



2024 Lindsay Orange Blossom Festival
Honored Couple
Jim and Janet Kliegl

Jim and Janet Kliegl have been chosen as the Honored Couple for the 2024 Orange Blossom Festival. They are both thrilled to be recognized in this way by the OBF committee for their contributions to Lindsay. This is not their family's first involvement in the OBF celebration. Their daughter, Karen, was a junior attendant in 1982, daughter Katherine, was selected as an attendant in 1996, and James served as Parade Marshall in 1998.

Jim is not a native of Lindsay, but was born in Ames, Iowa. He moved with his family to Fresno in 1953 when he was 5 years old. Jim graduated from San Joaquin Memorial High School in 1965 and then from Fresno State College in 1969, where he also earned his teaching credential in English. In 1970, he was hired to teach English for Lindsay Unified School District. Jim's teaching career spanned 39 years as an English and Drama teacher. He also taught the journalism class that produced the school newspaper and the Yearbook class that produced the Lindsay Comet yearbook. Over the years he was class advisor, activities director, and English Department Head at various times. Jim was also a coach for many sports: Cross Country, Swimming, JV and Frosh Basketball, Wrestling, Soccer, and Tennis.

Janet is also not a Lindsay native. She was born in Pontiac, Michigan and raised on a farm. She attended a one room country school until seventh grade. Upon graduation from high school, she went to Michigan State University, eventually transferring to Fresno State University where she obtained a master's degree in Communicative Disorders, Speech Pathology. She began her teaching career in Kings County, then Fresno Unified School District and eventually Lindsay Unified School District. In 1993, she became an administrator for the District and eventually Superintendent for the last fourteen years of her career. During her tenure as superintendent, she oversaw the financing and construction of the new Lindsay High School and Roosevelt. She was instrumental in the change to K-8 schools as well as building the foundation for the performance-based system for which the District is now a leader in the country. In retirement, she continues to work as a consultant to school districts and has helped Lindsay obtain numerous new preschool and kindergarten classrooms.

One of Jim's passions is theater. In 1973, Jim's first Lindsay production was "Scrooge" and was presented on a makeshift stage in the cafeteria. Through the years the cafeteria was again used along with the outdoor amphitheater, the Jr high and Jefferson cafeteria stages, and then starting in 1983, the Lindsay Community Theater. Over the years, Jim has directed well over 110 plays and musicals for LHS, the Lindsay Summer School program, the Stars after-school program, and the Lindsay Community Theater. Of the many plays he has directed the ones that stand out are Fiddler on the Roof, Once Upon a Mattress, South Pacific, Midsummer Night's Dream, Into the Woods, Grease!, Joseph...Dreamcoat, West Side Story, Barefoot in the Park, CATS, Noises

Off, Singin' in the Rain, The Little Mermaid, The Children's Nutcracker, and 9 to 5. Jim continues his connection with theater in Lindsay as manager of the Lindsay Community Theater.

Janet has served on many community committees: Kiwanis Club and Board as well as president, Kiwanis Foundation, Lindsay Community Theater Board, Charter City Committee, Healthy Kids-Healthy Lindsay Board. She was a member of AAUW and received the Community Service Award in 2000. In 2005, she was the Lindsay Woman of the Year. In 1997, she was selected as Administrator of the Year, Curriculum and Instruction, ACSA Tulare County. One of her first duties as an administrator was to start a recreation center, so she worked with a group of citizens to form Healthy Kids Healthy Lindsay and started the first recreation center, Teen Zone, which eventually was folded into McDermont Field House. She also developed one of the first Health Start programs in the State which is still flourishing today.

Jim has been honored over the years with two yearbook dedications, Lindsay and Tulare County Teacher of the Year, Tulare County English Teacher of the Year, Marshall of the OBF parade, Lindsay Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year, and Lindsay Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.

Jim and Janet met on a blind date and were married in August 1981 at which time Janet joined Jim to live in Lindsay. They brought their blended family together, daughters Karen and Katherine (Kathy) and sons, Roy (R.J) and James, Jr. (Jamie). All four of their children graduated from Lindsay High School. Karen is married to Steve Fisher, has a daughter Isabella (Bella, 15) and lives in Huntington Beach. Roy is married to Tristen and has two sons, Foster (13) and Pier (10) and lives in Davis. James is married to Gabrielle and has a daughter, McKenzie (29), sons Jordan (24), Sasha (16) and Jude (15) and lives in La Canada. Katherine is married to Chris Messick and has one daughter, Molly (8) and lives in Fresno.

Both Jim and Janet have been very active in the Presbyterian Church serving as both church elder and deacon. They both sing in the choir and have taught Sunday School. They also have been involved with the Ono City, our Japanese Sister City. Both have traveled to Japan as ambassadors for the city as well as hosted Ono City guests at their home. In 2012, Jim revitalized the program, serving as the chairperson. He designed and created the mosaic and bench in the park area for the 40th year celebration of the Sister City program, and he petitioned the city to rename the street Ono City Parkway.

Jim and Janet are blessed to live in Lindsay and thank the Orange Blossom Festival committee for this recognition.