

Oak Views

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**. BRING IN
THOSE
Fresh and
Easy
receipts!!!!**

And We're Off!

The year is off to a great beginning. Students and staff got right to work on day one and have already made it half-way through first quarter. So many credits already earned!

Our current student count is a bit low at 35, but we are growing, having added several students since opening day. That gives us room for a couple of new students, but we're not at maximum capacity.

Our senior class of 17 students makes up almost half of our student body and includes third and second year students, new students, and a fifth year senior!

This year we welcome a



Above, returning junior Shelby Storace and new senior Amanda Martin look forward to their first day of the school year.

new counselor, Mr. Jeremy Rogers. He comes to us with several years of experience from the Simi Valley district. He will be working half-time at OVHS (all day Wednesday and Thursday and half-day Friday) and half-time at MCMS.

New this year is our online series of courses.

During sixth period, students will take classes ranging from Computer Literacy to Fine Arts in Ms. Allen's class. The courses are self-paced and designed to aid students in credit recovery.

See pages 8/9 for more pictures of the first day.

Fresh and Easy — Our Community Partner

Our local Fresh and Easy is partnering with OVHS to help us raise funds. For every receipt of \$20 or over from their store that is turned in to OVHS, F & E will give the school \$1. Ms. Allen goes there a couple of times a week and has

already turned in several! Please have your son or daughter bring the receipts in — collect them from friends and family as well — so we can keep earning!

We need a parent to coordinate our night of bagging

groceries (which also brings in the largest amount of money). Contact Ms. Allen if you would like to participate or organize —sallen@oakparkusd.org.

Principal's Corner

What a great start to our school year! We had a fantastic Back To School Night with 80% of our parents in attendance. We cannot get the job done without informed and involved parents that share our excitement, hope and dreams for providing an exemplary program for all of our students. I hope to meet all of our parents and include each of you in our learning community and school family.

Kudos to our site council parents for stepping forward to serve Oak View High School: Mrs. Kay Fields, Mrs. Charmaine Rizzo, Mrs. Jody Melia, Mrs. Denise Keane and Mrs. Julie, alumni parent/community representative. Welcome and thank you.

Look for the first progress reports arriving in the mail soon.

Challenges remain and we are hard at work to reinforce the positives for our students. As you browse through this newsletter, you will find pictures and stories that chronicle success in academic achievement, as well as updates about individual students that are "stepping up" in character. We are really enjoying the celebration of success as we share in "Triple A" award

presentations and our "Step UP" awards for character development.

Congratulations to our ASB "site council" students for this school year: Shannon Moss, Liz Cruz, Mike Bilodeau, Claudio Renyer, Jack Hannah, Amanda Martin, Katie Rytterager-Nickel and Nick Rossiter. Each of you are student leaders for OVHS.

Make no mistake: Our students know their achievement is linked to our willingness and ability to support them when they need it. I am so proud of our teachers and staff at Oak View because students know that our teachers and staff are "for them." They can sense it. They can feel it. Keep

up the great and important work.

I believe that all of our students can, and will, achieve academic success and will become productive and responsible citizens. We

will work very hard to foster a culture of high expectations that supports the development of life-long learners. We will talk about teaching and learning every day. Students will be involved in decision-making to make our school even better. Students will have multiple opportunities to succeed and to meet their individualized, personal and school goals.



The journey of our new school year is underway. Many of our students are on such a path, from "where am I going" to "I am traveling far," on the odyssey from "who am I" to "I am an educated, talented, worthwhile person." We are very pleased with the students attending our first Clean Bowling Teen trip on Friday, September 30th. Watch for pics in our next issue of *Oak Views*. Also, we are looking forward to our School Wide BarBQ on Monday, October 31st at 11:30 AM. Parents are welcome to join us!

It is my hope that each of our students develops maturity, realizes their talents, and experiences the excitement of learning; and for many, discover heroes and heroines in real life.

Best wishes and success to the Oak View High School Learning Community: students, staff and parents. May we "travel far...."

Finally, thanks to Ms. Editor, Susan Allen. I can't wait to share this edition of *Oak Views* with everyone!

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Alumni Roundup

Many of last year's graduates have come to visit and are attending Moorpark Community College, including: Doran Arad, Eric Corleto, Jenna Hamilton, Jenny Kaidin, Elad Shapan, Tanner Klein, Jack Sorfazian, Desi Dusablon, and Chris Weiner. We look forward to continuing to hear of their success with higher education.

Jack Sorfazian worked with the great financial aid office workers at MCC to

get himself thousands of dollars in grants that will fund his education for years to come.

Emily Gilchrist spent time in New York this summer and then did mission work for her church. She will go to college when she is finished.

Murtaza Moiz ('06) is beginning his junior year at UC Riverside after working his way through his first two years at a community college. He was one of the head organizers of the student protest of tuition hikes in Sacramento last year.

At right, a happy Hollie Lynch shows off her diploma — earned after completing her last math credits over the summer and early fall. Way to go, Hollie!



Messages from our Superintendent and School Board President

It's hard to believe that we are one month into the new school year. It has been a terrific start for our schools with many accomplishments to celebrate already. While we opened short on enrollment, we have made up for much of that in the last few weeks. We anticipated, budgeted, and staffed for 4250 students K-12, and we now have 4200, so we are short about 50 students. We will most likely continue to gain students over the course of the school year, so this is less of a budgetary concern than it was initially. Of course, any loss of revenues is a concern in these difficult times for schools.

You may have seen my emails touting our top rankings on the state API (Academic Performance Index). Our District score of 918 places us in the top 1% of school districts in California. Oak Park High School average SAT scores rose by 43 points to 1778. In the area of reading, which our primary grade teachers assess throughout the year, we showed that over 95% of our K-3 students are reading at or above grade level, including children with special needs.

Class sizes in Oak Park USD remain some of the smallest in the county and state. Averages are as follows (excluding physical education):

K-3	23.8
4-5	32.8
6-8	28.4
9-12	30.5

Thank you in advance for responding positively to the appeal letter from Friends of Oak Park Schools that you will be receiving this month. We are all working hard to ensure that your children receive a world-class education even in the midst of this state budget disaster. **We need your support to make this happen and we need a 100% response from all parents.** I'm sure you will all

give what you can. Many organizations are asking for support in these tough times. Remember, however, that this organization – Oak Park Schools – is the one that is responsible for educating your child and that we can't 'do-over' or make up for a year of missed or substandard learning opportunities. We are asking for your support and commit to deliver quality in return.

THANK YOU!

Dr. Tony Knight, Superintendent

From the OPUSD Board President

Dear Parents and Community Members,

I am very excited to tell you about a new committee currently forming in the school district. It is a Community Outreach Committee with a primary focus of giving back to the Oak Park Community, a community which graciously and generously contributes in many ways to our school district. We have just started brainstorming ideas for ways in which OPUSD can go out and positively influence the larger Oak Park community, how OPUSD can bring those without children in the schools to our schools, and how we can better communicate with the community at large. If you are interested in being a part of this committee please contact us at BLaifman@oakparkusd.org. We welcome your participation and look forward to hearing your ideas.

In my September note I mentioned the work of the Board, as well as District and school site leadership, in regard to the District's moral imperatives and goals. We finalized them at our September board meeting and they are posted on our website. Please visit www.oakparkusd.org and go to "Moral Imperatives" under the "About Us" tab to view this hopefully more useable document as it is the framework for district leadership and guides much of the education that our children will be receiving.

This month's Partner In Education award

went to Jan Rosen, a parent and staff member in the OPUSD. Among other contributions, Jan does an incredible job with coordinating and running registration at MCMS. Please join us in congratulating her with this recognition. I encourage you to nominate those who you see offering their gift of time, ideas and talents purely for the sake of making the school district and the Oak Park community a better place. Nominations can be made by going to the OPUSD website at www.OakParkusd.org and clicking on the "Partner in Education Award" under the "District Office" tab.

Amongst other items of business, at our September Board meeting we held a public hearing and approved the flexibility to transfer otherwise categorical funding to the general fund. With the cuts in state revenue, the state has authorized school districts to use funding which is earmarked for certain purposes to be utilized at the discretion of the local education agencies. While this by no means corrects for the deteriorating budgets that public schools in California are experiencing, it does help to use the funds we have to best educate our children in Oak Park. We also approved the District's unaudited actuals for the fiscal year 2010-2011 and approved a resolution establishing the Gann appropriation limit for fiscal year 2011-2012. Thanks to the generosity of the Parent Teacher Organizations at the respective school sites, we were very happy, appreciative and grateful to be able approve and have full time librarians at each of our elementary schools and Medea Creek. We also held a hearing and approved the sufficiency of textbooks and instructional materials for 2011-2012.

I hope that you and your families have had a good start to the school year.

Barbara Laifman

We Bring Back A Winning Line-Up! — Teaching Staff

Ms. Allen



Ms. Allen is glad to be back at work after a busy summer. She taught summer school and then spent most of August first traveling in Europe, then going on a photo-safari to Tanzania. It was the trip of a lifetime!

In her tenth year at Oak View, Ms. Allen teaches all English classes as well as Consumer Math, Careers, Computers, Yearbook, Stained Glass, and our new online courses. "I love working here because there are so many opportunities for growth and creativity -- for staff as well as students."

Ms. Allen worked as a waitress for seven years to put herself through school at The Evergreen State College where she earned her BA in English and History and her teaching credential. She taught in Washington and Paramount USD in California before taking some time to raise her girls -- Rosie 21 and Sarah 16.

"Every year here is exciting. The best people -- staff, students, and parents -- come through Oak View. Everyone leaves an impression. What will yours be?"

Ms. Cohen



The intrepid adventurer Sharon Cohen has returned safely from her latest sojourn -- to Holland and Belgium this time. While there, she saw all the sights including Bruges and Anne Frank's house

Ms. Cohen appreciates the family atmosphere here at Oak View and has worked at creating it for the past 13 years of her service here. She teaches all the sciences, CAHSEE Math Intervention, Geometry, Design Crafts, and Art History. She has often created specialty classes such as Foods and Marine Science as well.

Ms. Cohen is happily married and has two children, a son who graduated from UCI and a daughter who graduated from CSUN. She also has three beautiful grandchildren, a boy and two girls, and will be glad to show you pictures!

Ms. Cohen graduated from SDSU with a B.S. and her teaching certificate and earned her masters through CSUN. She has worked in both the LA Unified and Santa Ana Unified School Districts before coming to us.

"I look forward to new beginnings and our feeling of family here at Oak View."

Ms. Liepman



Randi Liepman has been at Oak View since 1982! Working here was her first full-time teaching job, and she loved it so much she has never left. She is definitely a people person, having always worked at jobs that required excellent people skills.

She teaches all the social sciences here as well as Algebra, Psychology, Parenting, Evolution of Media, Film, and Current Events. She loves "working with a great group of people! Getting to know the students and becoming like a family." She also loves the beautiful setting where our school is located.

Ms. Liepman is married with two children who attend college. She grew up in Arizona, but attended college at the University of Redlands for her single subject credential, and UCI, for her teaching credential.

This year, her son Chris is attending graduate school in London and her daughter is a senior at UCSB.

"I am excited to get to know the new students and see the new seniors graduate! I'm looking forward to being with my wonderful co-workers. I missed them over the summer."

We Bring Back A Winning Line-Up! — Office Staff

Ms. Roberts



Ms. Roberts is a SoCal native. She graduated from UCSB and has worked in banking and the restaurant business before coming to Oak View. Ms. Roberts lives in Agoura with her husband, dog, and youngest son who attends Agoura High School. The Roberts have four other adult children living in the Southern California area. She began working for OPUSD in 1997 as a guest teacher coordinator and the office manager for summer

I always hope each year will be the best! I'm looking forward to a great year.

school. She came to OVHS in 2002, so this will be her 10th graduation!

Her favorite thing about Oak View is getting to know the students and working with our great staff.

Mr. Tabone



Mr. Tabone was raised in New York and moved to California in 1978. He is married with two lovely daughters and Daisy, his faithful dog. "I have always been in education, and I earned a Masters in Education in Boston, adding a few other credentials along the way, including counseling and special education. "My entire career has been in alternative education—continuation high school, court schools, independent study, and special education. I began my career in 1972." Wow! That's 39 years of experience!

He had a great family vacation in the Sierras fishing, hiking, relaxing, connecting with nature. He continues to work out and jog around the Conejo.

Mr. Tabone is very excited about working with "the fantastic staff in a fantastic school district. He has confidence in the success of all of our students—both new and returning—and the OVHS program, with all that it has to offer. His favorite thing about working at Oak View is the "GOOD FEELING when it **all works**. when the challenge facing a student, our faculty, our school, or internally in myself is successfully overcome or completed. I call this culmination of hard work that results in success 'Making Music'!"

Mr. Rogers



Mr. Rogers is working at three schools all within his regular workweek. He is working at OVHS, OPIS, and Medea Creek Middle School. Each school is different in its own way but all are fun to work at. He worked at Royal High for the past five years and has had a total of ten years in working in K-12 education. He has held the jobs of substitute teacher, PE teacher, and counselor (K-5, Middle, and High School).

Having grown up in Camarillo and attending college at Ventura and UCSB (lived in Isla Vista and on Del Playa) he is familiar with the local schools and communities. He graduated from UCSB with a degree in Sociology and a minor in sports management. He went on to get his Masters degree in Educational counseling. "I love working in education", "I always tell people my job doesn't feel like a real job because I get to work at a school and talk to students every day."

Mr. Rogers has had other recent changes in his life other than starting a new job. His second daughter was born in August, 5 days before he started at OVHS. He currently lives in Camarillo and enjoys being with his family, good food, watching Notre Dame football, and going to the beach whenever possible. Something you don't know about Mr. Rogers is he ran with the bulls (made sure not to get hit) in Pamplona Spain in 2006.

His favorite aspect of working at Oak View is working with the students and being part of the Oak View family. His goal is to help all students reach their academic, social, and career goals.



Oak Park Neighborhood School

for preschoolers & their families

On the Campus of Oak Hills Elementary School

Presents:

A Green Halloween Fundraiser

Wednesday, October 19,
2011

8:00am to 3:00pm

Don't pay retail for those adorable or one-of-a-kind

Help Us Stock Up On Supplies for the Year!!

First, thank you to parents, such as **the Fields**, who have already brought in supplies for our school.

**A special thank you to
the Bilodeau,**

Kovacic,

Keane, Piloto, Gregor-

chuk, and Freeman

families for their

very generous

cash donations!

With our site budget cut to the bone, we rely on parent donations of goods and money to make it through the year. **Our students are not required to bring any supplies to school; we appreciate your assistance in making sure they never go wanting.**

If you can, please make a monetary donation (tax deductible) to the school or send in school supplies such as copy or lined paper, pens, pencils, notebooks, etc. Ms. Roberts always has information on what is needed. She can be reached at 735-3217.

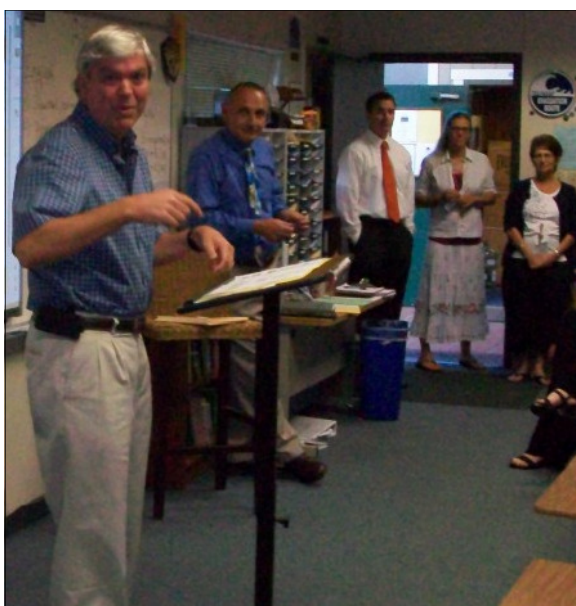
Back to School Night



Parents were out in great numbers for our annual meeting between family and staff. Nearly every student was represented by at least one family member. Staff appreciated the great turnout as good communication with students' families is key to successful learning. Among the guest speakers were Dr. Tony Knight, pictured



middle left, who began his career in the district here at OVHS as a teacher, then principal. Thank you parents for your continued support of our program!



How To Access Your Child's Zangle Account!

- Go to the district website: www.oakparkusd.org
- Select "Zangle Student Connect"
- Enter ID # (your child will know this if you do not)
- Enter Password (same as above. You can also get this by calling Ms. Roberts in the OVHS office)
- Select *Demographics* to see address, phone numbers, etc.
- Select *Marks* to see report cards
- Select *Transcript* to see high school academic history
- Select *GPA* to see grade point averages
- Select *Graduation Requirements* to see requirements, met and short (not completed yet)

Quarter 1 grades — 11/9

Quarter 2 grades — 2/1

Quarter 3 grades — 4/4

Quarter 4 grades — 6/18

Please contact our school office with any questions at (818)735-3217

What'cha Reading??

As always, Oak View is reading up a storm! Students are given free reading time regularly in English and are encouraged to take books from the library and read at home.

Mia Jacobson-Van Dyke is reading *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous. She says it is good so far and chose it because so many people had told her it was a good book to read.

Claudio Renyer is reading *Fight Club* by Chuck Palahniuk and also finds it to be a good book, very entertaining. Nick Rossiter, who is reading the same book, says, "The first rule about reading *Fight Club* is that you can't talk about reading *Fight Club*." Those of us who have read the book know what he is talking about! Joey Melia is also reading the book as he did not have the opportunity to finish it last year.

Mr. Tabone is reading *Tattoos on the Heart* by Father Boyle who founded Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles. He says that Boyle's dedication to decreasing gangs is amazing; he made it his whole life.

Chase Rosson is reading *Burned* by Ellen Hopkins. "The way it's written is weird, but I like the parts where it rhymes because I can just rap it in my head." Hopkins is among the most popular authors for OVHS students.

Kevin Ferman is reading *Skate* which he says is pretty good. "I can relate to it and it's interesting to read."

Kelly DiFonzo is reading *The Lost Boy* by David Pelzer. He has a series of books about his challenging childhood. She finds it inspiring and has read another of his books already.

Ms. Allen is reading *The Female Brain* by Dr. Louann Brizendine. "I am blown away by her findings and the great insight it gives into my own thinking as well as of my students' and daughters'." She is also rereading *The Odyssey* along with her students and just finished *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett.

John Rizzo and Dilon Wallace are both reading *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* by Tom Wolfe. Dilon likes the author's style so much, that when he is done, he looks forward to reading more from this author.

Liz Cruz and Amanda Martin are both great readers who zoom through books faster than Ms. Allen can keep track. It is nice to have a whole library in the English classroom to keep them going.

If you have books — especially young adult fiction — we are always glad of donations!

Clean Teen Bowling Trip



Staff and students enjoyed their first Clean Teen outing of the year at Brunswick Bowl in Simi Valley. Students in the program who wish to go are rewarded for testing clean with a day of fun and food. Bowling is always a big hit. Look for another trip in the winter.



First Day of School — It Only Gets Better from Here!



Students face the new year with the hope of a fresh start or the opportunity to build on the reputation and learning they have already acquired here at Oak View. The beauty of our school is that you can become what you were meant to be — as a student and as a person. With guidance from an interested staff and much support from friends, this is a good place to re-create your life.



Above left, Blake Piloto and his father march toward Blake's first day at Oak View. Above right, Ms. Cohen is happy to be back. Teachers and students have a much closer relationship than at a traditional school. With small class sized, alternative teaching methods, and students' traditionally long tenure, we often get to know each other very well. Though summer may be filled with travel and relaxation, it is always good to get back together and catch up.

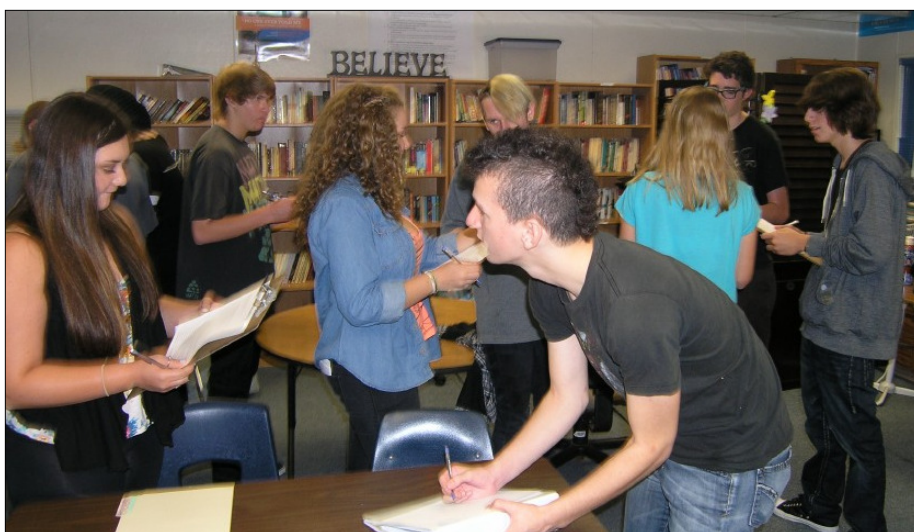
Below from left to right, four new students — Jack Hannah, Alexis Lewin, Anissa Hewett, and Mikey Bilodeau. Jack is a junior and the rest are sophomores. When a traditional education does not support the learning needs of a student, Oak View is often the best place for them. Our goal is to reconnect students with their learning. We remind them of how smart they already are and facilitate skill-building necessary for a successful adult life.





Above left, Sam Fields makes himself right at home. Above right, the Kovacic brothers, Michael and Jared, get their first day schedules. Far left, returning students Chase Rosson and Joey Melia. Near left, Katie Rytter-ager-Nickel checks in with Ms. Roberts

Below left, new students Shane Moore and Shannon Moss get ready to face their first classes. Below right, Alexis Lewin, Kevin Ferman, Anissa Hewett, Griffin Greenhut, and others participate in a first day activity in Ms. Allen's class. Students make friends quickly here. It really is one of the few schools where students know everyone's name!



Oak Park Unified School District

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Email: sallen@opusd.k12.ca.us

Respect, Restraint, Responsibility

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Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5



October 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	Aaron Freeman's Birthday 4	Progress reports sent home 5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	Claudio Renteria's Birthday 14	15
16	Shane Moore and Bre Kay's birthday 17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	Halloween BBQ Minimum Day 31	Pupil Free Day				