Avenue in front of Santa Rosa High. It's part of a larger fencing system that can enclose the entire SRHS campus, if all gates are shut. Teachers already must use key cards to open the gate to their parking lot. Total fence cost: \$750,000. Fences will soon enclose the seventeen other Santa Rosa City School District campuses. Why? The arguments include perceived increasing violence, non-students bringing drugs and weapons onto campus, and keeping homeless people from sleeping on site. Three years ago a student was stabbed and killed by another student at Montgomery High. Fences will keep the bad people out, and keep the good people in. These all seem like good reasons to rational adults. But if you're a student at SRHS, a school that has always cherished its openness and has never before had an enclosing fence, you might see things differently.

To the left is a tongue-in-cheek student poem that appeared this school year in *The Santa Rosan*, SRHS's student newspaper, overseen by Casey Elsa, English Department Chair, and journalism teacher.

Part 2: Teacher Lore

Teacher morale is low at Santa Rosa High these days. Why? Probably because they've seen a good number of their fellow instructors disappear last school year, and will see more absences in the coming school year. The Santa Rosa City School District, running at a deficit for several years, has had to drastically tighten its belt to avoid state receivership. It's an outcome no one wants. So the School District has largely turned to teacher and staff cuts to get out of the red. In many ways, teachers and staff have been reduced to numbers on a spread sheet. "If we cut five teachers, we'll save X dollars a year."

The Santa Rosan student newspaper has found a way to remind us that teachers are much more than dollar signs in a budget. They are intelligent, creative, caring people who often have, or have had exciting, interesting life experiences far away from the academic world. The newspaper's "Teacher Lore" series sheds light on many of those experiences, and reminds us of how very *human* teachers' "other lives" can be. On the next page is a fascinating story about Government teacher Andy Brennan. It's got international intrigue, a great surprise, and a terrific punchline.

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TEACHER LORE: ANDY BRENNAN

By Lee Corey

Brennan's most shocking tale occurred in East Berlin during the Cold War. As a young soldier, Brennan was allowed to cross to the eastern side of Berlin for a few hours. "It was sort of the way of this communist country trying to showcase how wonderful things were," he explained. He ordered a drink and a slice of cake at a café and requested a song from the piano player. After tipping the musician with an American dollar, the piano player followed Brennan out of the café.

The musician explained that he had family on the west side of the wall whom he had not seen since the beginning of the war and asked Brennan to take a letter across the wall to them. "Something in the back of my brain was just like 'danger, danger, danger' . . . and I told him I couldn't do that," said Brennan.

His intuition in this moment likely changed the path of his life drastically. When he informed his superiors, who had told him to report anything strange, Brennan said that "they said that that was a KGB front operation. All the waitresses and the piano player, they were all KGB agents." The KGB were the secret police of the Soviet Union. If he had taken the letter, the interaction would have been photographed and sent to a KGB agent in West Germany. They would then use the photograph as blackmail, alleging that it was evidence of an exchange of classified documents, and frame the person photographed into a double agent for the KGB.

In 1999, while flipping through the August edition of Newsweek, Brennan happened to recognize the piano player and KGB agent who had attempted to covertly blackmail him. "He'd just been



Andy Brennan, SRHS Government teacher

appointed head of the new Secret Service AFSB, and it was Vladimir Putin. . . I always like to say that George W. Bush, Donald Trump and I, we have all looked in Putin's eyes, but I didn't trust him," Brennan said.

Class of 1961
65th Class Reunion
Saturday, October 17, 2026
11:30am - 3:30pm

Iron & Vine at Bennett Valley Golf Course
3330 Yulupa Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Luncheon - \$90.00 per person

RSVP — ASAP
Ann Porrino
182 Blue Wing Dr.
Sonoma, CA 94766
(707) 322-6051
porrinopad@aol.com



"Once a Panther, Always a Panther"

Calling All 1950 to 1959 Panthers

Don't Miss the First Ever Decade Reunion

August 8th, 2026
11:00am - 6:00pm

Finley Community Park
2060 W College Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

\$40 per person
Register by July 25

To register and purchase tickets, call (208) 640-3614 or (707) 321-2220

Renew old friendship and make new ones!
Relive the magic of what made SRHS special for you!



"Once a Panther, Always a Panther"

PANTHER PROJECT FUND GRANTS HELP SRHS, AND OUR NEW SRJH STUDENTS

By Art Horner

The Foundation's Panther Project Fund (PPF) Committee meets at 6:30 am on the first Friday of each month at the IHOP on 4th Street. Teachers, coaches, staff, and volunteers get up early to request funds for various projects that will enrich SRHS students. Afterwards, the Committee discusses each request, and rewards a great many of them. This year, SRHS welcomed 7th and 8th graders to the campus. They are a part of SRHS and their teachers can apply for funds too. The teachers and staff were quite surprised to find out that our organization is there for them, and we helped them feel at home on our campus by funding many of their requests.

Thank you to all of our members for helping to support this important fund. We get our funding from the Polenta Feed, earnings from designated memorial funds, the unrestricted endowment, and One Thousand Panthers. This year we have provided \$81,758 in grants. Below are some highlights of our spending, and although not necessarily those with the highest dollar value, here are some that are particularly interesting.

- **Sports Equipment:** To make sure everyone knows our 7th and 8th graders are Panthers, the Foundation paid for the Track and Field team to have Orange and Black uniforms (\$1920). Our HS girls basketball team also received new uniforms (\$2000), our Pole Vault pad now has a new cover (\$1500), Wrestling has a new mat (\$5000), Badminton has new nets (\$1500), and Cross Country has special run-ready water bottles (\$555). In addition, PE now teaches grades 7-12, so the instructors needed some additional outdoor equipment since all the classes can't fit in the gym (\$2000). And those are just the highlights.
- **Field Trips:** As you can guess, school districts don't fund field trips. Luckily SRHS students have the support of the Foundation and some other great groups that help get our students out into the community. Some of the trips hosted were for ArtQuest and Fine Arts students. They included trips to several SF museums for Visual and Digital students, Choral students to a festival, and Band and Orchestra to Bay Area competitions (\$9000). Other popular field trips included sending Math students to the Exploratorium (\$728) and the Academy of Sciences (\$887). Debate competed in a Bay Area

tournament (\$1000) and some Debaters made it to state finals! (\$1242). FFA took a large group to the State convention and the National convention. The Foundation helped fund those FFA trips (\$7000) along with other funding it received. The Band (7-12) played at Six Flags at the "Music in the Park" festival (\$1721). These 44 students bonded as one big school group!

- **Other needs:** In addition to supplies and trips, we were happy to fund a wide variety of other activities to help SRHS students. Project Grad hosts a safe and sober graduation party attended by almost every senior on graduation night. We helped with \$8,000 toward supplies, equipment rentals, security, and aid for those students that couldn't afford the entry fee. Our Wellness Center, a safe place where students can get counseling help and can take a time-out when needed, asked for art materials and games, and we funded that (\$2000). Our Spanish classes wanted some sweet bread to teach a lesson about Latin American culture (\$100). Our PB&J (Peanut Butter and Jelly) club will have plenty of bread and toppings to bring together students and form some friendships (\$2000). Finally, the Best Buddies club, a 40 member club that meets weekly and brings together general and special ed students, walked to the Roxy Theater, which opened early and dedicated a theater just for them to see the animated film Hoppers. (\$550)

Although the 7th and 8th graders are now a part of SRHS and some of their grants are listed above, I am listing additional grants here to let you know that we made an extra effort to make them feel welcome this year. Among the grants: a new lunchtime mic and speaker (\$495), sheds to house their gardening equipment that they are using to help beautify the campus (\$2000), and a trip to Six Flags for all the honor roll students (\$2000 towards a \$10,000 trip). Also, the new science classrooms in the DeSoto building don't yet have lab equipment, so we helped, along with the SchoolsRule Sonoma County, another volunteer organization, to send the 8th grade science classes to the Exploratorium. Our PPF grant was for \$4627.

For more information about how to apply for a PPF grant, interested parties can contact Deby Marvel, Principal's secretary, at dmarvel@srcs.k12.ca.us

CONTRIBUTIONS & MEMBERSHIP NEWS

By Paulette Guaspari Gomes '68 and Brian Mecchi '77

SPRING 2026

For the period February 2026 through May 2026 the Foundation welcomed four new members and 90 renewing members. Membership dues totaled \$3,750.00 for this period. Total active membership in the Foundation now stands at 757.

We continue to actively contact members regarding upcoming renewals.

The following Foundation members and friends made contributions in addition to membership dues:

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dan/Sharon Perry Alexander '70 | Jerry Grey '58 | Jane Hamilton Schmidt '61 |
| Virginia Denner Cambou '65 | Shirley Capri Havner '55 | Mary Jo Tanner Spring '52 |
| Burl Estes '61 | Mike Olenberger '65 | Granville Stark '59 |
| Mark/Lisa Keller Evich '85/Parents | Mary Linn Hart Sadler '65 | Bruce Wright '67 |

NEW MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Mark Adams '84 | Brenda Crain Solheim '72 |
| Mike Olenberger '65 | Sarah VanGiesen '84 |

ORGANIZATION DONATIONS

Benevity
United Way California Capital Region
Oliver's Market/eScrip

MEMORIAL & SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

You may send the SRHSF a contribution in the name of a deceased Panther, or in the name of a specific living person, department, group need, or scholarship fund.

DIRECTED: AGRICULTURE DEPT

Raymond Rasmussen '61 (Brother)
Larry Timmer '59

DIRECTED: ATHLETIC DEPT.

Diane Camilli Abraham '57

ROBERT "BOB" BARTON, SR. '59

Ward '58/Pat Townsend '59 Thompson

FRANK BERTOLI '49 DIRECTED: BASEBALL PROGRAM

Rosemary DeMarco - Friend

NANCY NOONAN BERTO '48

Martha Comstock Keegan '47

CORRICK BROWN '47

Martha Comstock Keegan '47

ED BURKE '58

Ward '58/Pat Townsend '59 Thompson

CARMAN SILVERSHIELD FORMWAY '49

Rosemary DeMarco - Friend

JOAN FINLEY MC CUE '55

William Fairbanks II '55

BRUCE MECCHI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Brian Mecchi '77

JACK RACKERBY '50

Todd '73/Mary Orsborn '74 Beseda

LEONARD "LENNY" READ '55

Darlene McCullough Bath '56

RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHOLARSHIP

Don Cambou '64

ANN FALETTO VANNETTI '51

Brian Mecchi '77



In Memoriam — Spring 2026

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------|------|
| Wesley Colgan, Jr. (1946) | faculty | Kathleen Hood-Martinez | 1958 |
| John “Jack” Rackerby (1950) | faculty | Arthur Lewis | 1958 |
| Shirley Beine McDonald | 1940 | Suellen Plover Hamby | 1958 |
| Corrick Brown | 1947 | Robert Barton | 1959 |
| Florence Noonan Berto | 1948 | Sandra Bassignani | 1959 |
| Elia Wilson Ramsey | 1949 | Suzanne deTurbiville Oglesby | 1959 |
| Elizabeth Moranda Keegan | 1950 | Lloyd Rogers | 1959 |
| Barbara Beggio Buffi | 1951 | Jerry Lee Hembree Schuman | 1959 |
| Ann Faletto Vanettit | 1951 | Donald Weese | 1960 |
| Diane Francis Showalter | 1953 | Timothy Evans | 1963 |
| Douglas Camilli | 1954 | James Fife | 1963 |
| Donna Sorensen Payne | 1955 | R. Douglas Nunes | 1963 |
| Hazel Hansen Clegg | 1956 | Alfonso Roman | 1968 |
| Glen Vadon | 1956 | Robin Harrington | 1976 |
| Nelson Black | 1957 | Randy Rogers | 1977 |
| Fay Asuelo Mendoza | 1957 | Robert Smith | 1985 |
| Charles Brownlee | 1958 | John Paul Lisciandro, Jr | 1999 |
| Beau Edward Burke | 1958 | Shannon Gaston | 2012 |



THE 2026 POLENTA FEED

By Paulette Guaspari Gomes '68, Chairwoman

This year's Polenta Feed was another sold out success. 450 Panthers and friends filled the Vet's Memorial for delicious Polenta. Chef Stephen May and his helpers did an outstanding job with the food!

Auctioneer California Senator Mike McGuire commanded the stage for the Live Auction, which brought in \$14,650. The Silent Auction brought in \$7,864. and the Raffle took in \$4,516. With all the income and expenses, we hit an estimate net profit of around \$34,000.00. That's the most ever in the 29 years that we have been doing this event.

The Live, Silent Auctions, and Raffle wouldn't be possible without the generous donations of local businesses and wineries!

This event wouldn't have been a success without all the hard work that the SRHS Foundation board members and volunteers (alumni and non-alumni) put in.



Guest Live Auctioneer California State Senator Mike McGuire gets bids on two three foot salamis

The 24 SRHS student servers did a fantastic job, along with this year's SRJC Culinary leaders, Joelle Montes and Marley Sweeney. Thank you to everyone.

Please mark your calendar for next year's Polenta Feed, Friday, April 23, 2027.



ONE THOUSAND PANTHERS

Donations fiscal year 2025/2026 ■ April 30, 2026
Thank you for your generous donations!

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Larry Weese 1964 (37) | Kathleen Smith 1967 In Memory if Ron Westlund '61 | Stephanie Lowry Nacouzi 1977 (2) |
| Anonymous #581 (19) | Frank Kibbish Jr 1970 | Jim Streeter 1976 (3) |
| Art & Andi Gambini Art Gambini 1968 & Andi, In Memory of Larry Sani 1937 (3) | Alana Kelly 1978 (15) | Bonnie Panizzera 1963 (4) |
| Art & Andi Gambini Art Gambini 1968 & Andi, in Memory of Steve Orsborn 1968 (1) | Daniel McMahon in Loving Memory of Pam Griffin McMahon 1967 (4) | David C 1969 & Kathleen E Faris (3) |
| Art & Andi Gambini Art Gambini 1968, Andi and Kevin 2001, In Memory of Rae Gambini 1937 (11) | Mike & Louise Liewald 1970 (2) | JoAnne "Jodi" Formway 1969, Janice Formway Morrissey 1972, Vernon Formway 1976, & Nancy Formway Birch 1978 in Memory of Carmen Eleanor Silvershield Formway 1949 |
| Art & Andi Gambini Art Gambini 1968, Andi, In Memory of Dan Bianchini 1969 (1) | Bruce & Debra Agee Burton, Parents in honor of Rachel Burton '98 & Scott Burton 2008 (1) | Arthur 1996 & Mindy Chung (3) |
| Robert 1958 and Marci Tarleton 1967 Jenkins (4) | Tad Shapiro 1973 | Gerald L. Grey 1958 (7) |
| Mark 1967 and Cathy Trione (9) | Rick Call & Rocky Call 1967 (1) | Linda Olson Cornell 1969 (2) |
| Donna Dennes Doyle 1967 | Todd 1973 & Mary Orsborn 1974 | Dennis Morgan 1967 (1) |
| Shawn Brumbaugh 1985 and Jennifer Richardson Brumbaugh 1986 (1) | Beseda in Memory of the three Albany Drive BFF's Alma DeMaria Orsborn 1943, Aileen Michetti Bianchini 1943 & Norma Rochetti Malone 1941 | Ward 1958 and Pat Townsend 1959 Thompson # (18) |
| Eric Pierce 1965 (3) | Reed & Jean Wang Walker 1994 | Edwin J. Canevari Sr 1957 in Memory of Edwin "Skeeter" J. Canevari Jr. 1976 |
| Richard Bastoni 1957 (4) | James G Laier Jr 1958 (5) | |
| Bill & Suzie Friedman 1966 (9) | Chuck Garvey MD 1964 in Memory of Larry Weese '64 | <i>NOTE: After each donor's name, the number in the parenthesis (x) represents the number of additional donations these generous donors have given to the OTP Program, above the original \$1,000 donation. This notation replaces the previous asterisks.</i> |
| Lu Butcher Kistner 1957 (1) | Jack Orme 1966 & Stacey Orme # (3) | <i>#Indicates Front Sign Plaque</i> |
| | Mike Bucchianeri 1971 | |
| | Rick 1968 & Paulette Guaspari 1968 Gomes | |

ONE THOUSAND PANTHERS is a campaign in progress to enrich the SRHSF Endowment Fund by utilizing \$1,000 donations by 1000 Panther supporters to reach a goal of \$1 million. Proceeds are allocated to student needs at SRHS through the Panther Project Fund of the SRHS Foundation

The campaign began in 2011 and will continue until the goal is met.

Currently - we have a total **of 330 donors (many with multiple donations)**

WITH \$707,838.55 IN THE FUND

JOIN US!

Call the Pandy Line (707-571-7747) or visit us online at www.SRHSE.org for assistance, or email us direct at donations@srhsf.org.

Donation options by cash, check, credit cards, or securities direct are accepted from individuals and groups (pooled). Donations can include pledges over 2, 4, and 5 years, employer matching funds, and marketable securities.

CALL US!





FOUNDATION

"Once a Panther, Always a Panther"

P.O. Box 11006

Santa Rosa, CA 95406-1006

Address service requested

Time to renew?

Please check your expiration date above your address to see if it is time for you to renew your membership.

If you have already renewed

THANK YOU!

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SANTA ROSA HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

| | | | | | |
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| _____ | | _____ | | _____ | |
| Name (please print) | | Maiden Name | | Spouse's Name | |
| _____ | | _____ | | _____ | |
| Address | | City | | State Zip | |
| _____ | | _____ | | _____ | |
| Home Phone | | Cell Phone | | Email | |
| _____ | | _____ | | _____ | |
| Preferred Method to receive mail & Newsletter: | | <input type="checkbox"/> Email | | <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Mail | |
| SRHS Grad Year _____ | | Spouse SRHS Grad Year _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> SRHS Staff | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SRHS Friend | | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Grandparent (circle one): Grad Year of Student(s) _____ | | | |



| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Membership Fee: | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 ~ 1 year | <input type="checkbox"/> \$45 ~ 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 ~ 3 years | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 ~ Lifetime | | |
| Annual Fund Campaign Contribution: | | | | | |
| Please accept my gift of \$_____ for: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> General unrestricted gift | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Directed gift for _____ | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Gift in honor/memory of _____ | | |
| (Department or Program) | | | (circle one) | | |
| Join One Thousand Panthers: | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 or more | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 ~ 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 ~ 4 years | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 ~ 5 years | | |
| Please acknowledge this donation in name of: _____ | | | | | |

YOU MAY SEND CHECK (made payable to SRHS Foundation) for GRAND TOTAL OF \$_____ OR

Charge my: ___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ Discover Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

3 digit CVV# (on back of card) _____ Name as printed on card: _____ Signature: _____

Please return this form to: Santa Rosa High School Foundation, P.O. Box 11006, Santa Rosa, CA 95406. If you prefer, you may complete your transaction online through our website: www.srhsf.org. For more information, please call the Pandy Line at (707) 571-SRHS (7747) OR email us at: info@srhsf.org. Tax ID #68-0195375 (for a gift of Marketable Securities, please contact us for more information.) **Remember... Once A Panther, Always a Panther!**