



Gee Family Class of 2013

The Gee Family is the first ever “family” to be inducted into the OUHSD Hall of Fame. The family meets the criteria for the category of Alumni as all nine siblings graduated from Oroville High School and for Distinguished Service due to the nine children establishing the Fred and May Gee Achievement and Scholarship Awards for both Las Plumas and Oroville High Schools, in honor of their parents.

Fred Gee emigrated from his native China in 1936 and joined his father Lee “Charlie” You in Oroville. Charlie owned Tong Fong Low Restaurant. Because of anti-Chinese immigration policies in the early 20th century, both father and son entered the country under assumed identities using different surnames. As a 17 year old teenager, Fred could only speak Chinese, so was enrolled in the 3rd grade at Bird Street School in order to learn English while working at Tong Fong Low.

After serving in the United States Army during WWII, Fred returned to China to retrieve his wife May and their first born child, Wing Gee. They settled in Oroville where Fred joined his father as partner in the restaurant business.

Fred Gee was an active member of the community and sponsored many youth activities and local organizations. Well known and widely respected in Oroville, Fred was honored as the Grand Marshall of the 1973 Feather Fiesta Days parade.

The next eight children of Fred and May Gee were born in Oroville and attended Bird Street and Central Schools. All nine children graduated from Oroville High School between 1960 and 1977. Each child worked in the restaurant while in school and following graduation left town to attend college. All nine earned degrees from four year universities and were or are successful in their chosen endeavors.

Wing Gee graduated in 1960 and played football, baseball, ran track and was on the tennis team. He went on to earn his BA degree at University of California, Berkeley (Cal) and his degree in pharmacy from University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). He owned and operated the community and retail pharmacy Arlington Pharmacy in Berkeley, CA for many years. To this day Wing is an avid Bear Backer. He and his family have lived in Walnut Creek since 1969. A quote from Wing: ‘Life is good, when you can say, Oroville and grandchildren in one breath.’

Jean Gee Rosenblatt graduated from OHS in 1965. She was the co-recipient of the highest GPA for a female student. She was a member of the band, the political club and CSF. She received the Bank of America Achievement Award and earned degrees from Cal and UCSF. She had a very successful career in nursing, specializing in critical care, working throughout the United States from San Diego and Los Angeles to Boston. She has been a resident of Beverly Hills for over thirty years where she has been actively involved in many volunteer and philanthropic activities.

Buck is a 1967 OHS alum and a lifetime CSF member, receiving the Bank of America award for mathematics. He was ASB president his senior year and Boys State rep following his junior year. He was very active in band and other clubs and was a speaker at his graduation. Buck earned his BS degree from Stanford University and his MBA from Harvard University. His career was spent working in high tech companies in the Silicon Valley. He taught electrical engineering and computer design at Stanford University and at Howard University in Washington D.C. He was the key note speaker at the Top Ten event in Oroville in 2012.

Lind Gee is a 1969 OHS alum and was Top Ten all four years and in the National Honor Society three years. She won the Bank of America Science Award, was Girl's State Delegate, and participated in the CSF brain brawl. She was ASB secretary as a senior as well as CSF president as a junior. She earned her BS degree in applied mathematics from Cal and then became a Senior Software Engineer, KLA-Tenor Corp, in Milpitas, CA. Lind worked for 40 years as a software developer in the Semiconductor/Electronics industry at several high tech companies. She was a Girl Scout leader for several years and has three daughters.

Faye Smith-Gee was valedictorian of her 1970 class at OHS. She was a lifetime member of CSF, earned Top Ten honors all four years and was ASB president. In addition, Faye was a class officer for two years and belonged to the United Nations Club. She was Girls State delegate as a junior. She received her BA degree from UC Santa Cruz with a major in English literature and a minor in Chinese literature. She earned her teaching credential from SF State University. She currently works for Cost Plus World Market, Inc. as an Inventory Management Planner.

Young Gee is a 1971 OHS alum and was a member of CSF and the National Honor Society. He was a Block O member and wrestled and ran track. Young earned his BA degree from S.F. State University and his Master's degree from UCLA. He taught at UCLA, University of Guadalajara (Mexico), CSU Northridge, CSU Los Angeles, SF City College and Hollywood Adult School. In San Francisco, he donated time to the San Francisco Suicide Prevention Center. He is currently Associate Professor at Glendale Community College.

Lily Gee Hickman graduated in the top ten of her class at OHS in 1972. She was also a member of CSF and the National Honor Society and won the Bank of America Award for Fine Arts. She was a member of the chess club, GAA, the "S" Club, and participated in the brain brawl. Lily earned her BA degree from U.C. Santa Barbara, her Master's degree from S. F. State University, and her teaching credential in art from U.C. Los Angeles. She taught art in the Los Angeles School District. She left education in 2005 to work for the labor movement.

Zand Gee is a 1973 OHS alum and was a member of the National Honor Society. She was senior princess for the James C. Nisbet Basketball Tournament and a member of student council. She earned her BS degree in Environmental Design from UC Davis and her MFA in Photography from the SF Art institute. Zand is a widely published book designer for Rizzoli New York and other major publishers, whose projects include many Frank Lloyd Wright publications. In 2008, her book, Oscar Niemeyer Houses, was a RIBA Award finalist (Royal Institute of British Architects). She currently resides in Orinda with her husband and daughter and is an active member in her community.

Sem Gee is a 1977 OHS alum and graduated in the Top Ten of her class all four years. She was a life member of CSF, a member of the National Honor Society for her last three years, and was in Who's Who as a senior. Sem played field hockey, powder puff football, softball and ran track. She was class president as a freshman and sophomore, a member of the band and student council all four years. She received her BA degree in applied mathematics from Cal in 1982. She is currently Vice President, Senior Technical Consultant with ABD Insurance and Financial Service. Sem currently resides in Moraga with her daughter.

In 1996, Wing, Jean, Buck, Lind, Faye, Young, Lily, Zand, and Sem established the Fred and May Gee Achievement Award and the Fred and May Gee Scholars Award for both Las Plumas and Oroville High Schools. This was established to honor their parents. A total of \$6,000 was awarded to the top five students at each high school. They awarded one \$5,000 scholarship and four - \$250 scholarships for a combined total at both high schools of \$12,000.

The total amount was increased in 2001 and \$7,000 total was awarded at each high school to the top students. The family awarded one \$2,500 scholarship, one \$1,500 scholarship, and three \$1,000 scholarships, for a combined total at both schools of \$14,000.

To this day, these scholarships continue to be awarded and give the top students in their graduating classes the opportunity to further their education and give back to their community as the Gee family has done.

Annually, the Gee siblings return to Oroville for a weekend to interview the top five students at each high school. Following the interviews, the family makes the decision as to which scholarship will be awarded to which students.

In his letter of support, local attorney and Oroville native Paul Minasian wrote, “*Yes, it is possible to be raised in a small town and yet gain the skill and the ethical experience to be a star in an evermore sophisticated and complicated world!*”

The Gee Family scholarship program continues to thrive and the siblings have remained highly involved for the past seventeen years. They have not forgotten their roots and from where they came.