

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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SERVING THE POLY COMMUNITY SINCE 1913

NOVEMBER 2010

Chips Off the Old Block

This year's Aca Deca squad may be better than last year's.

By Rosa Hernandez
Staff Writer

Parrot Academic Decathlon Coach Brian Block, who led last year's squad to the state competition, says this year's team may be better.

"We have a very competitive team that has an excellent chance of returning to state if they study very, very hard," Block said.

Block said this year's team is more consistent, top to bottom, than any team in his seven years of coaching.

"We have at least five students capable of reaching 7,000 total points," Block said. "Only two of last year's team scored this high, and we made it to state. So I am very encouraged at this point."

Block expects Poly to do well at a practice competition for seventy LAUSD school slated for Saturday, November 13.

"This competition is important for diagnosing a team's strengths and weaknesses," Block said, "and lets you know how you compare against other schools."

In last year's scrimmage, Poly had the ninth best score overall and finished ninth at the actual competition as well.

Many schools set up practice scrimmages prior to and after the "real" scrimmage. Poly finished second to Franklin High School in a practice scrimmage held a few weeks ago.

"We finished much higher than the other schools in the competition," Block said.

Block said the team set a goal to

[See Block, pg 6]



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

COACH: Varsity coach Fred Cuccia, with senior linebacker Myron McFarland, led Sun Valley Poly to its only city title in 1990 during his second year.

Parrots RIF'd

Twelve clerical staff positions to go December 1.

By Joel Hinojosa
Editor in Chief

Poly will lose 12 of 22 clerical positions as part of a new round of LAUSD budget cuts, according to Principal Gerardo Loera.

"We have three clerical staff losing their position altogether," Loera said, "and the rest are being transferred. We will have 10 remaining clerical positions."

The cuts are permanent and more are expected, Loera said.

"LAUSD will reduce staffing levels by an additional 1,600 next year when the federal stimulus money runs out," Loera said.

Poly clerical staff will be transferred mainly to District 2, with a few in District 1. All will stay in the Valley.

Cuts and transfers go into effect December 1.

"The technology position will be transferred to Beaudry," Loera said. "Poly is scheduled to receive a transfer from Gloria High School."

Poly will no longer have a full-time textbook person.

"A lot of this is still being played out," Loera said.

The attendance and counseling offices will each have two personnel.

"We are losing a lot of custodial workers as well," Loera said. "Some of this is because we are not a year-round school."

Loera said Parrot students, staff and faculty will have to clean up for themselves because there won't be as many custodial people.

[See RIF'd, pg 6]

COMING HOME TO HOMECOMING

Members of the 1990 Poly varsity football team made Homecoming a special event.

By Vanessa Marroquin
Staff Writer

In 1990, a band of Parrot varsity football players won Sun Valley Poly's first and only City Title with an easy 28-8 win over Lincoln High School.

Twenty years later, many of them came home to celebrate both their triumphant season and today's varsity squad during Poly's Homecoming on Friday.

Various members of the team, including 1990 head coach Fred Cuccia, attended a second period pep rally, participated in the pre-game parade and watched Poly defeat Verdugo 68-21 from a special area to the right of the grandstand specially arranged for them.

After all, with twenty years behind them since their title run, the 1990 varsity squad had plenty to talk about.

"We were mostly from the baseball team," said 1990 right guard Jake Loveridge. "We just all got together and said 'let's win this thing this year.' We were all athletic. We just had to learn to play football together."

Spirit Week kicked off with ninth grade council's Disneyland theme. Sophomore council had a masquerade theme. Junior Council's Despicable Me was Wednesday. Senior council got scary with a Polywood Fear Fest.

Friday's Pep Rally featured merengue dancing, Lady Gaga's upbeat music and Aztec dancing from senior Maria Luz Silva. Jasmine Ramos sang the national anthem.

Clubs included Something New, the Multicultural Club, Band, ROTC, and AcaDeca.

Sports at the Pep Rally included Football, Cross Country, Volleyball, Tennis, Drill and Cheer.

Parrots voted for seniors Cindy Tagle and Oscar Garcia for homecoming court. Voting was done online again this year.

And the Class of 1990 football team was featured in a slideshow recognizing their championship run.

Twenty-one floats were featured in the parade before the varsity game. Band, ROTC, Color Guard, Byrd Middle School the Future Parrots, Principal Gerardo Loera with children Alina and Diego, Grand Marshals Larry and wife Maria Ziehler, Homecoming Court, ninth grade council's Disneyland float, tenth grade council's masquerade float, junior council's Yellow Muniions float,

senior council's Polywood Fear fest float, G.S.A, Cross Country, Play Production, CSF and their Pirate Float, Drill, Multicultural Dance Club, Soft Ball, Cheer and Class of 1990 participated.

Soft Ball won best float based on Deadmau5.

For more on the 1990 season and players, see page 4.



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

SCHOLAR: Principal Gerardo Loera awards medals to junior Gustavo Sanchez for high API scores.

Parrots receive medals for high CST test scores.

By Joel Hinojosa
Editor in Chief

Every year Parrots take a standardized test called the CST and months later receive their test results or API (Academic Performance Index) scores. And so it goes.

Not any more.

This year, students who did well on the 2009 test got a medal and a handshake from Poly Principal Gerardo Loera, who visited classrooms last week with a boxful of gold, silver and bronze medals and a list of smart Parrots.

"The idea for awarding students medals was my idea and it was for recognizing students for their achievements," said Loera.

Students received gold medals for scoring Advanced on the annual high stakes test, silver medals for a Proficient score and bronze for Basic. Medals were specific to the discipline, including English, Math, Biology, etc.

"I continue to be very proud of the Poly students. I believe that they can prove that more. I want them to understand the significance of their improvements."

Let's Get Physical

Skateboarding as part of Poly's PE curriculum? Why not?

By Mariana Santos
Staff Writer

Skateboarding as a PE class has been approved in 500 schools in 31 states. More than a million students have used the program.

Could Poly be next?

"I would teach skateboarding in a heart beat," said Poly PE instructor Chuck Schwal. "I think it would help kids a lot because I think if you were a skater you would rather skate than do the regular PE exercises and it would provide kids with more freedom and make PE a fun experience for them."

Parrot Jose Larios from the 9th Grade Center agrees. "I would like to have skateboarding class because we

could have more activities, not just running," said Larios.

Skateboarding is rapidly becoming part of the "New P.E.," which stresses alternative, individual and non-competitive activities that appeal to students who aren't necessarily natural athletes. Schools across America are dropping dodgeball for rock climbing and skateboarding.

Douglass Elementary in Boulder, Colorado was the first school in the nation to adopt skateboarding as part of its PE curriculum. Former pro snowboarder and longtime skater Eric Klassen taught the class and helped develop the curriculum to teach basic skateboarding skills in a noncompetitive environment.

Klassen and his former P.E. teacher, Richard Cendali,

[See Pysical, pg 6]



Photo provided by Maria Zieler

All the News that Fits

The OPTIMIST had the story of Poly's city title.

HISTORY - page 4



Photo provided by Toby Bachenheimer

First Time, Last Respects

Bachenheimer visits the town her father and grandparents knew.

HISTORY - page 5

OPINION

EDITORIAL

ELECTION 2010

Do Democrats owe their wins to Hispanic voters?

Governor-elect Jerry Brown beat Republican Meg Whitman with the help of 64 percent of Hispanic voters.

Latino voters drawn to the polls because of the governor's race went lopsidedly for Brown, 73% to 18%.

Latinos represent 8% of the national electorate, but 22% of California's.

Sen. Barbara Boxer drew 65 percent of the California Hispanic vote for her win over Carly Fiorina.

Democrats ran away with their big counties. Brown carried Los Angeles County, home to 25% of the state's voters, by 31 points, giving him almost 60% of his lead.

Rudy Lopez, political director for the Campaign for Community Change - which helped mobilize Hispanic voters - said: "We

have invested heavily in infrastructure, new organizations on the ground, training and capacity building. We will now turn over that infrastructure to focus on 2012. This is just the beginning."

In 1994, Republicans in California picked up five of seven statewide offices, including the governorship, and adding legislative seats. This time, Democrats picked up a legislative seat despite Republican gains nationally, and were waiting for uncounted ballots to see whether they lost a congressional seat or two.

The difference between then and now rests on the changes in the California electorate.

California in 1994 was more white and proportionately less Democratic than it is today, thus more similar to the country today.

California Goes Rogue

While much of the nation shunned Democratic candidates, California did just the opposite.

Californians bucked the national trend on Tuesday by voting mostly Democrats into office.

Republican Meg Whitman spent \$140 million in her campaign for governor but lost to Democrat Jerry Brown, who captured 54% of the vote to Whitman's 41%.

"You know there's an old Beatles song," said LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, "and it says money can't buy me love. In California, it can't buy you an election either."

Governor-elect Brown, who will have to manage the state's money wisely, agreed.

"Just throwing money at things doesn't necessarily solve them," Brown said. "Throwing a lot of ads on the TV in the middle of the summer may not make a lot of sense."

Brown, who had a considerably smaller campaign war chest, waited til just before the election to spend his funds and the wait apparently worked.

Whitman, former EBay CEO, saw the process differently.

"I was new to politics," said Whitman. "What my investment in this campaign has done is give California voters a choice."

Another former CEO Republican woman, H-P's Carly Fiorina, also lost. Democrat Barbara Boxer won 52% of the votes to

Fiorina's 43% of votes in the run for Senator.

"The Republican brand name is still a tremendous liability," said Allan Hoffenblum, a former Republican consultant. "People of color are just turned off by the Republican Party."

Californians said no to marijuana legalization, voting down proposition 19 56% to 43%.

The Los Angeles Times called the proposition "poorly thought out, badly crafted and replete with loopholes and contradictions."

Proposition 23, which called for the suspension of California's "Global Warming Act of 2006" lost 41% yes to 58%. The proposal would have stopped regulation on green house gases until California's unemployment rates dropped to 5.5% or lower.

Across the nation, 37 Governors races, 37 U.S. Senate Races, 435 U.S. House Races and dozens of ballot measures and initiatives were decided Tuesday.

The number of governorships up for election was more than the nation has ever seen in a single year.

Six thousand, one hundred eighteen state legislative seats were chosen in 46 states.

In most states, newly-elected governors and state legislators will draw congressional district boundaries that will stand for the next decade.

LETTERS

NEWBIES

I've still been reading the OPTIMIST online and I'm glad to see our successors seem to be doing just fine. Around 10 people on staff is a nice small number to work with.

I recognize about half the names so by now I'm sure you've time to show any newcomers the ropes and taught them what they need to know.

The OPTIMIST has to win its 5th ASPA award in a row this coming year. Best of luck to your new staff.

- Marvin Martinez

Marvin Martinez, class of '10, was Sports Editor and staff writer of the OPTIMIST in 2009.

LATEST EDITION

Just wanted to congratulate you on your latest edition of the OPTIMIST. :)

Looks great!

- Jason Castro

Jason Castro, Poly '10, was Editor in Chief of the OPTIMIST for two years and won two ASPA awards.



Photo by Alejandro Cadena

HOMECOMING

Homecoming was very stressing. I loved it but then again I hated it...I'm a senior obviously I was gonna hate it, in a good way. It's my last. I cried but they were tears of joy. Especially when I saw the 1990 champions I thought to myself, Damn that's exciting. That whole week was very fun I've always enjoyed spirit week. Too bad this time is my last. To tell you the truth I even cried myself to sleep that night because I know I will never do that again.

- Alessa Ordonez, 12

Homecoming was amazing. I had never witnessed so much school pride until I came here to Poly. The pep rally was great entertainment. Not only was it super fun, but you get to see what other students are participating in. The varsity game was better than great because we kicked some Don butt.

- Oscar Velazquez, 12

From the Halloween-themed week from our councils, to the pep rally, to obliterating Verdugo (boo!), Homecoming was all absolutely amazing. Walking down the hall, I could feel the spirit just emanating from everyone. The pep rally was a great way to get everyone pumped for the game. Who's house P's house.

- Robert Dillworth, 12

Well my side of homecoming was kind of weird. As a regular student who is not involved in any Poly activities, I would take it as an average day at this school. It's cool that they do all this but I really didn't get excited. The big game is just as all the others except that they have a small parade and a bunch of crazy hyped up teenagers jumping up and down for their school. Maybe if Poly actually tried I might put some interest to their events.

- Antonio Venegas, 12

The parade before the game. Absolutely astonishing. Wonderful zombie float by senior council. To bring back the 1990 championship team was awesome and then the big win vs. Verdugo. What a week. Makes me proud to be a Parrot.

- Nelson Davila, 12

For senior council, all the hard work we put in, including days of staying after school to make posters, weekends spent putting together the float, we didn't mind. In the end it was all worth it, even if we didn't win. This year's homecoming was an immense experience, never to be forgotten.

- Wanasanunt On-art, 12



the
OPTIMIST

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Letters to the Editor must be typed or 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.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The OPTIMIST is the voice of the Poly community, and follows the Code of Ethics for the Society of Professional Journalists. Editorials are the opinions of the staff.

Editor's Note: Letters to the Editor must have first and last name and grade level. Additional pages online only at polyhigh.org/opt.jsp.

INTERVIEW



Photo by Alejandro Cadena

MAGNETIC: Poly's Math and Science Magnet sent seniors Fabiola Esquivel and Rahwa Yehdego for three weeks of classes at Stanford as part of the Junior Statesman Summer Program.

Magnet Parrots Fabiola Esquivel and Rahwa Yehdego spent three weeks at Stanford in Pal Alto participating in the Junior Statesmen Summer Program. Below are their comments.

The Junior Statesmen Summer Program at Stanford University is a three-week series centered around politics. We took courses such as AP American Government and participated in debates about important issues such as immigration, affirmative action and the death penalty.

We had to write two essays. One was on a political issue that we are passionate about and the other was on our extra curricular activities.

Rahwa: I chose to write about environmental justice and environmental racism, which is very close to us since our neighborhoods are considered environmentally dangerous.

We also had to submit our transcripts and a teacher recommendation. We were notified within a month.

Fabiola: I was very excited opening the envelope with our acceptance into the program. My parents were very proud of me. They have always been very supportive and know the value of achieving a higher education.

Fabiola: I chose AP American Government because I am fascinated by the inner workings of the government and I truly enjoy AP US History, so I believed that American Government would be an appropriate choice.

The program offered a variety of courses such as Speech, AP Macroeconomics, International Relations and Constitutional Law. We also had guest speakers such as Bill Clinton's press secretary Mike McCurry, BP representative Julia Curtis and state assemblyman Zoe Lofgren.

We left LA at five in the morning on a Sunday and arrived there at about noon. We stayed at Sterling Quad in the Adams Dorms. The dorms were spacious and comfortable.

Our room became a second home for many of our friends since it was one of the cleanest. The Adams Lounge was also the only co-ed lounge so many nights we would gather there and entertain ourselves with karaoke night or have people play on the piano and sing.

Our classroom was across the campus. We would wake up early to eat breakfast and embark on our twenty to thirty minute walk to class. The campus is very large so for the first few days all the students were lost and tardy.

Class size was about 18 and included students from all around the globe. The students were intimidating to some extent with their level of awareness of political events and their past experiences with JSA. But we were able to handle the work load and perform well in our classes. In class we had discussions on what we had read and newspaper articles we had to bring in.

The classes were mostly lecture. Each day we brought in an article about current political issues such as the BP Oil spill or the congressional elections. We had class discussions about each

issue and what we thought and how our government is run. The class was run as a college class. We had no quizzes, just a midterm and a final.

The location of the debates always changed so we saw much of the campus. It is beautiful, especially the church and the detail on its façade. The campus is green, with unique architecture and fountains at every corner.

We took a tour of the campus and they made sure to tell us where the libraries were since we had a ten page paper due by the end of the program. We visited the Stanford mall and Union Square and Chinatown in San Francisco on our free Sundays. San Francisco is about thirty minutes from Stanford by train.

The weather was warm, in the high eighties most of the time. There were a few times when the weather seemed unbearable but it was mostly pleasant. We were there from June 27 to July 18 and we packed normal everyday summer clothing. We were required to take business attire for three days and formal wear for our graduation and final dance.

Fabiola: I bought a Stanford shirt and a few souvenirs for my family.

We had class from 9-11 then lunch from 11-1 and class from 1-3.

After dinner we would head to our Congressional Workshops in which we had to deliver a five-minute speech and three three-minute speeches. On a few days we had speakers in the morning until the afternoon.

We had class Monday through Saturday and Sunday was our only day off.

Our final consisted of two in-class essays and 20 multiple choice questions and a research paper on a political issue that we were interested in.

Rahwa: I wrote my essay on the integration of our educational systems since the mid 1950s and how our schools still currently lack complete integration. I chose this topic because I felt like it was an issue that needed to be addressed.

Writing a pure research paper was a first for me - getting our information from books, past articles, and governmental documents - but practices we learned from our PolyEnglish and history teachers helped.

The people there were amazing. We met students from Samoa, Saipan, Guam, Vietnam, China, Russia, the Virgin Islands, and students

from all over the United States. It was interesting to see their reactions to San Francisco and the culture shock that many experience. They were amazing people. They might have had different customs, but being teenagers it did not really matter. Many of us bonded over the stress that we felt spending twenty-four hour days with someone for three weeks, but we were able to make remarkable friends.

Spending all day with people there made us really close because we dealt with the same stress and could relate.

It was a lot of fun, and every Saturday they had a dance for all the students. We were able to make good friends whom we still keep in contact with.

POLITICS at Stanford

Interview by Kelsey Cruz
Staff Writer

“Writing a pure research paper was a first for me - getting our information from books, past articles, and governmental documents - but practices we learned from our Poly English and history teachers helped.”

FOOTBALL

CINDERELLA SEASON

Poly's title run comes with new recruits and upset wins.

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

The Parrots hadn't had a winning season since 1983. But change was in the air under second-year coach Fred Cuccia and the Parrots made the playoffs with a 7-3 regular season.

"It was a great feeling during that run," said Parrot alumnus Anthony Senegal. "When both teams (JV and varsity) lost the first game, around school it felt like another losing season at Poly. But as the wins started to pile up, more people got excited. Losing became not an option. The whole school was a proud Parrot. It was a great feeling."

The Locke game found Poly down 20-15 after three, but Parrot QB Lance Garcia capped a 14 play, 68 yard drive with a keeper from the one to put Poly in the lead. Parrot Danny Martinez intercepted a Locke pass on the Saints' first possession and ran 40 yards for the final score as the clock ran down.

Cuccia credited his defense for the Saints' scoreless second half.

"They played real hard," Cuccia said. "They won the football game for us."

Parrot Jonathan Campbell finished with 161 yards on 32 carries.

Two more wins later, the team bus was headed to East LA College for the title game against Lincoln.

"I remember just being around those guys and how relaxed they were," said Senegal. "We were talking and joking and enjoying the moment. The bus ride however, was very quiet. The week before, a couple guys got in trouble for laughing and joking on the bus, a no-go with Coach Cuccia. So it was quiet."

"When we got to East LA College (ELAC), we all ran out on the field like a bunch of little kids because we had never played or been on artificial turf before. I knew then we were going to win. After beating Fairfax the week before, this team had a confidence in them that Lincoln High school was not going to stop this run."

"It was and still is one of the most gratifying moments of my life," said right guard Jake Loveridge. "The group of people that made up that team was extraordinary and extremely unselfish. From the coaches to our friends and family and the administration at the school, we were loyal to one another and could count on the person next to us. Playing on that team taught me that if you have a dream and dedication, anything is possible."

Jonathon Campbell, who had 177 yards and two touchdowns in the championship game on 31 carries, became only the third running back in City history at that time to rush for 2000 yards in a season, according to Loveridge.



Photo provided by Maria Zieler

WIN TIME: Poly's varsity squad beat Locke, Manual Arts and Fairfax before meeting Lincoln, above, for the title.

Meant To Be

The 1990 season quickly went from typical to one-in-a-million.

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

Poly went 2-8 in 1988. They changed coaches the next year and managed a 1-8-1 season.

There was no reason to believe 1990 would be much better.

"I was just hoping for a .500 record," said three-year varsity running back Jonathan Campbell. "Some of the new players believed what the coaches said, but I had heard it all before, so I was trying to be realistic."

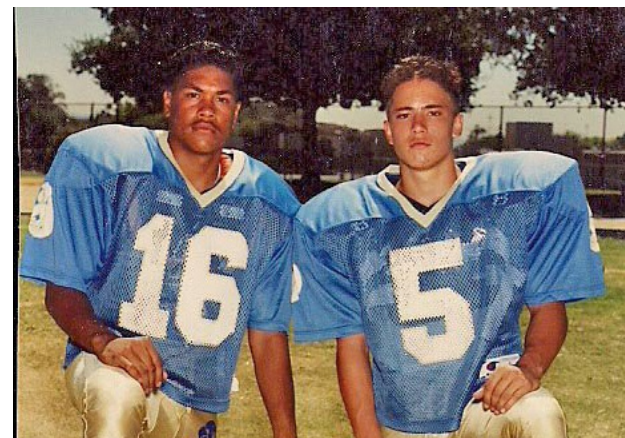
But Poly quickly picked up six wins in their first eight games before a 45-28 loss to visiting Sylmar on Nov. 9.

But even that loss didn't worry sophomore coach Fred Cuccia.

"Except for a couple of officials' calls that went against us," Cuccia said, "we were right in that game."

A week later, Poly crushed nemesis North Hollywood, 56-19, in the regular-season finale to clinch second place in the East Valley League and a berth in the playoffs.

Once there, the Parrots were unstoppable.



They came from behind to defeat fourth-seeded Locke 29-20 in the first round. They blasted Manual Arts, 33-0, in the quarterfinals. They upset top-seeded and previously undefeated Fairfax, 35-28, in the semifinals, before dominating Lincoln 28-8 in the 3-A final at East Los Angeles College.

It was the school's first City football title since 1928, when the championship was awarded to the winner of the regular-season City League.

Campbell rushed for 182 yards in 31 carries and scored two touchdowns against Lincoln.

"I always knew I was playing for a reason. (Friday) night, I found out what it was."

Campbell gained a school-record 2,091 yards and scored 31 touchdowns during the season.

"After we won in the first round, it was win the whole thing," Campbell said.

Cuccia agreed.

"Once we beat Locke, I knew we could beat any team in the City at the 3-A level," Cuccia said. "They were a good football team, but so were we. From that time on, I said that the only team that's going to beat Poly is Poly."

Cuccia was so sure of victory that the team watched very little film of Lincoln.

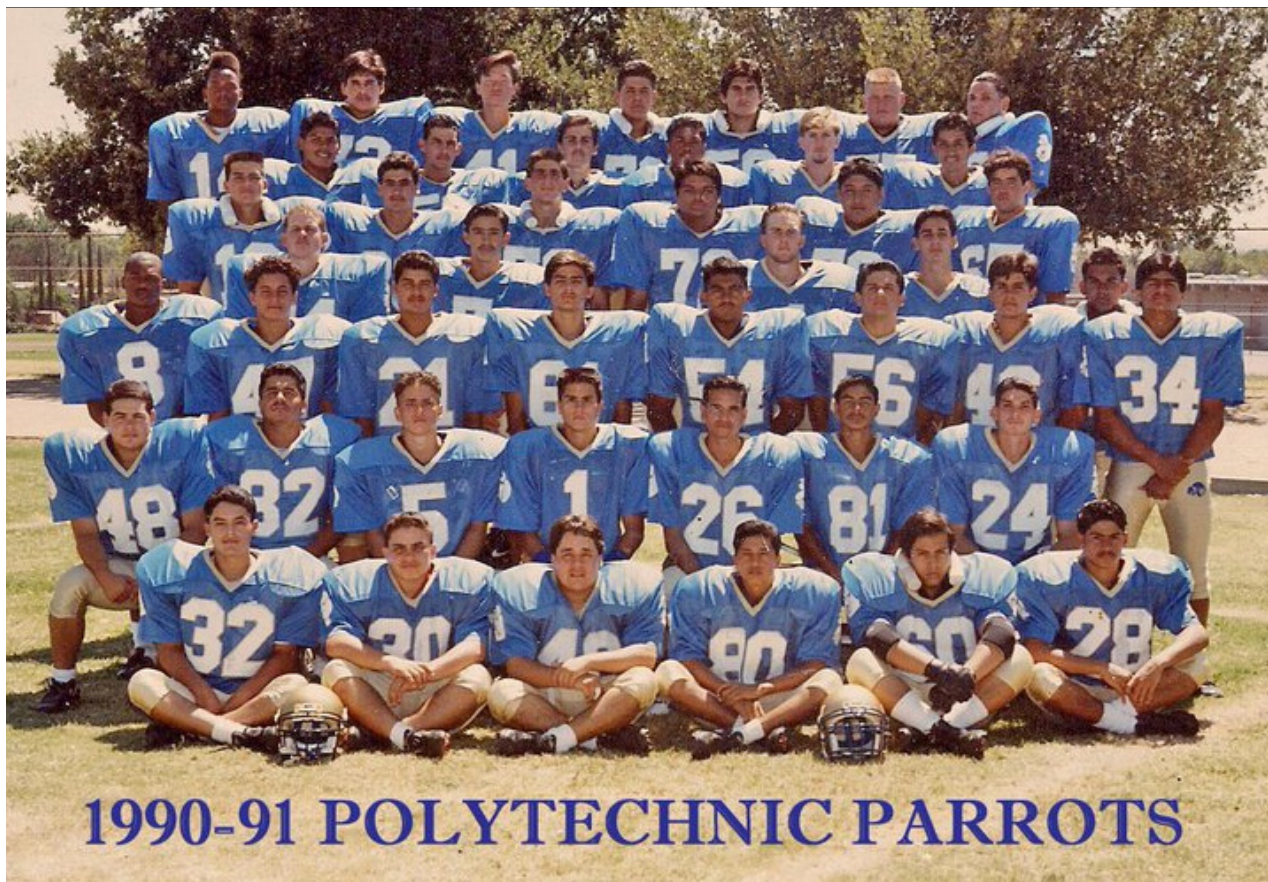
"I didn't want them getting too overconfident," Cuccia said. "After watching them on film, we didn't think they'd be able to stop our run, and we didn't think they could throw the ball on us effectively."

Lincoln QB Gaspar Ortega, who had passed for 2,165 yards and 25 touchdowns entering the game, was held to eight completions in 19 attempts for 82 yards and a touchdown. Poly held Lincoln to 177 yards in offense.

Campbell said that the first-year players on Poly's roster had a lot to do with the title run.

"We had so many guys who had never played football before, that each game really helped them," he said. "They improved a lot with each game and so did we as a team."

Source: Los Angeles Times story by John Ortega 16 December 1990.



1990-91 POLYTECHNIC PARROTS

HISTORY

“Our grandparents never had headstones. This was our opportunity to give them that honor.”

- Toby Bachenheimer



Photo provided by Toby Bachenheimer

STOLPERSTEIN: Toby Bachenheimer and sister Bonnie visited Salzwedel, Germany this summer to pay tribute to their grandparents with Stolpersteins, hand-made stones honoring Nazi victims. The stones above read Tobias Bachenheimer, Betty Bachenheimer, Heinz Bachenheimer, Kurt Joseph Bachenheimer and Horst “Harry” Bachenheimer.

[Poly teacher Toby Bachenheimer’s grandparents, Tobias and Betty, were transported to a concentration camp in Treblinka in Poland in April of 1942 where they later died. This summer Toby and older sister Bonnie visited “where our father lived, where our grandparents worked and the town they were forced to leave.” The following account of that trip was taken from Bonnie’s blog.]

BERLIN - On Wednesday, we visited Sachsenhausen, the Nazi concentration camp just 35 km from Berlin. Although our visit was necessary, it was disturbing for countless reasons. On the train we passed pristine forests, turned sinister by the memory of the death marches. Taking the short walk from the train station to the camp we passed houses that were there in the 1940s; prisoners walked the same streets to the trains and factories, passing homes occupied by families, every day.

Over 30,000 people died at Sachsenhausen due to overwork, illness, exhaustion, disease and extermination. There is a grassy area near the entrance set aside for memorials erected by families of the victims. These days the camp is somewhat sterile, with most of the buildings, including the barracks, laundry, mess hall, infirmary, morgue, prison and guard houses turned into museum-like exhibits.

Our Friday visit to Platform 17 was an unsettling experience. Jews who had been relocated to Berlin boarded the box cars that would take them to the extermination camps at Platform 17. Except for the memorials, Platform 17 looks like it did in the 1940s. There are hundreds of plaques on the ground indicating the number of Jews transported on each particular day; some plaques list 50; some over 1,100. My grandparents, Tobias and Betty Bachenheimer, were transported from Berlin on 14 April 1942 along with 65 other Jews.

On Friday, we took the train to Salzwedel, where my dad had lived with his mother, father and two brothers. Salzwedel is a hamlet of approximately 20,000 citizens located in the north of Germany, near Hamburg. Upon our arrival, the town

archivist, Mr. Langusch, took us on a walking/dragging-our-luggage tour of the 750-year old city. It’s easy to imagine that Salzwedel looks that same as it did 100 years ago. The streets and sidewalks are cobblestone, the building façades are old-fashioned and there are few cars. The clothes and shoes in the storefront windows seem to be throwbacks to the 70s. (OK, they’re not 100 years old, but could be.)

Salzwedel is famous for its baumkuchen, a cake shaped like a tree (which I liked a lot). Our quaint, but newly-remodeled hotel is across the street from the Bachenheimers’ last apartment/store (although the building had been demolished and replaced). At dinner in a local restaurant we lit shabbat candles, recited the blessing and said the kiddush over German wine.

The next morning we met a woman who had owned and run a bookstore across the street for over 50 years. She remembered playing with my dad and two uncles and also remembered seeing their store windows shattered and contents plundered the day after Kristallnacht. We then took a more comprehensive walking tour with Herr Kaiser (the vice-mayor) and his English/German speaking daughter, Pia, which included the actual apartment where my dad and his family had lived in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The purpose of our trip to Germany was to lay Stolperstein (“stumbling block”) stones in front of the store/apartment which was the last place my grandparents, Tobias and Betty Bachenheimer, had lived as free citizens. Stolperstein are small stones, hand-made by artist Gunter Demnig, for each single victim of the Nazis. Although my father and two uncles escaped Germany, they too were victims, so we included stones for them as well. Gunter told us that he has put in over 25,000 stones so far.

The laying of our Stolpersteins had been set for noon on Saturday. Unfortunately, through some tight scheduling, we ended up getting there at 11:55. Upon arrival we observed about 30 people, including townspeople, elected officials, and numerous print and broadcast journalists. When we saw that the installation had begun, three of us burst into tears. (I can’t wait to see those pictures from the newspaper.)

Gunter fit the stones into the cobblestone sidewalk in front of the building. It was heartbreaking and poignant for all of us.

A couple of hours after laying the stones we attended a

ceremony in a former church where a youth choir sang, Toby and I read tributes, Herr Kaiser and Dr. Ernst Block spoke. The whole time we were in Salzwedel we were treated like visiting diplomats.

Dr. Block has written a painstakingly researched book about the Jews of Salzwedel entitled *Wirwareneine Glückliche Familie*. The book, written in German, contains numerous Bachenheimer photographs and documents, including Uncle Kurt’s picture on the front.

On the way to catch the train to the airport, we stopped by the Jewish cemetery, which was lush and peaceful, most of its markers overgrown. One line of graves were people who had died just days after the liberation of the camps.

Bonnie Bachenheimer lives in Long Beach and works as a legal secretary and office manager. Bonnie was on an 18-month leave of absence working for the USO in Kuwait and Afghanistan when she joined Toby in Berlin.



Photo provided by Toby Bachenheimer

SALZWEDEL: Commemorative stones put in place by worker.

CAMPUS

Tennis Girls Finish 6-7

Quick 5-0 start highlights strong season.

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

The Lady Parrots' tennis squad lost six of its last seven matches after a quick 5-0 start.

But head coach Evan Rabins views this season as their best ever.

"I'm happy with the team," said Rabins. "My goal was to win as much as we lose, and we came pretty close."

Parrot athletic director Kim McEwen agrees.

"This is the most successful season I can remember," said McEwen, who has been at Poly for 23 years. "The girls should be proud."

The team lost to North Hollywood 7-0, Grant 6-1, Verdugo 4-3 and Monroe 5-2 before beating Sherman Oaks 4-3.

"The teams we were supposed to beat, we've mostly beaten," said Rabins.

The Parrots were 6-5 after a tough road loss to the Huskies 7-0.

"If you lose all seven, sometimes it's not necessarily a blow out," said Rabins. "It's just that they won a lot of close games. I was proud of the girls for battling."

Poly's 6-1 loss to Monroe on Wednesday featured a double win by Kailey Myron and Jessica Gonzalez and ended the season with



Photo by Alejandro Cadena

EYE CONTACT: Parrot senior Brenda Gonzales held the #2 singles slot for coach Rabins.

a narrow 7-0 make-up match loss to Verdugo Hills on Thursday.

"They're very good," said Rabins, "and I was pleased that our matches were competitive. I think in sports, you always want to go and try, you'll never know unless you try. But they are both very good teams."

Their 6-7 record means the Lady Parrots will miss the playoffs.

"We won a lot of preseason games and not enough league," said Rabins, "but it's been a pretty successful year. We've got some really good teams in our league and it's not easy beating some of these guys."

"I'm very proud of the girls this year; they've done a really nice job," said Rabins.

Skaters

[From Skateboard, pg 1]

then created Skate Pass, a skateboarding program designed to suit any school. Partner Eva Mullen runs the business end of the company.

"It was so radical an idea that we were all inspired to go for it," Klassen said.

Skate Pass expanded to the national level in 2006. "We had to prove that everyone could do it, and that it was safe," Klassen said.

The program costs schools approximately \$3,000, depending on options, and includes 20 complete boards, full pads, helmets, a curriculum and instructional DVDs.

Components of the boards are custom-made to prevent damage to gym floors.

The California Connection

In 2008, Fillmore Middle School became the first school in California to adopt Skate Pass.

A set of 60 skateboards and safety equipment, plus the curriculum and teaching materials cost Fillmore \$6,000. A state grant earmarked for physical education equipment funded the program.

Fillmore students learn about body movement, spatial awareness and balance, all while working out their core muscles.

After learning the right way to fall "on their knee pads, arms up" students master the art of balancing on skateboards. Before long, most are not only balancing but also carving giant half-moons around the gym floor and doing "grabs," holding the boards with one hand as they skate in a crouched position.



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

FLIP: Sun Valley High senior Genaro Contreras goes airborne for 360 flip.

The new middle school program did prompt questions about safety and legal liability, but the district's insurance policies treat skateboarding like any other gym class activity.

Parrots RIF'd

[From RIF'd, pg 1]

The budget cuts have been in the works for a year and a half, according to Loera, and more cuts are likely.

"The budget could continue to get worse," Loera said. "A lot of that has to do with the federal stimulus money drying up."

Loera said he first learned of the possible cuts in April of last year.

Poly's clerical staff learned of the staff cuts and transfers through a District mailing.

"I did not think that was the best way at all," Loera said. "They basically sent us a copy of the letter."

Loera said each clerical position cut represents a \$50,000 savings for LAUSD.

"There may be longer wait times," Loera said. "We may wait longer to distribute textbooks. It may take longer for all the tasks that we have problems with already."

Chips Off the Old Block

[From Block, pg 1]

be competitive with Franklin on two of the seven subjects.

"Our scores, in the two subjects we targeted, were about equal to the Franklin team," Block said. "We scored a little below them in math, and a little above them in economics."

An Early Start

Preparing for the competition as early as possible is key, Block said. Marshall High School, for example, has an honors humanities class to introduce the program, a "junior varsity" class for those hoping to make it the next year and the actual team.

"Those students are essentially studying for three years before making their team," Block said.

Block started reviewing the materials with this year's team in May and met over the summer, about eight months prior to the test. Some current students were on last year's team, so they have been studying as long as the Marshall and El Camino students.

Studying starts with grasping the fundamentals of the ten subjects in

competition: Music, Art, English, Science, Social Science, Economics, Speech, Interview, Essay and Math.

"We review the materials, and then go over them, again, and again, and again," Block said, "often in different ways, and sometimes in informal competitions with other schools. The bottom line is, the more time students spend studying, the higher their scores."

The seventy-school scrimmage takes place Saturday, November 13 and is spread among six sites. Last year, Poly finished first at their assigned scrimmage site and had the ninth highest score overall. Six students on last year's team had experience from the year before. Not only did this give them an additional year of "practice," but many of them had developed strong bonds of friendship with each other and their coach.

"Everyone wanted to succeed," Block said, "not only for themselves, but for their friends and teammates as well."

Attitude is Important

A large part of success is having a winning attitude, and the will to succeed, according to Block.

"Part of this attitude," Block said, "is having a swagger, an almost boastful attitude that your team has worked hard, you know that you have what it takes, and that competition day is a day for you to show off what you have worked hard to achieve."

Last year, Block told everyone early on that the team was going to accomplish great things.

"I told the director in May 2009 that we would make the State Competition," Block said, "and accurately predicted how we would perform at scrimmage. In part, due to this self-promotion, we were chosen to be a featured team on the live Super Quiz television broadcast that year."

This year's team, as a whole, actually studies better than last year's team that made it to state, Block says.

"My biggest concern is that this year's squad has fewer experienced students than last year's," Block says, "and several have other activities and classes that conflict with Aca Deca. So, as we approach the scrimmage, they have not had as much time to study as we did last year. However, I have been really impressed with the intensity and camaraderie of this year's students. We are going to score very close to last year's team. And we have the advantage of a little extra time to study in December and January. They have been testing well, and I am very, very excited."

Some students have afternoon scheduling conflicts, so Block arrives before 7 a.m. to give those students the opportunity to work together an hour before school opens.

"I'm here from 7 a.m. to almost 5 p.m. most days," Block said.

"Additionally, with scrimmage and Saturday study sessions, I'm spending about every other Saturday working with the team."

"Teaching is great, but coaching is awesome," Block said.

"In a typical eight-week mester, I barely have time to learn a student's name. But as a coach, this changes. The intensity of Aca Deca, and the amount of time spent with each student creates a learning relationship that exists well after the student leaves Poly."

Block says he still has many students who stay in contact with him through the internet and in person. Graduates often help the current students work on their speeches and interviews.

"Instead of an eight-week class," Block says, "I get to observe for years as teenagers develop into young adults and college graduates."

This Year's Theme

Each team has nine members - three honors members with GPAs of 3.75 and above, three scholastic with GPAs between 3.0 and 3.74, and three varsity members with GPAs of 2.0 to 2.99. The top two scorers in each of the three categories are added up to get the team score, but each member has the potential to win individual medals in each of the ten categories.

An overall theme combines the ten topics. This year's is "The Great Depression."

"Our artwork, music and history comes from the Depression era," Block said.

"Our artwork, music and history come from the Depression era."

SUDOKU

November 2010

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October 2010 Solution

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

FOOTBALL

Poly 30 Arleta 26

Parrots #1 in league after breaking Arleta's 14-game win streak in tough-fought home win.

Faer Comments

Varsity coach Scott Faer – his Parrots were 9-3 in 2009, finished second in league and made the second round of the playoffs.

“Ervin had a really nice hold by our offensive line. He broke three tackles, balanced himself on one arm, and like the all-state running back that he is, took it in the end zone.”

“This win meant a lot just because Arleta had a 14-game winning streak in league, and no one's been able to knock them off. For Poly to do so and to have a chance at a league championship means the world to this whole city.”

“For me it meant everything. We prepared this year to win every game and although we haven't done so, our ultimate goal was to win league and to still be alive to be able to do so means a lot to me.”

Player Comments

Junior DB Alex Alvarez – his key interception late in the fourth quarter stopped the last Mustangs drive and allowed Poly to run out the clock.

“Since the beginning of the game, I was pumped up and I was on the sideline cheering my team on and my coach told me to get in so I was really excited. I just kept my eyes open and we went into coverage and I saw them rolling out because of the linebackers and I just kept my coverage on the pass and I went for it.”

“The interception was really important. Every play is really important for us and making an interception is like one of the most important because you're giving the ball to our offense, which gives them a chance to score, and that's what I did.”

Senior kicker Jose Delgadillo – his field goal gave Poly a slim 17-14 half time lead and three PATs gave him six points for the night.

“A lot of pressure is put on me. They always tell me to not get burned, and when it is time to make a field goal, I get nervous because if I don't make them, it's always on my shoulders. Friday it was a close game, and if I didn't make that field goal, we would've lost. So there's always pressure on me and I just try to do my best.”

“I feel pretty confident because we have a pretty strong O-line and defense is getting up there and I think we'll do good because there's pretty much no competition anymore. We just have to have our heads straight and that's it.”

Senior RB Edgar Alejandro – his two touchdowns and 160 yards on 22 carries were a major offensive contribution.

“This win meant a lot because there's been talk since the beginning of the season. People have been saying that it was us and Arleta for league championship and we haven't beat them for four years, and being a senior, it felt really good beating them, finally.”

“I came in thinking positive, wanting to win. I was trying to run hard for my team. We came in and Kevin scored first, then it was me and we were up fast 14-0. Then our defense started messing up on some plays and we let them back in the game, so by half time we were up 17-14 because our kicker scored the field goal.”

“We went in at halftime knowing that we could beat these guys because we were out-powering them, so the rest was just our team working together. And there was that one point where they got really close and it was up to the last couple of minutes where we scored and then Alex got an interception and pretty much that got us the win.”

“I feel confident winning league and we could beat any team out there right now.”



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

QUICKER: Senior running back Edgar Alejandro outruns pursuing Mustangs on the way to his second touchdown of the evening in Poly's 30-26 win over visiting team Arleta.

HOMECOMING



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

YARDAGE: Senior running back Edgar Alejandro had 81 yards and two touchdowns in Poly's 68-21 homecoming win over Verdugo, giving Poly more than 3,000 yards rushing on the season.

Football and Fireworks

Homecoming victory has fireworks on and off the field in 68-21 romp over the Dons.

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

This year's Homecoming week featured plenty of excitement, including a fireworks display at halftime. But most of the fireworks were on the field.

Like senior running back Kevin Ervin's 91-yard return on the second play from scrimmage in the second quarter that put Poly ahead to stay at 16-13.

“It was fast,” said Ervin, “by the time I looked up, I was already past their safety.”

Or junior running back Tony Ephraim's 78-yard dash for the end zone that left the Dons memorizing his number.

And then there was the 45-yard ramble by junior Isaac Vasquez, who hasn't seen much of the end zone this year but was happy to find himself there.

“Isaac Vasquez's touchdown was definitely one of the highlights of the game,” said head coach Scott Faer. “For him to barely play this whole year, and to get that one opportunity and to take complete advantage of it and score was gratifying.”

Nobody was more excited than Vasquez.

“I just read the hole, read where I was supposed to go, and I hit it and kept moving my feet,” Vasquez said. “It feels unreal, but it motivates me to work better and get more of those.”

For the game Ervin piled up 381 yards in 16 carries and scored three TDs. He also had three two-point conversions for a total of 24 points.

Senior quarterback Moises Roman threw two 35-yard touchdown passes to senior safety Erick Martinez, who also scored three two-point conversions. Martinez finished with 18 points.

“I always try to get open because I want my quarterback to see me and then I just try to catch the ball every time it goes to me,” said Martinez. “The touchdowns were important because they were game-changers and they got everybody rallied up.”

Senior running back Edgar Alejandro scored two touchdowns in the first half and finishing with 81 yards rushing on eight carries.

Senior co-captain Sioni Tongamoa and senior linebacker Kevin Arrue each had 11 tackles for the night. Tongamoa also rushed for 21 yards on three carries and finished the game with four points from two two-point conversions.

“Our team played hard for four quarters and convincingly beat Verdugo Hills,” said Faer.

Even with the win, Faer felt the defense needed to address some issues.

“What I disliked was that we had 80 yards in penalties,” Faer said.

Poly (6-2, 4-0) hosts Monroe (2-6, 2-2) next Friday and Verdugo (3-5, 2-2) will host North Hollywood.

SWEET



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

TEAM: Poly's narrow win over the Mustangs put smiles on the faces of the varsity squad. The victory was the Parrots first over Arleta in four tries and broke the Mustangs' 14-game win streak.

SPORTS

Their Chemistry Is Unbeatable

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

The varsity volleyball girls turned in a strong regular season, finishing 20-5 and taking the East Valley League title 9-0. The OPTIMIST caught up with three players, seniors Vanessa "Monkichi" Lopez, Jocelyn Lopez and Arleth Ramirez to get their views on the season and the team. Here's what they told us.

Q. You guys played three tournaments?

Jocelyn: We played the Van Nuys tournament and the Venice tournament and we did an out of state Nike tournament in Arizona.

Q. Do you get invited to these or do you go because you went last year? How does that work?

Jocelyn: Your coach has to sign you up. For every tournament you have to pay to get into the tournament. The money pays for referees, for equipment, and all that.

Arleth: Usually they pick whether they want you in the tournament or not.

Q. Talk about the Arizona tournament?

Jocelyn: We played six teams, and we lost to five of them. Out of the six that we played, we could have beaten five of them, but our team just couldn't pull through it. We kept rallying through. We would win the first game, lose the second, and rally through the third, and couldn't finish.

Arleth: We killed the first match. By the last game, we just got fed up and were like 'Dude, I want to win'. So we slaughtered the last game. I think overall it was a good experience. Just for the team because by the last game, we were able to see like 'Dude, we could really do this.'

Jocelyn: These girls have been playing in clubs since they were like five. I mean, they're amazing girls, but we put up quite a bit of a fight. These girls were surprised. They were so racist towards the fact that we were Hispanic. So whenever they saw like the little Mexican girls playing, it was funny because they were like 'Wow'.

Arleth: It was funny too because we were the shortest team there.

Jocelyn: Their average heights were probably me and Arleth, and if not, taller. And we're 5'10.

Q. At that level is it the psych out? Were you guys thinking that "they've been playing since they were five, of course they're going to be way better than us?"

Jocelyn: Personally, my thing going to Arizona was I was so excited. I wanted our team to experience playing against teams that are just amazing. Everybody tells us we have a good team and I know we have a good team, but when we got there, by the way we played, I can really say that we have a good team. So we're psyched to start playoffs.

Q. So that was a powerful experience?

Jocelyn: It was a good experience because we all bonded as a team and the chemistry built up so much, I mean we were already close as it was, and everybody now is like so comfortable.

Arleth: I think the most important thing is that we were able to build trust in each other because that's important.

Q. Wouldn't you trust each other anyways? I don't understand how deep this trust can go.

Arleth: Because every position is different and you have to have your job in that position, if you play another position, you can't go on and play another person's position. So you have to trust that they're going to do their job so we can get the points and eventually go on to win the game.

Jocelyn: There's definitely that thing where I can leave my position to play her position, but then there's nobody playing my position, and that's when the problems start. That's why you have to be able to trust your teammates so that you



Photo by Jennifer Martinez

DOMINANT: Poly's Lady Parrots volleyball team under new head coach Gabby Gallardo has rolled over its East Valley League rivals, posted a perfect season, and is headed for the playoffs.

Having six girls on the court with the desire to win, you know they're going to go out and win it, but having the support of a coach that cares is a million times better and makes you feel so much stronger.

focus on your job and you know that they're doing theirs.

Q. Are you guys just way better than the rest of the girls that you played in your league?

Jocelyn: I'm not going to lie, our league was weak. But we have a strong team, and I think that we're just good athletes.

Q. How much of every game is a psych-out especially as the season goes on?

Jocelyn: I don't go into the game thinking about the other team, I go into the game thinking about us and what we have to do and I think that that's every single one of us. We come in not caring what people have to say about us, but caring about doing our job and taking care of business.

Q. So you don't go out there and try to psych somebody else out?

Jocelyn: Well, that's part of the game. If you do your job, you're gonna get into your opponent's head.

Q. Do you guys ever talk trash out there?

Monkichi: They talk trash to us.

Jocelyn: I think we were a little like that last year, but there's no point in saying anything. I'm not going to lie, if someone's saying something to me, I'm going to go off back. But it's more personal than volleyball. When I'm out there playing, the only thing is I'm here to play my game.

Q. Talk about the Van Nuys and Venice tournaments?

Jocelyn: They weren't walkovers. We were champions in the Van Nuys tournament.

Monkichi: That was exciting. We have individual trophies and the team trophy.

Q. How many trophies have you gotten this year?

Jocelyn: We have two second place trophies and one first place trophy.

Arleth: And then we have summer league trophies.

Q. Summer league?

Arleth: We've been playing with each other since March. There are five of us on this team that have been playing together for years now.

Jocelyn: The new girls that have come in that moved up from JV to Varsity this year, we've been playing together since March, so the chemistry in the team is just perfect. Four of us have been together for three years and there's five of us that have been together for at least two years.

Q. So has that been a large part of it?

Arleth: Well it has been important just to get the chemistry because it's easier to play with people once you know each other's weaknesses and their strengths, so we try to embrace their strengths. The chemistry has to build just to be able to play volleyball well.

Jocelyn: If you threw a group of six girls that have never seen each other in their lives. They could be the best, most amazing, athletic girls, but you put them together on this court, they're going to have to trust each other. And if they don't, they're going to have problems.

Q. So part of this chemistry, is the trust of how their personalities work together?

Jocelyn: Well not personality, you just learn to be comfortable depending on each other.

Q. Do you have to be friends?

Arleth: Well, you have to be best friends on the court.

Jocelyn: I could hate Monkichi, but when we're in the gym practicing and playing, we have to be the best of friends. Luckily, we all like each other on the team. We're all very good friends.

Q. Chemistry makes the teamwork possible?

Jocelyn: Yes.

Q. Can you manufacture this chemistry or does it just have to happen?

Monkichi: It has to happen.

Q. So put the chemistry factor in context for us?

Arleth: I think that chemistry is critical, it's the key point. Because you could be as good as you can be by yourself, but then if your whole team doesn't ... I don't know, it's complicated.

Jocelyn: I'll give you an example. We played against a team during the summer, there was an Occidental tournament. In one of the tournaments, there was this team. They were a pretty good team and they had this girl who was a pretty good hitter, pretty good blocker, and pretty good setter, but she was all about herself. Skill wise, I'll give it to the girl, she's amazing, but her personality throws her down the drain because she did not trust in her team at all. She wanted to do everything on her own.

Arleth: so then her teammates started giving up on her.

Q. You guys are pretty much all the same, there are no "stars"?

Jocelyn: Nobody has egos on our team, and that's a big thing.

Q. What about your coach? Does she have a strong ego or is it all about team for her?

Jocelyn: It is important for our coach that we are a team. We do a lot of team bonding. We probably spend more hours a week together than we do at home.

Arleth: Especially during the summer. We would be together from two o'clock to about nine-thirty to ten playing volleyball.

Q. You guys have got to love it though to play it for that long, so what's the most fun about it?

Arleth: Just playing. For front row, like us, it's always about getting that point, smashing the ball, and being like 'Dude.'

Jocelyn: But it's not even about yourself. Let's say the girl on the opponent's team spikes the ball hard, and your defense digs it, and you just get so excited. Excitement builds up from seeing these things happen. A kill is a big thing, but without the defense, you have no kill to give.

It starts off with the dig. If you don't get a good dig, you're not going to get a good set, and that makes it hard on the hitter. If you put the ball away, it makes it easier on the defense because the ball's not coming back to us. It's a process that revolves around each other.

Q. Summer league was a lot of volleyball?

We had spring league and then summer league. We ran from March to like June, which was the Spring league, and then from June to August is summer league. These were basically just to keep us in shape and get us ready for the season.

Arleth: I think what is most important about these in my opinion is that because we have new girls coming up, we start getting to know what they do, and it's better so we could get that teamwork and chemistry going.

Q. Did you start out the season with a game or a tournament?

Jocelyn: During the summer we had two tournaments, but they didn't count against us. During the season, we play two preseason games. This year we played against Cleveland and Contreras and we beat them both.

We beat Van Nuys, came in second in the two Occidental summer tournaments and we were quarter finalists in the Venice tournaments.

Q. Is your new coach a big change from last year?

Jocelyn: I think that without her, we wouldn't be where we are today.

Monkichi: I think it's because she coaches us, she motivates us, and she supports us.

Arleth: When we go around, we see other coaches just sitting on their chairs and not telling their girls anything.

Having six girls on the court with the desire to win, you know they're going to go out and win it, but having the support of a coach that you know cares is a million times better and makes you feel so much stronger.

OPINION

LETTERS

HOMECOMING

Homecoming was a great week. It got the whole student body in the spirit for the big game. I played in the game so having the spirit was a great motivation factor for us to win. The best part of homecoming was the game. It was packed, they had music and it just made everything exciting, Goon #8.

- Eddie Moncivais, 12

The homecoming was a huge success! Students had so much to do in such little time. It was very entertaining for our fellow students, shows how much spirit we have. The whole thing in general really shows what our Poly students can do.

- Sashell Loza, 12

What I liked about homecoming was how the PARROTS destroyed Verdugo. By far, the game against Verdugo was awesome. Wooo 68-21! Let's go Poly!

- Anthony Gaitano, 12

The homecoming was amazing. So much energy at the pep rally. The parade was hella fantastic and of course GSA float was the best. It was my first football game and I had so much fun with all my friends. I'm so proud to be a Poly Parrot.

- Kenya Mejia, 12

My favorite part of the spirit week was working on the parade and pep rally. As president of the Multi-Cultural Dance Club, it was hard to get in the festive spirit knowing that we had a performance and float due on the same day.

- Chris Rodriguez, 12

The whole spirit week was just great. The 9th and 10th graders were a little quiet but the juniors picked it up on their day. Of course, seniors had the best day but only because it's our last year and we want to go out with a bang. It was also fun to paint our faces. Some of us went to class with our make-up.

- Octavio Correa, 12

Out of the whole week my favorite event was the homecoming varsity game. It was such a bitter sweet moment. Bitter because it was my last homecoming ever at Poly, sweet because I made lasting memories with all my friends.

- Alessandra Moreno, 12

Homecoming was a lot of work. It took a lot of effort and time from the participants, but it was all worth it. The parade was great. The big win over Verdugo on Friday night was wonderful. It was amazing how our team played. Homecoming was full of fun activities, which showed how fun Poly is.

-Lizbeth Perez, 11

If you're a member of council, leadership, and/or any club participating in homecoming, the past few weeks were surely full of stress and work. For Junior Council, our hard work paid off. Many individuals enjoyed the sight of our Despicable Me-themed float.

-Jesusa Carvajal, 11



Photo by Alejandro Cadena

This homecoming was very special thanks to leadership and Mr & Mrs. Ziehler. I will never forget this homecoming because it's my senior year and I had a great time playing and enjoying the fireworks. All I have to say is that Poly has a lot of swaggers. Now let's keep it going.

-Sione Tongamoa, 12

The streaker was "High-larious" at half time it's a shame that it was sort of planned out.

-Joey Medina, 12

Spirit Week was great. My favorite one was seniors because I participated at the maze with my friends. I also participated at the parade. But where I had more fun was the big dance. This is my last year and I'm never going to forget it was the best.

-Karely Navia, 12

The things I liked the most is when they showed pictures of the 1990 Champs. The best thing was when we won Verdugo 67-21.

-Alex Chavez, 12

I liked that we beat Verdugo !!Hells yeah!! And the fireworks at the middle of the game were awesome. I liked the dance. If they keep it up like that it's a guarantee people that come to this school will have a great time.

-Jimmy Fajardo, 12

Homecoming was great. It really surprised me when I saw the fireworks It just made the whole thing special. I couldn't ask for anything else. It was a great weekend.

-Saul Pineda, 12

The Homecoming parade was awesome I really liked the softball float. Being able to be a part in the parade was more fun. Helping out in the G.S.A. float was a great experience. The pep rally made me emotional seeing the old football players from class 1990

-Laura Ramos, 12

I'm in color guard. I enjoyed performing in the big pep rally in the gym. Knowing mostly everybody was going to there got me excited. Also I came out in the 12th grade maze. It was fun putting things up and decorating, doing each other's make-up.

-Ana Cuevas-Zaiyarripa, 12

I have to say the homecoming football game was the best; both JV and Varsity won Verdugo and have made us very proud. The parade was so inspiring and very nice.

-Lucero Gonzales, 12

How was homecoming? Gee, I have no idea. From what I've been told it was great, like Poly's football team whooping on Verdugo H.S. I guess I should've gone. Oh there was a fireworks show? Wow, staff did kick it up a notch.

- Cesar Arriaza, 12

The best thing was all the music during lunch and all their activities. But honestly, the best part was the pep rally, it was fun. It was actually one of the best pep rallies I've seen. I didn't attend homecoming but I heard it was really fun.

- Vanessa Curiel, 12

I really enjoyed Homecoming week because you see some school spirit and that helps the students feel full of pep. All the students get to participate and help out the school. All the students went and cheered for the football team.

- Salvador Aguilar Camacho, 12

I was in charge of float committee for 12th grade council. I think 50 + students were out there giving a hand. Twenty of us got ready in costumes and make up for big waves to the crowds, candy throwing and a lot of cheering.

- Jose Luis Vilches, 12



Photo by Joel Hinojosa

OPINION



Photos by Alejandro Cadena



Photo by Mariana Santos

LETTERS HOMECOMING

The pep rally was the best. All of the performances were fun to see. The video for the class of 1990 was very touching and brought alumni back to Poly. Seeing homecoming court and the Grand Marshals get presented was a nice experience.

Linda Esquivel, 12

Having the champions of 1990 at the gym was a great honor. As a leadership member, being involved in the preparation for Homecoming made it even more satisfying to watch everything come together so well. Seeing how much everyone was enjoying themselves just made all the hard work worth while.

Magdalena Corona, 12

What I liked best about the homecoming week was the dance on Saturday night. It was a good way to end the hectic Homecoming week. It allowed many people to hang out and just have fun. Almost everyone enjoyed themselves because they would not get off the dance floor.

Melissa Perez, 12

I loved homecoming. As a 12th grader, I thought it was the best memory for all Poly Parrots. The display of all the spirit that Poly has to offer was breath taking. I know it's one I'll never forget.

Viviana Orozco, 12

The pep rally was not as fun, it was better last year. The performers were everywhere, they didn't know what they were doing. The game was fun. It felt good to beat Verdugo. Kevin Ervin was a beast out in the field. I didn't go to the dance but I heard it was very fun. If it wasn't here at school, it would have been better and more people would have gone.

Ana Rivera, 12

My favorite part of homecoming was the dance, the first homecoming dance in more than six years at Poly. The photo booth was available so that students could take photos with their friends and cherish great homecoming memories at Poly. Everyone was on the dance floor, "doing their thing" and enjoying their fantastic evening.

William Leiva, 12

The pep rally in the gym was lots of fun. My friends and I enjoyed it every much. The game was also very fun. I got to enjoy the game with all my friends. I had a great time. The fireworks were beautiful.

-Valerie Perez, 12

Well I liked everything, but the things that I liked the most were the pep rally, the fireworks and the biggest one was the dance. The dance was better than what I expected.

-Chris Medina, 12



Photos by Joel Hinojosa