

# The Poly ptimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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## ELECTION 2012

### CANDIDATES, ISSUES AND POSSIBILITIES

By Nam Woo  
Staff Writer

Many people are anxious for the 2012 presidential race to begin. Barack Obama is obviously the candidate for the Democratic Party. For the Republicans, the top nominees for now are Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich, and Herman Cain.

Romney, former governor of Massachusetts, ran in 2008, but lost to Arizona Senator John McCain after changing stances on key issues numerous times. Or so his critics said.

Romney's positions are fairly simple. He wants to lower the corporate tax rate to 25% from 35% and eliminate taxes on interest and dividend income for anyone making less than \$200,000 a year. Romney also wants to cut spending and regulation and repeal Obama's health care law.

Gingrich would overhaul the tax code by cutting corporate rates, ending capital gains taxes and eliminating the estate tax. He'd also move to a flat tax, keeping charitable and home ownership deductions. Gingrich also wants Obama-care

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repealed.

Gingrich was a former speaker of the House until his resignation in 1998. Gingrich also led the impeachment of former President Clinton.

Cain, former CEO of Godfather's Pizza, is not a career politician, unlike the rest of the nominees.

Cain favors a return to the gold standard and supports a strong national defense. His "9-9-9" tax proposal calls for 9% personal, corporate and national sales taxes. Cain also wants a reduction in government regulations, tough border security and enforcement of immigration laws, an overhaul of Social Security and a new health care law.

Romney, Gingrich and Cain are all against the health-care law, in fact, but what exactly is the health care law?

The health care law was passed in 2010 after much effort from President Obama. The law states that

[ See Candidates, Issues, page 6 ]



Photo by Catalina Murillo  
**IN THEORY:** Enigmatic Theory members Micah Mora and Diana Guerrero perform at Thursday's Talent Show. See story on page 3.

## Saturdays at UCLA

### AP classes get more instruction at UCLA.

By Lisa Guardado  
Staff Writer

Most Parrots sleep in on Saturday and forget about school until Monday morning.

But for about 50 Poly students enrolled in AP Calculus, Biology and Chemistry classes, Saturdays have a different look.

A unique program sponsored by LAUSD offers these Parrots a chance to take additional AP study sessions at UCLA.

Classes meet once a month and all Poly AP students are welcome to attend. An LAUSD bus arrives at Poly at 8 am and transports the Parrots and their Poly teachers to

[ See Parrots at UCLA, page 6 ]

## USC Holds Journalism Day

By Jasmine Aquino  
Staff Writer

Hundreds of practicing high school journalists and their faculty advisors attended the University of Southern California's (USC) semi-annual High School Journalism Day on November 18.

High School Journalism Day provides an opportunity for high school students to attend a variety of workshops and panels led by professional journalists and USC faculty members.

Each school is allowed to take up to five students and a faculty advisor. Each student received a personalized folder with a schedule of what workshops to attend and a meal ticket.

Students had a chance to explore various aspects of journalism from working professionals with firsthand experience. The more than two dozen guest speakers represented the Los Angeles Times, the Orange County

Register, the Wall Street Journal, the Daily Bruin, and the Daily Trojan.

A photo journalism panel hosted by freelance photographer Armando Brown from the Orange County Register discussed how young photo journalists can produce more compelling photographic coverage.

"Capture emotion in your photos," Brown urged while offering examples of both high and low quality photos.

Brown also demonstrated how to get the most out of a camera and stayed afterwards to answer student questions about media equipment and his experience as a photojournalist.

Investigative reporter Robert Lopez of @LANow (the breaking news blog of the Los Angeles Times) hosted Backpack Journalism.

Lopez produces multimedia content for breaking news stories using just the contents in his backpack – a hand-held HD camcorder to record video and a laptop to edit

[ See A Day at USC page 6 ]

## Parrots Get 20K+ at Aca Deca Scrimmage

### Smart squad hopes score is good enough for state.

By Yenifer Rodriguez  
Editor In Chief

Poly's Academic Decathlon team scored 20,622 points in an official scrimmage against all 70 LAUSD Aca Deca teams. The scrimmage was held in the cafeterium on November 19.

"For the third year in a row, we appear to be right on the line between just getting in and just missing," said Aca Deca coach Brian Block.

Granada Hills High School had the highest score.

"The point of the scrimmage was to see their abilities and weaknesses for the upcoming competition," said Block.

The next competition is on the last Saturday in January, when the teams give their speeches, do interviews and write essays.

"Which we do incredibly well on," Block said. "We speak well and write well."

The multiple-choice test and the Super Quiz relay are held on the first Saturday of February. Last year the Super Quiz relay was televised.

Winners get invited to state. "Based on the scrimmage, I think there will be 13 teams who make it to state," said Block.

Last year, 10 teams received at-large bids and went to state.

Every county or school district gets to send their best team. The runner-ups fill any leftover spots.

Between one third to one half of the teams come from the LAUSD.

The LAUSD competition is more difficult than two thirds of the state competitions. Last year's team would have won state anywhere else if they weren't in California.

Last year ten teams were chosen to go to the state competition. Poly came in 11.

"The team has the ability, but is short on experience," said Block, "and in any competition experience is a crucial factor."

Block said the best person on the team is the Captain, senior Kathy Silva. Her specialty is art, but she's strong in all subjects.

"This year I picked the captain, but the team would've picked her anyway," Block said.

## Yellow Has Parrots Seeing Red

### Where have all the murals gone, wondered students and teachers back from the holiday.

By Ramses Lemus  
Staff Writer

Poly's new coat of yellow paint had some Parrots and teachers seeing red on the Monday after Thanksgiving break.

The colors were chosen by Poly Principal Gerardo Loera and a special committee, according to Assistant Principal Lourdes De Santiago. Different shades were painted on the walls of the 70's and input was sought from teachers and students.

"The principal had input from different people," De Santiago said. Various factors were used to choose which murals would be painted over.

"The outdated murals, the murals for programs no longer funded and murals on rooms where the class had moved were chosen for removal," De Santiago said.

Colors on some of the murals were fading, according to De

[ See Parrots see red, pg 6 ]



Photo by Catalina Murillo

## More Paint News

Principal Loera with the straight scoop.

INTERVIEW - page 3



Google Image

## Christmas For Your Pet Pal

Complete your pet's christmas wish list.

LIFESTYLE - page 7



## OPINION

## EDITORIAL

## Stanford Commencement

Apple CEO Steve Jobs 2003 Stanford address offers some uncommonly good advice for students of all ages. Below is part two, the final words of his speech. The OPTIMIST ran part one in our November issue.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.

My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called The Whole Earth Catalog, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors,

and Polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of The Whole Earth Catalog, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.

Stay hungry. Stay foolish.  
Thank you all very much.

Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

## LETTERS

## Faded Spirit

Many Poly students are not satisfied with Poly's new look, including me. I believe that the murals made the school unique. They were all different and would stand out. Now its appearance gives the impression of any ordinary building.

Every mural told a story of a role model, such as Albert Einstein. The quotes made me think of the importance of life and the murals would show the talent at my school. Poly even had a special mural that been there since the 1980's. The blue and yellow plain colors have faded Poly students' spirit because it lost the murals memories.

- Rocio Joya, 12

## Unwanted Changes

All changes have their melancholy. There are some effective changes and some unpleasant changes. The new paint job at Poly has caused a lot of disillusion for most students. Poly's new look is unwanted and disliked by many. The murals were what made Poly original and a friendly school. One of the things I liked most about Poly were its murals, but now most of them are gone, leaving many students like myself heartbroken and empty.

One of the murals I miss the most is the Spiderman mural. Now all I see there is a simple wall. Poly has lost part of its originality.

- Cynthia Jimenez, 12

## Blue Is OK,

The school paint job is ok but it could have been better. If we are gonna cover up all the murals we need something better covering it up not with something worse. The blue is ok the yellow is horrible. It should have been gold. And we need more Poly Parrots on the walls. I overall think it's ok but a lot of students hate the new paint job and thinks it's horrible.

- Daniel Amaya, 11

## School Personality

We returned from our enjoyable Thanksgiving break only to see our school turned into a mental asylum. It's not that we don't appreciate a new paint job, but students didn't have a voice in it. We are the ones who go to school and have to deal with it, so why not ask us before something like this is done.

We loved the murals because our very own Mr. Loya helped create many of them and we felt they were part of the legacy he left. The school should at least start a new mural class for the incoming generation to see.

- Katherine Catalan, 12

## Who Knew?

Our murals have been destroyed. One of our most valuable 1980's murals vanished under this hideous paint that Poly now has. Why weren't any of us informed? I think this move was very irresponsible because whoever decided to paint the walls didn't inform anyone at Poly beforehand. Whoever started the project of painting Poly walls should have asked the students and teachers at Poly so we could have given an opinion.

Since the walls were painted, the murals that took hard work and dedication disappeared. If the artist would see that his/her mural or artwork was painted over, that person would be really angry.

- Luis Cruz, 12

## Second Home

None of us (the students at Poly) knew about this change at our school, and I think we should've been told and should've been part of it by asking for our preferences. We are the ones that make up the school.

We are all together and live together in this kind of a second house as well as our teachers. I think we all should have the opportunity to choose what we want to be new and changed in our school.

- Citlalli Rios, 12

## Gone In Five Seconds

It is disappointing to know that the ones who painted the murals spent their time to give Poly some light. Sadly, it was gone in five seconds.

They should open a new mural class. Not only to redecorate Poly but to let artistic people here at Poly express and show their talent. It really was a mistake to paint over the murals because they were really good and they meant something to us.

- Cynthia Zamara, 12



the  
**OPTIMIST**

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School  
12431 Roscoe Blvd, Sun Valley, CA, 91352  
<http://polyhigh.org>

## 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.

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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.

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Yenifer Rodriguez

## SPORTS EDITORS

Alex Dimas  
Maureen Kang

## PHOTO EDITORS

Diane Alvarado  
Catalina Murillo

## CARTOONIST

Patricia Racelis

## WRITERS

Jasmine Aquino  
Amy Ayala  
Karen De Leon  
Alex Dimas  
Jessica Flores  
Joel Garcia  
Michael Garcia

Lisa Guardado  
Maureen Kang  
Ramses Lemus  
Yenifer Rodriguez  
Shean Santy  
Nam Woo

## OPTIMIST ADVISOR

John Blau



## INTERVIEW

## PRINCIPAL TALKS PAINT

By Ramses Lemus  
Staff Writer

**A number of students and teachers have complained about the paint job. Some feel that the Poly “spirit” was taken away, some feel Mr. Loya’s legacy was erased, and other dislike the color choice. Can you walk us through the decision-making process?**

The school was painted because the previous paint was badly deteriorated and very dirty, by students and other people putting their feet up against the wall. The campus was in dire need of a paint job. Schools don’t get painted very often.

Poly has always had a great story of murals that had been built up over time, lots to be proud of there. Some of the murals showed great signs of deterioration, many needed maintenance and/or an updating and some were not even relevant to the current time. For example, the Yearbook mural, which was in front of room 73, doesn’t correspond to where the yearbook currently is in room 92. Same thing for the OPTIMIST mural, which was in front of room 11, which now is the recording studio. So some choices were easier than others.

Making the decision was not an easy one. We want to make sure to respect the artist, and definitely keep in mind the work done with Mr. Loya historically. All of this was definitely in our minds to decide which murals to keep.

Art teacher Karen Daneshvari and I walked around to visually inspect the murals for future decisions on which murals we would keep and which to take down. It was a very difficult decision. It was not easy. I knew some people

would not be happy because some people would disagree with our decision. I don’t see it as the end of the murals. We will actively look for a mural teacher, if the budget permits, giving the school a brand new start.

We respect the murals, as we did with the one outside of the school, restoring it to its original color. We are leaving several murals that are in good condition and that are relevant. They are actually looking quite well with the new paint around it. The murals located in the 60’s, the leadership sponsor agreed to paint over them to start over again. The intent was not to disrespect the artist or the history, the intent was to make the campus look better, and make room for further murals.

**How was the color combination chosen?**

In the spring semester last year, Dallas Blair started the process with several different people including teachers and students selecting the combination. We chose a color that was contemporary and that won’t age quickly. The previous color being white, aged very quickly. We wanted to go with the school colors and the Poly spirit with the gold and blue.

We picked several colors. We looked at the color selection several times. We looked at the color and ended up picking the recommendation that the contractor who is experienced in painting schools gave us because it won’t age fast, because schools don’t get painted very often. We want it to look more modern because our school is nearly 60 years old.

To paint the school was not a concrete decision. It was back and forth. We picked colors, then it was postponed because of budget cuts. The reality is that the school needed a paint job. I made the final decisions. We had the



Photo by Catalina Murillo

**DECIDER:** *Principal Gerardo Loera said he received different opinions on the paint color.*

students look at the samples and give their opinions, and everyone has different opinions and we went with what we thought was best over all and that’s that.

**You used a committee to determine the color choice. Who was part of that committee?**

Since the process was going back and forth we had different people. It was never a formal committee, but Grigsby was part of it, Blair had a number of people working with her. The reality is that it doesn’t matter what color you pick, someone is never going to like it, especially with 3,000 students. The school is not a new school and you are painting over a lot of modifications. At the end of the day, I believe the school looks a lot better than it did before. As we move forward and add murals, it will look much better.

**Can you walk us through how the paint job came to be, the choice to paint the school and the color choice.**

The process was started by Blair at the end of spring, by looking at the relative colors and trying to come up with various combinations. We narrowed it down to some ideas and purchased some color samples and put up around the campus.

We adjusted the colors in a little bit different tone due to the contractor’s legitimate reasons.

Then the process was basically canceled. Then I get a phone call saying that they want a final determination on the colors, and they give you a very short timeline, so there wasn’t a whole lot of time to get a whole lot of people together. We already had a group of people working on it. I didn’t want to delay to process or risk losing the school getting painted all together.

**Will new murals be approved to be painted around the campus?**

Yes. We will have to look at the professionalism, the message, we will have to develop a process for that, but the answer is yes.

If we kind of take a step back for a minute and really take a look, the school looks much better. I don’t want to look at the fact that the murals are covered, because that was not the intent. For me, it’s looking at it as a fresh start. As the school continues to improve both academically and athletic wise, we want to contribute to the physical appeal of the campus, internally and externally so the overall school moves forward to make it to the top of the school district.



## Dance Groups Dominate Show

By Jasmine Aquino  
Staff Writer



Photo by Catalina Murillo

**DUBSTEPPER:** *Parrot senior Alma Bravo danced at the talent show with Carol Areyona and Jerick Joya.*

**P**oly dance sensation Enigmatic Theory put the moves on another Parrot audience, this one at an SRO talent show in the cafeteria December 1. Leadership sponsored the event and all proceeds went to the toy drive.

“I was a little nervous, but once you’re up there, it’s like no one’s watching you and you’re just in your own little world,” said dancer Diana Guerrero.

Enigmatic Theory, a dance group formed in a KYDS after-school program, also wowed audiences on its first appearance at the Homecoming Pep Rally in October.

Theory consists of freshman Giselle Rodriguez, seniors Guerrero, Jerick Joya, Rochelle Navales, Karen Maya, Karina Perez, Juan Lupian, Luis Lucio and teacher Micah Mora. The troupe’s dance steps told a story of rejection and empowerment backed with “Bang Bang remix” by White Horse Dubstep, “Dance A\$\$” by Big Sean and “You and I” by Lady Gaga.

A dance trio that featured seniors Alma Bravo, Carol Areyano and Joya from Enigmatic Theory made a big impact too. Joya executed a variety of b-boy and hip hop moves, including a one-hand stand and various head spins as the audience squealed.

The three then danced to “Strange Clouds” by BOB featuring Lil Wayne. The dancers included hip and arm movement and hair whipping in this number which led to Bravo’s dance solo. Bravo robot-danced to “First of the Year” by Skrillex.

Sophomore Sara Gosa kicked off the event with a lip sync of “Fall For You” by American acoustic rock band Secondhand Serenade while the audience clapped along.

Seniors Jesusa Carvajal and Arturo Garcia brought an acoustic feel to the show with their rendition of “Lucky” by Jason Mraz and Colbie Caillet. The audience sang along with the chorus “I’m lucky I’m in love with my best friend/ Lucky to have been where I have been/ Lucky to be coming home again” as Carvajal strummed her ukulele and Garcia played his guitar.



Photo by Catalina Murillo

**LUCKY HIM:** *Senior Arturo Garcia sang at the show.*

The show ended on a high note with seniors Steven Diaz, Jose Ruiz, and Christian Medina as Chanco & the Locas doing “La Peinada”. One of the performers wore a cheetah dress and wig while the others took off their sweaters and swung them around their heads while dancing to the song.

The trio pulled volunteers from the audience to dance with, although they had a bit of trouble finding brave souls.

The show, organized by Enigmatic Theory’s Karina Perez, netted \$245 for the toy drive.

Phys Ed teacher Charles Schwal, in knit cap and sweatshirt, emceed the show.



## HAPPY

## What's Love Got To Do With It

By Jasmine Aquino  
Staff Writer

When a girl finds a song that makes her feel happy, she shares it with her closest girl friends, and they sing along until the lyrics are engraved in their brains. Such songs inspire girls to say what they've been dying to say to a boss or a crush. So if you need a little 'Girl-Power,' play one of these anthems sung by some of music's most powerful women.

### 1. Respect (1965) – Aretha Franklin

Originally released by Otis Redding on Stax in 1965. R&B singer Franklin's remake is the declaration of a strong and confident woman who knows she has everything her man wants. She is a good woman who never does him any wrong and demands respect. The song may sound a bit dated, but the subject matter certainly isn't.

### 2. What's Love Got to Do with It (1984) – Tina Turner

"What's Love Got to Do with It," from "Private Dancer," Turner's fifth solo album, became her most successful single and won 1985 Grammy Awards for Record of the Year, Song of the Year, and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. For girls pondering whether someone truly won their hearts.



### 3. Call Tyrone (1997) – Erykah Badu

Every man knew a "Tyrone" once this song was released and every woman made sure to let her man know when he had to make the call to help him move out. Badu is the voice of all the women who are tired of men and their inability to make a woman feel special and loved.



### 4. Caught Out There (I Hate You So Much Right Now) (1999) – Kelis

Sung in third-person, the singer discovers her man has been unfaithful. In the first verse, she explains all the things she has done for this man. The second verse laments how unfair infidelity is and in verse three, the singer finally blows a fuse—complete with a gun cocked. "Because you're caught out there," sung at the end of each verse, is a word play on "being caught with your pants down." Every girl has at some point felt this way—though she may not have screamed it out like Kelis does.

### 5. Independent Women (2000) – Destiny's Child

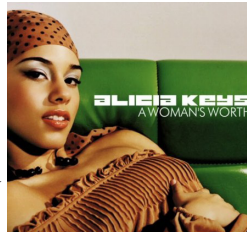
First appeared on the soundtrack of the 2000 remake of "Charlie's Angels." The lyrics speak for all the ladies who can do it for themselves, automatically making it a girl anthem.

### 6. Who Run the World (Girls) (2011) – Beyoncé Knowles

The title alone comprises an aggressive message towards female empowerment. This song embodies a theme similar to other singles released by Knowles but takes a more direct and assertive approach.

### 7. A Woman's Worth (2001) – Alicia Keys

A piano-driven soul ballad with a contemporary R&B twist from Keys' "Songs in A Minor," this song proves how invaluable a good woman is and that she is not afraid to let others know.



### 8. Video (2001) – India.Arie

"Video" is the perfect song to cheer up any woman—especially an awkward fifteen-year old. The new age of social media has young girls fixated on every "flaw" and feeling the pressure to look perfect, but India.Arie's song makes ladies feel beautiful in their own skin. She put the right words into a melody: "When I look in the mirror and the only one there is me/ Every freckle on my face is where it's supposed to be." Perfect for girls to jump around their rooms with smiles on their faces.



### 9. Fighter (2003) – Christina Aguilera

Women are strong. In "Fighter," Aguilera makes sure no one underestimates the strength of women. She realizes just how strong she and every woman can be: "Cause if it wasn't for all that you tried to do, I wouldn't know just how capable I am to pull through." This is the perfect after-a-breakup song.

### 10. Irreplaceable (2006) – Beyoncé Knowles

Girls—and boys—are able to relate to the lyrics of the well-known "Irreplaceable" starting with "to the left, to the left." The lyrics describe the breakdown of a woman's relationship with her boyfriend after discovering his infidelity. But she pulls through because she knows her own worth and every woman's. In today's society, too often men think women are disposable, so it's nice to have Knowles state bluntly that women are definitely "irreplaceable."

### 11. Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It) (2008) – Beyoncé Knowles

"Single Ladies" explores the issue that affects many women in relationships today: the fear or unwillingness of men to commit. The song was written for Knowles' album "I Am... Sasha Fierce" (Knowles' alter ego) and emphasizes the aggression and sensuality of women.

These songs were produced to open the eyes of young teens and older women to their own beauty. Every song embodies a great message: stop fixating on your flaws and love yourself.

# Holiday Movies of 2011: It's a Wrap

December is always a good movie month and this one is no exception.

By Shean Santy  
Staff Writer

Don't head to the mall til you've read our movie picks for the holidays.

### Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy (December 9)

John le Carre novel gets a big screen look. The story, set in early 1970s London, follows the hunt for a Soviet double agent at the top of the British secret service. Swedish director Tomas Alfredson ("Let the Right One In") directed Academy Award winner Colin Firth ("The King's Speech"), John Hurt ("Hellboy"), Tom Hardy ("Inception"), and Benedict Cumberbatch ("Sherlock"). Gary Oldman ("Sid and Nancy") is George Smiley.

### We Need to Talk About Kevin (December 9 – Limited)

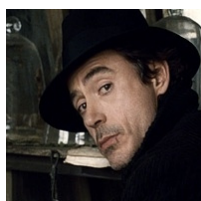
The film adaptation of Lionel Shriver's novel is a family drama that will produce more chills than horror. Tilda Swinton ("Michael Clayton") plays Eva Khatchadourian, a mother who recounts the events leading up to her son's massacre of students and teachers at his high school. Ezra Miller ("Californication") plays the psychopath son, while John C. Reilly ("Step Brother") is the husband.

### The Sitter (December 9)

Jonah Hill ("Superbad") and director David Gordon Green ("Pineapple Express") bring an R-rated comedy to the holiday season. Hill plays a suspended college student who is lured in to a babysitting gig. Reminiscent of 1987's "Adventures in Babysitting" but with more vulgarity and laughs, thanks to Green and Hill.

### Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (December 16)

After a two-year wait, December sets the return of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson played by Robert Downey Jr. ("Ironman") and Jude Law ("Contagion"). The sequel pits Holmes against nemesis Professor Moriarty (Jared Harris). The cast includes Mycroft Holmes (Stephen Fry) as Sherlock's brother and Noomi Rapace ("Millennium Series") as Romanian woman Sim. Director Guy Ritchie takes the helm again and femme fatale Irene Adler, played by Rachael McAdams ("The Notebook"), makes a cameo appearance.



### Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol (December 21)

The fourth installment in the series, with Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) and company set for another wild ride. Terrorists obliterate the Kremlin and Russia blames the International Monetary Fund. The U.S. government initiates a black-ops mission called "Ghost Protocol" towards the IMF. Hunt and crew must find the source of the attacks. Ving Rhames (previous MI films) and Simon Pegg ("Hot Fuzz") return along with newcomers Paula Patton ("Precious") and Jeremy Renner ("Hurt Locker").



### The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (December 21)

First a best-selling Stieg Larsson novel, then a well-received Swedish language film adaptation, now an American remake. David Fincher ("The Social Network") directs, Rooney Mara ("The Social Network") is Lisbeth Salander and Daniel Craig plays Mikael Blomkvist. Trent Reznor of R.E.M. and Atticus Rose did the score.



### The Adventures of Tintin (December 21)

The epic Hegerre comic book series gets the Spielberg touch. Peter Jackson ("Lord of the Rings" trilogy) produced and Brits Steven Moffat ("Doctor Who"), Edgar Wright ("Scott Pilgrim vs. The World") and Joe Cornish ("Attack the Block") scripted. Jamie Bell ("Billy Elliot") is Tintin and Andy Serkis ("Rise of the Planet of the Apes") is Captain Haddock. Long-time Spielberg collaborator John Williams scores. The film's current success in Europe (\$150M and counting) bodes well for a sequel or two.

### We Bought a Zoo (December 23)

Director Cameron Crowe ("Almost Famous") takes on the memoir of Benjamin Bee (Matt Damon), a man who spends his life savings to save a depleted zoo in the English countryside. Scarlett Johansson ("Lost in Translation") and Elle Fanning ("Super 8") co-star.

### War Horse (December 25)

Based on the children's novel and stage play, director Spielberg has another hit for the Christmas season. Oscar buzz always follows Spielberg, and this one is no exception. Joey, a horse owned and loved by Albert Narracott (Jeremy Irvine), is sold to a cavalry in France and embarks on an extraordinary odyssey. Albert's mission is to bring Joey home. Another Williams' score adds to the Oscar possibilities.

### The Darkest Hour (December 25)

Christmas goes sci-fi as newbie director Chris Gorak tells the story of a group of young people in Russia trying to survive an alien invasion. The twist here is that the aliens are invisible energy life forms. Emile Hirsch ("Into the Wild") stars with Olivia Thirlby ("Juno"), Rachael Taylor ("Transformers"), Joel Kinnaman ("The Killing") and Max Minghella ("The Social Network").

### Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close (December 25- Limited)

Film adaptation of a 2005 Jonathan Safran Foer novel follows Oskar Schell (Thomas Horn), a boy whose dad (Tom Hanks) died in the 9/11 attack on New York City. Oskar journeys across New York hoping to find the lockbox for which his father left him the key. Sandra Bullock ("The Blind Side") is Oskar's mother and Stephen Daldry ("The Reader") directs. A nationwide audition yielded unknown Thomas Horn, a Jeopardy Kids Week Champion, for the Schell role.



## HOLIDAYS

# More than a Jingle

These ten Christmas albums are chock full of good cheer and great sounds.

By Jasmine Aquino  
Staff Writer



## 10. "A Christmas Present" – Merle Haggard

A gift from Haggard, one of Country's most idiosyncratic artists, the album hit stores during the holidays of 1973. The single "If We Make It Through December," a heartfelt tale of hard times cracked the Top 30 of the Billboard Hot 100. Haggard's compositions range from the light and friendly "Santa Claus and Popcorn" to the high and lonesome "Daddy Won't Be Home for Christmas."

## 9. "Dr. Demento Presents the Greatest Christmas Novelty CD" – Various Artists

Holiday pop songs are practically novelties by definition because they are only relevant for about a month. This 1989 CD synthesizes the cute and funny (the Chipmunks, the Singing Dogs and Spike Jones), the satirical (Allan Sherman) and the just plain weird (Elmo and Patsy's "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer"). Great for Christmas as a dollop of good humor and a fun alternative to Bing Crosby.

## 8. "Reggae Christmas From Studio One" – Various Artists

Don't judge an album by its cover. This 1991 collection of early-Sixties ska and rock steady embraces Christmas from a different perspective. The album ranges from hard-edged dancehall tunes (Tiger's "Tiger Claus") to the smooth, soul-minded Frankie Paul's "Gee Whiz It's Christmas." Includes the Wailers' "Sound the Trumpet," which integrates "Santa Claus Is Comin' To Town" in the bridge.



## 7. "Soulful Christmas" – Various Artists

Unlike standard bearers Ella Fitzgerald or even Elvis Presley, these soul singers aren't exactly a perfect match for a Christmas album. This compilation, however, easily captures the Christmas spirit with some of the best performances around, including "I'll Be Home For Christmas" and Donny Hathaway's "This Christmas."

## 6. Charles Brown's "Please Come Home For Christmas"

Blues wasn't considered a festive genre until this album hit stores in 1961. Created entirely around the hit single of the same name which made the Christmas Singles chart for nine seasons, the album reached #1 in 1972. The single's lyrics reference the Christmas season and traditions and the use of a church bell-type sound created by using a piano. The single has been covered numerous times (Eagles, Bon Jovi, etc) yet none have topped the success of the original. The CD also includes other oft-covered seasonal songs including "Merry Christmas Baby".

## 5. "Elvis' Christmas Album" – Elvis Presley

The King's quintessential Fifties holiday celebration album and one of the few "rock and roll" Christmas albums everyone likes. The tunes swing from the festive seasonal staple "Blue Christmas" to more somber and spiritual tunes less often found on a holiday album. Presley's talent as a white gospel singer makes up for the occasional unusual choice.

## 4. "A Charlie Brown Christmas" – the Vince Guaraldi Trio

One of the most popular Christmas albums of all time and the soundtrack to the CBS Christmas television special of the same name. Released in 1965, the album is bound to please even those who aren't fans of the legendary Peanuts — or jazz, for that matter. Includes terrifically-realized gems like "What Child Is This" and "The Christmas Song." This album sounds like snow falling feels.

## 3. "The Ventures Christmas Album" – the Ventures

Surf-rock's finest interpretive moment. Each song starts as a mid-Sixties rocker and then morphs into a Christmas favorite. Listening to the Ventures' own "Walk, Don't Run" transform into "Jingle Bells" is one of life's greatest pleasures. So too the Beatles' "I Feel Fine" morphing into "Frosty The Snowman" and "Woolly Bully" revealing itself as "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town". Keep party guests entertained guessing which Christmas classic the hit singles will morph into next.

## 2. "Time Life Treasury Of Christmas" – Various Artists

This compilation brilliantly blends spiritual music, celebratory songs, pop/rock standards and novelties into a seamless whole. Thanks to Time-Life, who licenses more songs than Santa has presents, this CD offers a vast array of classic selections.

## 1. "A Christmas Gift For You From Phil Spector" – Various Artists

Only 35 minutes long, this masterpiece is arguably the greatest Christmas record of all time. Not just a collection of tracks but a real work of art, the album was produced by Wall of Sound genius and teen tycoon Phil Spector. Spector believed he could construct a holiday record that would not only capture the essence of Christmas, but would also be a pop masterpiece. See if you don't agree that Spector succeeded on every level.



## Politics and Race Featured in Drama Production

Poly's Drama Department recently performed a group of short one-act plays for Parrots that included "Simply Maria," by Josefina Lopez, "No Sacra Nada en la Escuela" by Luis Valdez and "War of the Words" by Robin Brancato. Afterward, the OPTIMIST talked to Drama Coach Katy Groskin, who chose all the plays, about the material presented. Here's what she told us.

By Karen De Leon  
Staff Writer

**The students in "Simply Maria" have trouble speaking English. Where are they from and how long have they been in the US?**

Two are from El Salvador, one from India, three from Mexico, two from Thailand. All have been in the states for less than 5 years

**Isn't the play in English?**

The play is in Spanglish

**Was the play an appropriate vehicle for working out language issues of immigrant students?**

We did many articulation exercises to help the students in the play.

**Is America just a place to take things from, according to the authors of these plays?**

No, both playwrights Lopez and Valdez are of Chicano descent and all of the plays are about the amazing talents, blood, sweat and tears of Latino youth and their families and the ways in which American society provides both hope for some and nothing at all for most.

**Valdez's work is political more than artistic. Would you agree? (Valdez's short plays were performed on the back of pick-up trucks or in union halls and aimed at an audience unused to viewing theater.)**

It is equally political as it is artistic

**Both "Maria" and "No Sacra Nada" speak from an immigrant perspective. Was that**

**why you chose those plays?**

I chose the plays because they were related to the students' personal experiences

**The title of "No Sacra Nada en la Escuela (I Don't Learn Nothing in School)" by Luis Valdez seems to be anti-education. Is that true?**

No, the play presents an experience of some students in the United States particularly Latino students and the discrimination they face within the American school system.

**Valdez's play looks at the racism students were experiencing in the schools at a time when Spanish-speaking students were punished for speaking their first language at school, according to reviews from the time. Is that accurate?**

It is accurate in that it deals with discrimination and being punished for not speaking English.

**"War of the Words" is about two gangs fighting. Any bad language in that play?**

No, the grunts gang in the play uses "punkin" instead of the f word. Some of the actors were nervous and messed up their lines, so

the audience may have thought they heard something else.

**These three plays seem to have similar themes involving racism and oppression. Would you agree?**

I would.

**What do techies do?**

Techies are in charge of lights, sounds, cues, costumes, audience managing, clean up and many other jobs. They're students that are not interested in performing but had to take the class. When I say they struggle to express themselves, I mean that they're shy.

**Audience members reportedly had problems hearing the dialogue. Was that inexperience or technical difficulties. Did you have these same problems in rehearsals?**

It was because of technical difficulties. We tried using microphones but the lack of sound arose because of the space.



## CAMPUS

## Parrots at UCLA

[ From UCLA, front page ]

UCLA.

"These classes are great because the students are in with four hundred students and learning at a college level," says AP Calculus teacher Julia Keiper. "They get the college feel."

Two class periods are offered, the first from 9 to 11 and the second from 11:20 to 1pm.

"The first class is just working with the calculator," said Keiper, "and the second is working on word problems with the book like we do here."

The buses come at 1:45 to take the Parrots back to Poly, so the students get a chance to stay on the UCLA campus for a while after class.

"Our students are allowed to have a library card so they can check out the library and get books," Keiper said.

There are no tests in the classes.

"The purpose of the classes is to help the students earn a passing score for the AP test," Keiper said. "We know up front what the topic will be in the class and what to teach when we go back to Poly."

The AP Parrots agree.

"It's really cool because you've got the college experience so you know what you're up against," said AP Calculus student Gabriel Pelayo. "You get another perspective of learning the material. There is another instructor each time and that helps. That's how college works."

The UCLA classes enrich the AP experience, according to Poly students attending the classes.

"It's harder than Poly. They make us solve problems in many ways," said Parrot AP Chemistry student Yeeun Kim. "So it helped open my mind about Chemistry"

"We learn the subjects we learn in class," said Poly junior Asher Jeong, "so it helps me preview for what we are going to do in class. It's like 'Oh I learned this at UCLA haha.'"

"We get to see different styles of teaching," said Poly AP Chem student Asher Jeong, "because every teacher does it differently. So

we can see every teacher's style."

Poly faculty members attending with their students also see the classes as helpful.

"The students think it's helpful and it's interactive," said Poly AP Chem teacher Ramon Gomez. "It's three teachers and they're always moving and working on demos or sometimes they work on word problems or multiple choice. It's always something different, it's a dynamic class."

"My students sometimes feel bad because we are a bit behind, but I always tell them to relax and sit and learn because we will cover it," said Gomez. "That's my worst worry, because I don't want them to feel bad."

Gomez says his students get to know other students from other schools, and they always work in big groups, so they interact more with more students.

"It's like in a theatre class," Gomez said. "In other subjects, they get small groups. In Chem, they got big groups. It's more dynamic."

"I'm amazed that many students are going to these classes," Gomez said. "It's a big effort to attend these classes. Not everyone can wake up on a Saturday morning."

Gomez said he was surprised at first that other high school teachers are conducting the UCLA classes, not college professors.

"But from another point of view, college teachers don't know how to interact with high school students," Gomez said. "They talk to the students at a distant level, not like high school teachers, who teach more interactively."

"It's a good program," said Parrot AP Bio teacher Irene Maliwan. "It's a good college experience, so it's a little more. Anywhere students can get education off campus is great. They are not always in the same classroom."

The travel time is a problem, Maliwan says, since students and teachers spend two hours on the road.

"The students don't have time to study, unless on the bus," said Maliwan, "and they wake up super early and get home super late."

Maliwan also said space on the buses is always tight.

"We need money because buses cost a lot."

## Candidates, Issues

[ From Politics, front page ]

all American citizens should have health care insurance. The problem with this law is the funding.

Obama hopes to fund the program by taxing the wealthiest Americans. If the Republicans have their way, however, that won't happen. Then the poor would have to pay for themselves, whether they like it or not.

The new health care law has caused a good deal of controversy among Americans. And the Republican solution is to gut the bill and start over.

So what are Obama's chances against any of the main Republican candidates? Without doubt, Obama faces one of the most challenging elections in American history. Yet the president would need to lose huge chunks of states he won in 2008 to lose to any of the Republican candidates.

In 2008, Obama won 29 states. However, the new 2010 census has changed the weighting of some states' electoral votes.

Obama won with 365 electoral votes in 2008, the largest number since Bill Clinton in 1996.

Obama could win reelection if he maintains some of the key states – Indiana, North Carolina, Virginia, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Mexico and Ohio. These states make up 112 electoral votes out of 538.

Indiana, North Carolina, and Virginia went to the Democrats in 2008 for the first time in two decades. The other six were won by Bush in 2004 but controlled by Obama in 2008.

If Obama loses every one of these states in 2012 but holds the others he won in 2008, he will have only 247 electoral votes and the Republicans will win the White House.

But Obama has a strong lead in most of those states, with the exception of Indiana and its 11 electoral votes. Some Republicans even

concede these states to Obama.

In New Mexico (five electoral votes) and Iowa (six electoral votes), Obama has an advantage. VV

New Mexico's abundant Hispanic population gives Obama an edge and the Republicans a nice Tylenol headache.

Iowa is predicted to cause Obama some problems, however. Republicans won the governorship there in 2010, although many people still think Obama has a relationship with that state that is lasting and stable.

If Obama wins those two states and holds the other 19 states that also went to the Democrats in 2008 and Sen. John F. Kerry (Mass.) in 2004, the president would be just 12 electoral votes away from the 270 needed to win.

But the Democrats will have to take out their calculator again if Obama loses some of the states he and Kerry won in the previous elections.

Three worrisome states are Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, which account for 46 electoral votes in 2012.

No Republican since George H.W. Bush in 1988 has won Michigan or Pennsylvania. And Ronald Reagan was the last Republican presidential candidate to win in Wisconsin, in 1984. But can Obama's camp count on these three this time around?

Georgia and Arizona are more competitive, having voted Republican in the last two elections.

Right now, Obama will most likely take the blame for the grim economy, a problem he has failed to fix during his first term.

But that outlook could change for the better, at least that's what the Democrats hope, and if it does, Obama's chances improve considerably.

## Parrots see Red

[ From Parrots Seeing Red, front page ]

Santiago, adding that those murals were "not disliked, just mainly outdated."

C.T Georgiou Painting Co is doing the painting and De Santiago expects the job to be completed by February or March of 2012, depending on the weather.

"They come to paint the school while students are off, so mainly the weekends right now," De Santiago said. "They will be here during Winter Break."

Funds from a 2008 bond measure will cover the \$230,000 cost.

The removed murals had been funded mainly by the Art Department through fund raising, according to De Santiago. Former Art Department teacher Carlos Loya's mural class did the artwork.

Future murals may be in the works.

"Just because we are painting over some of them doesn't mean we won't have a Murals Class in the future," De Santiago said. "Just because we don't have a teacher doesn't mean we won't have one next year."

"We are hoping for an arts class next year, if we find the right person and the budget."

Meanwhile, a school paint job doesn't come around often, De Santiago said.

## A Day at USC

[ From Journalism Day, front page ]

and post the news straight onto @LANow.

Backpack Journalism teaches young journalists how to be mobile and quick when reporting on situations such as brush fires, protests, and disasters.

"Ethics & Credibility in a Digital Age" taught students about Journalism's code of ethics. In a simulated exercise, award-winning journalist Marc Cooper, who is Director of Annenberg Digital News, asked participants to evaluate the ethics of Mayhill Fowler. Fowler created controversy during the 2008 elections when she recorded candidate Barack Obama's comments at a private party and uploaded them to YouTube.

Cooper stressed that new technology is dominating the media and new ethical issues have emerged.

The final workshop helped students better understand how to localize and report on California's education budget cuts.

Lidia Ramos and Lauren Mendoza of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Communications said LAUSD schools will experience more budget cuts, including fewer programs such as summer school and increased class sizes.

Lunch at Journalism Day was provided—a sandwich, cookie, chips, and water—after the workshops, along with an optional tour of the USC campus.

Four Optimist staff members and the paper's advisor attended the event.





## CHRISTMAS

## Time For Santa Paws



Hey pet pals, Christmas is just around the corner.  
Here are 10 gifts your pets will love  
that won't break the bank.

## Cat's meow

By Lisa Guardado  
Staff Writer

1. Make your cat a fashionista with the Holiday Plaid Flower Decorative Collar from Petco. \$2.39.



1.



2.

2. Get the Candy Cane or Santa Hat Teaser for your kitty and play all night. \$2.99.

3. Give your Cat a cute Santa Hat this Christmas. \$2.99.



3.

4. Add the Mr. Claus Cat Costume from Petco for \$2.99.

4.



5.

5. Holiday Feather Balls with Rattle from Petco. \$2.99.

## Arf Arf!

By Yenifer Rodriguez  
Editor-in-Chief

1. Petco's Assorted Rawhide and Munchies Dog stocking. \$9.59



1.



2.

2. The Giant candy cane from Petco is 33.5" inches of rawhide with a red Christmas bow on it. \$9.59.

3. The smaller version comes in rawhide or savory peanut butter flavor. \$3.99



3.

4. Glam up your little princess with PetSmart's Top Paw™ Holiday Dress. \$11.89 to \$12.59.



4.

5. Fido can grab and run with this vinyl toy ornament built for rough handling. With built-in squeaker. \$9.59

5.



## RETRO MATINEE

# Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Pt. 1

A RANT BY  
JOEL GARCIA,  
THE REVIEWER  
WHO NEVER SAW  
A MOVIE HE  
COULDN'T TRASH.

**M**ovies don't necessarily have to be good to be entertaining. Most of my favorite films are awful – "Highlander 2," "Space 9," "Pokémon," etc.

And I think I've found a new one. "The Twilight Saga," a phrase you could not possibly say with a straight face.

These vampire love story movies are so horrendously bad that they actually reach Nirvana. My favorite being "New Moon," where we meet Jacob (Taylor Lautner), a buff and shirtless werewolf that's sole purpose is to guess what? take off his shirt. I counted how many times he took off his shirt in that film. The answer was 42 times, but that's not important right now.

What is important is the latest film in the franchise, "Breaking Dawn," directed by Bill Condon. WAIT. I'm sorry; I meant to



say "Breaking Dawn Pt. 1," otherwise known as "completely not a marketing decision!" (Sarcasm)

The film revolves around Bella (Kristen Stewart plays an unintentional sociopath) and Edward (Robert Pattinson as a good Christian vampire) trying to get married. They get married and pretty much the film doesn't know where to go from there.

Within ten minutes, we're treated to Jacob taking off his shirt. I was expecting Jacob to rip his shirt as often as the previous twilight film, but disappointingly, that's the only real legitimate shirt ripping in the whole movie.

The rest of the film is very much a wedding. I mean that. I mean if you were to go to a wedding and video tape it...that is exactly what you would see. They meet the parents, they cut the cake, and they eat pie. It's a boring and ludicrous scene because Bella's family looks like typical humans and Edward's looks like PALE, SPARKLING VAMPIRES.

DID NO ONE GUESS? A character in the background says "I think they might be vampires?" REALLY? What gave it away? Was it the sharp fangs? Or the pale skin? How about the blood-stained cloths? They wear

blood-stained cloths, for lord's sake!

Bah! Forget it. We're almost at the end of the movie by the time the wedding ends. Edward and Bella retreat to an island off the coast of Brazil. From there "Breaking" is a lot of shameless sex montages leading up to the dramatic pregnant scene. Somehow, because the baby's half vampire, it'll grow faster than a normal human baby. Yeah, don't ask me how that works.

Apparently the baby can only receive nutrients from blood. Now I'm no pediatrician, but I'm pretty sure that babies receive nutrition from cell nutrients and not tissue.

Mumbo jumbo aside, Edward believes it's a good idea to feed the fetus blood, so Bella does, and this leads to another montage. I didn't bother counting how many montages are in this film, since they use one for every little thing.

You may have noticed I've skipped a few details such as the Baby's name scene, the father letting Bella do whatever she wants scene, mostly any scene that incorporated Jacob, the sex bed sub plot that was thrown away, etc. I assure you they don't in any way matter to the overall plot of the story and if

I were to address every little thing wrong, pointless and a waste of time, this would be a very long review.

I brought that up because the next few scenes are just that: pointless. They don't establish anything or go over anything. It's just a waste of time. At the very end of that waste of time, we reach our climax. This is the scene where Bella goes into labor and Edward and a few other vampires and maybe a werewolf race to the hospital.

The baby's killing her and oh SPOILERS. Since the vampire doctor can't really help her, Edward boldly decides to turn her into a vampire by viciously biting her all over her body and injecting her with vampire venom. My only thought in that scene was "Dude you're not helping."

He then realizes he needs to take the baby out of Bella so he performs a C-section with his teeth. He uses the scalpel first, but finds out the blade can't cut a certain part of the flesh.

Moving on, the untrained Edward manages to successfully remove the baby girl from Bella. You think the doctor could have performed a child birthing?

Bella dies, kind of, which leads to the werewolf vampire treaty subplot. The werewolves claim the vampires have broken their side of the treaty by killing Bella, and tell them to prepare themselves for battle.

Finally our friend Jacob goes to see the baby. His plan is to "imprint" the baby. This will somehow restore the treaty between the vampires and the werewolves. "Imprinted" werewolves fall biologically in love with one mate until their death.

And by far that is the creepiest scene in the whole two-hour movie. After the deed is done, Jacob begins fantasizing about spending his life with this baby, dating, kissing, having children. Let me be clear - he's standing there imagining having kids with this infant. I'll let that sink in.

At this point Edward talks a little. We see what everyone is kinda doing, switching from character to character and then cut to Bella opening her red eyes. The credits roll and thank god, I can leave.

This movie was awful, so I'm not even going to mention the after credits scene because we already know there's going to be another movie.



## SPORTS

## Poly Bounces Marshall 4-0

By Alex Dimas  
Staff Writer

Poly's varsity soccer team defeated visiting Marshall High 4-0 in a non-league match Monday.

"They were a weak team," said Poly head coach Raphael Loza, "but we should have won with more goals. We needed a solid defense and solid offense."

Parrot junior Juan Valdivia scored with a through pass during the first half. Junior Edgar Diaz had the assist.

Francisco Hernandez scored a free kick during the first half. Andres Nieto scored with a rebound from a corner kick.

Valdivia scored his second goal during the second half from a corner kick and scored with his head.

Loza was happy about the win over Marshall, but not the teams' performance.

"We lack basic skills and our defenders were fooled easily," said Loza.

"We need to practice the basics again, which include movement, work on defense and work on a strategy to fill in the holes we had on the game against Marshall."

The Parrot offense wasn't making the right decisions on when to drive the ball in.

"The team wasn't hungry for the goals" said Loza.

The Parrots edged by Burbank 1-0 in their season opener last week.



Photo By Catalina Murillo

**LADY PARROTS:** Junior Lupe Ramos scored the tying point against visiting Marshall High in the girls' second year under head coach Jose Alvarez.

## Lady Parrots Tie 1-1 in Season Opener

By Maureen Kang  
Staff Writer

The Lady Parrots opened their 2011-12 soccer season with a 1-1 tie against visiting Marshall Wednesday in a non-league match.

The Barristers struck first.

"My team was just nervous," said Parrot head coach Jose Alvarez. "It's common for girls to be like that during the game."

But the Parrots tied the match when senior Maria Grimaldo got the running started and passed the ball to junior Lupe Ramos.

Ramos beat the Marshall's goalie and scored Poly's point.

"They (Poly) got their rhythm in the end," said Alvarez

The Parrots worked through several injuries in the game and made a strong counterattack against the Barristers.

"The injuries may have affected us a little bit, but our girls know how to play together," said Alvarez. "We don't let small things like that get in the way."

Poly's hosts Fairfax Monday while the Barristers next opponent is Glendale.



Photo By Catalina Murillo

**POLY:** Parrot Senior Dianne Guzman leads Colorguard members in a practice drill of flag waving skills.

## The Art of Flag Waving

By Jessica Flores  
Staff Writer

Color Guard took 1st place in a competition at Granada Hills on November 12, besting Fairfax, Lincoln and Gardena.

Afterward, the OPTIMIST spoke with captain Gabriela Ibarra about Colorguard's part in the competitions. Here's what she told us.

Competitions usually last all day. We come in early in the morning to school to practice. Poly's band is pretty big and the bigger bands perform at night, so we perform at 6 or 7.

Color guard is scored based on our drill, our movement, our performance, and most importantly our spinning. Drops take away points but depending on how well the person recovers from the drop, the judges might give recover points.

We are also scored on how our costumes, equipments and drill contribute to the show, if it all makes sense. We don't receive points if our spinning is off. We are a team and each flag or rifle must spin together. It's what we refer to as "looking clean" instead of "messy and dirty."

After the performance, Band and Colorguard change into more comfortable clothes. The drum majors, drum captain and Colorguard captains attend the awards ceremony. All bands that perform that day are at the awards ceremony, but Poly only competes with schools in our division.

During the fall season we perform at prep rallies and football games before the first kick off and during halftime.

We spin and provide visuals to the music the band plays. During the winter/spring season Color Guard performs and competes on its own.

Coach Joey Leon is in charge of teaching us work and drill and he corrects us when we do something wrong, but when he isn't here it's the same routine. We warm up our bodies by stretching, then individual practice on what we need, then we spin a group to make sure each girl is hitting her checkpoint on the correct count.

New members learn the basics first - drop spins, carves, extensions, the pray toss and the pull toss. Returners normally teach new members the basics. The coach calls out mistakes, so newbies can make corrections.

After warming up, we march out to the field with the band where we practice marching our drill. Before we are dismissed, we run our entire show.

If our coach isn't here, co-captain Gloria Vanegas and I watch over the girls to make sure things get done. Some days we have two volunteers that help us and "clean us."

We practice every day during 4th period and until 5:00 pm after school, even if it's a shortened day. If our coach is absent, we leave when the band gets dismissed. On Fridays when there is an away game, we stay till 9:00 pm for practice. We also practice Saturdays mornings before a competition.

Our next competition will be our LAUSD Champions competition on December 10.

### TIPOFF TALK

## NBA Back, Lakers Up

Is a Howard trade in the works and can the Lakers erase memories of last year's playoff sweep by the Mavs?

By Amy Ayala  
Staff Writer

With the 149 day NBA Lockout finally over and a 66 game season set to tip off, Kobe Bryant and the Lakers will face reigning MVP Derrick Rose and the Chicago Bulls on Christmas Day.

Two preseason games against the Los Angeles Clippers, one home on December 19 and away on December 21, should put Lakers fans in the mood quickly.

The shortened season may be a blessing in disguise for the Lakers, who can use the extended rest after playing 100 games or more each of the last three seasons.

After the playoff sweep by the

Mavericks, many thought GM Mitch Kupchek had to make some trades to upgrade the point guard and center positions. Two players most often mentioned were Chris Paul (PG) from the New Orleans Hornets and Dwight Howard (C) from the Orlando Magic.

The Howard trade may be just around the corner. When asked recently who he most wanted to play with, Howard didn't hesitate to answer "Kobe Bryant."

Former teammate and close friend Matt Barnes was asked about the rumors.

"You know, I've been hearing Dwight. I've been hearing Baron [Davis]. I've been hearing stuff a lot lately. I've talked to both of those guys and they want to be here, so

we'll see what happens," Barnes said.

Whether these trades happen or not, the Lakers will still have their superstar, Kobe Bryant. The "Black Mamba" will be strong and hungry this year.

Zen master Phil Jackson is gone so the pressure is now on former Cleveland coach Mike Brown to carry on the Laker tradition of winning championships.

On that score, Metta World Peace (the former Ron Artest) was asked recently how the Lakers will do this year.

"Win the whole thing," MWP said. "That's a guarantee."

Laker fans hope he's right.