

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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SERVING THE POLY COMMUNITY SINCE 1913

APRIL 2011

Flenner Finds Ad +

Former Poly Math and Science Coordinator Pat Flenner used magnet as the model.

By Michelle Lopez
Staff Writer

Poly's Advantage Plus (Ad+) program will graduate its first class in 2011, 149 strong.

Ad + is a four-year academic program designed to provide highly motivated students with an accelerated high school schedule.

The program is the brainchild of former Ninth Grade Center Assistant Principal Pat Flenner.

Flenner was a mathematics and computer science teacher, counselor and dean before starting Poly's Math and Science Magnet in 1995.

The seeds for the Ad + program were sown there.

"When I started the Magnet," Flenner said, "Poly had a very poor reputation. Over 90% of our gifted students went to other schools - mostly Magnets. Magnet Coordinators actively recruited our students."

"We did very well initially recruiting students but when our school went year-round (one of the first) we lost many of these students to traditional high schools. We had to find a means to attract our own students back to our campus."

Flenner felt she also had to address concerns about adding a Magnet to Poly's campus.

"One of my concerns originally about petitioning for a Magnet - I gathered a group of teachers to speak to the board regarding placing a Magnet on our campus - was the conflict that seems to occur between the Magnet and the comprehensive school in many of the high schools," Flenner said.

The solution, Flenner decided was to give all students the same access to all Poly classes.

With that in mind, Flenner created the Early Start program in the Magnet, which allowed students who qualified to start their college experience. Students could complete all of their general education classes before entering college, thus allowing them to double major.

Flenner had buses that ran between Poly and Valley College. She had internships at the local hospital.

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Photo by Joel Hinojosa

LEAD: Gabby Melendez stars in "Annie," Play Production's new musical about a little orphan in Depression-era New York looking for her parents.

"ANNIE" at Poly

By Yenifer Rodriguez
Staff Writer

Play Production will present "Annie," the 1977 Broadway musical, in April. "Annie" was based on a Depression-era comic strip. "It has a strong female cast and we have a lot of female actresses," said Drama teacher Katrina

Hetrick

Auditions for the play went well, Hetrick said, with 40 students trying out. Little Orphan Annie will be played by junior Gabby Melendez.

"It's the first time I've ever gotten a lead role," said Melendez, who has been performing since the 6th grade.

Melendez had roles in "Grease," "Tire Tracks," "Broken Show" and "Twisted Tales and Ridiculous Rhymes" at Poly and appeared in the play "That 60's Show" at Pacoima Middle School.

Melendez said the pace of rehearsals has been "really hectic," with the cast often staying until 5:30pm.

"When you put acting, singing, and dance together," Hetrick said, "a lot of

[See Annie, pg 6]

WASC Pleased With Progress

By Ivan Escobedo
Staff Writer

Poly impressed the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) committee in a mid-term review of school accreditation in late March.

"I am pleased with the overall feedback we've received from the visiting committee," said Poly Principal Gerardo Loera. "They've acknowledged that we are following our action plan, and responding to their recommendations."

WASC is one of six associations that accredit U.S public and private schools. Poly is in the middle of a six year accreditation term.

WASC members Monica Hatcher, Warren High School resource teacher, and Terry Connolly, Lakeside High school Assistant Principal, made the one-day visit to Poly to complete the scheduled three-year progress report.

"Accreditation is taken very seriously," said Loera. "We've done our best to follow our action plan."

The WASC committee had four separate meetings in the library with Poly's faculty, staff, parents and students.

"The visiting committee confirmed the great progress our school has made in the last three years," said Assistant Principal Ari Bennett, "and acknowledged our hard work in the face of an increasingly difficult economy."

Loera, Bennett, Poly WASC coordinator Devon Richter, three assistant principals and two SLC coordinators represented Poly in the first morning meeting.

Hatcher and Connolly complimented the faculty's commitment to both the school and the students.

"If I lived in the area, I would want to work at Poly High School," said Connolly.

[See WASC, pg 6]

Teachers, Students Run LA Marathon

By Armando Orozco
Staff Writer

The calendar said "LA Marathon."

The weather forecast said "cold and rainy"

But eight Parrots and two Poly teachers from Students Run LA (SRLA) braved the elements anyway and finished the 26.2 mile run.

"It was cold, raining and exhausting but I didn't want to quit" said freshman Edith Gonzales

"Running a marathon is mind over body," said SRLA club co-sponsor Erin Hunt, "because your body can do the work but your mind must focus."

Poly Freshmen William Lopez finished with the club's fastest time of 4:26:00.

"During the marathon I felt really hyped up," said senior Melvin Munoz, "but when I finished I was exhausted but proud of finishing one of the hardest marathons I've run. This is an amazing achievement that I will remember for the rest of my life."

"It is not about finishing the marathon with the best time" said SRLA senior Cynthia Rocha "It's about finishing and enjoying the run itself."

[See Marathon, pg 6]

College Workshop for Parrots

UC-Berkeley students explain the ins and outs of applying for college and financial aid.

By Jizel Emralino
Staff Writer

Over 1000 Parrot juniors attended a period-by-period educational workshop Monday in the auditorium on California college admission requirements and ways to get money for college.

"The presentation was to show students what it really takes to go to college," said College Counselor Leona Warman.

Six UC Berkeley students from the Raza Recruitment and Retention Center (RRRC) braved a snowstorm to give the presentation and take questions. Poly's College Office coordinated the event.

"I know there are kids just like me who are not educated enough about the college experience and fundamentals," said Berkeley senior architecture student Korina Salas, one of the presenters.

RRRC was established by the UC-Berkeley Chicano/Latino students to increase the number of Chicano/Latino students in institutions of higher education and provide academic and social support networks in order to maintain academic achievement among Raza students.

The presentation provided Parrots with a comprehen-



Photo by Alex Cadena

BERKELEY: (From left) Yesenia Escobar, Uriel Lopez, Cynthia Ubilla, Korina Salas, Olivia Delao and Jose Ramos gave a college workshop at the auditorium.

sive overview of community college, CSU and UC academic requirements for admission as well as a discussion of the application process, writing a personal statement

[See Berkeley, pg 6]



Photo by Mariana Santos

A Little Piece of Paradise

Hector Colon runs the Senior Glade.

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Photo by Mariana Santos

Lady Parrots Win Again

Poly's 8-2 NoHo win is fourth in a row.

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OPINION

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OP-ED



Right Time, Wrong Fix

Obama's plan for NCLB would make the legislation worse not better.

In Vermont, new standardized test results show that 72 percent of 216 public schools did not meet federal achievement targets under the 2002 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law this year.

Under NCLB, most students in every public school in the country are supposed to score "proficient" on standardized tests in math and reading by 2014.

Critics have been warning for years that the adequate yearly progress requirements of the law are so difficult to achieve that almost all public schools in the country would fail to meet them by 2014.

In fact, a nonprofit organization called FairTest predicted that result back in 2001 when the law was still being debated in Congress.

At last, the landmark education reform law may itself be in for reform.

President Barack Obama has asked Congress to rewrite the law by the time the new school year begins this fall.

Many lawmakers concede the time for updating the law is long overdue.

"It's too complicated — too much Washington control and too many unrealistic goals," said U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn, who served as U.S. education secretary under former President George H.W. Bush

"Overall, NCLB hasn't lived up to expectations, said U.S. Rep. Phil Roe, R-Johnson City, who sits on the U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee, which will have a pivotal role in rewriting the law.

"I haven't met a teacher anywhere in my district — and I've talked to a lot of them — who doesn't want students to get to their maximum ability," Roe said. "They all want

that. But the problem is, we're dealing with multiple issues in schools — many single-parent families, a lot of issues that weren't dealt with years ago."

No Child Left Behind took effect in 2002

The goal was to make sure all students have a shot at a good education and to hold schools accountable if they don't. The law mandated that schools set academic standards and test students annually in reading and math while they are in grades three through eight and once while they are in high school. All students also must be tested periodically in science.

Test results are then used to determine whether schools are making adequate yearly progress. Those that aren't are considered "failing" and can face severe consequences, including closure or replacing staff.

Critics argue that the law is too punitive, places so much emphasis on reading and math scores that other subjects are given short shrift, and doesn't take into account that some schools may fall short because of a handful of low-performing students.

Currently, about 37 percent of all schools fail to meet their performance goals. But by next year, that number could climb as high as 82 percent, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan recently warned.

Yet Duncan and Obama want to make matters worse. Measures Duncan and the administration support for an NCLB rewrite include an increase in the number of federally mandated tests and an increase in the consequences for the scores — exactly the opposite of what would help public schools most.

Obama is right to call for an NCLB rewrite, he couldn't be more wrong about how to do it.

DENISE ACOSTA

Marching for Equality

Besides being the reason for a day off of school, or a day off of work, Cesar Chavez is an idol for the entire Latino community. He fought for equal and fair pay on the fields, but as Chavez himself said, "The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people."

Chavez, who later became the president of the United Farm Workers, fought for the minority, those who were forcefully silenced, and only through him, could speak. He raised awareness of political activism through non-violent methods such as protests, marches, and fasting. He believed that, "Non-violence is hard work. It is the willingness to sacrifice. It is the patience to win."

Cesar Chavez, and everything he stood for, still lives on through people as passionate about change and progress as he was.

Throughout the country, marches, parades and festivals have been held in the name of Cesar Chavez, because equal treatment is not allotted to everyone, because the minorities will not be repressed and because no one should ever stop fighting for what they believe in.

On the last Sunday of March, the eighteenth annual Cesar Chavez march was held in the San Fernando Valley. The march began

at Brand Park and ended at Paxton Park. Hundreds of people of all ethnicities and all backgrounds joined together in a march filled with Aztec and Inca tribal dancers, high school bands, an elementary school drum line and dozens of clubs, foundations, organizations and supporters from the community. Even Cesar Chavez's grandson, Anthony Chavez, came to show his support. There were proponents of the DREAM Act, fighting to be heard. Shouting Chavez's famous phrase "Si se puede" or "Yes we can," the march advanced through the streets, demanding the attention of everyone it came in contact with. Supporters proudly waved their red flags with the United Farm Workers emblem. Others expressed their artistic capabilities by drawing large portraits of Chavez or creating collages of what he stood for. Many chanted the words on their picket signs.

At that moment, everyone was infinite. The atmosphere was one of justified disenchantment; there was pride and there was passion. But there was also outrage over discrimination and a revolutionary spirit for equality. It served as a reminder that the people will be tricked and they will be mistreated, but they will live on.

The Glamorous World of Elizabeth Taylor

She was the woman with the violet eyes. From her first role in "There's One Born Every Minute" at age nine, to her most famous roles in "Cleopatra" and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?," Elizabeth Taylor was one of a kind. She was considered one of the greatest actresses of Hollywood's Golden Age, and her death at 79 of congestive heart failure marked the end of an unforgettable epoch in the world of film.

While an award-winning actress, Taylor was perhaps most famous

for her glamorous lifestyle, beauty, and social activism. Extravagant marriages and love governed Taylor's life. She was married eight times to seven men, marrying Richard Burton, a popular Welsh actor, twice. Of her many marriages, Elizabeth Taylor once commented, "I was taught by my parents that if you fall in love, if you want to have a love affair, you get married. I guess I'm very old-fashioned."

Among her other infatuations was jewelry. Taylor had a passion for collecting precious stones, pearls, and diamonds. In fact, she was famous for the quote, "Big girls need big diamonds." At death, her collection was worth an estimated \$150 million.

Elizabeth Taylor was also one of the first celebrities to become politically involved

in AIDS and HIV awareness, speaking about something many at the time found uncomfortable. Her concern with the disease sprouted from the death of a close friend who died of AIDS. Taylor's efforts helped raise more than \$270 million for the cause.

Taylor was well-known for scandals too. Unfortunately, her luxurious lifestyle led her to experiment with drugs and alcohol. She became desperately dependent on these chemicals, but luckily, sought treatment and recovered.

Elizabeth Taylor had a life filled with the good, the bad and everything in between. It is for all these moments we shall forever remember her, and her words, "I'm a survivor - a living example of what people can go through and survive."



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.

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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.

Corrections - the following errors occurred in the March OPTIMIST.

In the CASHEE Breakfast story, Louis Fletcher was named as the cafeteria manager. The manager is Evelyn Galvez.

Uricala Cadavana is two separate names and is actually Ellen Urciola and Jeanne Cadavana.

In the Arlette Cruz story, Color Guard member Monica Martinez was misidentified as Monica Rodriguez.

The OPTIMIST regrets the errors.

INTERVIEW

A well-rounded senior and member of the first graduating class of Poly's exclusive Advantage Plus program, Dianna Barba recently spoke with the OPTIMIST about her busy life. Here's what she told us:

When I found out I'd been accepted, the first thing I screamed was profanity, so I can't really say it here in our interview.

Because the first thing I was looking for was "We're sorry" but when I read "Pleasure" I was shocked. I said, "this isn't happening." I started screaming, jumping up and down. I really didn't expect it.

I thought it was a mistake. I still think it's a mistake. It's like you don't really expect yourself to get in. You apply and think that it would never happen. It's not what you expect.

I fear failing out of college. It's like, you go there and you don't understand anything. Then you fail. That's my biggest fear.

I want to major in Mathematics, but I think I might go into Engineering.

I am in the Advantage Plus Program at Poly. I think it is more difficult, because it went from super easy to more work. So I spend a lot of time doing homework, but it has gotten easier.

In 10th grade, I took AP Biology and Spanish.

In 11th grade, I took AP Calculus AB and English.

Now, I'm taking AP American Literature, Statistics and Government.

I'm on the track and field, soccer, and tennis teams.

I manage doing sports and academics by multitasking. During tennis season, we would study our flashcards in the bus. During soccer season, we would study our calculus flashcards.

I'm also in senior council, CSF Secretary, National Honors Society President, Soccer Club and the Young Senator's Program.

I also volunteer at Byrd Middle School as a Spanish translator during parent-teacher's night.

When I get home after sports, I spend most of my time doing homework. Sometimes I stay up late.

I love Sudoku puzzles. I watch TV. I love the Food Network. I can't stop watching it. Everything looks delicious, especially Cupcake Wars and Iron Chef America. I also talk to my sisters. I've been helping my younger sister, Sandy, with Calculus.

Mathematics is my favorite subject. I don't know why exactly, but I just love numbers. It just comes to me. It's like when the teachers teach

it to me, I feel like I just know how to do it. It's like I don't have to study anything.

My greatest challenge is managing time, catching up on the work whenever we miss class because of our games. But my teachers are nice enough to stay after school to teach us what we missed in class.

I did my own college applications and for my UC application, Ms. Palacios, ETS coordinator, helped me.

Our English teacher told us to write our personal statement over summer vacation. When we came back to school, she showed us how terrible our personal statements were and taught us how to improve it.

I applied to MIT because of its focus in Math and Science. I kept getting mails and emails about the application and so I decided to just give it a try.

My SAT score was 1950. My Subject Test scores were Spanish: 800; Math 2: 720 and Biology: 700.

Early Signs

I went to Fernangeles Elementary school. It was fun.

In kindergarten, I was taking second grade classes for Math and English. They were gonna put me in second grade in Kindergarten, but my sister told me not to, because she was in second grade as well.

In second grade, I would go to 3rd grade classes. They were gonna switch me to third grade, but my mom said that it would be better if I just stay there. I didn't want to go either.

Everything just came easy to me. My classmates would be struggling, but I would just have fun. My teachers would tell me that I'm smart.

When I was younger, I would just spend the time at my neighbor's house having fun, playing games and cooking fake food. We would get mud and make mud pies.

I went to Byrd Middle school. I was in Honors classes. I was also in band for a year in 7th grade.

Family

I was born in Pacifica Hospital and just grew up here in Sun Valley. It was pretty good. My mom has been very supportive of my studies.

My parents are both from Mexico. They didn't go to college, so my sisters and I will be the first generation in our family to go to college.

I have two siblings: an older and a younger sister. I am a middle child.

My sisters call me the "FedEx" child. They say that I came from a FedEx truck, because I don't look like them. I am the "odd one." I'm taller, lighter-skinned, and my hair is lighter than theirs.

They're both smart, but yeah, I am smarter than them.

Ad Grad Boston Bound

Advantage Plus senior Dianna Barba might attend MIT in the fall.

By Jizel Emralino
Staff Writer



Photo by Alex Cadena

ADVANTAGE PLUS GRAD: Senior Dianna Barba took second-grade math and English in kindergarten and hasn't stopped excelling ever since. Now she has her choice of big-name schools to attend.

CAMPUS

A Little Patch of Paradise



All photos by Mariana Santos



By Valeria Gonzalez
Staff Writer

At the corner of Poly's campus is a little patch of paradise called the Senior Glade. Fruit trees, flowers and a pond with fish make for a shady retreat from the urban hustle nearby.

The apricot tree is 15 years old, most of the others are ten.

This is Hector Colon country. He's been keeping an eye on the place since 1999 and teaching agriculture classes there.

"I love being outdoors," Colon says. "The flowers are beautiful. There is no judgment out here. It is peaceful and real nice."

Birds stop at the senior glade for a snack at sun up and sun down, Colon says. They fly back and forth between Hansen Dam and Balboa Lake.

"The sprinklers have sensors to scare the birds away from the fish," Colon says.

Colon feeds the fish and cleans their pond. The pond water is filtered and then used to water the plants, or returned to the pond.

"One of the themes for my classes is water conservation," Colon says.

Every sprinkler has a timer. The drip irrigation system waters individual plants while the lawn sprinkler waters a huge area. The sprinkler system resembles rain and is used where all the plants are close together.

"The students and I take care of the plants in the agricultural area," Colon says.

Colon's students clean, weed and trim the Senior Glade at least twice a week. They alternate jobs - one class sweeps, one trims and another weeds.

All this grounds keeping requires tools, and tools can be dangerous. Students learn how to operate the tools safely and take a test on topics like power equipment and floristry.

"We are planning a community garden that will be available to parents and people in the community who can not raise or afford their own vegetables," Colon says. "They will adopt a plot, and the garden will be open a couple of days per week and on weekends."

Colon is currently working with North Hollywood High grad Mirian Baltazar to manage the Senior Glade.

"She is going to school to learn to be a teacher," Colon says. "Hopefully, she will take my place."

Floriculture

Floriculture students make flower arrangements, often for special occasions such as Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's and Easter.

"When the apple tree blooms, we use the red flowers for the floral arrangements," Colon says. "We take care of other flowers here, but it is difficult because they require a person to be

around all the time.

An arrangement should look natural, Colon says. Flowers and greenery must be arranged appropriately. Colors should blend, not clash. Balance and symmetry are key.

"A good arrangement is an exact copy of a model," Colon says. "The designer will make one, and then want duplicates. The students have to replicate what they see."

Some arrangements last at least a week and a half, depending on the flower.

"The materials for the classes are usually provided by me," Colon says. "I take money from my own pocket to pay. Sometimes the school gives me money."

Landscaping

Students learn about plants and their growth requirements, basic landscaping principals and the use of computer software to landscape sample houses.

Sample home photos are uploaded to Pro Landscaping, a software program that shows students how their designs will look. Students consider a client's budget and personal preferences.

Outside, students learn how to plant and arrange the plants in an attractive design.

Colon

"With technology, people start to lose touch with the basics in life," Colon says. "The plants remind us of that. They provide us with everything: clothes, oxygen, food, medicine."

Since I was a little kid, I would take a plant apart to see what was inside. I was curious.

I was born in Bisbee, Arizona. It was the first town in Arizona. It is also the southernmost town before the Mexican border. My family moved when I was one. My parents lived in California, but my mother wanted to be with my grandmother when she gave birth.

I studied biology at Cal State Northridge, Pierce College and Valley College. I did not actually learn about plants until I worked here and went back to school.

I was teaching biology when the principal asked me to go back to school for a degree in agriculture. I was allowed to teach for a little while so that I could either go to school or stay with biology. After a year, I liked the Agriculture job and decided to go back to school.

My older brother and two sisters all attended Poly.

“... People start to lose touch with the basics in life,” Colon says. “Plants provide us with everything.”

MUSIC



Google Image

STILL ROCKIN': Motley Crue original members Nikki Sixx (bass), Mick Mars (guitar), Vince Neil (vocals) and Tommy Lee (drums), popular Sunset Strip glam band in the 80s, don't want to hang up their rock 'n' roll shoes just yet.

The Strip and The 80's

The scene disappeared but some of the bands didn't.

By Jasmine Aquino
Staff Writer

The 1.6 mile stretch of the Sunset Strip from West Hollywood to Beverly Hills was lined with small boutiques, restaurants, night clubs and live-music venues in the 80s.

At night, the Strip pulsed with neon and a virtual traffic jam of young cruisers and musicians. Head bangers delivered the goods at clubs like the Whiskey A Go Go, London Frog, The Roxy, and Pandora's Box.

It was known as the glam scene and broke bands like Van Halen, Motley Crue, Quiet Riot, Whitesnake, L.A. Guns, Guns N' Roses, Ratt and Poison.

But rents got too expensive in the early 90s and the venues for up-and-coming rock bands without industry sponsorship disappeared. So too did the glam rock scene.

Thirty years later, however, some of those bands continue to perform and find appreciative audiences.

The rockers least likely to survive the 80's, Motley Crue, for example, are alive and well, performing in venues around the world.

The Crue's story began when bassist Nikki Sixx and drummer Tommy Lee began jamming together. The two found fiery guitar player Mick Mars through an ad in *The Recycler*, a free ads tabloid known as the *Green Sheet*. "Loud, rude and aggressive guitar player" the ad promised, just what Sixx and Lee were looking for.

Vince Neil completed the quartet, leaving previous band Rock Candy when that band went new-wave.

Motley Crue favored a gaudy look.

Neil was into white, wearing satin white pants with white leg warmers, capezio shoes, chains around his waist, and a white T-shirt he ripped down the middle and sewed together with lace. He dyed his hair as white as he could and teased it until it added half a foot to his height.

Lee wore bright leather pants, stiletto heels, dyed black hair, and a ribbon around his neck.

Mars wore leather jackets and Sixx wore a six-hundred dollar pair of boots.

"Back then, if we wanted anything that had a price tag of three digits, we had to steal it," said Neil in the Crue's 2002 autobiography "The Dirt."

Mars was married with two children: Les Paul, named after the man who built the first solid body electric guitar, and Stormy. Stormy made Mars a grandfather three times before he was forty.

Neil worked a day-job as an electrician while playing with Rock Candy at night, and for job security, he dated the boss's daughter.

Sixx and Lee were too caught up in the music to think about love.

The rockers started rehearsing every day, amazed at how many new songs Sixx came up with. Sixx's day-job at the Starwood earned them gigs: Two sets on Friday evenings and one on Saturday mornings.

Whenever the band was not rehearsing or performing, they made their way down the Strip, nailing posters on every wall and lamp post. If every other band had one poster, they needed to have four: That was Sixx's rule.

Motley Crue released their debut album *Too Fast For Love* in 1981 on their own, something that was quite uncommon in those days. The

album sold well over 200,000 copies, earning them a contract with Elektra Records.

Three decades and eight studio albums later, they are still exciting to watch and listen to. The hair metal quintet were even named 2011 Sunset Strip Music Festival (SSMF) honorees.

Poison is another 80s survivor that can be heard in adult and adolescents' iPods today.

Formed in 1981, Poison was Bret Michaels (lead vocals), Matt Smith (guitarist), Bobby Dall (bassist), and Rikki Rockett (drums).

In the late 80s, Poison's manager negotiated a deal in which the Troubadour, a West Hollywood club, would pay for their shows.

Things heated up when the band auditioned guitarist Slash (Guns N' Roses and currently Velvet Revolver) and C.C. DeVille, who showed up in stilettos, make-up and gaudy glam-rock clothes.

DeVille beat out Slash, completing the band.

The group signed to independent label Enigma Records in 1986 and released their debut album "Look What the Cat Dragged In" on August 2, 1986.

"Cat" produced three hits: "Talk Dirty to Me," "I Want Action," and "I Won't Forget You."

The album ultimately sold 4 million copies worldwide. Four more albums followed.

The original line-up parted but reunited in 1996 and recorded five more studio albums.

After 25 years, the band is still recording music and performing.

And no list of glam rock survival would be complete without hedonistic rebels Guns N' Roses, who still get plenty of airplay.

Vocalist Axl Rose and bassist Duff McKagan united with guitarist Slash, rhythm guitar-

ist Izzy Stradlin and drummer Steven Adler in 1986 and the Strip exploded with just the kind of raw energy the glam scene crowd was looking for.

Though a part of the LA heavy metal scene, GN'R skipped the big hair, tight pants, and heavy make-up that Motley Crue and Poison popularized.

Guns N' Roses filled clubs Rio and Whiskey A Go Go, bringing huge gangs of kids from North Hollywood, Sherman Oaks and Sun Valley flooding onto the scene.

But the band's four song EP "Live ?!*@ Like a Suicide," released the same year, sold only 10,000 vinyl copies.

But the album gained attention from Geffen Records, who released the band's debut album "Appetite for Destruction" in '87. Sales were slow until MTV started playing "Sweet Child o' Mine."

The album eventually sold 20 million copies, yielded three top 10 singles and hit #1 on the album charts.

The original GN'R line-up is long gone, but front-man Axl Rose keeps the legacy alive.

The glam rock scene is long gone, but these three holdovers are still rocking and still making timeless music.

And the Strip, with its colossal billboards, notorious nightclubs, dark dining haunts and decadent lifestyle, is still making the scene, a must-see for the tourist buses roaming the neighborhood.

With a remodeled image and the annual Sunset Strip Music Festival just around the corner, the Strip is ready for its close-up.

CAMPUS

Annie Comes to Poly

[From Annie, pg 1]

work has to be put into it.”

Senior Berlin Perez will play Daddy Warbucks, Annie’s benefactor. About 10 students auditioned for the Warbucks role, although Perez didn’t.

“I feel like we’re halfway done,” said Perez.

Junior Abdi will play Grace, Warbucks’ private secretary and sophomore Omar Lopez is playing President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

“Learning how to dance and act is fun,” Lopez said.

Rehearsals for a musical typically last three months, but Hetrick says the cast will have seven weeks.

Most students who auditioned were familiar with the musical, but Hetrick wanted the students to come up with their own interpretations.

The cast will perform such classics as “Maybe,” “Tomorrow,” “NYC,” “Like it Here,” “Little Hard Knocks,” etc. Only “Hooverville” and “Finally Different” will not be sung.

The musical will use three major sets – an orphanage, the city of New York and Daddy Warbucks’ office - and a handful of minor



Photo by Mariana Santos

SANDY: Annie’s faithful friend first appeared in Harold Gray’s comic strip in 1925.

ones, all created by the student stage crew.

Performances are set for April 6-8 at 6 pm and on the 9th at 2 pm in the auditorium.

While the budget for the musical is under \$300, permission fees will add \$1,100. Hetrick says tickets sales will cover all costs. Tickets are \$5 each.

Ad + Founder Flenner

[From Ad +, pg 1]

“I never excluded a non-magnet student from participating,” Flenner noted.

In 2004, Principal Jan Fries Martinez asked Flenner to create a Small Learning Community to be called the 9th Grade Centre.

Ninth graders were getting their basic learning needs filled, Flenner said. But those students whose skills were already well developed could never acquire the classes they needed.

That need became the impetus for creating the Advantage Plus program.

Flenner based Ad + on her Magnet success. “Over the years I had visited just about every school in the District,” Flenner said. “I looked at every model.”

Flenner visited Poly’s middle schools and talked to students and counselors.

“I also sent an informational packet to all our incoming students,” Flenner said. “It was well received.”

Entrance to the Magnet was based on points. Those who matriculated from a middle school Magnet had first access to Poly’s Magnet.

“This left most of our students with little opportunity for the same rigorous education,” Flenner said.

Ad + would solve that problem.

“All students have the right to the same rigorous curriculum,” Flenner believes. “There should be no competition – it is simply a matter of all students having the same opportunities.”

Flenner initial concern was the rigor of the classes. Most of the 9th Grade Centre teachers were new and inexperienced.

“I was concerned that they would simply give students grades,” Flenner said. “Our teachers would have to demand the same high standards as the Magnet.”

If Poly seniors with good grades gained access to some of the high-ranking schools in the

nation and could not compete, every student who came after would suffer.

“In the Magnet, students got accepted to MIT, Harvard, and Princeton and they were successful at these schools,” Flenner said. “It opened the door for all students who followed.”

Flenner knew that if her Ad + students failed at the Ivy League schools, the schools would no longer recruit her students.

“These schools keep stats,” Flenner said. “If we sent students with inflated grades and they could not compete with the top students in the nation, it would have been the death of Ad +.”

“The success of the Magnet,” Flenner said, “was because we had teachers that demanded the most of our students.”

Ad + would have to do the same. When 149 Ad + students graduate in June, Flenner’s hopes will be fulfilled.

Quake and Bake Sale

By Briahna Angulo
Staff Writer

Poly Leadership’s recent bake sale raised nearly \$1,000 to aid victims of the earthquake in Japan.

“All proceeds from the bake sale are going to the American Red Cross as a donation to aid the Japanese crisis,” said Leadership spokesperson Grace Wheeler.

Parrot clubs, organizations and individuals

providing the homemade baked goods included Title I, ROTC, Leadership, GSA, the Multicultural Club, the Cooking Club, Katie Marzolo and Wood Grigsby.

Countless trays and plates came into the leadership room with baked goods (cupcakes, cookies, brownies, etc.).

The bake sale took place at lunch time in the polygon.

“Thanks to all those who participated in the bake sale, people in Japan can look forward to a brighter future,” said Wheeler.

WASC Pleased

[From WASC, pg 1]

The WASC committee then met with 10 Poly parents chosen by Title I Advisory Council Parent Representative Ana De Jesus.

One parent said Poly was the only school that was willing to provide all the services her son needs.

Connolly and Hatcher then had lunch with four Poly Leadership students for a discussion about the school.

At the exit meeting, Connolly and Hatcher said they were impressed with what they saw in the classroom.

“The committee saw that we were addressing all of the areas for growth we were tasked with three years ago during accreditation,” Bennett said.

The improved areas included better communication and collaboration, formative assess-

ments, rigor and writing across the curriculum.

Bennett said preparing for the WASC visit took hundreds of hours of work from coordinators, department chairs, course leads and administrative officials.

Magnet math teacher Richter led the effort. Coordinators, department chairs, course leads, and administration collaborated on Chapter 4, the progress made on the action plan.

“We also got input from teachers during the February professional development day,” Bennett said. “Departments wrote documents outlining progress made on specific elements of the action plan and growth recommendations from the WASC team.”

“I’m grateful that I work at a school where collaboration is the rule, not the exception,” Bennett said. “This could only happen with a resilient, driven staff that puts our kids first.”



Photo by Mariana Santos

MARATHONERS: Erin Hunt (left) and Dennis Madrigal (right) sponsor Students Run LA.

Berkeley

[From Berkeley, pg 1]

and getting financial aid.

“I didn’t know much about Berkeley before I applied,” Salas said. “I saw ‘Berkeley’ and I thought it was an interesting name. It was not until later when I found out that Berkeley was such a good school. When I got accepted to Berkeley, I ran around the entire block. When I went there to visit, the moment I stepped out of the bus, I knew that I wanted to be there.”

Getting financial aid can be just as important as getting accepted.

“Financially, it has always been hard for me,” said Delao. “Financial aid is a tremendous help but that does not leave me much money for extras. I just tell myself I have done this before and there are always things I can do that do not cost money. It really is all a part of growing up.”

Political Science senior Uriel Lopez said attending Berkeley has raised his awareness on issues.

“I was really ignorant about different issues going on in our world before I went to Berkeley,” said Lopez. “There is so much that students are exposed to in college, so I encourage everyone to go.”

College admission has been getting really competitive, Warman said.

“It is not enough to have a good GPA,” said Warman. “The students have to really get involved in extracurricular activities, community service and take leadership roles.”

Marathon

[From Marathon, pg 1]

The race started at Dodger Stadium and finished at Santa Monica Pier.

After the race, students and coaches received medals, dinner at a restaurant of their choice and a black jacket with the words “marathon finisher” on the back.

SRLA trains Poly students to physically and mentally cope with the strains of running a marathon.

English teachers Dennis Madrigal and Erin Hunt are the SRLA sponsors and trained alongside the club’s five freshman and three seniors

Club members got their first taste of marathon running in late October 2010. The club ran smaller marathons such as the Say No to Drugs 5k and the So Cal half marathon as preparation.

Madrigal suffered an injury in October and required months of physical therapy before returning in January.

“They inspired me to do better after my injury,” Madrigal said, “because I knew if they could do it so could I. They are driven to run and I am amazed by them.”

The members increased the distance of the runs as the marathon drew nearer. The 18-mile Friendship Run in February removed the training wheels.

The club is currently in limbo since both sponsors received Reduction In Force (RIF) notices.

SUDOKU

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March Solution

Read pages
9-10 online at
polyhigh.org

CINEMA

Film Legend Taylor Did It All

By Ivan Escobedo
Staff Writer

Two-time Oscar winning actress Elizabeth Taylor, 79, died Wednesday morning, March 23, of congestive heart failure at Cedar-Sinai Medical Center with her family by her side.

The popular 5'4" violet-eyed cinema legend won her first Best Actress Oscar in 1960 for "Butterfield 8."

The film, adapted from John O'Hara's 1935 best seller, tells the racy story of escort girl/ model Gloria Wondrous, who gradually falls in love with the married man she was having an affair with.

Taylor's personal life often got more publicity than her movie career. Her torrid love affair with married actor Richard Burton made headlines around the world in the fifties. The antics of Brad and Angelina pale in comparison.

The affair began in 1964 on the set of the over-budget sword and sandal epic "Cleopatra," a retelling of the Egyptian queen's ill-fated effort to save her empire by manipulating both Julius Caesar and Marc Antony to do her bidding.

At \$37M, "Cleopatra" was the most expensive film ever made at the time and Taylor the highest-paid actress (\$1 million).

Burton and Taylor earned about half of Hollywood's income for several years after their marriage. They remarried and later divorced again, making Burton her fourth and seventh marriages.

Taylor won her second Oscar in 1966 for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf," playwright Edward Albee's

dedicated young girl who trains her horse for the tournament.

Taylor got adolescent parts until 1951, when she starred in George Stevens' "A Place in the Sun." Her work in that film proved she could take on more mature roles.

At 18, Taylor married hotel heir Conrad "Nicky" Hilton Jr. in 1950.

Two years later she married British actor Michael Wilding, 40. Taylor had two sons with Wilding, Michael Howard and Christopher Edward, before divorcing him in 1957.

The third and fourth marriages ended in divorce and included Oscar winning producer Michael Todd, who died in an airplane crash, and popular singer-actor Eddie Fisher, who costarred with her in "Butterfield 8"

Other marital partners included Senator John Warner, whose inattention caused Taylor depression and more health problems, and construction worker Larry Fortensky, whom she met at her alcohol-therapy sessions.

After her last divorce in 1996, Taylor swore off marriage.

Health problems – over 70 injuries and illnesses – plagued Taylor throughout her life.

She was pronounced dead during the filming of "Butterfield 8" and nearly died of pneumonia during "Cleopatra." Her illnesses ranged from spinal injuries, ulcers and phlebitis to a brain tumor, an appendectomy and skin cancer.

Illness kept Taylor home for Elton John's civil partnership ceremony in 2005 and Michael Jackson's



“When she wasn’t making movies, Taylor was making headlines, thanks to numerous health problems and a number of relationships.”

1962 Broadway hit about a mean and emotionally dependent middle-aged couple, Burton and Taylor, who use alcohol and a young married pair to insult each other.

Born in London to American parents in 1932, Taylor's family moved to Beverly Hills California. At 10, Taylor made her Hollywood film debut in "There's One Born Every Minute," a comedy from American Universal Pictures.

Next came minor roles in "Lassie Come Home" and 1943's "Jane Eyre" adaptation, but the role that pushed her into child stardom was 1944's "National Velvet."

Taylor moved from "Universal" to MGM specifically to audition for the part of "Velvet."

"National Velvet" tells the story of a broken-down jockey who wants to ride in the Grand National, an English horse race.

Taylor played Velvet Brown, the

trial, where she intended to appear as a defense witness.

By 2001, no studio would insure Taylor, effectively ending her career.

Taylor was an AIDS activist at a time when the majority of celebrities avoided any association with the then-touchy subject.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences gave Taylor the humanitarian award in 1987 for her advocacy on AIDS. Taylor was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1999.

The funeral, for family members only, included her two sons and daughters Elizabeth Frances Todd and Maria Burton. Taylor was buried at Forest Lawn in Glendale.

On-screen and off, Elizabeth Taylor did it all and had it all, the glamour, the headlines, the Oscars and the men.

Google Image

LARGER THAN LIFE: Silver-screen legend Elizabeth Taylor, who made glamour look easy, played everything from an Egyptian queen to a middle-aged alcoholic in a career that spanned four decades and six husbands.

SPORTS

Parrots Tame Huskies

By Stephen Castaneda
Staff Writer

Parrot sophomore Monica Mendoza held visiting North Hollywood to two runs and the Lady Parrots got off to a quick start Wednesday, routing the Huskies 8-2.

"Monica pitched an amazing game," said head coach Manny Peralta, "striking out six and giving up only two hits."

Parrot senior Yesenia Reyes and freshman Vanessa Carlin both singled before junior Janet Zapien kicked one out of the park in right to put Poly in front 3-0 after one.

"It was good to see Janet Zapien's three-run homer to start off the first," Peralta said.

Poly added three more runs in the fourth. Senior Anabel Soto homered. Senior third baseman Stephanie Hernandez's bunt scored senior Ruby Ramirez and Carlin's walk forced in Erika Tzic.

The Huskies got on the scoreboard when replacement pitcher Charissa Martin walked, stole second and scored on freshman Jessica Moreno's line drive to second.

Huskie hurler Danielle Feuer, who took the loss, was tagged with six runs on 10 hits.

Poly got hits from Tzic, pinch-hitter Jazmine Gutierrez and Hernandez to add two more runs in the fifth.

"We're still trying to get the entire line up to hit," said Peralta, "and we are always improving our hitting."

NoHo's last run came when junior Gabby Suano hit a line drive to right and scored on Martin's pop up.

Poly (6-5, 4-0) also got the second win of the here-there North Hollywood (4-5, 0-2) series with a 5-3 victory Monday.



Photo by Mariana Santos

OUTFIELD: Lady Parrot senior and left fielder Ruby Ramirez is batting .231 this year.



Photo by Mariana Santos

INFIELD: Lady Parrot senior second baseman Anabel Soto is batting .462 for Poly.

Poly Loses 8-7 Squeaker in 9th

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

North Hollywood junior Sebastian Piscuskas hit a ground ball single up the middle with one out in the ninth to break a tie game and give the Huskies an 8-7 squeaker over visiting Poly in a rain-out makeup game Monday.

"The guys waited until the last three innings to decide to come play," said Parrot head coach Gabe Cerna, "and that's what happens."

It was a seesaw scoring night for both clubs. Parrot shortstop Omar Rodriguez walked, stole second and scored when third baseman Johnny Espinoza's pop fly was dropped in the first.

First baseman Phillip Marquez got hit by pitch, stole second, and scored on a pop fly from junior David Galdamez for a 2-0 Poly lead after two.

But the Huskies tied the game with two outs in the third on a line drive single from junior Marvin Galvez and a home run from senior Jonathan Linares.

Two NoHo fielding errors and a double down the foul line from senior Luis Vargas helped the Parrots pick up four runs in their half of the sixth.

Huskies head coach Hector Menchaca then brought in sophomore Anthony De la Torre, who ended the Parrots scoring with a strikeout.

Moreno got in trouble in the sixth, loading the bases in the bottom of the inning. Cerna brought in sophomore Anthony Cardoza, who promptly hit Huskie junior Zane Weston with a pitch, forcing in a run.

A walk and a single brought in three more runs to tie the score at six all.

Cerna changed pitchers again, bringing in Daniel Lopez for Cardoza.

Lopez struck out De la Torre for the second out, but then hit Huskie junior Marvin Galvez



Photo by Mariana Santos

STARTER: Sophomore Josue Moreno was one of three Parrot pitchers head coach Gabe Cerna used in Poly's loss to North Hollywood.

with a fastball to force in another run and give NoHo a 7-6 lead.

With two out in the top of the seventh and a full count, Parrot Moreno hit a pop fly to center field. But NoHo dropped the ball and Moreno pulled in at second. Marquez then singled in Moreno to tie the game one last time.

Poly had a chance to go ahead with two on in the top of the ninth, but Galdamez struck out on an 0-2 count, ending Poly's chance to break the tie.

"We didn't perform," said head coach Gabriel Cerna. "We came out flat. We didn't do the things we were supposed to."

North Hollywood (4-7, 1-2) faces Verdugo Hills next, while Poly (6-8, 2-1) hosts Sun Valley on Wednesday.

Huskies Edge Parrots 4-3

By Jizel Emralino
Staff Writer

Aknee injury to #2 doubles player Cris Duarte may have hurt Poly more than Tuesday's 3-4 loss to visiting North Hollywood.

"If we lose him for the year, it would be impossible for us to advance very far in the playoffs," said head coach Brian Block after the loss.

Poly #1 singles Jae Choi won in straight sets, 7-5, 6-4, against Huskie Zach Lipel, but the Parrots' #2 doubles had to forfeit their match after the Duarte injury. Numbers 2, 3 and 4 singles also lost.

"We had the two top teams in our league playing for the number one spot," said Block, "and it was as close as it should have been. It was 4-3 but we could have gotten 5-2."

"Our doubles team performed incredibly well, winning two out of three. The singles matches were very close. It was a solid match against a team that should make the playoffs, like us. It shows that our team has great ability and great motivation."

"I was most impressed with our singles players. They kept coming back and coming back. There were many times during their matches when the tide was turning and they just came back and played incredibly hard and incredibly smart."

Block called his team "solid" from top to bottom.

"My big concern now is that Cris Duarte, who has been playing incredibly well on number 2 doubles has sustained a



Photo by Mariana Santos

CHOI STORY: Parrot #1 Singles Jae Choi defeated Huskie Zack Lipel in straight sets, 7-5, 6-4, but Poly lost the match 3-4.

very serious knee injury," Block said. "He's at the doctor's office right now because he was unable to walk this morning."

Poly (7-2, 3-1) has four more matches in the regular season. The playoffs are invitational, and Block thinks only the top two league finishers will go to post-season play.

"I'm hoping to win three out of the remaining four matches, which would put us in the playoffs," Block said. "But I am more concerned right now about an injured player than I am about winning games."

Poly Whips Wildcats

By Stephen Castaneda
Staff Writer

Homers from sophomore Monica Mendoza, senior center

fielder Stephanie Hernandez and senior left fielder Ruby Ramirez led a 13-1 Poly slugfest as the Lady Parrots picked up their sixth win in a row.

"Monica gave us some good offense today with the two home runs," said head coach Manny Peralta, "but she has been struggling because she is focusing on her pitching."

Ramirez' grand slam came in the fifth and accounted for four of Poly's five runs. Mendoza homered to left in sixth and to right in the seventh. Hernandez's two-run homer also came in the seventh, with Reyes on base.

Mendoza pitched another strong game, limiting the Wildcats to four hits while accounting for three Parrots runs herself.

"Monica is our number one pitcher," said Peralta, "and in softball you can't win without good pitching."

Sun Valley senior Jessica Hernandez took the loss, giving up all 12 runs on 14 hits.

The Wildcats scored their only run in the fourth when sophomore Stephanie Flores stole home on junior centerfielder Maria Morales' walk.

Poly (7-5, 4-1) gets a second shot at Sun Valley (2-4, 2-2) on Friday.

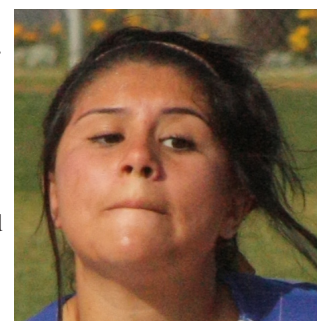


Photo by Mariana Santos

BIG BAT: Soph Monica Mendoza hit back-to-back homers.

EXTRA

FOOD
&
CULTURE

At home and abroad, food is an important part of the local culture.

By Valeria Gonzalez
Staff Writer

If you want to understand what a country is all about, eat local.

People eat differently around the world because they are different. Food options and local specialties arise out of a society's nature, geography, and history. Food and drink are different in every country because they satisfy something deeper than hunger and thirst.

The Japanese, surrounded by water, eat more seafood. Argentines, with vast pampas and big cattle ranches, love red meat cooked in the gaucho tradition. The French favor dishes prepared with the rich sauces.

When to eat is different too. Mediterranean and other warm-weather cultures tend to eat late, and in much of the world, dinner before ten o'clock simply isn't done. In other places, dinner is less important as the main meal is taken midday and what we call dinner is replaced by a small meal eaten mid-evening.

Street food is found anywhere in the world: satay sticks in the night markets of Korea, fish at the shore in Thailand, ice cream on the beach in the Middle East. Standards of cleanliness vary widely, however, and even where things appear clean, bacteria in the food and water is different in the developing world.

“Eating local is the best way to learn about another culture.”

Many locals drink bottled water. Aranciata in Italy, tamarind agua fresca in Mexico, and mint tea in Morocco are thirst-quenching staples. Lunches that include wine or beer are common. In some places, beer for breakfast is part of the routine.

In many countries, wine is inexpensive, delicious, and part of the customs in South Africa, Chile, France, Italy and Spain. Young people are exposed to alcohol at an earlier age.

The United States has local foods too, despite an abundance of standardized McDonald's, Olive Gardens and Chilis from coast to coast.

In fact, Jane and Michael Stern have written a book about local food in America called “500 Things to Eat Before It's Too Late.” The book is a bucket list of restaurants still serving local, often obscure dishes like Kentucky burgoo (thick stew), South Carolina perloo (meat-and-rice dish), Wisconsin hoppel poppel (meal in a skillet), Ohio sauerkraut balls and even the Vermont sour-milk doughnuts.



The Sterns' describe endless varieties of hot dogs and dueling chowders, lamb fries, prairie oysters and other forms of animal testicle.

“We're getting more homogenized,” Michael Stern says. “But it is not that difficult to avoid. Jane and I could eat our way around this country for three more lifetimes and not eat all the regional dishes. And by then, there'd be 3,000 new regional dishes.”

Technology has made local food more vibrant, Stern believes, with people trading recipes and restaurant suggestions online. Yet many dishes remain local. Why, the Sterns ask, hasn't the Midwest's sour-cream raisin pie joined Texas' nachos on more menus?

America's culinary landscape is the kind of dynamic cultural mash-up that occurred in Italy before each town's dishes were calcified into classics, according to some observers. While there might be only one right way to make bouillabaisse in France, there's always a new argument about how to barbecue.

“There is no national hot-dog chain,” says Stern. “That's because people are so loyal to the hot dog with which they grew up.”

Author Mark Kurlansky is another fan of local foods. His new book, *The Food of a Younger Land: A Portrait of American Food — Before the National Highway System, Before Chain Restaurants, and Before Frozen Food, When the Nation's Food Was Seasonal, Regional, and Traditional — From the Lost WPA Files*, is a snapshot of America's culinary past, a menu that included squirrel and opossum, along with cornmeal, molasses or salt pork and ash as a totally acceptable spice.

“I like to eat food that tells me where I am,” Kurlansky says. “I would have rather eaten in 1930.”

In America, like everywhere else in the world, eating local is the best way to learn about another culture, and get full at the same time. Bon appetite.

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At the Fair

By Daniela Solis
Staff Writer

ARGENTINA - CHEER

Q: How did you prepare for the fair?

We didn't know what country to do. We were struggling, but we had a helper named Hugo Leon. He graduated a long time ago from Poly.

Q: What will you do with the money?

Cheer is getting ready for competition, so we'll use the money for that because we have to pay admission at some of the events.

Q: How did you do?

Most of the food was sold, the empanadas and drinks.

Q: Who cooked?

Hugo Leon, formal yell leader at Poly.

Q: Ingredients in the dishes?

Empanadas is chicken and beef.

Enconitos con crema means round crème filling.

Al fajorcitod de maicena is cookies with caramel and coconut.

GUATEMALA - TRACK

Q: Is this your first fair?

yes

Q: How does the group benefit from the event?

We will use the money for team equipment, the hurdles or poles for pole vaulting.

Q: How did you do?

We sold all the drinks and a lot of food.

Q: Who cooked?

Moms from the team players. Dianna's mom made the agua de pina (pineapple juice) and Graciela's mom made the agua de limon (lemonade) and de pina.

Q: Ingredients in the dish?

The empanadas had bananas and crème. Outside they were decorated with powdered sugar.

Agua de limon is lemon and sugared water.

Agua de pina is pina molida with sugared water.

EXTRA

HERE'S
LOOKING
AT YOU

Syfy channel's "Face Off" series brings the art of movie make-up to cable.

By Joel Hinojosa
Editor in Chief

Rating: 5/5

Syfy's new reality hit TV series "Face Off" is an addicting, creative and intense look at the world of special effects make-up and movie magic.

The show features talented make-up artists competing in elaborate challenges like full body painting, zombie creation and recreating tales.

The prize is a \$100,000 and a shot at a Hollywood career.

"The show was looking for good effects artists, first and foremost," said special effects make-up artist Glen Hetrick. "You had to be able to do what we do. At the end of the show, you get to see this awesome transformation – some that work, some that don't, who failed this week, who succeeded. So I think that makes it extremely unique in this field. I hope "Face Off" transcends the sci-fi/horror genre and really opens up and resonates with a wider audience, and that people will be interested in it."

The contestants use make-up and prosthetics to make astonishing creations like a pregnant alien, zombie hooker, teddy bear serial killer and a grotesque display of industrial Hansel and Gretel. The artists also included a backstories for most of their works.

The competition grows heated as the show progresses and the challenges become tougher, requiring more teamwork and time-efficient effort.

Anticipation rose during every episode as participants who failed to impress the judges were eliminated.

"Face Off" judges and make-up artists include three time Academy Award winner Ve Neill ("Beetlejuice," "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Edward Scissorhands," "Tim Burton's Sweeney Todd") and Glen Hetrick ("Heroes," "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," "The X Files") and Patrick Tatopoulos ("Underworld," "Independence Day," "Resident Evil: Extinction").

"I think it's just one of those... rudimentary desires to see if you can look weird, or different, or be scary, or be a fantasy creature or — I don't know. It's a sickness, that's what it is," Ve Neill told NPR.

Guest judges included Michael Westmore ("Star Trek," "Rocky," "The Munsters") and Sean S. Cunningham ("Friday the 13th," "The Last House on the Left," "Freddy vs Jason").

The first season, eight episodes, ran from January to March 2011 and drew an average of 1.4 million viewers per episode.



Google Image

MAKE-UP: "Face Off" contestant, Gage Hubbard, applies latex and paint to a model.

BASEBALL



Photo by Mariana Santos

VARSITY: From left senior shortstop Omar Rodriguez, senior center fielder Daniel Lopez and sophomore pitcher Josue Moreno.

Around the Diamond

The OPTIMIST recently spoke with senior shortstop Omar Rodriguez, senior center fielder Daniel Lopez and sophomore pitcher Josue Moreno on the season so far. Here is what they said:

By Kelsey Cruz
Sports Editor

Q. How long have you been playing?

Omar Rodriguez: I've been playing since I was 14 years old. I played JV one year and three years in varsity.

Daniel Lopez: I've been playing for four years, since freshman year. I didn't go up to varsity until halfway of my sophomore year.

Josue Moreno: I've been playing since I was eight years old.

Q. What are your skills?

OR: I would say my speed, my bat hitting wise, and my glove is decent.

DL: My skill would be my speed. I usually play center, but I pitch whenever they need me.

JM:

Q. How do you expect Poly to do this year?

OR: I expect Poly to do really good during our league

DL: I expect us to do pretty good, we have a good squad. Our pitching is good, our hitting comes through, so we should be doing good.

JM: I expect us to do well, to win. I think we could get to playoffs and win the championship.

Q. Talk about your coach?

OR: He's a good coach. He's strict, keeps us in line. He keeps our grades from going down because he checks up on us all the time.

DL: He understands us. Like if we tell him something, he'll listen and understand and try to improve it. He'll listen to us and try to help us out with whatever we need help on.

JM: He's a good coach and he teaches well.

Q. What are your individual strengths and weaknesses?

"I just like the fact that you could be winning in the last inning by a lot, but they could come back you'll lose. Basically, you never know what's going to happen."

- senior Daniel Lopez

OR: My strength would be hitting and I wouldn't call it a weakness, but maybe my glove or defense isn't as strong.

DL: My strength would be my defense. With the position I play, I think I have decent range and a decent arm. My offense is my weakness. Hitting wise, I just haven't been hitting.

JM: I don't really have a weakness. I don't get nervous when I pitch.

Q. What are the team's strengths and weaknesses?

OR: I would say our strength is pitching and our defense. Our weakness would be hitting, our offense.

DL: Our strength is our pitching and our weakness could be our pitching because if it's not there, then we're off. If it's there then we'll be good.

JM: We have good defense, but our offense sometimes isn't that good.

Q. When do you bunt?

OR: We would bunt if we're trying to move a base runner over. We sacrifice ourselves to move the runner over to get a run.

DL: Personally, I think we bunt in situations where they're unexpected or unless their infield is back. It depends on the coaches strategies too.

JM: We bunt when we want to move runners over. I only bunt when Cerna tells me to.

Q. When do you steal?

OR: It depends on the counts. We would steal if the pitcher's throwing a lot of off-speed. That means the ball is going slower than the fastball. We would steal on those or on the dirt ball. If it hits the dirt, we have a better chance stealing the base because the catcher has to get up, get the ball, and throw it.

DL: Whenever you have a chance. Even if the coach doesn't tell you to.

JM: When the coach gives us a sign to steal.

Q. When do you hit and run?

OR: We would hit and run if there were no outs and we're trying to get the runner over and trying to get a base hit out of it at the same time

DL: Usually, you just hit and run when you have a slow runner. We try to give them a heads up. A hit and run is when a runner takes off early like he steals, and you hit the ball no matter where it is.

JM: When we want to move a runner over.

Q. Who's hitting well?

OR: I'm hitting well and John Espinoza. We have batting practice and stations that help us. In practice, we work on our offense a lot.

DL: Omar Rodriguez and John Espinoza

JM: Omar Rodriguez is hitting well.

Q. What do you like about baseball?

OR: I like to compete, first of all and I've been playing baseball my whole life so I fell into liking it.

DL: I just like the fact that you could be winning in the last inning by a lot, but they could come back you'll lose. Basically, you never know what's going to happen.

EXTRA

Me and My Monkey by Ronald Ruiz



The Adventures of Jack and Jacky by Melissa Cuevas



Google Image

BOY: Dalton Lambert (Ty Simpkins) is the young boy haunted in "Insidious."

It's not the house that's haunted

Director Wan's "Insidious" takes new slant on the haunted house genre.

By Ivan Escobedo
Staff Writer

Rating: 3.5/5

"Insidious" is director James Wan's ("Saw") fresh take on the overdone haunted house horror genre.

"Insidious" borrows ideas from horror classics like "Poltergeist" and "The Exorcist" but avoids the clichéd formulas of so many other haunted house flicks.

Josh and Renai Lambert's son Dalton slips into a mysterious coma-like state.

Apparition specialist Elise Rainier (Lin Shaye from "There's Something About Mary") reveals that Dalton's soul is trapped in the spirit realm (a.k.a. the further).

Dalton's soulless physical body becomes a magnet for life-craving spirits and malicious demons.

Patrick Wilson ("Watchmen") is Josh, the protective yet reluctant father with a secret past and Rose Byrne ("Damages," and this summer's upcoming "X-Men: First Class") plays at-home mother Renai.

Some of the film's scares were based on real-life but unrelated accounts from both Wan's and Whannel's friends and family.

The first half of the film is all eerie atmosphere and lengthy scenes

of terror. The second half relies on suspense rather than blood.

Missing are "Saw's" gore and flying limbs. Instead, creepy set pieces, flashy cuts and shocking music make audiences jump, scream and squirm in their seats.

This PG-13 is scary as hell.

The opening-night audience cheered as Josh physically fought off an apparition in the attic while in "the further."

The film is peppered with small jokes to keep from being too intense.

Rainier's assistant tech guys, the cowardly Specs (played by Whannel) and awkward Tucker (Angus Sampson from "Where the Wild Things Are") provide the comic relief.

"Missing are "Saw's" gore and flying limbs. Instead, creepy set pieces, flashy cuts and shocking music make audiences jump, scream and squirm in their seats."

