

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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Politics '09

Obama To Close Guantanamo

By Angel Silva
Staff Writer

President Barack Obama, in his first week in office, ordered Guantanamo Bay's detention camp closed down by year's end and its 245 prisoners relocated. Where they will be placed is still undecided.

The executive order called for an immediate review of the detainees to determine their legal future.

In addition, the order calls for the closing of the detention camp at Guantanamo within a year, and also calls for an end to a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) anti-terrorist program that held suspects under secret custody for prolonged periods of time, sometimes up to months or years.

Amnesty International, a non-government human rights organization, expressed praise for Obama's action.

"Today's announcement is a sign that the U.S. government will reject, once and for all, the past U.S. policies that have caused so much damage to human rights and the rule of law," an Amnesty statement said.

For those unfamiliar with the camp's history, Guantanamo Bay is notorious for the inhumane tactics used to extract information from detainees. The most controversial tactic was "waterboarding," in which torturers douse a victim with water while chained to a board, giving the sensation of drowning.

Sleep deprivation, religious abuse, starvation and beatings were other methods approved by the U.S. under former president Bush.



Photo by Karina Muniz

FINE ART: Assistant principals John Ortega (left) and Dave Sanchez hold a recently appraised work by California regionalist Lee Blair, a Poly alumnus. The oil is titled "The Ranch Horses."

HIDDEN TREASURE

By Angel Silva
Staff Writer

LAUSD Curatorial and Collections Management Consultant Leslie Fischer paid Poly a visit late last year to catalog art pieces stored in Poly's auditorium. She was here as part of a \$100,000 Getty Museum grant to catalogue LAUSD's art collection.

Among the artworks she found was an oil painting, "The Ranch Horses," by renowned California regionalist Lee Blair. Though poorly preserved and cared for, the 23" x 27" oil was appraised in November of 2008 at \$15,000.

The painting has special meaning for Poly because Blair was a Poly graduate.

Born in Los Angeles in 1911, Blair grew up in Tropic (now Glendale) on Gardena Ave. He got into art at his old high school in nearby Redlands, where art teacher Mary Louise Arnold encouraged him to pursue art, as she had done earlier with renowned artists Phil Dike and Elmer Plummer.

In 1928, Blair transferred to Poly, then located in Los Angeles, as a sophomore. He graduated in 1930 and received a scholarship to attend the Chouinard School of Art.

In 1932, the Olympics were held in Los Angeles and 21-year old Blair submitted "Rodeo," a watercolor he had painted at the Los Angeles stockyards (for a brief period, the Olympics awarded a gold medal for art). Blair's painting took the gold for the U.S.

After winning the medal, Blair sold "Rodeo"

to Poly, and for years the painting hung in the library. But when Poly relocated to its present site in Sun Valley, "Rodeo" didn't come along. According to LAUSD officials, no one has seen it since.

These facts came to light when a Los Angeles Times reporter contacted the OPTIMIST last December asking for the whereabouts of the Blair painting.

Blair, who joined Disney Studios in 1937 as director of color and animation, distinguished himself there as a leader in animation and film production, working on "Pinocchio," "Bambi," and "Fantasia," for which he helped design the dancing alligators.

His groundbreaking commercials for early television included one for Maxwell House Coffee that featured an annoying coffeepot.

Blair was an influential artist who helped develop the California Regionalist style of watercolors and won several prestigious awards. He died in 1993.

As for "The Ranch Horses," assistant principal in charge of physical plant David Sanchez

[See Treasure, pg 2]

Poly Gets New AP

By Karina Cruz
Staff Writer

There's a new face at Poly. John Joseph Ortega, a former middle school teacher for nineteen years, is Poly's new assistant principal.

Ortega will replace AP Lourdes De Santiago. De Santiago will replace Vicky Damonte as AP at the Tenth Grade Center. Damonte will transfer to the former Byrd middle school at the end of January.

Born in Oxnard, California in 1946, Ortega attended Ramona High School in Riverside and the University of California at Davis, where he majored in International Relations, graduating in 1973.

After college, Ortega worked for a labor union for fifteen years negotiating contracts for workers and addressing workers' grievances.



Photo by Karina Muniz

AP: John Ortega

In 1988, Ortega joined the faculty at Griffith Middle School as a history teacher and was the Magnet Coordinator from 2004 to 2006.

Ortega then went back to college and received his Master's degree and administrator credential from California State University at Lutheran.

He was a student-testing specialist for LAUSD before becoming assistant principal at Mount Gleason Middle School.

Ortega transferred to Poly

[See New AP, pg 2]



Killer Karaoke

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Banditas With Guns

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Mozart Mod

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EDITORIAL

Real Challenges
for America

Rhetoric that is understandable and direct has always been hard to find.

Not anymore. Now there is Obama. His 18-minute inauguration speech on January 20 addressing the challenges facing the United States and the world was a lofty example of world-class rhetoric.

"Today our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred," said Obama. "Our economy is badly weakened...Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet."

These words directly summed up what the Bush Administration had failed to admit—the fact that the U.S. has fallen from the way that Bill Clinton's presidency left the United States.

Obama also addressed right-wing Republicans who opposed Obama's policies.

"Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions — who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans," stated Obama. "Their memories are short. For they have forgot-



ten what this country has already done; what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage."

The speech, which lasted about 20 minutes, was heard by over a million at the Capital and millions more worldwide via television, including 37.8 million in the U.S. alone.

Apart from addressing the issues of the U.S., Obama assured the worldwide audience of the fact that the country that had elected him would meet the set goals.

"I say to you that the challenges we face are real," said Obama. "They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time."

"But know this, America: They will be met."

THE OPTIMIST

JOHN H. FRANCIS POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL
12431 ROSCOE BLVD. SUN VALLEY, CA, 91352
URL: [HTTP://WWW.POLYHIGH.ORG](http://www.polyhigh.org)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jason Castro

POLITICAL EDITOR

Angel Silva

SPORTS EDITOR

Marvin Martinez

ART EDITOR

Karina Muniz

PHOTO EDITORS

Michael Obando

Stephanie Tejada

CARTOONISTS

Ricky De Guzman

Marina Turruelles

WRITERS

Jocelyn Alas, Karinina Cruz, Hazel Kasusky, Lizette Lopez, Marvin Martinez, Angel Silva, Belle Tadana

OPTIMIST ADVISOR

John Blau

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. 14 or Mr. Blau's box.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Poly's administration made a great effort to make the inauguration of Barack Obama available to all Parrots on January 20. Some students were inspired enough to write about what they saw and heard. Here are three of the best.

Ending the war

The inaugural speech given by Barack Obama is his promise of change. "We need to remake America." This is true, our economy is suffering. "We will be judged by what we build and not what we destroy." Meaning war will end because killing and destroying

is the least rewarding action. Renewing our government and thoughts is what will be remembered with honor and respect. To help out the world and the countries that rate us, I really do hope they take Obama's offer "We'll reach out but unclench your fist." Taking this offer will

not only change our nation but the world. I'm really excited for Obama's presidency. I don't doubt his judgment in any way.

Joe Martinez
Senior

Obama doesn't have a magic wand

I think Obama being elected and becoming president is a sign of change. His reign is the symbol other countries can see that the U.S. is changing. Obama has broken the double standard. He is the change this country has needed to advance and to prosper. With

him as our president we will with no doubt be a stronger and better country. It will take time to fix all the mistakes that have ruined this country. People might expect that the moment Obama becomes president he will wave his magic wand and all our problems will disap-

pear. We need to understand that this will take time. Our country has seen many bad times but with Obama as our president everything is about to change.

Andrea Avalos
Senior

"Everything Has Come Full Circle"

Barack Obama becoming president is inspiring. African Americans were brought to America as slaves and now an African American has become president. Everything has come around

full circle; no longer can a minority feel that he or she cannot accomplish something great. Barack Obama is our proof that no matter what race or financial background, anyone can be presi-

dent. Obama has opened the door to all minorities; everyone has an equal chance to become what they want.

Jennifer Fajardo
Senior

Blair
Painting

[Treasure, from pg 1]

wants the Blair hung in the library, where it can be enjoyed by all students.

Fischer agrees that LAUSD's art was acquired to be seen and appreciated by the school community

"We want them hung," Fischer said. "It's the saddest thing for me when they just languish in a closet at a school site."

Coming up in Part Two of the OPTIMIST series on Poly art is a look at more highly valued art works by well-known California artists hidden away at Poly.

Ortega Joins Poly

[New AP, from pg 1]

late last year.

"This is my first high school assignment and I'm looking forward to getting to know the staff and students at Poly," said Ortega.

Ortega says he is eager to become a part of the Poly community.

"Poly is a very big place," he said, "the largest school

I've worked at so far. Everyone seems to work well with each other and I hope to be a part of that," said Ortega.

Ortega has been married for 26 years. He and his wife Irene have two daughters, Yasmine, 38, and Sara, 32.

He is also a proud granddad of three boys, Robert, 4, Aiden, 1 and John, who is turning one year soon.

Be an OPTIMIST



SINGING PARROTS: from left, history teacher Chante Calzada, English teacher Lisa Blackwell and vocal coach Amy Showalter.



Photos by Michael Obando

Teachers Raise the Roof

Karaoke fundraiser features faculty fun.

By Marvin Martinez
Staff Writer

The house was rockin' during lunch Wednesday for the second annual teacher karaoke, held in the auditorium.

Among the performances was English teacher Evan Rabins getting down with Wild Cherry's 1976 hit "Play that Funky Music" and English teacher / librarian Lisa Blackwell soaring to new heights on Irene Cara's 1984 smash "Flashdance." Parrot principal Gerardo "Heavy G" Loera hip-hopped his way through "Mr. Big Stuff," with soul singers Jamille Kenion, Gigi Slezak and Leslie Wolfson providing the backup.

Well-known rock star, Vegas performer and

The teachers have a good time doing it and the students have a good time watching them.

campus celebrity Amy Showalter brought the house down with her stylings on "Lady Marmalade," the 1974 Patty Labelle charter, to close the show.

"A lot of our teachers are very talented," said 10th grade counselor Lori Combs, who organized and served as MC for the event, "and gladly volunteered. The teachers have a good time doing it and the students have a good time

watching them. Everything we do is to boost student achievement."

The purpose of the event was to raise money to buy breakfast for 10th graders who will be taking the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) in February.

"We did the same thing last year and it turned out great," Combs said. "We raised nearly \$1,000. The breakfast really seemed to help our students our last year so we were determined to do it again this year."

Attendance was down compared to last year, but the event still managed to raise over \$600.

"I think we needed to advertise more over the whole school," said Combs.

AMERICA'S OLDEST UNIVERSITY

By Karinina Cruz
Staff Writer

Harvard is a liberal arts college and America's oldest. Located in Cambridge, MA, it is ten minutes from Boston.

"It's a great place," said representative Benhur Gomez. "It's a metropolitan area with a lot of historical significance," said Gomez. "Only downside to the West Coast area is the cold weather, but it is readily fixable."

Campus life:

All first year students must live on campus, where the student housing is modeled on that of Oxford University in England.

"Students at Harvard live together and learn together," said Gomez. "An integral part of learning at Harvard is at midnight, when friends are debating about government and other topics."

The school works hard to assign roommates with the same economic backgrounds or other similarities. Upper classmen can choose their dorm mates. There's a lot of diversity happening.

Academics and Extra-curricular:

Graduate students serve as residential tutors who are ready to aid students with their studies.

"If Harvard does not offer a specific class in which students are interested, they will bring a professor to come and teach it," said Gomez. "As long as there is one student willing to learn that specific course, Harvard will find a way for them to take it."

Students can also cross-register at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and there is a study abroad program that has grown increasingly popular.

Harvard offers 3,500 courses and most classes have below 20 students. The largest concentration of classes is in Economics and Government.

With over 400 clubs and 41 intercollegiate teams, Harvard has the largest number of teams among other colleges.

"Harvard is an academic-oriented school which will not only teach students but give them tools to succeed," said Gomez.

Admission:

85% of applicants are good candidates but admission is not just based on academics. Other factors include letters of recommendation, extra-curricular activities and community service.

Students must take the SAT Reasoning, the SAT Subject tests and the ACT test. Recommended test scores are 600-800 on each portion of SAT reasoning (Critical Reading, Math and Writing), but most Harvard freshmen score in the 700-800 range.

"We don't compare GPA's of applicants. What we look at is the rigor of the classes that they take," said Gomez. Advanced Placement classes are considered more rigorous.

REPRESENTATIVE:

Benhur Gomez, a sophomore at Harvard, is a 2007 Canoga Park grad.

Financial Aid:

If a family's annual income is less than \$60,000, then the student pays no tuition. Students from middle class families, those making less than \$100,000 a year, pay at least 10% of tuition. About 70% of freshmen get financial aid.

"We bring the best people that we can have. We have a blind based application process in which we don't know if the student is applying for financial aid," said Gomez. "We only know that after we accepted him already."



Photo by Michael Obando

ART EXHIBIT

Who: Bold Caballeros Y Noble Banditas

What: Revolutionary art and the evolution of Mexican pop culture

Where: Autry Museum 4700 National Heritage Way

When: Now - May 10, 2009

Revolutionary Art

By Jocelyn Alas
Staff Writer

The two-tone brown tile walkway of the Autry National Center of the America West leads visitors into a quiet, overly air conditioned entrance hall. So the intensely yellow wall boldly proclaiming "Bold Caballeros y Noble Banditas," comes as a bit of a surprise. Happily, this exhibit of Latino culture and myth, from the Revolution through the golden age of Mexican cinema, delivers plenty of visual excitement.

The goal of the exhibit is to offer an authentic experience of the Hispanic culture, strongly influenced by its heroes, los banditos. Amidst the Mexican Revolution and growing pride in the Latino community, no one filled the need for heroes better than these radicals. Merely standing in the midst of the exhibit brings about this experience of Latino culture. The warm colors of the walls emit a sense of passion and determination, but more importantly, the enigmatic, composed verve that is the Latino attitude. Perfectly placed background music enhances the experience, while four audio sets are available that sing the praises of the glorious bandits. Soft lighting perfectly highlights the exhibit's nuances.

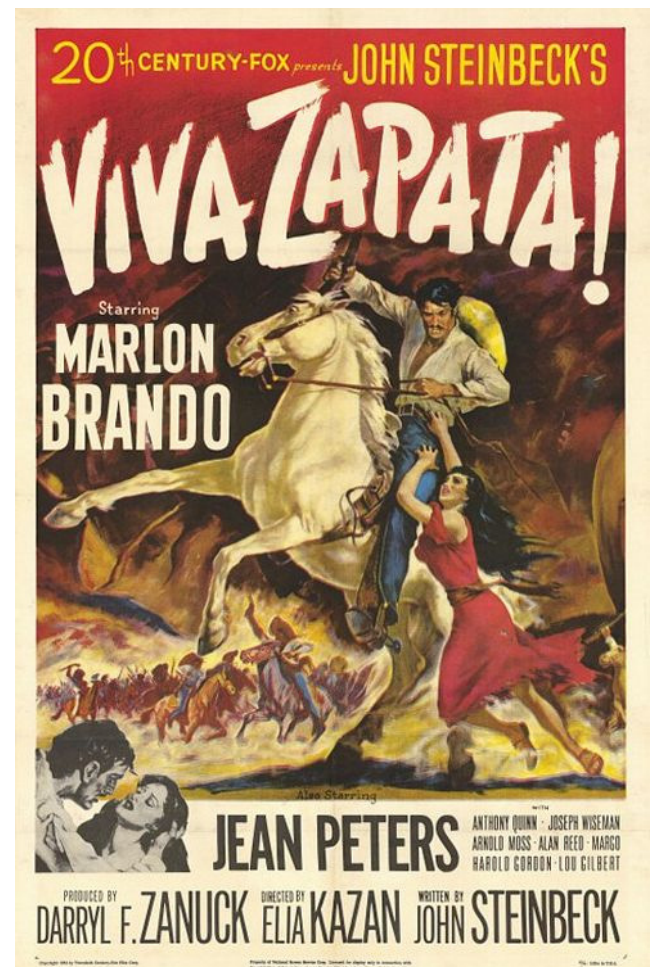
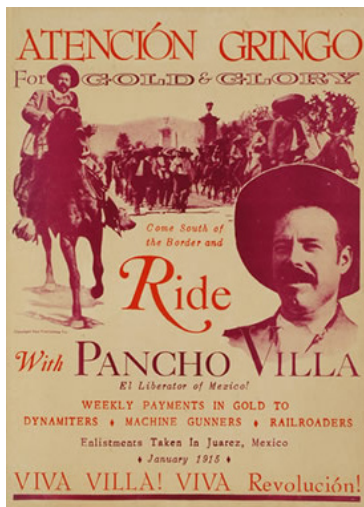
The mix of fictional characters and real events provides a genuine feeling of a Latino upbringing. Childhood heroes such as the Cisco Kid, the Bandit Queen, and Zorro line the walls alongside toys, comics, posters, and all sorts of other memorabilia cherished by children. The wonder of these Hispanic idols was never reserved for only the boys. The incredible Maria Felix proved

in her time that gun slinging was not just a boy's sport. She, along with Che, Zapata and Pancho Villa, created a feeling of revolution. The exhibit also includes more contemporary art inspired by the same influences.

Around the corner, El Dia de Los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, presents an authentic depiction of all the beloved festivities. The holiday itself brings the living and the dead together in celebration of those alive, past and present. The celebration is hugely important in Latin-American countries, where family and heritage take center stage.

Against indigo walls stood a small, elaborately painted puppet theatre, with six wooden puppets available for a hands-on experience. But the epitome of El Dia de los Muertos lay in the altar. With its intricate and pure decorations, the display invites the viewer to stand back and let its grandeur sink in.

The entire exhibit exudes the folklore of the classic bandits and heroes that still speaks to today's Latino community. The exhibit continues at the Autry through May 10. All of the exhibit's descriptions are in English and Spanish.



Internet Photos



The Kids Are Alright



Q & A

Q: When did you start getting into this scene? Who inspired you?

I started getting into this when I was in 10th grade. Pin-up models Bernie Dexter and Dayna Delux were my inspiration because of their beauty.

Q: What kind of music do you listen to?

Psychobilly, it's a morph between Punk and Rockabilly.

Q: Have you seen any of Elvis Presley movies?

Not many, but I have seen "The Notorious Betty Paige" and other movies like that with my friends.

Q: What inspires you to dress the way you do? Why?

From the music I listen to. I live it in my music.

Q: Where do you get your clothing?

I buy most of my clothes from Forever 21 and thrift stores.

Q: How do you put yourself together before school?

I just come up with things, mix and match, that kind of stuff.

Q: How did you and your friends meet each other?

It all kind of branches out. I have a friend I met in 10th grade and she has a friend who has a friend who also has a friend, etc. We all just hang out at lunch.

Q: What kind of shows do you go to?

The last time I've been to one was about two years ago called "The Hollywood Showdown" with a lot of bands playing. I would go to sort of underground concerts before, but not anymore because they are getting pretty lame.



All Photos & Interview by Karina Muniz



Giant snakes attack unwary travelers and Oompa-Loompa-like creatures capture princesses.



Internet Photo

Mozart Goes Modern

This is not your father's "Magic Flute."

By Hazel Kasusky
Staff Writer

For an opera first performed in 1792, Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte," or "The Magic Flute,"

has come a long way.

Using British music director Peter Hall's 1993 production as their source, the LA Opera offers a decidedly modern take on the classic "prince-rescues-princess" storyline. There are giant snakes that attack unwary travelers and Oompa-Loompa-like creatures that capture princesses. Dramatic costumes and mild nudity look to capture the attention of audiences saturated with "Dark Knight" and "Iron Man."

The opera, now on stage at the Dorothy Chandler, begins with an ascending overture of cellos and violins. An illuminated pyramid is set onstage as a large, rainbow colored snake hovers over the hero, Prince Tamino. The setting is ancient Egypt.

Tamino has fallen in love with the Queen of the Night's daughter, Princess Pamina. Heroine Pamina is the captive of Sarastro, a powerful magician and Tamino is determined to rescue her. Tamino is accompanied by Papageno, a frivolous bird catcher searching for true love. Three ladies of the Queen of the Night give

Tamino and Papageno a magic flute and magic bells as protection. Throughout their journey, these magical instruments prove useful against wild beasts.

Thunder and lightning resound as the pyramid cracks open and a villain enters. The Queen of the Night then makes her first appearance as she descends from the ceiling on a star.

"Flute" also features Soprano Queen of the Night singing the oft-heard aria "Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen," or "Hell's vengeance boils in my heart," reaching that F note six octaves above middle C.

"Flute's" costumes add a cartoonish element to the production. Beasts include a penguin with a crocodile's head and an ostrich with a giraffe's head. Villainous slaves are overweight dough-boys with some green skin condition. Sarastro, the magician, is clothed in elegant golden robes and a purple hairdo. Papageno prances on the stage with feathers all over his body and panpipes around his neck.

With its eye-catching color and off-beat humor, this "Flute" is far from ordinary. But its message about the controlling nature of humans remains serious and strong.



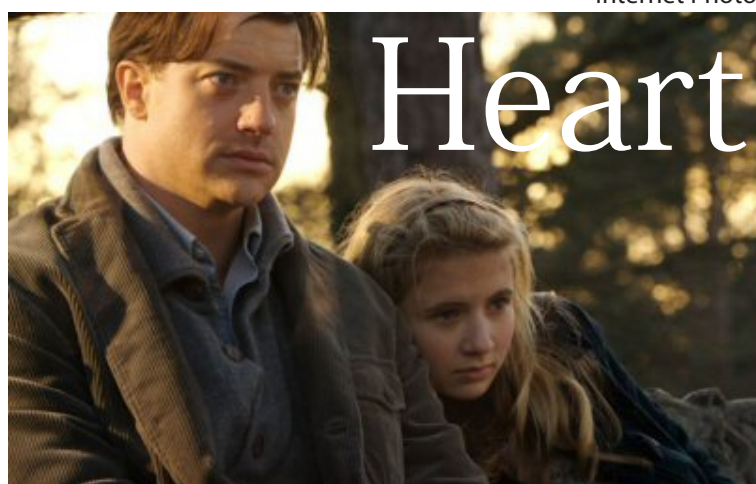
Internet Photo

By Hazel Kasusky
Staff Writer

When a book is enjoyable, it's said that the characters leap out of the pages. "Inkheart," based on a bestselling book by Cornelia Funke, dares the audience to rethink this idea.

When book binder Mortimer Folchart, played by Brendan Fraser, discovers he has a special gift for bringing fictional characters to life, he accidentally traps his wife Resa (Sienna Guillory) into a book co-incidentally titled "Inkheart." Mo's daughter, Meggie Folchart (Eliza Bennett) insists on helping her father rescue Resa.

Not only does Mortimer, or Mo, trap Resa into the book, but he reads three "Inkheart" characters from the Inkworld



Internet Photo

Heart of Ink

Book binder Mortimer Folchart, played by Brendan Fraser, discovers he has a special gift for bringing fictional characters to life

into our world.

Two of the characters wreak havoc in this world, but the third, fire-eater Dustfinger (Paul Bennett) isn't satisfied with this world. Dustfinger's homesickness drives him into selfish attempts to be read back into "Inkheart."

Farid, a thief played by Rafi Govron, read out from "One

Thousand and One Arabian Nights," tags along with Dustfinger and Mo. Farid adapts to the new world and hopes to learn a "Dragon Breath" fire trick from Dustfinger.

Elinor Loredan, a bookworm played by Helen Mirren, owns an immense library that took years to put together. In the film's library scenes, excerpts

from novels are whispered at random by invisible voices. "Inkheart" is clear evidence of author Cornelia Funke's passion for books.

Mo reads out the "Inkheart's" creatures, who enrich the scenery with scattered unicorns, flying monkeys, ticking crocodiles and a Minotaur. And literary allusions to other

fantasy novels like L. Frank Baum's "The Wizard of Oz" are scattered throughout the film.

"Inkheart" promotes reading in a non-nagging way. The film attempts to revive the audience's thirst for reading by reminding them to turn their book right side up and exercise their imagination.

Interview

Losing Is Not An Option

The OPTIMIST recently caught up with varsity coach Tremeka Batiste for her thoughts on the Lady Parrot season so far. Here's what she said.

Q. In your first six league games, you're averaging 68 points a game and your opponents 33. That's better than 2-1. Are you playing exceptionally well or are your opponents over-matched? Give us some stats to back you up.

It's a combination. My girls are doing what they've been trained to do, and it's paying off. The teams in our league just aren't experienced enough to handle it. We've even had to pull back on fast breaks to prevent the score from getting too out of hand. In our game against Van Nuys, the referee tried to slow us down by giving us 4 minutes instead of 8 to play the third quarter. I've never seen that happen before. The referees have also interfered by stopping two of my players on two separate occasions from shooting their last free throws because they said they weren't necessary, we didn't need the points.

Q. Has the team met your expectations? Any players that seem to have matured or greatly improved since last year?

The team is meeting my expectations. Their fundamentals are solid, and they are in sync. Four of my starters have evolved into better players since last year.

Fabiola Romero is one of the reasons we are doing so well. She has blossomed into a very reliable player. Faby was so inconsistent last year that I never knew what to expect. Now she is vital to the team's success. She consistently rebounds and scores, and her defense is always on-point. Faby is one of my go-to girls when we need to shut down a particular player, which is why she is Fabylicious.

Miranda Acosta also stepped up her game. She went from a princess on the court to a warrior. Miranda is not afraid to shoot or get physical. Her hustle has kept the ball in our hands a number of times.

Christine Hernandez has finally accepted her role as a power player, and she's not afraid to make a statement. She is our leading rebounder and averages 11.8 points per game.

Crystal Cristales' story is similar to Faby's. She was inconsistent last year but



Photo by Michael Obando

ON THE MOVE: Lady Parrot leading scorer Sara Villanueva looks for an opening in Arleta's defense during Poly's 76-39 win over the Mustangs on Wednesday.

has matured into quite a player. She's averaging 13.5 points a game, and she's my other go-to girl for defense. When she's on, Crystal is dangerous. She's smooth like butter well beyond the 3 point line.

A highlight this season that deserves mentioning is Sara Villanueva dropping 35 points against North Hollywood. It was a tough and physical game. But Sara was like the sun shining on the court; she was untouchable.

Q. Can you finish the regular season undefeated, barring injuries?

We should end our regular season undefeated in league. If we do lose a league game, it will be our own fault. Over confidence and lack of respect for our opponents will be our downfall if we're not careful.

Q. How do you keep the other players from relying too much on Sara to win

ball games? Who are your role players and what roles do they play?

Sara is the heart of the team, but she's not the entire team. She sets the tempo of the game and does the most scoring, averaging 19 points per game. But like the body, our team needs other components to thrive. We are a good defensive team, and it takes five players on the court working as one unit to accomplish that.

Offensively, if the game is tight and we need a basket, Sara is our obvious choice because she has proven her reliability. However, she is not the only one who can hit key baskets. Faby, Crystal, Christine and Natalie Barerra have all done it this season. Sara is a phenomenal player, and other teams recognize this. They will double team her, thinking it will slow us down, but that's when Sara's teammates let the other teams know that they too are a force to be reckoned with.

The Batiste Bio

Batiste was born in New Orleans, but has spent most of her life in California. She played basketball all four years at Louisville High and got her BA in English from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo in 1993.

In 2001, Batiste earned a Master's degree in Multicultural Education from National University and became a National Board Certified teacher in 2003.

Batiste got her first high school coaching job when Poly hired her as the girls' frosh/soph basketball coach in January 2004. By November, Batiste had been named head coach. When Batiste took over the program, the girls' varsity team had only won two games in the previous season. The Lady Parrots finished their first season under Batiste at 13-9 and reached the Invitational quarter finals.

Batiste is 69-45 as head coach.

Q. Coaching philosophy?

My philosophy is simple. I only have four rules, but I take them seriously.

1. Defense, defense, defense.
2. Practice how you expect to play in the game.
3. Go hard or go home.
4. Be a class act.

Q. Comments on your current roster?

A. This has been my favorite team by far because there has been no drama. Everyone gets along, and the girls are all fantastic. I have loved every minute of this season, and I'll probably be a mess when it's over because I won't get to spend everyday with such an amazing group of people. I'll be in tears right after that last buzzer goes off. I love this team dearly. They are TBA!

Q. What do you do when you're not working?

Since I have to be so serious at work, I like to spend my free time joking around and having fun. I'm a silly person who likes to laugh. My friends and I often get together and have Rock Band parties. I can't sing, but I can still work the mic.

Most of my free time is spent with my son. He's either playing football or baseball, so my schedule is usually quite busy. I love playing catch with him. I'll even join in when he plays tag football with his friends. I'm not afraid to take down a nine-year-old.



Photo by Michael Obando

JUMPER: Sharpshooter Sara Villanueva gets all net during the Lady Parrots 76-39 defeat of the visiting Mustangs of Arleta.

Routine Win for Lady Parrots

By Marvin Martinez
Staff Writer

What happens when the 1st place team in the East Valley league goes up against 5th place? Nothing that startling.

The Lady Parrots handed visiting Arleta a 76-39 spanking Wednesday, the closest they've come to breaking their season record of 82 points in one game.

The victory was Poly's sixth league win.

Arleta led 3-2 in the opening seconds on a three-pointer, but the joy was short lived.

Poly was up 21-8 after one and 41-19 at the break.

Senior Christine Hernandez's seven steals helped the Lady Parrots quickly turn them into points and effectively kept the ball away from Arleta.

The Lady Parrots were led by playmaker Sara Villanueva, who had 21 points and was seven for seven from the free throw line. Senior Crystal Cristales had 18 and Hernandez added 12,

totaling nearly 70% of the team's final score.

Sophomore Tiffany Mejia also had a hot hand, making three threes in as many attempts.

Though Poly only had five turnovers, head coach Tremeka Batiste wasn't satisfied.

"We had a good offense," Batiste said, "but we need to build more on our defense. We shouldn't have let Arleta score 39 points. Defense is the main thing I stress during the second half."

Poly (14-7, 6-0) plays Grant (3-12, 3-3) Friday. Arleta (4-7, 2-4) gets the Lancers on Feb. 2.

Late-breaking scores

Lady Parrots Pummel Grant

Different opponent, same ending.

The latest victim: Grant. The latest drubbing: 71-32

The East Valley League-leading Lady Parrots brought the heat Friday night as their offense continued to roll. It was Poly's 15th win of the season and seventh league win, where they are undefeated.

The two hot-shooting senior guards, Sara Villanueva and Crystal Cristales, had 20 and 19 points respectively, nearly half the team's total.

Waiting in the wings is Verdugo Hills, fresh off a lopsided 73-17 ransacking of Van Nuys. Poly scored a season-high 82 points against the Dons the last time the two met, however, so fireworks are expected.

League Leader Grant Clips Parrots

Poly suffered its second loss of the season to Grant and its sixth loss in its last seven games, taking a 67-50 thumping Friday night on the road. The Lancers handed the Parrots a 23-point loss, 59-36, on January 12 at Poly.

Grant dominated the rematch, winning every quarter but the fourth and getting double-digit scoring from Wayne Robinson (18), Jared Garner (14) and Mike Agazaryan (11)

Parrot junior Arthur Rivera led Poly with 10 points, while junior guard Oscar Aguilar added 7. Eleven Parrots got on the scoreboard.

Grant sits atop the East Valley League with a 6-1 record, while the Parrots are in sixth place, their only win coming over last-place Canoga Park (0-6).

Compiled by Marvin Martinez

Parrots Persist in 35-25 win

By Marvin Martinez
Staff Writer

Well, there's good news and bad news concerning Poly's Friday night home game against Canoga Park.

The bad news: Poly only managed 35 points all night.

The good news: the visitors scored 25.

The low-scoring victory was Poly's first East Valley League win of the season after three straight losses.

"The defense was good," said Parrot head coach Dave Bonino. "We've been playing good D all year."

Poly's offense, however, was another matter. The Parrots converted only 18 of 45 shots, a scimpy 40%.

"We had 23 turnovers," Bonino said, "that's why we didn't score."

Poly led 14-5 in the second but the Hunters clawed their way back and cut the Parrot lead to four at the half, 18-14.

Canoga took a brief one-point lead at 21-20 in the third before Poly senior guard Oscar Garcia drained a three pointer. The Parrots, up by only a basket after three, used a 10-point fourth to close out the Hunters, who scored two points in the period.



Photo by Karina Muniz

X's and 0's: Head coach Dave Bonino talks it over with his players during a timeout in the contest with visiting Canoga Park.

Garcia had 10 points on the night to lead the Parrots, making four of six shots, two of those three-pointers.

Bonino also liked sophomore Erick Martinez's effort

"He was very active out there," Bonino said. "He ran around like a wild man chasing after the ball. He gives me a lot of effort. If he cuts down on turnovers, he'll get more production."

Martinez, who played on this year's football squad, had 11 re-

bounds, four steals and four turnovers on the night.

Looking ahead, Bonino said his team still has lots of work to do.

"We need to get ahead of Canoga Park and Arleta to make the playoffs," Bonino said. "We need to win our next few games. Otherwise, it's only going get tougher getting into the playoffs."

Poly (4-19, 1-4) will play Arleta (1-11, 0-3) Wednesday while the Hunters (1-8, 0-3) travel to Grant (9-11, 4-1) next.