

EXTRA The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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Vote '08

Making History

By Angel Silva
Staff Writer

Senator Barack Obama and Governor Sarah Palin made political history this year.

With his nomination as the Democratic nominee for the presidency, Obama became the first African-American to successfully be a candidate for a major party.

On the Republican side, Palin is the second major-party vice presidential candidate and the first woman on a GOP ticket.



GOP
veep
Sarah
Palin

Dem
choice
Barack
Obama



Both political figures have been attacked, either for race, gender or for political tactics.

Early in his campaign, Obama was under fire from several directions, from small things such as emails and videos on YouTube, to more public attacks such as those of the Reverend Jeremiah Wright in March 2008. Obama has also been accused of "playing the race card" during his campaign.

McCain drew criticism for choosing Palin for his running mate. Her youth, social conservatism, and appeal to disaffected Hillary Clinton voters couldn't make up for her lack of experience and short time on the political stage. Palin's political positions, such as her approval of oil development in protected wildlife areas, have been praised by Republicans and condemned by others.

Controversy aside, both political figures have reconfigured the face of politics.

Program Improved

By Karinina Cruz
Staff Writer

The cloud has lifted, blue skies are back. Having now met Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years, Poly is free at last of its Program Improvement status.

"Teachers made it happen and administrators moved barriers," said Poly interim principal Gerardo Loera. "I am proud to be part of a community that believes in kids and to be part of a school that has come a long way."

Poly has been under Program Improvement (PI) status since 2002. State officials have the option of taking over the school if sufficient improvement does not take place within five years.

"Poly is the only comprehensive high school in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to exit the Program Improvement Year Five (PI5) status this year," said Loera.

"Poly High School is one of two high schools in LAUSD to have achieved this," said LAUSD Superintendent David Brewer. Banning High School exited PI5 status last year.

Fifteen schools in California, including elementary and middle schools, exited PI5 status this year.

"We have made remarkable progress for the last seven years," said Interim Principal Gerardo Loera.

The federal accountability system, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) focuses on whether or not students are scoring at the proficient level or above on the state assessments. AYP is the result of Congressional legislation known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

"Since we're meeting the AYP requirements, we are also meeting NCLB requirements," said Loera. "The AYP is defined by the NCLB."

Poly was recently named a school "On The Right Track" by the state of California, Loera said, and Parrot administrators and teachers will present the school's strategies at a meeting in Costa Mesa next month.

"A team of Poly teachers will be at the symposium," said Loera. "We will share our best



Photo by Michael Obando

BY THE NUMBERS: (From left) LAUSD Superintendent David L. Brewer, State Superintendent Jack O'Connell, and Poly Interim Principal Gerardo Loera.

strategies for exiting Program Improvement."

Poly's academic successes this year include a six-year accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and College (WASC) and a 66.4% completion rate for A-G requirements for 2007, the highest in LAUSD.

"We project that more than 75% of Poly's 2008 class has completed the A-G requirements," said Loera. "If we're right, we'll beat some of the highest performing charter schools."

Poly this year is ranked number one in the district among non-charter schools.

"Having these successes gives us credibility within the district," said Loera, "and shows that improvement is possible in a large school like Poly."

Brewer frequently describes Poly as a model [See AYP, Page 8]

O'Connell, Brewer at Poly Press Conference

By Angel Silva &
Karinina Cruz
Staff Writers

Poly did better than LAUSD and LAUSD did better than the state of California on 2008's high stakes testing.

That was the news State Superintendent of Schools [See API, Page 7]

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The Valley

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Ballet
Folklorico

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Lights

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LETTERS TO
THE EDITOR

FEEDBACK

Comments on our
September issue.

My favorite article must be "Rollin' On Air." I like the fact that information like this is shared to us so we can see how the world is changing for the better.

STEPHANIE HERRERA [IITH]

My favorite was the "Parrots Have Star Quality" article. It shows that Poly is not only awesome with their grades, but also in the creativity and "Star Quality" as it says.

KARINA MUNIZ [IITH]

I like every single article in this awesome newspaper. But it wouldn't hurt if you guys would add a section where people out of the OPTIMIST could write articles too. It's not fair we don't get to do that. There is too many people who are awesome writes and can't prove it. Also add a section of contest.

MARIA SANCHEZ [IOTH]

Well, I like the Parrothood article. But can you put more activities like skateboarding, biking, etc. Other than that it's pretty cool.

ANTHONY GAITANO [IITH]

Each time I like to look at the OPTIMIST I like to look at the sports section. Last time I checked it I was surprised to see Telemundo in our school. I never thought Telemundo could have visited us and be interested in Poly's sports.

GLORIA TECUM [IOTH]

In my opinion my favorite article was the one of Parrothood because it shows us that many of our teachers,

administrators, and staff have their own family too. Also, it shows that they are like us too and need their own time for other things.

LAURA SEPULVEDA [IOTH]

I like the "Rollin' On Air" article, I really like it because you guys are covering not just Poly news but world news. I really like the people and you guys are doing a good job, keep it up!

BRANDON PEREZ [IOTH]

Well, my favorite is the front page because it is the most interesting. They have great pictures that catch my attention. Also they talk about anything.

DIANA HERNANDEZ [IOTH]

My favorite part is the Cartoons. You should really put one page all about cartoons.

SARA GOMEZ [IOTH]

My favorite article was "Faer's Sophomore Season" because he gives his thoughts on what he is expecting from his team for this year and is going to do anything he can to make them the best team.

JONATHAN ZALDANNA [IOTH]

My favorite article in this edition of The OPTIMIST is "She's A California Girl Now." I thought that it was really interesting, and I found it really cool how a foreign person could easily blend in with a whole new crowd.

CHESKA RAMAS [IOTH]

Character Counts

A decade ago, St. Genevieve High School in Panorama City was in trouble. Crumbling facilities, declining enrollment, only 35% going on to college, all were problems.

In 1999, Daniel Horn joined the school as principal and instituted a character-building program.

Daily attendance went up, enrollment went up, the number of students on the honor role went up, according to Horn.

In 2003, St. Genevieve became the first Catholic school in the nation to be named a National School of Character by the Character Education Partnership based in Washington, D.C.

"Our students aspire to be men and women of character - trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring and good citizens," says the school's website.

"We provide opportunities for values clarification and moral growth, a chance for students to be their moral best."

At the entrance to St. Genevieve are six pillars that represent the traits that build character. Students, teachers and administrators see these words as a reminder of the "moral code."

Every year, upper classmen welcome freshmen with open arms and pancakes in an all-day ceremony.

Individualized classes in fitness instruction from salsa to tai chi are offered to St. Genevieve's students. The school also provides trips to foreign countries like China and France. Cool, huh? Not to mention their graduation rate last year: 100%.

"When I first came and my brother dropped me off and said 'Have a good day,' I was scared," said 14-year old freshman. "It's so different than elementary school. But right away, all these new people, juniors and seniors, said 'hi' and treated me like family. Right away I felt like it was home."

"But more important," said Horn, "are things that are hard to put a measuring stick to, like students who look you in the eye and are confident."

In some ways, Poly and St. Genevieve are similar. Both schools have made many improvements and can boast of major accomplishments. Both high schools are located in violence-prone areas. They both survived school related problems. But most importantly, Poly and St. Genevieve have improved and succeeded.

If character building at a nearly-condemned school made students better, could the same program improve Poly a little more? If we are aiming to continue improving, we can adopt a similar program of character building to promote academic success.

Poly could surpass its current attendance and graduation rates, resulting in higher college graduation rates.

St. Genevieve has already accomplished great things. They've proved that character counts.



A Heartbeat from the Presidency?

What's up, John McCain? I heard about your vice president, and I was wondering if you've gone insane. Well, more than usual.

Enter Sarah Palin.

South Carolina Senator and close friend of yours Lindsey Graham noted in an interview that Palin's life story is one with which your supporters can most closely identify, and that she will project a human, down-to-earth quality.

Oh, really? Let's look through her life, shall we?

She was born in Idaho forty-four years ago, and later moved to Alaska. As a teenager, she smoked marijuana during the time when possession was legal in Alaska. Well, at least that's something that some young voters can relate to...

In 1984, she finished second in the Miss Alaska pageant, at which she won the "Miss Congeniality" award.

Yeah, all of us can really relate to these things. Great job, Johnny!

But let's be civil-now we look at her career.

As mayor of Wasilla, Alaska, Palin had some episodes of what psychologists would call

"maladaptive behavior."

In October 1996, she tried firing Wasilla police chief, librarian, public works director, and finance director, and instituted a policy requiring department heads to get her approval before talking to reporters. I wonder why?

In January 1997, Palin fired the police chief and tried to fire the town librarian because she believed the two did not fully support her policies.

Anyone somewhat reminded of Guantanamo Bay?

Oh, it gets worse. As Alaska's governor, Palin strongly promoted oil and natural gas resource development in Alaska, including in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), a protected reserve of 19,049,236 acres and home to endangered species such as polar bears and seals.

But enough already. Here's my last question. With all those "great" Republican politicians out there, was Palin really the best choice to (literally) be a heartbeat from the presidency?

Hope you live long, 'cause if you don't, it's Palin that will lead the U.S. to it's demise.



THE OPTIMIST

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EDITORIAL
POLICY

The OPTIMIST is the voice of the Poly community and accepts the responsibilities of a free press. The OPTIMIST follows the Code of Ethics for the Society of Professional Journalists. Editorials are the opinions of the staff writers.

LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be typed or neatly printed in ink and include the writer's signature. The OPTIMIST reserves the right to edit submissions. Send letters to Rm.11 or Mr. Blau's box.

Vegan in the Valley

By Jocelyn Alas
Staff Writer

For those new to the veggie scene, it can often be difficult to transition from meat-eater to herbivore. Many who consider the lifestyle, decide not to go through with it because their social life will have to change. In fact however, that is not true at all. Even here in the San Fernando Valley it is easy to find delicious veggie friendly restaurants.

If you think good Mexican food can't be vegetarian, Leonor's Vegetarian Mexican Restaurant will change your mind. The closest location is at 11403 Victory Blvd across from the old El Cubano Market.

From the outside, the restaurant looked old, dated, dirty and not the type of place I would eat at, but inside it has a totally different atmosphere.

The employees greeted us with smiles and were very friendly. Although small, its seven tables have plenty of room. Despite its orange and white walls, the décor is not overwhelmingly "authentic" Mexican. It feels very homey in its Latino style, yet still clean and professional.

From tacos to burritos, enchiladas and tamales, the menu is authentically Hispanic. The prices are also incredibly reasonable; the "Forever Young" beet salad goes for \$4.50, Dory's potato salad for \$5.70, and the "beef" burrito for \$4.50.

Every thing on the menu, of course, is vegetarian. All

the meats are soy products, although most include non-vegan ingredients.

I decided that I would go with the "chicken" quesadilla and "beef" tacos and the "very veggie" drink. The waitress explained to us that Leonor's dishes contain no MSG and so can sometimes taste bland. For that reason, every table has a bottle of Spike seasoning as a substitute for salt and MSG. I would recommend adding this to most dishes.

The waitress brought my "very veggie" drink and I fell in love with it. The frothy mixture contains carrots, celery, spinach, beets, tomatoes, and cucumbers. The strongest flavor was the celery, but it was not overwhelming and actually made it very refreshing.

The presentation of all the dishes is appealing. The "chicken" quesadilla was delicious. The "chicken" in it had a baked taste and almost even a fried chicken taste. The guacamole side was jam-packed with tomatoes, onion, and spices.

The beet salad that my sister ordered (she's a meat eater) smelled sweet and tangy. When I asked her what she thought of it she said "that just hits the spot" and then said, "I love the way it's sweet, but not too much."

The tacos were stuffed with beans, lettuce, "beef", and pico de gallo. The portions are generous for the prices. As I tried to finish off my last taco, the waitress was taking the customers next to us an avocado pizza. It looked so good that

"This quaint little restaurant that I had passed by so many times was surprisingly delightful. I do recommend it greatly. Especially the North Hollywood location with original manager and founder Leonor."

even though I was already full, I desperately wanted a piece.

This quaint little restaurant that I had passed by so many times was surprisingly delightful. While not a four star restaurant, I do recommend it greatly. Especially the North Hollywood location with original manager and founder Leonor.

For vegans who adore Thai cuisine, the Lotus Vegan restaurant is just the thing. Located at 5038 Vineland Ave. in the heart of the NoHo art district, the Lotus Vegan is welcoming restaurant. While it is extremely tiny and slightly untidy, it does have some outdoor seating. Purely vegan, the menu offers all the standard Thai dishes.

The service is quick and the waiters attentive. Before we knew it, our Thai Teas had come to the table. The tea was slightly watery, but both my friend and I agreed that it was nice because other places



Internet Photo

LEONOR'S: *The place to go for frothy veggie drinks.*

make it too thick.

The Miso soup I ordered with my lunch special had the traditional taste that I had hoped for. My friend Estela Ramirez, who ordered the salad with her lunch special, said that "it was really good, but too sweet for my taste." I tried it and disagreed, feeling the peanut taste overcame the sweetness. However, we both agreed it was sweet, so it's great for all those sweet-toothed vegans.

The lentil loaf had a very odd look to it. It came in a simple, brown, baked, crusty block. I was a bit apprehensive, but after I tried it, I couldn't stop eating it. It was flaky and scrumptious. The lentils were mashed in and the texture was soft, almost like white rice.

The Pad Thai that my friend ordered was pretty good. The noodles were decent and had plenty of fake chicken. However, my friend felt the fake chicken was too bland to taste.

The spicy eggplant dish I ordered had a bountiful amount of eggplant. Unfortunately, it was very garlicky and once I was half done I could no longer eat it. The fake fish I ordered only tasted like fish once I picked a piece out and sucked on it. Other than that it was barely noticeable.

Each lunch special (\$7.95) comes with a small spring roll and a brown rice ball. Each was good in its own way, but not that distinctive in comparison to the rest of the plate. The sauce for the egg rolls was tangy and sharp. Each of the portions of these dishes has a good amount of food, leaving you neither hungry nor overly stuffed.

Although some aspects of the Lotus Vegan were disappointing, overall the restaurant did well at "vegan-izing" Thai cuisine. The prices are all below 10 dollars and well worth it. I plan on returning soon.

College Journal

As a service to our readers, the OPTIMIST asked one Poly senior to tell us about her senior year. Below is the third installment of her story.

By Belle Tadena
Layout Editor

Rise and shine seniors.

Your year is just about to get more chaotic than it already is.

Halting your habitual procrastination is essential now more than ever.

There are too many things you need to get done before Mester 3 ends.

"Senior year is supposed to be the year when we can relax," said Poly senior Ricky De Guzman. "Instead the pressure is even heavier."

UC admissions will open for all applicants giving seniors only two months to complete numerous applications forms, write various personal essays, request several letter of recommendations.

Moreover, seniors planning to attend CSU's and UC's have stressful required standardized tests to take.

Don't be fooled by the big numbers the score report presents. Many may find the tests easy but many hovers above

the "average" line.

I, for one, got 1490 on my first whack at the SAT Reasoning test, which is quite average.

"I got a ridiculously average score on the Reasoning," said senior Natalie Castaneda.

The exams have quirks that test takers must pay close attention to. All questions, easy and hard, have the same value when it comes to scoring. A portion of a point is deducted with every wrong answer in the SATs.

I still have chances to improve my scores until December, which is the last time applicants can take a test. Of course, I'll need to get the highest scores I can get. I also need to make sure that I answer questions wisely.

Students' Grade Point Average (GPA) also plays a big role in college applications.

"For a CSU, you need to have a minimum of 2.0 GPA to be eligible and 3.0 for UC's," said college counselor Leona Warman.

Advance Placement classes just add to the heap of applications.

Many Poly Parrots are taking their first steps towards the upcoming AP Tests.

For some, these demanding and expectant classes began on September. For others, these classes won't begin until November.

When asked what the most important skill seniors need to master, De Guzman said, "Two words: Time management."

Seniors need to squeeze in all their schoolwork, familial responsibilities and college application responsibilities without breaking under the pressure.

"If you don't learn how to manage your time you'll fall behind and it'll be hard to get back," said De Guzman.



Ballet Folklórico

ALL PHOTOS BY MICHAEL OBANDO



MARIA MARTINEZ (9TH)

“My favorite song is ‘La Negra’.”
 “I would like to dance professionally after high school.”
 “The dresses of folklorico represent the histories of different states in Mexico.”
 “I’m interested in the club because I like to dance the music of my country.”
 “My brother also dances folklorico.”

JUANA FLORES (IITH)



MIRIAM RAMOS (IITH)



ANAHI GONZALEZ

“My first Folklorico dance was at the age of five.”
 “What made me form the club was to save our culture, tell students about their culture and keep them doing something good.”
 “Each dance of folklorico has a history, each state of central America has their own dances and each dance tells what happened there. Almost all of them talk about romance.”

ROSALBA GARCIA





Folklorico



ANA MORALES (9TH)

“My favorite folklorico song is “La Chapaneca.”
 “I would like to dance professionally after high school.”
 “People usually dance folklorico during celebrations.”
 “When there’s an audience, I get nervous.”
 “I was born in Colima, México and grew up in Tijuana.”

GLORIA MARTIN (9TH)



YAHIRA MORALES (11TH)

“I have been dancing since when I was 3 years old. Dancing is my passion.”
 “I like to dance folklorico to ‘El Toro Mambo’.”
 “The Dance Club is all about dancing and enjoying what you love to do.”
 “I was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico and grew up here in California, but I never forget where I’m from.”



Internet Photo

NEW CREW: Fresh faces inhabit the old neighborhood.

SAME ZIP, NEW RESIDENTS

By Adriana Amaya
Staff Writer

It's the same old West Beverly Hills High School; gorgeous teens, lots of style, raging hormones, and potential for backstabbing, broken hearts and payback.

The parties are bigger, crazier and shot in real Hollywood nightclubs; the girls are way skinnier and the rich kids obviously more rich. And "90210," the edgy remake of the 1990s series "Beverly Hills 90210," made an impressive debut last week, with 4.9 million viewers.

The story begins with the Wilson family, like the Walsh family 18 years before them, moving to Beverly Hills from the Midwest. Instead of twin children with alliterative first names like Brandon and Brenda, there's Annie Wilson (Shenae Grimes) and her adopted African-American brother Dixon (Tristan Wilds).

Old school cast members Kelly Garth and Brenda Doherty guest star. They both played major roles in the original "Beverly Hills 90210" cast. Kelly is now a single mother, working as a guidance counselor and liked by the English teacher Ryan Eggold. Brenda, who has become a great actress of the London stage, is back in town to do a play.

Most of the cast are the stereotypical, one-dimensional characters. There's the typical mean girl Naomi (AnnaLynne McCord), the troubled jock Ethan (Dustin Milligan), the quirky wannabe filmmaker

Navid (Michael Steger), the defiant chick Silver (Jessica Stroup), the jerk jock George (Kellan Lutz), the rich pretty boy, Ty (Adam Gregory) and the worn-out addict/aspiring actress Adrianna (Jessica Lowndes).

With its images of palm trees, bright-colored sports cars and the Beverly Hills sign, "90210" is typical of post-millennial teenage soaps like "The O.C.," "The Hills," and "Gossip Girl."

So far, this teenage drama is a mix up of school problems and social troubles, although the sexual element has certainly been amped up since the '90s. A rotten rich girl cheats on her English paper, an uncomprehending teen has a drug problem, and lacrosse jocks pull pranks. They've all been seen before on other teen soaps, and with more finesse, too.

And, of course, there are risqué sexual displays, most notably one involving oral sex that probably would have been considered outrageous on a network teen series 10 years ago. The scene is a desperate cry for controversy and attention.

Who knows - maybe the show will find an audience and survive after early curiosity-factor ratings. Maybe, despite its lack of charm, "90210" will go on to be remembered fondly by a new generation of viewers. In today's world of television, the more sexual escapades, problems, and raunchy teenage angst, the more ratings a network will receive.

Hooked On "Gossip Girl?"

By Lizette Lopez
Staff Writer

What do you think of when you hear about a young, good-looking cast, designer fashion and provocative ad campaigns? The only thing that comes to mind is "Gossip Girl."

The show is centered in Manhattan's Upper East Side, where privileged teens from an elite private prep school attend debutante balls and sip martinis at scandalous parties. The formula may be tired, but it's also tried and true and it makes this show a hit.

Blake Lively plays Serena Van Der Woodsen, a bad girl in high-end designers by Versace and Gucci. In the pilot episode, Serena returns from boarding school to learn she is the subject of a mysterious blogger, the unseen and unknown Gossip Girl. Gossip Girl can be anybody. If that person uncovers any potential scandal they send it as an e-mail or as a text message to Gossip Girl. Then it is seen by those who have access to the infamous blog. The most juicy and dirtiest secrets are exposed through Gossip Girl. So what is Serena really hiding?

"Gossip Girl's" shocking secret was exposed during the first season. Viewers knew she left town because she was hiding something, but they didn't know what. Everything in Serena's life was upside down. She had made some bad choices and needed to escape, hoping that when she came back, everything would be forgotten. But in a town where everyone knows everything, thanks to Gossip Girl, everybody found out why Serena left.

Gossip Girl unveils secrets from the rest of the cast too. Leighton Meester plays Blair Waldorf, the perfect, Ivy League-bound, white pearls kind of girl. Blair is, many believe, the definition of perfection. But Blair too has her dirty secrets too. She had sex with her boyfriend's best friend the night that they broke up.

According to Gossip Girl, Blair's best friend Serena was seen buying a pregnancy test. Sometimes the truth is even juicier than the gossip. With a single text message, people found out that little Ms. Perfect was not so perfect after all. Soon everybody began questioning Blair's perfection.

The characters in "Gossip Girl" seem perfect, untouchable, every teen's fantasy. Their behavior is immoral and deceitful, yet many teens who watch the show want to be-



Internet Photo

CATTY: The CW's latest glamour queen Leighton Meester

friend them or become them.

One look at the ad campaign and it's not hard to see why "Gossip Girl" is raising eyebrows.

"A nasty piece of work" says one racy billboard for the hit show. It shows two half-naked teenagers in a full out make-out session.

Another even more controversial billboard is the "OMFG" billboard. "Gossip Girl" is aimed at teens, and yet in the ad Nate Archibald (Chace Crawford) and Blake Lively are seen in an extremely erotic pose. The ad campaign, like the show, is edgy and controversial.

So what will happen next in this perfect teen world? Who will be the talk of Gossip Girl? What else can the show do to create a fantasy dream world for viewers? Tune to the CW Mondays at 8 and see what happens. Buzz is, the second season will be hotter than the first.

"Gossip Girl" has been described as trashy, daring and naughty, but that's not the half of it. This show is like an addiction: once you're hooked, there is no turning back. Watch it once and then watch out - you might be a "Gossip Girl" junkie too.



Internet Photo

SO PERFECT: "Gossip Girl's" cast leads the good life.

TECHNOLOGY

Chrome Is Bright

By Jason Castro
Editor In-Chief

Google may have struck gold with Chrome.

The internet search engine giant's new internet browser is faster and more efficient than Microsoft's Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Surfing the web will never be the same.

Surfing the web is a breeze using Chrome's bookmarks and the "Omnibox" search feature, a URL box that searches key words as you type. Chrome's interface is sleeker and simpler than Microsoft's Internet Explorer, although it does take getting use to.

The magic behind Chrome is tab browsing, which is significantly faster and safer. Here's how it works.

Each tab is its own separate browser. If the tab freezes, for example, it will not freeze the entire browser, but simply the malfunctioning tab. Close the tab and problem is solved. Each tab also works in a "sandbox style," prevent-



Internet Photo

SHINE ON: Chrome's Interface is simple and easy to use.

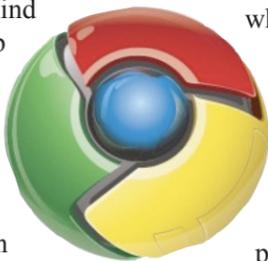
ing malicious software from installing itself.

Chrome periodically updates security and warns users when they attempt to visit a harmful site. Google notifies the owners of harmful sites

who may not be aware of the presence of the harmful software.

Chrome's minor drawback is that add-ons and plugs-ins available on other browsers, such as Mozilla Firefox, are not compatible with Google's new browser.

Chrome is free to download and is available at www.google.com/chrome.



27 point API bump for Poly

Conference, from Page 1]

Jack O'Connell and LAUSD Superintendent David Brewer announced last Thursday at a hastily-called press conference in Poly's Blue Gym.

"Poly has one of the largest API increases in the district with 27 points," said Brewer. "That's six points higher than the LAUSD average."

The Academic Performance Index (API) score for Los Angeles Unified schools rose by 21 points in 2007-08 while the statewide score increased 14 points.

LAUSD went from 662 last year to 683 in 2008. The state average was 742 this year from 728 in 2007. Poly's API was 635 from last year's 608.

The scores range from 200 to 1,000, with a performance target of 800.

"This is a good day for LAUSD," said O'Connell.

Schools in LAUSD have the highest improvement rates in the state of California.

Two measures are used to determine test scores results.

The Academic Performance

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

BOYS BASKETBALL			
VISITOR	LOCATION	DATE	F/S
Verdugo Hills	Poly	Monday, 22nd	2: 30 / 4: 00
Poly	Van Nuys	Wednesday, 24th	2: 30 / 4: 00

CROSS COUNTRY			
OPONENT	LOCATION	DATE	TIME
Verdugo Hills	Pierce College	Tuesday, 23rd	2: 30
Grant & Van Nuys	Pierce College	Tuesday, 30th	2: 30

FOOTBALL			
VISITOR	LOCATION	DATE	VARSITY
San Fernando	Poly	Friday, 19th	7: 00
Marshall	Poly	Friday, 26th	7: 00

GIRLS TENNIS			
VISITOR	LOCATION	DATE	VARSITY
Verdugo Hills	Poly	Monday, 22nd	2: 30
Poly	Van Nuys	Wednesday, 24th	2: 30

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL			
VISITOR	LOCATION	DATE	VARSITY
Poly	Verdugo Hills	Monday, 22nd	3: 45
Van Nuys	Poly	Wednesday, 24th	3: 45

COLLEGE REP VISITS			
DATE	COLLEGE	TIME	PLACE
20th	College + Career Fair	9: 00 a - 12: 00 p	Woodbury University
25th	UC San Diego	9 : 30 a	Poly

Visit Ms. Warman in the College Office

Index (API) reflects growth in student achievement from one year to the next. It is largely determined by results on the California Standards Tests and the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

The federal accountability system, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) focuses on whether or not students are scoring at the proficient level or above on the state assessments. AYP is the result of Congressional

legislation known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

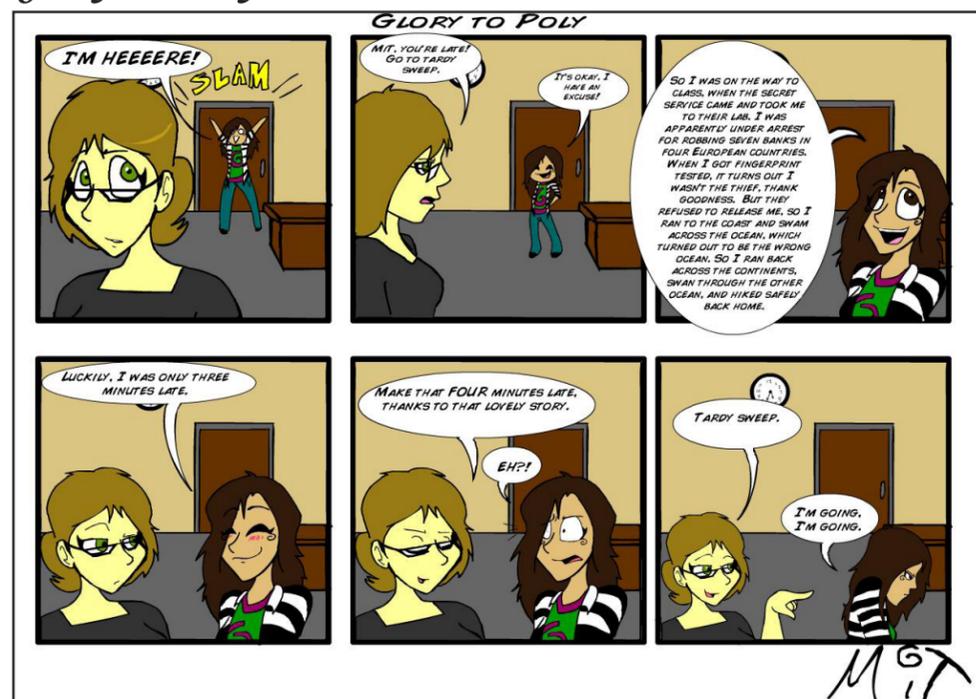
Other education officials attending the conference included District 2 director of secondary schools Maria Ochoa, District 2 superintendent Alma Pena-Sanchez, school board member Julie Korenstein and Poly interim principal Gerardo Loera.

Local media at the press conference included KTLA, KABC and the Daily News.

Pencilhead



Glory to Poly by Marina Turruelles



Sudoku Time!

9		4	2					
6		4						
	2	7						8
	3		2					
5	8		6	3		2	1	
			8				3	
	6					5	4	
						8		7
			9	5				2

Complete the grid so each row, column, and 3x3 box contains every digit 1 to 9. Good luck solving this month's puzzle!

Solution to September's puzzle

4	3	5	9	6	8	7	1	2
6	1	7	5	2	4	9	8	3
2	8	9	3	7	1	6	5	4
3	9	8	7	4	5	2	6	1
7	2	6	8	1	9	4	3	5
1	5	4	2	3	6	8	9	7
5	4	1	6	9	2	3	7	8
9	7	2	1	8	3	5	4	6
8	6	3	4	5	7	1	2	9

Poly Opener 61-8 Scoring Fest

Manriquez, Ervin rush for four of Poly's nine TD's in decisive road win at Monroe.

By Diana Jauregui
Staff Writer

Parrot running backs lit up Monroe's scoreboard for nine touchdowns Friday night in a dominating 61-8 season-opening win on the road.

A 27-yard scramble by sophomore running back Kevin Ervin on a double-reverse seven minutes into the first quarter put Poly in the scoring column for the first time in 2008. Senior quarterback Marco Manriquez followed with an 11-yard run to pick up another TD, capping a 51-yard drive. Poly was up by 13 at the quarter and 33 at the half.

Meanwhile, the Vikings offense sputtered and stumbled, unable to put together a scoring drive on the ground or in the air.

Ervin resumed his torrid pace as the second half opened, racing past Viking players like they were turnstiles on his way to a 90-yard kickoff return and score.

It was that kind of night for both

Ervin raced passed Viking players like they were turnstiles on his way to a 90-yard kickoff return.

teams.

Not surprisingly, Poly's stats were exceptional. Ervin had three touchdowns in six carries. Anthony Manriquez led all rushers with 120 yards and a touchdown on 10 carries. Marco Manriquez had an MVP night, running the team with precision while picking up 65 yards and one TD on six carries and passing for 97 yards.

For the game, the Parrots had 531 yards, 434 of those on the ground.

Viking quarterback Rodrigo Loredó struggled, making 19 of 35 passes for 153 yards. Loredó's final pass of the



Photo by Michael Obando

CARRYING: Junior William Zelaya rolls left for a first down against Monroe.

night yielded Monroe's only score. OPTIMIST that Parrot assistant coach

Poly is 1-0 and will play San Fernando at home on Friday. Monroe's loss was their second of the new season.

Athletic director Kim McEwen told the

Larry Ziebler knows more than a little bit about Viking head coach Ron Sayer.

The two were classmates at Poly in the '70s.

Matthews Takes Tennis Slot

By Diana Jauregui
Staff Writer

Q. How is tennis different than the usual high school sports of football, basketball and baseball?

Well tennis is individual. Instead of focusing on a team, I have to focus on an individual. I have to put my attention in one person only.

Q. Are tennis players in better shape than other athletes?

I wouldn't say better shape, I would say different shape. Tennis players need to have a quick burst, hand-eye coordination is fundamental, the ability to sprint quickly. A player needs to be powerful and in control of the game.

Q. How many players are on this year's squad?

We have 14 players and want two more. We have four seniors, three juniors, three sophomores and three freshmen. Ai-Ji Lee, Deborah Chang, Jessica and Diana Oleo, Elizabeth Martinez and Alejandra Ortega all played for us last year. Half of the players have never played before.

Q. Describe a typical practice.

We start out with a warm up that's mostly stretching. Monday Wednesday and Friday we start out with rallying, then we play a full match. Tuesday and Thursday we are in the weight room. We've been practicing for a month and a half.

Q. Do you demonstrate how to serve, return, play net, etc?

I show them how to do it, they get in line, practice, then we switch sides. Sometimes we play for points. For example, if it's not done right, I make them run a lap.

Q. Tell us about your players' tennis skills – good serve, good footwork, etc.?

The returners are the ones that have the most skills. Some struggle with the back hand. Diana Olmedo has a really good forehand and Elizabeth Martinez is good at volleying.

Q. Your top three singles?

1. Diana Olmedo, 2. Jessica Olmedo, 3. Ada Nuñez

Q. What are you doing to prepare your team for the match?

Getting them used to how to keep their own score and to keep their rally going. Make them believe they can win and also to keep teaching them the fundamentals.

Q. In girl's high school tennis, what factor usually determines the outcome of the match?

The serve, because if you can't serve, then you can't really play. Also, to hit the opponent's return, to be prepared for the opponent's response.

Q. Did Poly win any of its matches last year? What will be different this year?

Unfortunately, we won two games out of 10, so not much luck. This season I'm looking forward in winning a least half of the games.

Q. Tell us a little bit about you.



Photo by Michael Obando

COACH: Amy Matthews.

How long have you been at Poly?

It will be four years in January since I started at Poly. I've been teaching P.E. for five years, including a year at Granada Hills.

I'm a single mom, I'm working to get my Master's Degree and I play softball.

Q. Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Pasadena, I moved to Northridge when I was one year old. And I've been living there ever since. I've been in Northridge practically all my life.

Q. Where did you attend college, what was your major?

It will be easier if I tell you where I didn't go. I went to Pierce College for two years. Then I got a softball scholarship at Master College in San-

ta Clarita. Then I left to go to College of the Canyons. Now I'm back at Northridge finishing my masters.

Q. Did you play tennis in high school or college?

No, I played it for fun but I never really played it competitively. Only for fun.

Q. Do you have any experience coaching?

Well I coached kids in all kinds of sports. At Poly, I coached track for two years and softball three years. I coached basketball for two years at Little Youth Services and soccer too.

Q. How often do you play tennis now? Does a coach need to play well to coach well?

I play on weekends about four hours. Well I think a coach definitely needs to know how to play because you've got to know what you are doing. Every coach needs to be in good shape.

Q. Tell us a bit about your coaching style.

Well, tennis is different than softball; I have to focus on the strengths in each individual. I just tell my players that it's mostly about working hard and having fun.

Q. How will you turn this team into winners?

With hard work. I need the team to be competitive, they need to want it. And most important, dedication. The players need to give all of their best to win.

Poly Makes AYP, API

[Improved, from Page 1]

school and gives recognition for the hard work and achievement of Poly students, especially the removal from the P15.

"He frequently refers to Poly at meetings and cites some of our practices that work," said Loera.

Loera credits recently retired Poly Principal Dr. Janis-Fries Martinez for much of Poly's success.

"Most people would agree that Jan's the biggest change agent that made a difference at Poly," said Loera.

"Jan's name in the District is legendary," Brewer said at his Poly press conference.

Poly's use of a "four by four" schedule, in which students have four classes per mester instead of the usual six, has been a factor in the academic success of the past few years, according to Loera.

"With the four by four schedule, Parrots get four additional classes," he said, "making it sixteen classes a year instead of the usual twelve"

The Beyond the Bell program, Twilight Program and intersession were also cited by Loera as important factors to Poly's improvement.