

Elk Grove Citizen ONLINE

LIFESTYLE

More Super Grads ⁴

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Print Page

We can call them the Notable Graduates of our Schools or the Hall of Fame Folks or, as I refer to them, the Super Grads. But, whatever terms we use, our intent is to recognize the accomplishments of people who attended and/or graduated from our schools. And, by schools, I mean the entire "family tree" of schools that make up today's Elk Grove Unified School District.

EGUSD covers most of South Sacramento County from Sloughhouse and Rancho Murieta to Wilton and Franklin, all of the city of Elk Grove, the Valley Hi-Mack Road area that is in the city of Sacramento, a tiny piece of the city of Rancho Cordova in the Sunrise area, and a large portion of Sacramento County – the Florin and Sierra Enterprise regions.

If you are thinking that is a lot of acreage – it is. EGUSD covers 365 square miles! And, we are talking about a long period of time that the schools have been in operation. The unified school district has been in existence since July 1, 1959 (almost 50 years ago), but the first formal school in Sacramento County, the San Joaquin School at Grant Line and today's Highway 99, goes back to 1854. The Rhoads School in Sloughhouse, however, and schools in the gold fields of Michigan Bar go even farther back.

Do we have many notable graduates of our schools? We certainly do. My list is well over 100, and I know there are more! It is a pleasure for me to share what I know about many of our Super Grads with you, the readers of this column. Continue to send me your suggestions for other Super Grads and your thoughts about the ones I have written about. I appreciate hearing from you.

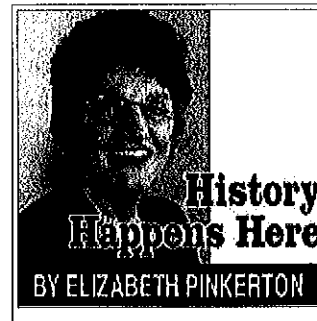
EGUSD – Super Grads:

Lance Briggs, EGHS, Class of 1999 – All you have to do is google the name, and your computer is immediately loaded with stories about this outstanding young Super Grad football player. He not only dominated the program at Elk Grove High, but he now is doing the same for the Chicago Bears in the National Football League. Heading to the University of Arizona after high school, Lance had an impressive career there, too, and in 2003 he was drafted by the Bears. He has been with Chicago ever since.

Deborah (Van Horn) Sigman, EGHS, Class of 1971 – Folks in Elk Grove Unified know the name of Deb Sigman very well, as she worked for many years in the district with testing and assessments as well as training teachers how to use student test results in effective ways. However, Deb has moved far up the education ladder in the few years since she left Elk Grove. She is now Deputy Superintendent of the Assessment and Accountability Branch of the California Department of Education. With 30 years of experience behind her, there is probably not much about testing that she does not know and, apparently, Superintendent Jack O'Connell thinks so too. An interesting piece about Deb's life in Elk Grove is that her family was one of the first to live in the Valley Hi Country Club development.

Karen (Leeders) Schauer, EGHS, Class of 1975 – Karen is the superintendent of the Galt elementary school district, our neighbor to the south. One of only a handful of female school superintendents in Sacramento County, Karen's career has been totally dedicated to the Galt district. She was a teacher and curriculum director for 27 years prior to her appointment as superintendent in 2007. And since Karen is a former student of mine at Joseph Kerr, it is a great pleasure to see her moving forward with such distinction.

Marsha (Green) Holmes, EGHS, Class of 1966 – Marsha continues the spirit of community service that has been in her family for several generations. She was Elk Grove Citizen of the Year in 2005 and is well known for her work with the Elk Grove Community Foundation and the Strauss Festival. But there are many other groups that have benefitted from her dedicated work over the years, and she continues to work for the betterment of all of us in our city of Elk Grove and its neighboring places.



Lucinda Woodward, EGHS, Class of 1966 – Lucinda (also known as Cindy to local folks) serves as a historian for the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation. Historic preservation is one of the key areas that she works on, and we have utilized her services for a variety of local efforts here in Elk Grove. You may recall reading her name recently as the donor of Golden 50 scholarship #5 in honor of her parents, Lillian and Warren Woodward, yet another example of her community support.

Marcie (Zenker) Stamm, EGHS, Class of 1955 – The Zenker family moved to Florin from South Dakota in 1951, and Marcie has lived in the Florin area ever since. A lifelong community volunteer and activist, she also served on the Board of Education for Elk Grove Unified from 1975-1983, a time of great growth and many changes in the school district. In addition to her involvement with the Florin Historical Society, Marcie also serves on the EGUSD School Names Committee, and many other groups benefit from her hard work. She was named to the Elk Grove HS Hall of Fame in 1989. Marcie's husband, Larry Stamm, is also well known in the area from his previous work with the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department and, since he graduated from high school in Kansas, I am sure he would be considered a Super Grad there. Their sons are all EGHS Super Grads (1970s): Jim retired as a Lt. Colonel from the U.S. Air Force and now teaches college classes in Illinois; Jeff lives in Texas and works with the Drug Enforcement Administration and has been in Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Pakistan and Afghanistan for the DEA; and Burt is a businessman in Fair Oaks.

Larry Zenker, EGHS, Class of 1964 – Larry was Marcie's brother, which makes the Zenker family doubly super with their grads. This young man was very active in sports in school and, because he had his choice of scholarships, he went to the University of Hawaii. After getting his law degree, he continued his Hawaii connection, becoming the Deputy Attorney General for the state. Like his sister, Larry was also inducted in the EGHS Hall of Fame.

William and Laverne (Kammerer) Simas, EGHS, Class of 1944 – This dynamic duo, active community volunteers and business leaders, had their start as high school classmates. During World War II, teenagers were encouraged to do their part to help the war effort, and the Simas family has continued that dedication to serving others. One major recipient of their efforts since 1974 has been the Heart Research Foundation of Sacramento. They started with a golf tournament fundraiser, known as "A Stroke Fore Life" for which they received a national award. Both William and LaVerne are in the EGHS Hall of Fame. Every time you pass the new library in Elk Grove (on EG-Florin Road and EG Boulevard), know that this was the site of the Simas service station in an earlier life of that corner.

That is it for today ... but read about more Super Grads next week ... To be continued ...

1. History Happened Here, Book 1-River, Oaks, Gold – \$20
2. History Happened Here, Book 2-Fields, Farms, Schools – \$20
3. Images of America-Elk Grove – \$20
4. We the People, A Story of Internment in America – \$30

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