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EDUCATION

Yosemite, Sierra, Mariposa student head back to school

By Cathie Campbell - Special to the Sierra Star

(Updated Friday, August 18, 2006, 3:30 PM)

Mountain Area high school students can expect some new additions for the 2006-2007 school year

Every school year brings some sort of change, the most obvious being new students, but sometimes there are new classes, new programs or buildings and equipment or changes in staff.

Oakhurst's Yosemite High School, home of the Badger teams, reports that Tom Fiormonti, assistant principle and athletic director, has left the district to return to Porterville Unified, where he will be taking a teaching position at Porterville High School and assuming a leadership role in their business academy.

"The assistant principal's position is being filled by Randy Hyatt, who has been splitting duties as a part-time administrator and band director," said YHS Principal Steve Raupp. "Randy moves into a full-time assistant principal's position and will be handing the band program over to a new teacher, P.R. Gaffney, who is a first-year teacher. P.R. comes to us out of the Fresno State music program, where he was actively involved in their outstanding music program.

"Randy will be adding the responsibilities of coordinating the ROP program to his list of duties, which also includes coordinating the IB program and summer school principal. Other new staff includes Michelle Forsythe in agriculture (she is also a Fresno State graduate). Tim Sailors in welding will also be working with the FFA program," he added.

As far as changes of the facilities go, with the completion of a six-year construction project, last year a number of portables have been moved off campus, most notably the 10 in front of the campus.

"That area will revert back to a parking lot and should address the shortage of parking that we have had on the campus," Raupp said.

"Other projects that have continued this summer are paving on several areas of the campus, work on a new soccer field, which will be located behind the swimming pool, work on an equestrian arena on the ag facility and relocation of a classroom on the ag facility."

Also, this will be the first-full school year during which the new Ansel Adams Hall will be used. Another welcome change, although not on such a grand scale, is the addition of a concrete stairway leading between the levels of the science building and the cafeteria, which replaces the railroad ties that had been set into the ground.

Freshmen and new student orientation will be held on Thursday, Aug. 17, and the first day of classes begins on Monday, Aug. 21.

Throughout the summer, there have been busy crews and individuals working hard to make sure that Yosemite High School continues to offer top quality educational opportunities and experiences for new and returning students.

Over in Tollhouse, folks at Sierra High School are also preparing for their first day of the new school year, which began Wednesday.

This is also when the late busses were scheduled to begin their scheduled routes.

The principal at Sierra High is Melissa Ireland and her secretary, Kathleen Sanderson, reported that, "We have a new assistant principal/athletic director, Scott Pickle. He will be replacing Robert Griffith. We also have a new activities director, Vicki Clason, as well as a new yearbook advisor, Tony Sharp, who is also one of our art teachers.

"Tonight is our first football scrimmage against Reedley High School, at 4:30 p.m.," Sanderson



Yosemite High School Junior Kari Lauterbach enjoys lifeguard duties at the YHS Baker Swim Complex as summer comes to a close. Lauterbach swims and plays water polo for the Badgers.

Photo by David Richards

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added. "It is a home football scrimmage with our freshman, junior varsity and varsity football teams. We will have the burger bash after the game and a dance will follow."

Burger bash

The burger bash will be held at 5:30 p.m., at a cost of \$5 and the dance, which will cost \$6, will be held at the Sierra High School pool area.

Hours for the dance are from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. For some, the event might be a fun way to start the new school year and see a lot of friends.

Another important date for Sierra High is their Back-to-School Night set for Thursday, Aug. 24.

Many Mountain Area residents, especially from the North Fork, Auberry and O'Neils areas have a long-standing family tradition of having attended the historical Sierra High, home of the mighty Chieftains.

Ever since 1914, Mariposa County High School has opened its doors to generations of students.

The buildings may have changed over the years but the dedication of staff and accomplishments of graduates remain a tradition to this day.

Principal Rock Carlson reminds students and parents that the new school year begins on Wednesday, Aug. 23, with a freshman and new student orientation to be held on Monday evening, Aug. 21 in the high school auditorium. For a \$5 donation, there will be a dinner offered that night by the MCHS Boosters.

The dinner will be free to those who sign up for Boosters membership.

Friday, Aug. 25 is "Picture Day," so everyone can smile for the camera.

"Changes for Mariposa County High School's 2006-2007 year include four new honors classes and two new AP classes," said Mr. Carlson. "Also, there will be a return to the semester system from a trimester system."

Another new feature for this year is a return to a full-time firefighting program, with two highly qualified instructors.

The school also carries on with another tradition as home of the Grizzlies sports teams.



After two months of summer, Yosemite High School students head back to school on Monday.
Photo by David Richards



Mariposa High School students return to school Wednesday.
Photo courtesy of Cathie Campbell



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