



# SANTA ROSA HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

Winter, 2025

Vol.38

Issue 1

*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 HIGH WILL STAY OPEN BIG CHANGES COMING**

By Don Cambou

If you find the headline above shocking and confusing, you probably haven't followed the nine month drama that brought us here. In a nutshell, the Santa Rosa City School District found itself heading dangerously deep into the red, and decided that the best way to address the problem was through school closures. On February 21, the Santa Rosa City School Board presented its numerous decisions. Among them was the determination that Santa Rosa High will stay open, but the campus will accommodate 7th through 12th graders. It will absorb students from both Santa Rosa Middle School (Junior High), which will close at the beginning of the next school year, and new seventh graders from neighboring elementary schools. SRHS is currently a four year high school, grades 9 through 12. Other Board decisions will affect every school in the District in larger or smaller ways.

When did the financial problems begin? That's a tough one to answer. But we can look all the way back to the 2012 - 2013 school year, when the District had 15,430 students. By 2023 - 2024 that number had decreased to 12,860 students. Families with school age children have continued to move out of the area, while those remaining have lower average birthrates. Charter schools compound the problem by siphoning off students. Temporary COVID relief funds helped delay the final reckoning, but the District burned through them entirely by the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year. This school year, the District used its general fund dollars to keep all the schools open. Those general fund dollars were a onetime distribution.

Something had to be done – and soon. Otherwise the District would be looking at a \$20 million plus shortfall for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. So the District Board of Directors decided in June of 2024 that the best way to make up the shortfall would be to close and consolidate some of the 23 schools under its supervision. The Board wanted the closures to save the District around \$12 million dollars a year. Cuts to instructors, staff and District employees could make up most of the additional eight plus million. Furthermore, the closed schools could be leased, or even sold, to save more money.

Soon, the District had a plan: 3-1-1. Close three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The District Board formed a School Consolidation Advisory Committee (SCAC) to rank every school under its administration. The SCAC soon created a complex rating system to be applied to each school. By fall of 2024, the SCAC began a series of public "Town Hall" meetings, and also opened their "school rating" meetings to the public. Consistently, Santa Rosa High emerged as a 3 – meaning it would be the third high school most likely to close. The SRCS rating system evaluated all five of its public high schools – Santa Rosa, Montgomery, Elsie Allen, Piner, and Maria Carrillo. Certainly SRHS outranked all the other high schools in meaningful ways. It has ArtQuest; wood, auto, metal, and manufacturing shops; agriculture, and dual enrollment through next-door's Santa Rosa Junior College. It also has a hundred and fifty year history and some of the most beautiful and iconic buildings in town. But for some of these same reasons, it was thought to be the

*Continued on page 3*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Mary Orsborn Beseda '74

Since the last newsletter a lot has happened at SRHS and with the SRHS Foundation.

The SRHS Choir sang the National Anthem at a Warrior Game on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Musical Matilda was launched and performed in the SRHS Auditorium for two weekends,

Mary Orsborn Beseda  
President

including matinees! The musical was all hands-on-deck – Wood Shop built the stage props, ArtQuest students painted the stage, Choir sang in the musical, ArtQuest performers told the story, and the Orchestra played the music. The show was a true success. Next the Orchestra will be heading to Carnegie Hall in March. The SRHS Foundation, through Panther Projects and also Schools Rule, was able to assist with all the endeavors listed above. Schools Rule, established by Sonoma County Office of Education, awarded the SRHS Foundation \$3,571.20 in September 2024 to be utilized in several areas, one of them being for the Arts! (See picture from awards ceremony)

Since the last newsletter we added a new Board Member, Dave Brown from the class of 1980. Dave brings much needed investment expertise to the Board.

The annual campaign was a true success this year, ONE THOUSAND PANTHERS increased by \$12,000 over the prior year, due in part to our amazing alumni, supporters and friends. We also received directed funds for various Departments at SRHS.

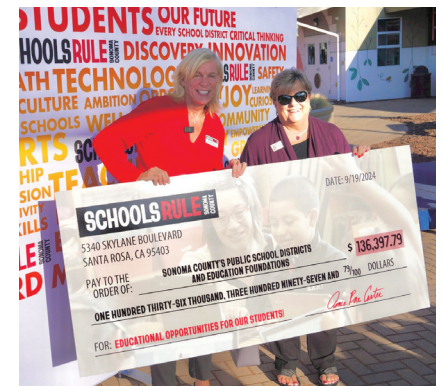
The first two months of the New Year the Foundation Board has been busy attending Santa Rosa City Schools Board meetings, and “Town Halls” on the various high school campuses. Santa Rosa City Schools is facing an estimated \$20M deficit, and knew it would have to

close several schools. Needless to say it, has been a rollercoaster for the staff, students, parents and the Foundation. The final decision is that SRHS will become one of the new 7 through 12 campuses, with just over 2000 students!

The Foundation plans to support the campus and ensure that the incoming 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders feel welcome! We will also commit to help wherever possible as it will take a community to make this new endeavor a success.

On Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup> we will have our 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Polenta Feed, which is sure to be a sellout of 450 Alumni, friends and supporters. A few teases: we have a Taylor Swift autographed guitar and pre-season 49er tickets to name a few items for the Live Auction! We will also have some amazing wines and special items from SRHS Woodshop on the silent auction. We hope to see everyone there!

“Once a Panther, Always a Panther”



Schools Rule First Awards Ceremony  
Amy Carter, Superintendent,  
Mary Beseda, SRHSF President

## 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](mailto:newsletter@srhsf.org).

## SRHS Foundation Directors

- Monica Baldenegro '95
- Mary Orsborn Beseda '74 President
- David Brown '80
- Mike Bucchianeri '71
- Don Cambou '64 Newsletter Editor
- John Coddling '82
- Paddy Robotham Coreris '66 Secretary
- \* Mike Daniels '59
- \* Donna Dennes Doyle '67
- Kristine Erken, Former SRHS Counselor
- Paulette Guaspari Gomes '68
- Veronica Stoops Haas '69
- Art Horner, Retired SRHS Teacher
- Alana Kelly '78
- Rhonda Rehm Loop '73 Treasurer
- Brian Mecchi '77 Corresponding Secretary
- Tony Negri, Retired SRHS Principal
- Nadine Wiggins Smedshammer '59
- Ilona Mayer Williams '64

\* Founding Director

most expensive per student of the five high schools. And money was on the SCAC and School Board members' minds. (Further research of SRCS's own 2024-2025 files indicated that SRHS was in fact the *third* most expensive school per student, after Montgomery and Elsie Allen. But, because of its large number of students, SRHS was the most expensive *campus* to run.)

Even the SRHS Foundation, with its unrivaled \$7 million endowment, couldn't be counted on to change the SCAC's and the School Board's decisions. But the Foundation kept the pressure on with a full page ad in the Press Democrat titled "Save Santa Rosa High School," and a steady stream of pro SRHS letters to the District Board. No other school alumni association could match our Foundation's muscle. SRHS faculty and students made their opinions known with letters, by attending the meetings, and even by orchestrating demonstrations. The faculties and students of the other Santa Rosa high schools did the same.

The public meetings were often disorganized, passionate, and messy. Some attendees were angry that the School Board seemed to wait so long to address an obvious problem. Others even questioned the whole idea of shutting *any* schools to save money. Despite the SCAC and School Board efforts to keep the meetings public, many in attendance found the proceedings to be somewhat too general or opaque, especially in regard to financial allocations.

Four newly elected School Board members, three of them sworn in on December 18, 2024, seemed more willing to explore other options. Through the meetings, the SCAC started to develop scenarios beyond the 3-1-1 plan. One option included closing all middle schools and turning elementary schools into K through 8th grade schools. Another option included closing all middle schools and making high schools 7th through 12th grade schools. Another strong sentiment started to emerge as well: Don't close *any* of the District's five public high schools. As Foundation founding member and three decade teacher at SRHS Mike Daniels put it "High school years are an especially formative time in a young person's development: physical maturation, career direction, understanding of behavioral boundaries and of inherent abilities, all play a role. This is when life-long friendships are formed, values emerge and youth fades as adulthood beckons... A high school student today has struggled through destructive fires and a deadly pandemic and the failures of distance learning. That student is not at all like the pre-fire and pre-Covid student."

On February 5th, the District Board held a public meeting to reveal and discuss the SCAC's recommendations. Elsie Allen, in southwest Santa Rosa, and Montgomery, in east central Santa Rosa scored the lowest on SCAC's rating system. At that meeting some members of the School Board indicated that they would like to see all five of the public high schools remain open. The District Board planned to make its final decisions on February 19th. But then the School Board called an "emergency meeting" on February 7. Some members wanted to revisit the idea of possibly closing Santa Rosa High – remember that that erroneous perception that SRHS was the most expensive per student to operate? One Board Member even suggested that, if closed, SRHS might make a fine School District event center. That meeting's direction prompted more letters, more protests, and, yes, another meeting on February 12.

February 19 had long been the date on which the School Board would announce its final decisions. The viewing gallery at City Hall was packed. Hundreds of other parents, teachers, and students circulated outside. The crowd was anxious and noisy, but peaceful. At the end of a grueling six hour meeting, the School Board had only come to a decision on the closure of three elementary schools: Brook Hill and Albert Biella would close by June of this year. Steele Lane would close by June of 2026. Elsie Allen High School appeared to be the high school on the chopping block, but a deadlocked Board couldn't come to that decision. Half of the Board wanted *all* the high schools to remain open. Which led to... another meeting.

On a hastily scheduled February 21 meeting, the small room at Lewis Early Learning Academy was packed with 77 attendees, and again a larger crowd of parents, students and teachers waited outside. At 3 pm Board President Roxanne McNally announced to groans from the attendees that public comment would be limited to 20 minutes - total. After that short session, the School Board presented a *new* plan – one that had not been specifically discussed in any of the previous public meetings. Board member, Jeremy De La Torre, called the updated plan an "11th and half hour plan." After a contentious School Board discussion among the members themselves, the Board moved to approve the new plan by a 5-1 vote.

- Two elementary schools, Brook Hill and Albert Biella, will close at the end of this school year. Steele Lane will close in 2026 at the end of the next school year.

*Continued on page 4*

- Two middle schools, Santa Rosa Middle School and Herbert Slater Middle School, will close at the end of this school year. Hilliard Comstock Middle School will close in 2026, at the end of the next school year.
- Santa Rosa High will absorb the Santa Rosa Middle School students and new seventh graders from neighboring elementary schools, becoming a 7-12 grade high campus this coming fall.
- Montgomery High School will absorb the Herbert Slater Middle School students and new seventh graders from neighboring elementary schools, becoming another 7-12 grade campus this coming fall.
- Piner High School, after taking a year to improve its capacity, will absorb the Hilliard Comstock Middle School students, and new seventh graders from neighboring elementary schools, in the fall of 2026.
- All five public high schools will survive, at least through the next school year. Elsie Allen will become a magnet type school with a new “project based learning and experimental learning” offering, in the hope that it can attract more students.

The new plan is projected to save the School District at least \$6.6 million and at most \$8.6 million next fiscal year, assuming the District can negotiate successfully with the Santa Rosa Teachers Association. And the new plan should save considerably more the year after next, with the closure of Hilliard Comstock Middle School and Steele Lane elementary school. **Note that next school year’s savings will still be well under the yearly \$12 million the School Board had hoped to save and the following year’s savings *might* also be under the \$12 million. The District is already in what’s known as a “qualified certification” from the state of California. If the District receives a “negative” or “qualified” certification three budget cycles in a row, the state *could* declare the District insolvent and take over its duties.**

The quick, obvious solution is more staff cuts. At a February 27 meeting, the School Board voted to send layoff notices to 300 – yes, 300 – Santa Rosa City School teachers and staff informing them that they’ll be laid off, or have their hours reduced. Santa Rosa Teachers Association President Kathryn Howell remarked, “We’re losing counselors, we’re losing family engagement facilitators, we’re losing possibly up to 60 elementary teachers, which boggles the mind – at the very moment when we are throwing our students into turmoil.” (State

law requires that teachers must be notified of any layoffs by March 15, somewhat forcing the School Board’s hand.) Those layoffs would represent savings of over \$21 million a year. With the closures, that’s far more than the District’s goal of \$20 million total savings each year. So the Board hopes to rehire almost half of those 300 – if they’ll even want to be rehired.

The new plan also calls for an extensive remapping of the District’s attendance boundary lines to accommodate all its changes. That remains a difficult “work in progress.”

For the Santa Rosa High campus, the new plan means an increase from over 1600 students this school year to over 2000 students next school year. Just released plans have the middle schoolers taking all, or nearly all, of their classes in Desoto Hall, but sharing many of the other campus facilities.

Will SRHS ultimately survive? This writer thinks so. Its unique attributes, powerful Foundation, and hundred and fifty year history are unmatched by any other high school in this District.

But as I complete this article, I do so with the growing sense that this school closure drama is very far from over.

Essentially, the District is trying to quickly restructure the entire Santa Rosa Public School System. A huge number of problems await solutions.

*Editor’s note: I hope this article has given you an overall understanding of this closure crisis. But the crisis has now become a fast moving story. Too fast for a quarterly newsletter like this one. If you want more up to date information, try the Press Democrat. If you aren’t a subscriber, try any branch of the Sonoma County Library System – [sonomalibrary.org](http://sonomalibrary.org) -- for online access to day late PD text articles. The PD has two reporters working continuously on the closure story.*



*Photo by Todd Beseda*

# CHOIR SINGS AT WARRIORS GAME

By Marla Tusa, Choir Leader  
SRHS Teacher in Visual and Performing Arts

In early September, an ArtQuest parent, Sean Kaslar, had an idea ... would I be interested in having my choir sing the National Anthem before a Golden State Warriors game at the Chase Center this season — I very enthusiastically said “YES!” We sent in an audition video and the Warriors Front Office asked us to pick some home games that worked for our schedule. We agreed upon the Dec. 23, 2024 game vs. the Indiana Pacers. We were given the chance to purchase tickets in a designated section before the tickets went on sale for the public. Thirty singers then were invited to purchase tickets to the game... The SRHS Foundation graciously donated \$2000 towards the ticket purchases, and the Choral Student Union (the student-run, Associated Student Body club) raised funds through a bake sale to cover the rest. The SRHS Choral Boosters (the non-profit 501c3 organization that supports all choral activities at SRHS) helped pay for a limousine bus to take us to and from the event and a choir parent drove their 12 passenger van as well.

Once at the Chase Center, we were escorted “back stage” for our sound check. The singers have been singing the National Anthem at Panther Football games on Nevers Field for the past few years, but this crowd would be over ten times as large. Watching the looks on the faces of the students as we walked onto the court in that beautiful arena was one of the best moments of my year! After our sound check we were escorted behind the court where we waited for tip off. We were all star struck as we watched the players warm up. And as we warmed up backstage, the Indiana Pacers gave us a round of applause, and the Warriors



*Choir on one of 1,100 LCD monitors at Chase Center*

cheerleaders took photos with us. At 6:50pm, we were escorted back onto the court where we sang our National Anthem for a crowd of over 18,000 people. After the thunderous cheers at the end of the anthem, we took our seats to watch the game. The entire experience was wonderful — I checked off a personal bucket list item with that performance! I can’t thank Sean Kaslar enough for connecting us with this gig that my singers will remember for their entire lives. Go Panthers!

*Editor’s note: If you’d like to watch the video of the Choir’s performance at the Chase Center, go to Mrs. Tusa’s choir website: <https://sites.google.com/srhc.k12.ca.us/srhschoir/field-trips>*

*Warning! Goosebumps may incur.*



*Hangin’ with the Warrior Dance Team*

# CONTRIBUTIONS & MEMBERSHIP NEWS

By Paulette Guaspari Gomes '68 and Brian Mecchi '77

## WINTER 2025

For the period October 2024 through February 2025 the Foundation welcomed 21 new members, 54 renewing members and 1 lifetime member. Membership dues total \$ 7,505.00 for this period. Total active membership in the Foundation now stands at 765. We continue to actively contact members regarding upcoming renewals.

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

Robert Brown '64	Larry '62/Pat Hartley	Cynthia Spalding Norman '57
Robert Bryan '52	Nora Petty Hernandez '78	Steve '60/Elaine Olson
Robert/Kim Carpenter '77 Agrella	Beverly Chiappuzzo Jensen '57	Wendy Oto-Nacol - Parent
Hugh Cambra, Jr '68	Candace Pintane Jones '70	John '69/Charla Fravel '73 Paine
Class of 1952	Jim '66/Diane Dennes '67 Keegan	Charles W. Proses '50
Class of 1959	William Kennish '67	Diane Rubattino '54
Paddy Robotham Coreris '66	Lulu Butcher Kistner '57	Charmain Shimetz - Parent
Rick Delanty '69	Linda Macy '63	Honora Bessone Shipe '64
Stacy Stark Dunn '86	Janis Mc Murtry Martin '65	Don '63/Susan Popovich '64 Silverek
Robert Fabela '83	Don/Judy Magers Mills '59	Kaaren Conkling Spitzley '58
Joseph Fairbanks '57	Lucille Moholt-Siebert 2015	Marilyn Michetti Walker '66
William Firestone '64	Linda Joost Mori '61	Marianne Scheffler Wurnitsch '53
Sally Weeks Gard '57	Gwen Nicholson Neary '65	Patricia Walker Yeckel '66
Madeline Getts - Parent		

## LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

Brent '77/Lyndy Couzens '78 Durling

## NEW MEMBERSHIP

Mark Aronoff - Friend	Steve Lazzini '76	Michael Romero 2009
Donna Becchetti '84	Cindy Piccola Lopiccolo-Giles '85	David/Elizabeth Saltzman - Parents
Michelle Lucchesi Dell '85	Dennis/Robin King Magee '76	Mary Fostine Schreiber '66
Rebecca Guerin '76	Joan Finley Mc Cue '55	Diane Gabriel Siemer '76
Gail Bartlett Hirsch '77	Lynn/Billie Meister - Friends	Rob Testorelli '74
Harry Kniffin '64	Derek Moeller 2003	William '63/Paula Waters
Stanley Laughlin '75	Gary Chenoweth Pirkig '69	Donna Larsen Weaver '71

## ORGANIZATION DONATIONS

Benevity	United Way California Capital Region	United Way of the Wine Country
Scrip - Oliver's Market		

## SEAT PLAQUE

Barri Sisters	Derek Joseph Moeller 2003	Kris Sundquist '68
Janet 1970 Benita 1974	Moeller Electric	Kathy Sundquist Weed '70

**HAVE YOU INCLUDED THE FOUNDATION IN YOUR ESTATE PLAN?**

# MEMORIAL & SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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

## DIRECTED: AGRICULTURE DEPT

Ed Hansen '57

## DIRECTED: BASEBALL

Scott Beseda '72

Dan Kelly '59

## DIRECTED: CROSS COUNTRY

Ballo Family

## DIRECTED: INDUSTRIAL ARTS

Stephen Irish '69

## DIRECTED: MUSIC DEPT

Class of 1989

Noreen Knox Gemini '59

Bud Gerhardt '52

Anthony Martin '64

Jim Nelson '61

Frank Kibbish Jr. '70 – for Carnegie Hall trip

## DIRECTED: RENEWABLE ENERGY/ GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Rebecca Evert - Friend

Kevin Van Laeken/Amy Cambou - Friends

## DIRECTED: WOOD SHOP

Terry Tauzer Smith '75

## BEVERLY DALBY ALEXANDER '45

Martha Comstock Keegan '47

Stephen Olsen '61

## JOHN BRIBIESCAS '66 DIRECTED: ENGLISH DEPT

Carol Brown Bribiescas – Friend

## ROBERT "BROWNIE" BROWN '64 DIRECTED: BASEBALL

Jan Brown - Friend

## PEGGY IRISH CALL '41

Eleanor Giusto Griffin '45

## CAROL WHARTON CARRILLO '63

Art Valencia '59

## JOAN POMEROY CONNOR DIRECTED: SYMPHONIC BAND

Bonnie Panizzera '63

## MICHAEL "MIKE" GRACE '65

Charles Beck '64

Rick '67/Rocky Call

Mike Daniels '59/Penny Hastings '59

Bob/Donna Dennes '67 Doyle

Gina Lucchesi '89

Marioni Family - Friends

Ann Moscardini '63

Dan Newell '64

Art Valencia '59

Lee/Ilona Mayer '64 Williams

Denny '61/Robin Yaeger

## RUTH TAYLOR HAUSCHILDT '58

Ward '58/Pat Townsend '59 Thompson

## IN HONOR OF THE CLASS OF 1961

Charles Johnson '61

## MARIE BRIDGES LASKELLE '47

Martha Comstock Keegan '47

## SHARI LUCAS '80

Lori Lapham '80

## DARRELL MAXWELL '79 DIRECTED: ART DEPT

Kathleen Murray – Friend

## DARRELL MAXWELL '79 DIRECTED: MUSIC DEPT

Jeanne Speeg - Friend

## NANCY MAIN MC NEILL '52

Marshall Linthwaite '52

## BRUCE MECCHI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Forestry Crab Feed – Friends

Brian Mecchi '77

Yvonne Papeman – Friend

## DANNY MENDOZA '64

Charles Beck '64

## RONALD LEROY POMEROY '56 DIRECTED: SYMPHONIC BAND

Bonnie Panizzera '63

## BERTA WIGGINS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Oren/Nadine Wiggins '59 Smedshammer

## ROBERT "BOBBY" YATES '61

Janice Yates – Friend

## DAVE ZUMWALT '57

Ward '58/Pat Townsend '59 Thompson



## In Memoriam Winter '25

Barbara Pelletti Guidici	1945	Earl Moody	1958
Alice Mayer Stewart	1946	M. Rebecca Montano	1958
Marie Bridges Laskelle	1947	Lynn Macpherson Mott	1958
Robert Bryan	1952	Robert Nelson	1958
Carol Hassett Stilwell	1954	William Shields	1958
Elmer Barber	1955	Patrick White	1958
Ronald Earl Donner	1956	Frances Mazzoni	1960
Jack Girolo	1956	Richard Allen Pitkin	1961
Mary Mizell Anderson	1956	Ellen Richardson Epperson	1963
Raymond Jerrigan Spedoni	1956	Linda Sue Macy	1963
Ellen Niles Dhisley	1956	James William Tullos	1966
Ted Rodriguez	1956	Robert Edwards	1968
Roger Charles Guffee	1957	Sandra Borgzinner Norgrove	1968
Judith Harper Radley	1957	Eldean Burke Sullivan	1968
David Edwin Zumwalt	1957	Steve Clem	1970
Kenneth Byman	1958	Timothy Lawrence Yates	1976
Ronald Dickens	1958	Darrell Roy Maxwell	1979
Doris Ditty Dees	1958	Shari Lucas	1980
Dennis Dunbar	1958	Joanie Pomeroy Conner	1982
Ruth Taylor Hauschildt	1958	Kevin LeRoy King	1982
Shirley Scherrill Hurley	1958	Larry Broderick	1984
Jerry James	1958	Amy Baghdadi Weitzenberg	1990
Alzina Wynant Ferguson-	1958	Andrew Gonzalez	2012
Morris Lane			

## POLENTA FEED NUMBER 28 COMING UP

This year's annual Polenta Feed will be held on **Friday, April 25, 2025** at the Santa Rosa Veteran's Memorial Building. The social hour begins at 5:30 pm with dinner at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$45.00 for Foundation members and \$50.00 for non members. **ADULTS ONLY.**

Tickets went on sale January 15th and were available for Foundation members only until March 1st. Now tickets are available to *all* supporters of SRHS. We will stop selling tickets on April 15, 2025. Order your tickets by calling the **Pandy Line at 707-571-7747**. Leave your name and phone number and your call will be returned by the following day.



*Polenta Feed, 2024*

Join the fun with other alumni and supporters of SRHS. You won't want to miss this fantastic event!

**“Once a Panther,  
Always a  
Panther!”**

## PANTHER ATHLETIC CLUB SCORES FOR SRHS TEAMS

Santa Rosa High School community members came together in Santa Rosa Oct. 12 to raise money for the school's athletic programs.

The third annual Panthers & Pinot event was hosted by the Panther Athletic Club (PAC), a volunteer-run booster program, and took place at The Bird restaurant.

The evening featured hors d'oeuvres, pizza, wine pairings, beer, an auction and live music by Billy Kingsborough, front man of the local rock band Kingsborough.

Some popular auction items included local wine tastings, beer from local breweries and a variety of themed gift baskets, according to Bryan Price, a teacher and co-athletic director at the high school.

The \$100-a-person gathering raised over \$8,000 which has gone into the PAC General Fund. The Fund supports individual teams in a variety of ways. Some potential future purchases could include a new basketball/volleyball scorer's table, wrestling mats, and soccer dugouts.

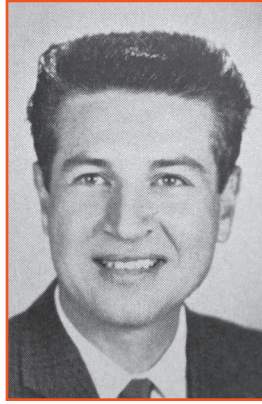
Details and planning for this year's PAC fundraiser are underway with information to come shortly.



## “MR. B”: A REMEMBRANCE

Marcia Witte Raggio '67

Bonaccorso was a mouthful, so we just called him “Mr. B.” Mr. B was the drama teacher at Santa Rosa High School for many years and didn’t mind his name being shortened to something more manageable for the kids who grew to trust and admire him. While he had some by-the-book approaches to teaching acting, directing, makeup artistry, and stage managing, with everything he did, he brought an innate gentleness to his interactions with students. He would never chide or demean anyone. Being unkind just wasn’t in him.



Mr. Bonaccorso

From junior high, we entered high school as a tight-knit group of thespians, but we weren’t exactly sure what that word meant. We were awed by the confidence of the juniors and seniors in drama, since under pressure, they could deliver their lines in flawless recitations of Gunga Din or the closing argument of Atticus Finch. Observing the model set by Mr. B, we offered critiques in a supportive way for anyone willing to put their performance neck on the line.

We met each day in a room with a rectangular cut out formed by the portico at the front of the building. We could look out at the Senior Steps and deliver unsolicited soliloquies on our own stage. As we prepared for the school’s annual spring play, we sat at a large, rectangular table at the back of the room as Mr. B carefully explained an activity known as a “table read.” It was during this time that we assigned parts and planned stage movements.

Mr. B cast Dave Rudig and me in *Moony’s Kid Don’t Cry*, a 1941 one-act play by Tennessee Williams. The play opens on a bickering couple whose dialogue lamented their better days and one-time dreams, accusing each other of being the cause for how lousy things turned out. Mr. B entered our play in a drama contest at Cabrillo College in Aptos. We won honorable mention among sixteen competing high schools along with Best Actor and Actress awards that year.

Our spring production was Thornton Wilder’s, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, a 1942 Pulitzer Prize winning play. I played Gladys, the daughter of George and Maggie Antrobus. This dark, allegorical comedy was about a family who represented aspects of the human condition capable of both goodness and chaos.

In our senior year, I approached Mr. B with a wish for a different drama experience. I wanted to direct. He gave me the task of directing our spring play, *The Scarecrow*, a 1908 dark fantasy in which a scarecrow is brought to life as a man. That year, I rarely made it to school during the

day, but Mr. B allowed me to come to direct in the evening where, with him being always nearby, I learned to stage a story and add life to its characters.

On a dark night in October of 1966, I was walking home from a grocery store when I was assaulted by a man who was lying in wait near my home. That incident left me extremely fearful and unwilling to be alone. After rehearsal one night, Mr. B gave me a ride home, but when we got there all the lights were off since my parents decided to go out

for the evening. I simply couldn’t make myself go into the house. Mr. B and I talked for a long time in his car when I explained why I couldn’t go into that dark place. With his characteristic compassion and not knowing where to turn, he took me to his home where we spent the next two hours talking with his wife and son until my parents returned home. The next day, Mr. B made arrangements for me to see the school psychologist.

We often say that there was that one teacher who had a huge influence on our young lives. Mr. B was that teacher for me. He believed in me, gave me opportunities in the high school drama world, and opened my eyes to humanity’s bigger picture. I will never forget his kindness as he understood and accepted my goals and fears. He created a safe place for me, in so many ways. I never got to thank him for all he did for me, so wherever you are in the universe, Mr. B, “break a leg.”

### CLASS OF '65 GEARS UP FOR 60TH REUNION

#### Grad Night

WHO? Just Grads

WHERE? BJ's in Coddington

WHEN? August 1, 5-9 pm

HOW MUCH? 15 bucks

#### 60th Reunion Dinner

WHO? Grads and significant others

WHERE? The Oakmont Saddle Club

WHEN? August 2, 2025, at 5 pm

HOW MUCH? \$75 per person. Top of the line buffet dinner featuring flat iron steak and salmon entrees  
Vic Trione '65 is donating the wine.

Details should arrive via mail to class grads in early March.

For more information, contact Rosie London at [rosielondon@comcast.net](mailto:rosielondon@comcast.net), or call her mobile number: 707-239-1684

# REMEMBER WHEN: 1985

by Rick Blaine

It was good to be a Santa Rosa High School senior in 1985. Yes, it was good to be alive in '85. We sure had fun in those golden times. We made sure of that just as our teachers (What a great faculty!) made sure we learned what we needed. Our class has done well since.

We weren't worried about a war in '85, though the Cold War between the US and the USSR was still pretty hot. Reagan and Gorbachev met that year to try to turn down the heat. People were starving in Africa, so events like Live Aid Concerts were held to raise money. We helped and we felt better.

Computers were becoming common. An Apple McIntosh would set you back about \$2500 (over \$7,000 today), so they were out of reach except for a special few. Did we call them nerds? We must have. "Revenge of the Nerds" was a popular movie.

Forty years ago, gas was \$1.09, a stamp 22 cents. The cost of housing wasn't really in our mindset yet, but monthly rent was around \$300 and a house cost about \$90,000. That was the year of Madonna and New Coke. One succeeded and the other failed big time. Remember Madonna's "Like a Virgin?"

We watched lots of cartoons on TV: the Cosby Show, Family Ties, Cheers and Monday Night Football. Back to the Future was the big hit at the movies. The Village Drive In, the Passion Pit, kept many of us occupied on the weekends. We went to the UA6 and the Varsity Theatre in Petaluma. Chicken Fried comes to mind but I can't remember why.

We were busy on campus too. We hung out on the Quad, on the grassy knoll and the benches by the Snack Bar and listened to music on loudspeakers. The girls' soccer team, the first for SRHS, won the NBL and the NCS that year. The boys' baseball team walked off the diamond to protest the coach, but the vocal music students adored their teacher. The excellent drama production "Indians" enjoyed standing ovations and won awards in competition. That was really great!

Fun? Yes, we had lots, some of it caused some trouble. Three boys in a rally that year did something that offended the administration. As a result, they were suspended three days. One of those days they went to San Francisco where they mailed a post card to the administration. "Wish you



*Viking Busters in action*

were here" or "Thinking of you" or something like that. Remember the fish emulsion in the Main Building? It stunk up both floors. I wish I knew who was responsible.

Viking Busters. Talk about big doin's! That really was the biggest of big deals! Those girls (I do know who they are) papered the whole town with the photo ala "Ghost Busters," another popular 1984 movie. One of those girls had a milkshake dumped on her head during a rally. She took it well.

Remember the rubber chicken scandal? It was at a basketball game with Montgomery, I think. An administrator removed the folks responsible for throwing the fowl, but they came back in the gym's side door. Administrator busters they were.

Maybe on days too nice to sit in a classroom, you might have gone to the river or to the ocean. It was a matter of preference, but Salmon Creek, Hacienda and Fitch Mountain were popular spots.

Hang out spots? We had plenty—Lyon's, Santa Rosa Bar and Grill, and of course Red Barn for burgers and Perry's Deli for sandwiches. We bowled at Holiday Bowl.

Did you go on the Disneyland trip? That was a party for both seniors and faculty chaperones. Much is better left unsaid about that. And probably about the Velvet Turtle on graduation night.

Next time I see you, let's talk about those good times. Yes, 1985 was the best of times for me. I hope it was for you.



# ONE THOUSAND PANTHERS

*Donations fiscal year 2024/2025 ■ January 31, 2025*  
*Thank you for your generous donations!*

Art & Andi Gambini (11) Art Gambini 1968 & Andi, In Memory of Larry Sani 1937

Art & Andi Gambini (11) Art Gambini 1968 & Andi, in Memory of Steve Orsborn 1968

Art & Andi Gambini (11) Art Gambini 1968, Andi and Kevin 2001, In Memory of Rae Gambini 1937

Art & Andi Gambini (11) Art Gambini 1968, Andi, In Memory of Dan Bianchini 1969

Robert 1958 and Marci Tarleton 1967 Jenkins (2)

Maridee Noonan 1976 (1)

James G. Laier Jr. 1958 (5)

Gail Rocco Dutton 1962 In memory of Warren Dutton Jr. 1962 (1)

Bob 1961 and Anna Marie Proctor

Elaine Rasmussen Thompson 1958 and Jim Thompson in Memory of Ray Rasmussen 1961

Phyllis Boutelle Bogart '51, Jan Witte Spaulding '57, Patricia Wirt Boutelle '63, & Marcia Witte Raggio '67 in Memory of Merrilyn "Lynn" Witte Cassil '56, Cameron Boutelle '62 & Timothy Witte '64

Bill & Suzie Simas Friedman 1966 (8)

Larry Weese 1964 (30)

Anonymous Donor #3451 (18)

A.James Robertson II 1955

Tad Shapiro 1973

Richard Bastoni 1957 (4)

Dennis & Ruth McGill 1967

Virginia Grossi Templeton 1963 (3)

Mark A. Walsvick 1973 In memory of Beverly Dalby Alexander '45

Fred Biagi 1967 (1)

Clarke Holland 1970

Samuel L. & Candace Pintane 1970 Jones (2)

Todd 1973 & Mary Orsborn 1974

Beseda In memory of three Albany Drive BFF's Alma DeMaria Orsborn 1943, Aileen Michetti Bianchini 1943, & Norma Rochetti Malone 1941

Alana Kelly 1978 (14)

Terri Traloggen Clark In Honor of Caleb Logue 2020, John William Logue 2022, & Elle Marie Logue 2026

Charles J Beck 1964 In memory of Harry & Trudy Beck (1)

Rosemary Tilson DeMarco 1949 In memory of David Devoto '49

John Ammirati 1968 & Erika Ammirati

Ann Moscardini In memory of Spirito Falco '41 & Pete Falco '62

Mark 1967 & Kathy Trione (9)

Bruce & Debra Agee Burton, Parents in honor of Rachel Burton '98 & Scott Burton "2008 (1)

Rick 1968 & Paulette Guaspari 1968 Gomes

Jack Orme 1966 & Stacey Orme # (1)

Jim Streeter 1976 (2)

David C.1969 & Kathleen E Faris (2)

Stephanie Lowry Nacouzi 1977 (2)

Bonnie Panizzera 1963 (3)

Mike & Louise Liewald 1970 (1)

Dennis 1957 & Arlene Hareland 1960 Petersen (1)

Wes 1985 and Carol Langford 1985 Daniels # (2)

*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.*

*#Indicates Front Sign Plaque*

**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 323 donors (many with multiple donations)**

**WITH \$646,888.55 IN THE FUND**

**JOIN US!**

Call the Pandy Line (707-571-7747) or visit us online at [www.SRHSF.org](http://www.SRHSF.org) for assistance, or email us direct at [donations@srhsf.org](mailto:donations@srhsf.org).

Donations 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!**



[www.srhsf.org](http://www.srhsf.org)



Winter 2025



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

Name (please print) Maiden Name Spouse's Name
Address City State Zip
Home Phone Cell Phone Email
Preferred Method to receive mail & Newsletter: [ ] Email [ ] U.S. Mail
SRHS Grad Year Spouse SRHS Grad Year [ ] SRHS Staff
[ ] SRHS Friend [ ] Parent/Grandparent (circle one): Grad Year of Student(s)

Membership Fee: [ ] \$25 ~ 1 year [ ] \$45 ~ 2 years [ ] \$60 ~ 3 years [ ] \$500 ~ Lifetime
Annual Fund Campaign Contribution: Please accept my gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ for: [ ] General unrestricted gift
[ ] Directed gift for \_\_\_\_\_ (Department or Program) [ ] Gift in honor/memory of \_\_\_\_\_ (circle one)
Join One Thousand Panthers: [ ] \$1,000 or more [ ] \$500 ~ 2 years [ ] \$250 ~ 4 years [ ] \$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.srhhsf.org. For more information, please call the Pandey Line at (707) 571-SRHS (7747) OR email us at: info@srhhsf.org. Tax ID #68-0195375 (for a gift of Marketable Securities, please contact us for more information.) Remember... Once A Panther, Always a Panther!