

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School, Sun Valley, CA 91352

VOL. XCVII No. 10

SERVING THE POLY COMMUNITY SINCE 1913

JUNE 2012

It's a Family Affair

Teens aren't the only ones in class at Poly. Their moms are too.

By Celene Castabrana
Staff Writer

Attending Poly is sometimes a family affair. While students are in class, some of their moms are too. Poly's Parent Center offers a weekly series of classes for parents, everything from Nutrition and Exercise to Parenting and Citizenship. "The classes have expanded in the last couple of years, but they have been around for years," said Poly Principal Ari Bennett. "They are a great way to have parents come to the school."

Classes are offered Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 9:30 am. Evening Parenting classes are offered every Thursday from 6:30 pm – 8 pm. Many classes are held in the new Parent Center Annex, formerly the textbook room. Exercise classes are in the Mirror Room and ceramics classes in Room 72.

Most of the teachers for the parent classes are Poly faculty members who volunteer their services.

Poly Special Ed teacher Alonso Blanco teaches a Citizenship class on Tuesdays.

"I have been in charge of this class for the past five years," Blanco said. "My ultimate goal is to help my students pass their citizenship exam."

Poly parent Edna Rojas, who has a son in the 10th Grade Center, is in Blanco's class

"I wanted my citizenship," Rojas said, "so I called the Parent Center and signed up."

Federal funding pays for the classes, according to Title I coordinator Yesenia Pleitez.

"We get money for every lunch application returned," said Pleitez. "Part of that money is available for parent services."

This year's \$25,000 budget is only half of last year's, Pleitez said.

The Parenting Class is the most expensive, Pleitez said, because a private sector counselor and physiologist are brought in to talk to parents.

Other outside experts include financial advisors who offer money management tips.

Pleitez also recently organized a field trip to USC for parents and students to learn about campus life and student aid.



Photo by Diane Alvarado

PRACTICE: Senior Karina Yopez practices her culinary skills for contest.

Bully for Them

Magnet students will see controversial documentary on teenage bullies and their victims.

By Alex Kang
Staff Writer

Over 300 magnet students and 15 teachers will attend a field trip to a screening of "Bully" at the BurbankAMC Theatres on June 4. "We're hoping that teachers attending this field trip will be able to recognize signs of bullying," said magnet English teacher Michelle Mitchell.

Mitchell believes that seeing the film may also help bullied students speak up and bullies realize what they are doing.

"The problem with being bullied is that you do not have anyone to talk to," said Mitchell. "And many bullies do not realize that they are bullies, so we hope that they will be able to reflect upon their actions."

Director Lee Hirsch's 94 minute documentary follows five kids and their families, including two families who have lost children to suicide and a mother whose fourteen-year old daughter was caught with a firearm on a school bus.

[See Bully, next page]

Teachers Appreciated

By Gabriela Melendez
Staff Writer

Who said there's no free lunch? Poly teachers got one Tuesday, May 8, in appreciation for their hard work throughout the school year.

Poly parents and students from Leadership, the California Scholarship Federation (CSF), and the National Honor Society put together a full course buffet in the cafeteria.

The Professional Development meeting scheduled every Tuesday after school was canceled for the luncheon.

Funds came from a variety of events and totaled around \$750. CSF raffled off an iPod touch for two dollars a ticket and parents sold homemade food in the morning.

CSF's Yesenia Pleitez and NHS's Eric Thornburgh

coordinated the luncheon.

"I wanted it to be student led, so I started proposing it to the students," Pleitez said. "The students had their ideas so they went with it."

The menu included tacos, carne asada, chicken, pork, rice, quesadillas, beans and more. NHS provided dessert. "The luncheon was an opportunity to let everyone know how much they were valued and appreciated," said Thornburgh. "We celebrated our common mission, which is to help our students achieve success."

This luncheon wasn't the first time Poly teachers were recognized for their hard work and dedication.

Last year, teachers received a clipboard that said "He who dares to teach must never cease to learn. Thank you for your continued dedication and support to our Poly Parrots. We appreciate you."

[See Teachers, next page]

Band Beats Competition

Poly's concert band and percussion ensemble won three awards in mid-May, a first place at the LAUSD Music Festival at Panorama High School on Friday and one first and one second place at the Music in the Parks festival at Disneyland on Saturday.

The performances are judged on a scale of 1-5, one being superior. Poly received ones from all three judges at Panorama.

"The entire band--and percussion ensemble--practiced long and hard for the past semester," said Poly band director Stephen Isaacs. "And it definitely shows."

The concert band performed three pieces at Panorama:

"Amparita Roca" by Jaime Texidor, "Amazing Grace" by Frank Ticheli, and "La Virgen de la Macarena" arranged by Calvin Custer. Three seniors performed solos: Doo-Ree Kim (flute) in "Amparita," Danny Rivera (clarinet) and Jose Reyes (trumpet) in "La Virgen." Poly sophomore Helen Aragonés played a saxophone solo in "Amazing Grace."

"It was a very precious high school moment," said Kim.

At Panorama, each band also attended a clinic with one of the adjudicators.

"Even before you started playing your first note, I knew you guys were going to sound great," said the judge. "The way you sat up straight, looking at your music while waiting for the percussion section to set up, even when your director wasn't on the podium yet, was very impressive."

Each judge has various certain

criteria to look for during a band's performance.

"Can any of you guess what might be on that list?" asked the judge.

"Tone," answered a brass player. "You know what? That is the very first thing on the list," said the judge.

The judge had the band play several phrases from each song, asking them to pay attention to style, control, projection and quality.

When the judge asked for a second factor in the judging criteria, tuba player and Poly senior Charles Hollowell answered "intonation."

[See Band, next page]

Turned Off

Vending machines won't dispense during class hours thanks to timers that regulate availability.

By Cesar Quiñones
Staff Writer

Poly's four vending machines for snacks are no longer available to students during class time. The new policy went into effect Wednesday May 16.

"If the machine is not lighted, it's off," said Student Store manager Jinna Bartulo. "The timer turns the vending machine off. If someone does put in money, you will not get it back."

The vending machines are off from 8:30 am – 10:30 am and 12 pm – 3 pm.

Four vending machines for beverages are not currently on timers but will be soon, according to Bartulo.

The new vending machine hours may cut profits from as high as \$1000 a month to \$400 a month.

Poly Principal Ari Bennett instituted the new policy on vending machines.

"Students eat out of the vending machines rather than the cafeteria," Bennett said.

Bennett added that Poly serves 16,000 meals a day for breakfast and lunch.

Students and clubs are also prohibited from selling snacks during school hours, Bennett said.



Photo By Diane Alvarado

RENT the rock opera

Sound problems plague racy 90s rock revival.

MUSIC - page 4



Photo by Diane Alvarado

She'd Rather Be Dancing

Graciela Vargas prefers folklorico to running.

SPORTS - page 8

OPTIMIST

NEWS & OPINION



Poly Band Takes First Place

[From Band, front page]

“That is the second thing on the list,” said the judge. You guys are good.”

“Did you prep them or something?” the judge asked Isaacs.

The judge then had the band play phrases from “Amazing Grace,” including Aragones’ solo.

“No matter how great your talent is, there’s always room for improvement,” Aragones said.

The next day was the Music in the Parks festival. The Educational Programs Network organizes the festival every year for student choral, orchestral, and band ensembles. Groups perform in the morning and spend the remainder of the day at an amusement park. The day culminates with an awards ceremony.

The band members and percussion ensemble performed at Valencia High School in Placentia before changing out of their formal attire and heading to Disneyland for some fun.

Poly band members spent the day waiting hours in line for rides, shopping for overpriced souvenirs and eating expensive snacks until the awards ceremony at 6:30 pm.

Mickey and Minnie Mouse helped distribute awards, including Poly Percussion ensemble’s first place Superior trophy and band’s second place Excellent Trophy.

The band spent fifth period the following Monday listening to the judge’s comments for improvement for next year’s concert band.

The band is currently preparing to perform for the graduation ceremony. Drumline and Colorguard are conducting tryouts for the 2012 marching season.

Teachers Eat

[From Band, front page]

Along with the luncheon, every teacher on campus was given a letter by Poly students. CSF provided the cards and envelopes.

“The letters were written by the students directly to the teachers with specific examples of appreciation,” said Pleitez.

The majority of letters were given during the buffet, and teachers who missed the buffet were given the letters the following day.

Teachers said they appreciated all the appreciation.

“It was really good for all of us to be together,” said History teacher Kitt Heilbron. “It meant a lot. With all the struggles and everything we’ve been going through, it was really nice to be acknowledged.”

“As a teacher I felt really really happy to see all my students, because most of the students were part of the celebration,” said language teacher Mario Quinteros.

“I thought it was just so nicely thought out, presented, it just felt like everything was made with a lot of love and caring and appreciation,” said ceramics teacher Karen Daneshvari.

“It was very nice to be appreciated,” said English teacher Katherine Marzolo, “because that doesn’t happen a lot in this job.”

“It was a task for CSF, but they realized at the end that it was for something important,” said Pleitez. “If we bring it up for next year, they will see the value in something like this.”

Pleitez and Thornburgh plan to make a teacher appreciation luncheon an annual event.

Bully Movie

[From Bully, front page]

The movie was originally rated R but was changed to PG 13 after some cuts involving objectionable language were made. Parents, teens and school officials had earlier complained that the R rating was keeping out the very people the documentary was intended for.

The Bully Project, a partnership that includes JP Morgan Chase, Townsend Press, Facing History and Ourselves, and First Student, set aside about \$100,000 for tickets on a first come, first serve basis, Mitchell said.

The magnet received about \$5000.

“We get the theater to ourselves,” said Mitchell.

“Bullying is a problem that’s in high school so we excluded the seniors because the freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will still be attending Poly next year,” said Mitchell.

“Considering that LAUSD does not have buses and funds for future field trips, we have to depend on outside donations,” said Mitchell.

“You cannot expect donations to come to your doorsteps so teachers have to look for the money to fund the trip because money will not come to them,” said Mitchell.

“I had to submit a proposal and call around for pricing. It’s not an easy process, so many teachers don’t want to do it. But it allows students to learn in a more unique way,” said Mitchell.

the OPTIMIST
VOL XCVII No. 10

JUNE

3 FEAR OF FAILURE

Magnet senior Mayra Soto has plenty of smarts but finds motivation the old fashioned way.

By Alex Kang

3 DTLA CAN BE GOURMET

Parrots looking for a new dining experience should check out some hot spots right downtown.

By Shean Santy

4 WALTER IS WONDERFUL

Singer / songwriter / vocalist / keyboard player Walter Linares has added new star power to KYDS.

By Yenifer Rodriguez

4 SNAP, CRACKLE AND POP

Not exactly what an audience wants to hear but that’s mostly what Parrots heard during “RENT.”

By Jasmine Aquino

4 THIS BAND IS YOUR BAND

Keep Youth Doing Something musical is KYDS teacher Ernest Mancia’s goal with Poly’s new band.

By Yenifer Rodriguez

5 THE COOK, THE BOXER

Read what senior Karima Yopez does when she isn’t cooking up prize-winning Asian-influenced dishes.

By Adrianna Garcia

5 CASHING IN

Seniors Josefina Flores and David Marquez turned their cooking skills into cash at culinary competition.

By Shean Santy

6 BACKSTAGE WITH RENT CAST

Four RENT cast members spill the beans on the characters, music and the meaning of the rock opera.

By Lisa Guardado

7 SUMMER SNEAK PEEK

Those three hot months every teen lives for will offer plenty of popcorn-munching blockbuster flicks.

By Shean Santy

8 AND SHE DANCES

Senior Graciela Vargas runs a pretty fast 1-mile but plans to put her feet to other uses once she’s a grad.

By Sandy Barba

8 PLAYOFF BLUES

Poly Volleyball staged a late rally against Van Nuys in the second round of the playoffs before losing 3-1.

By Shean Santy

8 GONE FISHING

Poly’s baseball team will have plenty to think about this summer, but it won’t include a 2012 playoff run.

By Maria Valles

8 NO CHOIS LEFT

Poly varsity tennis coach Brian Block offers details on the Andy Choi and Jae Choi singles matches.

By Jessica Gonzalez


the
OPTIMIST

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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 EDITOR

Jessica Gonzalez

PHOTO EDITOR

Diane Alvarado
Marielle Reyes

REPORTERS

Jasmine Aquino
Adrianna Garcia
Jessica Gonzalez
Lisa Guardado
Alex Kang
Gabriela Melendez
Cesar Quiñones
Shean Santy

OPTIMIST ADVISOR

John Blau

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.

INTERVIEW

Confidence

The OPTIMIST talked to Berkeley scholarship winner Mayra Soto recently about her accomplishments. Here's what she said.

By Alex Kang
Staff Writer

HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN YOUR ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

I have this strong fear of failure that just keeps me going and because of that I am academically successful. I do of course have a love of reading and support from my family but for the most part it's that goal of attaining success to avoid failure that explains it all.

ARE YOU JUST SMART OR HAVE YOU HAD TO WORK HARD?

I think both things have played a factor in my academic success. I do not think anyone can ever be smart enough to never have the necessity to put in any sort of hard work.

WHAT MAKES YOU STAND OUT ACADEMICALLY?

My ability to communicate well inside and outside a classroom. I never hid behind a book in class. I was always asking questions, making my opinions known. I knew what I was talking about. It was not as if I only opened my mouth in class to disrupt it.

WHAT ARE YOU ESPECIALLY GOOD AT?

I am good at imagining a future for myself. If in my future I see a luxury car, happiness and the ability to help those around me, then to have such an outcome, my input has to be one that will guarantee success. Knowing that an education is the key to attaining what I want in my future is what explains my academic success.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL OR ARE YOU A LATE BLOOMER?

I've always tried to bring my A game when it came to school, so no I am not a late bloomer.

IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU LIKE YOUR PARENTS? HAVE THOSE QUALITIES HELPED YOU IN SCHOOL?

My mom is so incredibly observant. She analyzes everything and all of that has played a factor in my ability to analyze theories in politics and works of literature. My dad is not shy about anything, which is why I have no fear during presentations or fighting back in class when I feel like points aren't clearly made or I don't agree with them.

My mother attended college for a year before coming to the US and my dad only received an elementary education.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO GO TO COLLEGE?

I always knew I had to go to college. For the most part, it has not been a particular experience or a particular individual. My family has played a huge part in my path to college but I would say it was self motivation and the need to experience self growth in a world of higher learning that has served as my motivation to go to college.

WHAT ARE THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF GETTING INTO COLLEGE?

The main DO for me is just to keep your head in the game. If you do that, you will have a balance, a balance of receiving a quality education while being able to receive a little bit of a social life so you will not be so consumed in academics and not enjoy your high school experience.

The absolute DON'T is to make your age an excuse. I know a lot of people who think that they are too young to worry about their future or that getting bad grades the first two years of high school is ok and it is not. I strongly believe that your first day of high school to your last will determine the quality of success of your future.

HOW MUCH WAS THE POSSE SCHOLARSHIP?

I will receive my four years of tuition at UC Berkeley fully paid. Aside from the money, I will receive a support system of 10 or so other Posse scholars at Berkeley.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO BERKELEY?

I am not sure. I had good extracurricular, decent SAT scores, a well-thought out personal statement, a high GPA and ranking. I'm pretty sure that without all of that my chances of getting in would have been slim.

WHAT DID YOU WRITE IN YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT?

I wrote about my father's cultural chauvinism and how I did not allow the standards of my culture to interfere with my educational goals, and how the world of academia was a haven of freedom for me.

HAVE YOU VISITED THE CAMPUS?

I have visited Berkeley. It is extremely beautiful and the community culture is fascinating. I think everyone should visit Cal and maybe some of that cool San Fran culture will rub off on more people.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT COURSES YOU'LL HAVE IN THE FALL? WILL YOU STAY IN A DORM?

FOOD

The Downtown Scene

On the outskirts of DTLA, hungry Angelenos can find affordable fine dining and scrumptious cheap eats.

Bottega Louie – “The Italian haven at Grand”

The 185-seat Italian restaurant has a “Manhattan-esque” vibe, its hybrid décor as unique as the dining experience. From their famous Napolitano-style pizza to their irresistible Pomodoro and Tagliatelle Bolognese pastas, Bottega Louie provides an

excellent Italian food experience for Angelenos. The convenient bakery next door serves more than 200 prepared and fresh baked patisseries. Meals range from \$10 to \$25. Bottega Louie is open daily and located at 700 S. Grand Ave.

Nickel Diner – “The Urban Foodie Diner”

A restored pre-World War II diner that offers comfort food and clever homemade desserts. Features on Food Network’s “Diners, Drive-Ins, and Drives with Guy Fieri” and in magazines have helped its rising popularity as one of L.A.’s fave diners. From soups to burgers and sandwiches, Nickel has the diner ambiance.

Unthinkable dessert combinations that might fail elsewhere have huge appeal for the diner crew. Desserts such as bacon-maple donuts, peanut butter-potato chip chocolate cake and mint lemonade are the stars of the place. Entrées for under \$10. Nickel Diner is located at 524 South Main St.

Wood Spoon – “Brazil at 9th”

Around the corner from the historic Orpheum Theatre is chef/owner Natalia Pereira’s dream, her critically-acclaimed restaurant. The addition of Brazilian cuisine by the lady from Minas Gerais, Brazil to the diverse food scene of L.A. is a gain for Angeleno food lovers. Top notch Wood Spoon

favorites include Brazilian Chicken Pot Pie, the Pork Burger, Carne de Panela and a Calabresa Salad. The Pot Pie was featured in “Best Thing I Ever Ate” and dubbed a “classic.” Entrées are \$10 to \$15 and Wood Spoon is located at 107 W 9th St.

Fisherman’s Outlet Restaurant and Market – “Seafood in the City”

The beaches offer the best restaurants in the county, but Downtown now boasts one of the best fresh seafood restaurants in Los Angeles. Grilled sea bass, salmon, halibut steak, mahi-mahi

and more are highly recommended. The restaurant is only open for lunch. Entrées are \$15. “FORM” is located at 529 S Central Ave.

Wurstküche – “Purveyor of Exotic Grilled Sausages”

The sausage mecca is in the industrial zone, far from the shadows of downtown skyscrapers. L.A. food-philies are buzzing over their classic and exotic Belgian sausages. The entrées (sausages) are served on a freshly baked roll and come in three categories:

Classic, Gourmet and Exotic. From Bratwurst, Mango Jalapeno to Filipino Marhalika, the menu is definitely unique. And don’t forget to try the alligator or rattlesnake meat. Entrées are under \$10 and Wurstküche is located at 800 E 3rd St.

MUSIC & DINING



Photo by Marielle Reyes

SINGER: Junior Walter Linares is a singer and keyboard player in the KYDS band.

A passion for music

By Yenifer Rodriguez
Editor In Chief

Poly junior Walter Linares is not a typical teenager. He's a singer/songwriter and plays the guitar and keyboard.

"When I was five, I used to climb on stage of my church and sing along to all the songs," Linares said.

At 14, Linares began attending Hollywood Academy of Music in Riverside.

"I've wanted to study music all my life," Linares said, "and I realized I had to start making my dream come true."

At the Academy, Linares learned songs like "American Idiot" by Green Day on keyboard. He sang "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" by Green Day for his first performances there.

Linares started playing guitar at 11, learning from his step cousin. He got into vocals at 14. At 17, Linares got his first guitar from his dad.

"The last thing I learned to play was the keyboard," Linares said. "KYDS club coach Ernest Mancía taught me."

Linares says he used to be into rock, but is now more into jazz, indie and indie-rock.

"I really love Aretha Franklin," said Linares. "She's a soul singer."

Linares, who describes his voice as soul, says he writes the type of music people can sway to and relax with.

Linares has a composition book full of songs he wrote and more on his iPod, phone and laptop.

"I usually write a song when I feel real inspired or when I come up on a subject many people are affected by," said Linares.

KYDS coach Mancía works with Linares on improving his scales and songwriting.

Linares' dad wasn't too thrilled about his son going into the music industry at first, but now his dad supports him.

Linares' mother used to sing for her church and his uncle used to play bass in a band.

Linares says he doesn't play guitar much since he learned about music theory and keyboards but still practices his vocal scales on the guitar.

Linares' musical influences are Elvis Presley and Coldplay vocalist Chris Martin.

"Elvis started out very young, his parents were very religious and he wanted to do his own music," said Linares. "I can relate to him."

Linares' top choices for college are CSUN, CSU Long Beach and a school in Washington.

CSUN has their performing arts, the school in Washington has songwriting classes and CSU Long Beach offers opera training.

"The main thing I want to do is have people getting inspired by my songs and lyrics," Linares said. "I've always wanted to have a change on the world."

"Rent" Is Too Noisy

Chronic sound difficulties make even front row seats a trying experience as audiences struggle to hear.

By Jasmine Aquino
Staff Writer

Although Poly's raunchy and vulgar "Rent" was increasingly toned down from Jonathan Larson's original 1996 Broadway rock opera, the Parrot version still packed plenty of punch and not a little controversy.

Drama's Katy Groskin and KYDS Glen Philip co-directed the story of fringe artists, drag queens and HIV-infected drug users with compassion and affection, making the characters easy for the audience to care about.

But chronic difficulties with the sound system made the actors difficult to understand and the storyline as well, since most of the story is told with lyrics rather than dialogue. The result was an unsatisfying experience despite some enthusiastic performances.

Roger, who falls for exotic dancer Mimi (freshman Audrianna Marie Wilson and Crystal Cruz), transvestite Angel (freshman Mary Joyce Aves) and her philosophical boyfriend, Tom Collins (junior Kelso Alcalá), all HIV-positive, are the main characters in the two-act, 31-song production and do many of the songs.

The couple's moonlit duet, "Light My Candle," and the recurring "I Should Tell You" are the show's romantic centerpieces. Roger's singing in "Your Eyes" was heartfelt and effective.

Wilson's provocative performance as Mimi in "Light My Candle" didn't need any sound to tell the audience what was going on.

Maureen (Gabriela Melendez, senior) and Joanne (Gabriela Pelayo, senior) did "Take Me or Leave Me" with conviction. The duet showcased lots of high notes and expressive body language.

Angel's death in Act 2 felt every bit the tragic moment, with Parrots tearing up and whispering "No..." as the play lost one of the main characters.

The group singing was most difficult to hear—except for a few moments when the cast



Photo by Diane Alvarado

ROCK OPERA: from left, Juniors Manny Arellano (Roger), Kelso Alcalá (Collin) and Alexis Campos (Mark) sing their way through one of 31 songs performed by the RENT cast.

Wilson's provocative performance as Mimi in "Light My Candle" didn't need any sound to tell the audience what was going on.

shouted a few words like "mutual masturbation" (which brought howls of laughter and giggles from the Parrot audience during a preview performances).

A tight budget limited the costumes and sets and it showed. Backgrounds were black, props were few and never changed, making for a rather dark, dismal and gloomy look.

Saturday evening's performance was followed by a small awards ceremony. Senior

Zuky Guillen won an award for her work in Parrot plays over the last four years. The choice may have surprised some audience members (who thought either Melendez or Pelayo would win), but Guillen's performance in RENT's "Tango" proved the actress has a lot of talent—especially since she had to perform on stage with Campos and his outstanding acting, singing and dancing.

Parrot KYDS Rock On

Poly's newest band plays loud rock for parents and teachers.

By Yenifer Rodriguez
Editor In Chief

Poly's KYDS club band auditioned for parents and teachers for their first live gigs on Tuesday at the Teacher Appreciation luncheon and the following Thursday at the Parent/Teacher Conference.

"It was a great experience performing at the Teacher Appreciation luncheon," said junior vocalist Walter Linares. "It was such a thrilling event."

The band is part of the "Rock On" club, a Keep Youth Doing Something (KYDS) class offered after school at Poly.

The band played "12:51" by The Strokes and "Little Lion Man" by Mumford and Sons for the teachers. Band members included senior Christian Medina on vocals and keyboards, sophomore Evelyn Lupercio on guitar, sophomore Angel Correa on bass and teacher Ernest Mancía on drums.

For Parent Conference, the band did four original songs by Medina, junior Walter Linares and freshman Apolonia Rivera.



Photos by Marielle Reyes

KYDS BAND: top, drummer Ernest Mancía, below from left, sophomores Angel Correa and Evelyn Lupercio



"The band really got the crowd going during Parent Conference," said Parrot Sophomore Iris Carrillo. "Even parents walking by got into it,"

Some parents stopped to listen.

"I really enjoyed the songs," said one Poly parent. "They were really talented for a bunch of kids."

The club has 17 members, with 12 who know how to play an instrument.

"I believe my students are becoming more and more talented together," said coach Mancía.

Eight of the 12 have performed in front of a crowd, including sophomore guitarists Ismael Lozano and Juan Granados.

"My goal is to teach people that music isn't something you just hear," said Mancía, "it's a part of someone."

The band has a set of eight songs that are finished and ready to be performed.

"I told my first group of students to call me Ernest. Mr. Mancía felt weird," said the 23-year old Mancía.

Mancía, who has been working at Poly for five years, started after graduating from high school.

"I love my job because I get to do something I love, which is making music."

PROFILE

Karina in the Kitchen

KYDS student cook hits the big time in Long Beach cooking competition.

By Adrianna Garcia
Staff Writer



Parrot junior Karina Yepez took first place in the Afro-Academic Cultural Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO) culinary competition Saturday May 5 in Long Beach.

"I cried from joy when they called my name," said Yepez. "It even brought tears to my mom and my two sisters."

Yepez will fly to Houston for the competition's final round June 7 and a chance at the \$50,000 first prize.

Yepez's winning dishes included an Asian vegetable and endive salad with crisp, bright red and green peppers and other vegetables and an entree of sweet ponzu chicken with a unique combination of flavors.

Chefs were judged on cleanliness, preparation techniques and flavor.

Yepez, who is a student in Chef Art Luna's KYDS cooking class, entered the contest on a lark. "It just caught my attention," Yepez said. "I mean, I love cooking so I was up for it."

Four other Luna students, senior Angelo Cruz, junior Christopher Menjivar, sophomore Jose Garcia and freshman Jessica Flores, competed in Long Beach.

The five cooks spent eight days practicing their dishes for the competition. Luna had the students work on their cutting techniques, choice of ingredients and sanitation rules.

Luna, who is a culinary teacher at Mission College in Sylmar, said this was the first time he enrolled kids in the ACT-SO competition.

Yepez plans to make a career as a chef and wants to open a restaurant.

Yepez has a carefree cooking style and says she likes to throw random ingredients into her creations. She likes Asian dishes for their uncommon ingredients and combinations.

Yepez began cooking around 12 after watching her mother and aunt cook.

Although Luna taught Yepez how to cook professionally, she had already taught herself how to make simple meals at home.

Unlike most cooks, Yepez likes to spend her spare time in the boxing ring.

"I got into boxing when a friend mentioned a gym he went to," Yepez said. "I asked him for more information and decided to join."

Yepez boxes Tuesdays and Thursdays when she doesn't have cooking club.

"I like hitting people when I'm in the ring," said Yepez, who says she enjoys the physical activity but isn't violence-prone.

"There's nothing that can't be resolved with words," Yepez said.

Yepez said she has wanted to box ever since she was a kid, but she never had the money.

"Now that I have the chance to, I do," Yepez said.

Yepez boxes at Burbank's Jeopardy Gym with two coaches and some friends from school.

Cooking and boxing do go together, Yepez says.

"They're both hard but fun."

Yepez says she likes to cook or box after school, do some homework and then relax with her family.

As for the next competition in Houston, Yepez is thinking big.

"I don't know who I'm going up against or what they're cooking," Yepez said, "but I'm still confident."

And she already has plans for the prize money.

"I plan to put the money towards the University of Johnson and Wales," said Yepez.

Poly seniors David Marquez and Josefina Flores won big prize money in a citywide culinary competition sponsored by the Careers Through Culinary Arts Program (C-CAP), a NYC based non-profit that nurtures talented young high school chefs.

Flores received a \$5000 scholarship. Marquez received a \$2000 scholarship. Both also won a \$300 knife set.

Winners were announced at a breakfast ceremony at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills.

The final competition was held at Los Angeles Mission College's new culinary arts building. C-CAP founder Richard Grausmann and other respected LA chefs attended.

The finalists were judged on procedure, taste and presentation.

"The competition was nerve-wracking," said Flores. "I had to remember the recipes and it was a lot of pressure because as I cooked, the judges walked around and watched everyone's movement meticulously."

The agenda was a two-course French meal: a chicken chasseur and crepes filled with pastry crème.

"It was definitely a learning experience," said Flores.

The finalist had two hours to complete the course. Finalists were then interviewed about their school preference and future goals.

Eighty students competed in a preliminary competition at the Art Institute in Santa Monica, making a cucumber and bell pepper salad with a ring of cucumbers and a French omelette.

Flores and Marquez made the cut, while senior Jennifer Zavala failed to advance. All finalists were guaranteed culinary scholarships ranging from \$1000 to full tuition at a culinary

Parrots' Culinary Talent Pays Off

By Shean Santy
Staff Writer



Photo by Diane Alvarado

SENIOR SIZZLE: Parrot David Marquez and Josefina Flores scored big bucks at the C-CAP.

institution.

Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for LAUSD Gerardo Loera was in

attendance in support of Flores and Marquez.

"It was an amazing ceremony. Our hard work and practice paid off," said Flores.

STAGE

RENT – the cast interviews



Alexis Campos - Mark Cohen

WAS YOUR CHARACTER A GOOD PERSON OR A BAD PERSON?

He was a good person because he doesn't do anything bad. He always tried to settle the arguments

WOULD YOU COMPARE YOURSELF TO MARK, FROM RENT?

Somewhat. He is kind of geeky, and I guess I am to some extent geeky. Maybe in the creative part yeah. I like film making. I'm taking Filmmaking right now with Mr. Herrold and it's my favorite class. It's just really fun.

DID YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT RENT BEFORE YOU STARTED REHEARSAL?

When they made the announcement for the musical I went home and watched Broadway's RENT on YouTube and it looked really fun so I just went for it and it was really fun.

WHAT SONG DID YOU SING AS A SOLO OR AS A DUET?

Tune up A, RENT, Tune Up Reprise, You'll See, Today For You A & B, Tango, La Vie Boheme, Happy New Year A, Support Group, Will I. I didn't really have any solos. Mark has one in the end of the musical but we had to cut it because it was just too long.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SONG TO PERFORM?

"Tango." Because it was kind of silly and there was dancing. It was just fun.

WAS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU SANG IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE?

Yeah. I've never really sung in front of an audience.

WHAT ISSUES DID YOU HAVE TO OVERCOME?

I don't know. I think I feel more confident. I still feel shy but when I'm performing it's different.

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER STRUGGLE WITH?

He wanted to make films but he didn't have much to work with. He wrote scripts but then dedicated himself to filming stuff like documentaries. In the play, they don't show it, but Mark's footage actually gets released in the end. Mark is the only one who doesn't have AIDS.

DID YOUR CHARACTER CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE MUSICAL?

No. I think all of the other characters did change throughout the play, but not Mark. He didn't really have any love problems or anything like all the others.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF RENT?

It's like about accepting other peoples' differences and to keep moving forward no matter what kind of problems you have, even if you are struggling.

IN WHAT WAYS ARE THE CHARACTERS IN RENT ROLE MODELS FOR POLY STUDENTS?

I think they send a good message. They send the message that everybody is the same, even if we look different, but in the end we are all equal, we are all just humans. I'd say the main message is that they still love and accept each other for who they were and what they had.

DO YOU THINK YOUR AUDIENCES UNDERSTOOD WHAT RENT WAS ABOUT?

If they saw the whole show yeah, I think they did. It may have been a little confusing at first because some scenes they would do something then reference it in another scene so that may have confused some people.

THE SOUND SYSTEM WASN'T WORKING. DID IT HAMPER YOUR PERFORMANCE?

Yeah I was mad because we worked really hard on it and the biggest complaint people had was that they couldn't hear us. It upset me because we put a lot of effort into it and hardly anyone heard it.

HOW MUCH BETTER WOULD THE PRODUCTION HAVE BEEN IF THE SOUND SYSTEM WAS WORKING?

More than 100%. We would have gotten a better reaction from the audience. Since the system was new we didn't really have time to learn how the new sound systems worked.



Gabby Melendez - Maureen.

WAS SHE A GOOD PERSON OR A BAD PERSON AND HOW DO YOU KNOW?

I think Maureen was leaning more towards the negative side of a person. Maureen loves, but she is also a selfish drama queen having problems with loyalty. I cheated on my ex boyfriend Mark, and also on my current girlfriend Joanne.

WHAT SONG DID YOU SING AS A SOLO OR DUET?

I had a whole monologue to myself, which was half sung. I also sang a duet with my partner Joanne.

WHAT WAS THE SONG ABOUT?

My monologue (Over the Moon) was a protest to Benny, the man trying to evict all of my friends and fellow bohemians from our homes. The majority of us have rent issues, and face the fear of eviction daily. My protest was meant to get people to stand up and fight, which actually was the catalyst for a riot later in the play. The duet with Joanne (Take Me or Leave Me) was a fight. During the song I tell Joanne to accept my personality.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE LYRIC IN THE SONG?

In Over The Moon, my favorite lyric had to be "I'm forbidden to produce milk, in Cyberland we only drink diet coke." That line was really fun to sing, and strong as well. This "Cyberland" that Benny was trying to create was going to restrict all people in it. For Take Me or Leave Me, my favorite line had to be "No way can I be what I'm not" because that summed up the whole song.

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER STRUGGLE WITH?

Maureen's struggle was loyalty. I could't stay true to my girlfriend. Also, I was selfish and cared about my time in the limelight more than anything else, including my friends.

DID YOUR CHARACTER CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE MUSICAL?

Maureen started to change when Angel died. While she was dying, I had broken up with Joanne. During the song Without You, I think Maureen started to realize how important Joanne is to her.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF RENT?

In my opinion, the point of Rent is to live every single day as if it were your last.

ARE YOU LIKE THE CHARACTER YOU PLAYED IN SOME WAYS, OR ARE YOU DIFFERENT?

Like Maureen, I love performing. We have similar tastes in style and cherish our friends greatly. Unlike Maureen, cheating is a HUGE no-no to me. Its one thing I can't stand.

WHAT DID YOU KNOW ABOUT RENT BEFORE YOU STARTED REHEARSALS?

I knew Rent. I love Rent. In 6th grade, my family bought the movie version, and since then I've watched it about 20 times. I know every song word for word, and love every bit and piece of the musical.

WHAT CONVINCED YOU THAT RENT WOULD BE A GOOD CHOICE?

This question's kind of hard.. The characters are all strong and different. Half of us are dying from AIDS, nearly all of us are borderline homeless, there are two lesbians, two male homosexuals, one of them being a drag queen, and an artist struggling with the suicide of his girlfriend. I would want to see how this bunch of misfits got together and became extremely close friends.

IN WHAT WAYS ARE THE CHARACTERS IN RENT ROLE MODELS FOR POLY STUDENTS?

The characters of RENT are normal, I can't really see them as role models. I'm sure I can find students at Poly with similar personalities as the characters. They are handling a bad situation in life, and all I can find admirable is how they take it head on and stay optimistic.

DO YOU THINK YOUR AUDIENCES UNDERSTOOD WHAT RENT WAS ABOUT? HOW DO YOU KNOW?

I don't think they did, since our sound quality was less than acceptable.

THE SOUND SYSTEM WASN'T WORKING. DID THAT BOTHER YOU IN ANY WAY?

I yelled my monologue. The sound bothered me a lot. I know that was RENT's #1 problem and I wish we had the time to fix it.



Manuel Arellanno - Roger.

WAS YOUR CHARACTER A GOOD PERSON OR A BAD PERSON?

A bit of both, because at times he showed both sides. His bad side was not like an evil side but just bad as in he wouldn't accept himself because he had AIDS, and that led him to push Mimi away when he should have just accepted himself.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE ROGER?

Insecure, self-conscious, stubborn, but in the end he changes and learns to accept himself.

WHAT SONG DID YOU SING AS A SOLO OR AS A DUET?

I sang "One Song Glory" as a solo also "Your Eyes" when Mimi is dying. I did a lot of duets with Mimi like "Another Day", "No Day But Today", "Without You" and "Light My Candle".

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SONG TO PERFORM?

"Your Eyes" was my favorite. But my least favorite song to perform was "One Song Glory" because I could not memorize the lines. Until like three days before the big show I still couldn't remember the lines and what they would do was we had our directors judge us after our scenes, and tell us what we did wrong and three days before the performance I still didn't know the song and my director wrote on his paper "WTF I'm scared", and that's when I knew I had to step it up. So I went home that night and I learned the whole song, and it only took me one day.

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER STRUGGLE WITH, WHAT WAS HIS MAIN PROBLEM?

He struggled with having AIDS. His main problem was self-acceptance.

DID YOUR CHARACTER CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE MUSICAL?

What made him change was when he realized he wasn't the only one struggling with AIDS and it didn't make him feel as alone.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF RENT?

The main message would be to live life to the fullest no matter what obstacles come to you because there is "No Day but Today".

YOU DIDN'T AUDITION FOR THE ROLE OF ROGER.

No. Originally I worked backstage as backstage manager. During parent conference, they were going to premiere a song and the guy who was supposed to play Roger was not there so I just filled in for him because I thought he was going to come back in two weeks but he didn't show up so I stayed playing Roger.

WHAT CONVINCED YOU THAT RENT WOULD BE A GOOD CHOICE?

Well to put the word out that AIDS is out there because not a lot of people are educated about AIDS.

IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU SANG IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE?

Yes! Oh my God, It was the first time I was singing. I was really nervous, it was the singing not so much the acting. Because I don't think I can sing but everyone was like "yeah" so that's why I did it too.

WHAT ISSUES DID YOU HAVE TO OVERCOME?

Memorizing "One Song Glory" and understanding what the lines meant like connecting the words with my body movements to make it seem more realistic.

WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU BEEN IN?

It was my first musical, I was Backstage Manager for Annie, I also played Jack in The Nightmare Before Christmas. Plying Jack was not as hard because I didn't have to sing.

DO YOU THINK YOUR AUDIENCES UNDERSTOOD WHAT RENT WAS ABOUT? HOW DO YOU KNOW?

I honestly don't think so, mainly the fact that we cut out a lot we didn't do the whole play. It would have been too long.

THE SOUND SYSTEM WASN'T WORKING. DID THAT BOTHER YOU IN ANY WAY?

Yeah it did bother me because we had to sing really loud.



Audrianna Wilson - Mimi

WAS YOUR CHARACTER A GOOD PERSON OR A BAD PERSON?

She was a hooker, she wasn't a bad person just looking for love

WHAT SONG DID YOU SING AS A SOLO OR AS A DUET?

"Rent", "Light My Candle", "Out Tonight", "Another Day", "I Should Tell You", "Seasons of Love", "Happy New Year", "Without You" and "Finals A and B".

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SONG TO PERFORM? WHAT WAS THE SONG ABOUT?

Another Day. The song is about Mimi wanting to be with Roger but he doesn't so she was hurt.

WHY WAS THIS SONG YOUR FAVORITE?

Well I could relate kind of on looking for love.

WHAT DID YOUR CHARACTER STRUGGLE WITH, WHAT WAS HER MAIN PROBLEM?

Well she struggled with AIDs and being alone, but when she meets Roger he helps her stop being lonely.

DID YOUR CHARACTER CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE MUSICAL AND IF HE DID, HOW DID HE CHANGE?

She changed by being less slutty.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF RENT, IN YOUR OPINION?

I don't know.

ARE YOU LIKE THE CHARACTER YOU PLAYED IN SOME WAYS, OR ARE YOU VERY DIFFERENT?

No, well feeling lonely and looking for love.

WHAT DID YOU KNOW ABOUT RENT AND YOUR CHARACTER BEFORE YOU STARTED REHEARSAL?

Nothing.

WHAT CONVINCED YOU IN STARRING IN RENT?

I wanted to try something new, and I love to sing .

IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU SANG IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE?

No I sang in Poly Idol.

IN WHAT WAYS ARE THE CHARACTERS IN RENT ROLE MODELS FOR POLY STUDENTS?

Well they teach you to never give up

IF YOU WERE TO RATE YOUR SATURDAY NIGHTS PERFORMANCE FROM ONE TO TEN WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE YOURSELF?

A full 10

ANYTHING YOU FEEL YOU MESSED UP?

I did well in playing my character well

DO YOU THINK YOUR AUDIENCES UNDERSTOOD WHAT RENT WAS ABOUT?

Yeah. Well I don't know some were just immature about it but most understood it.

WILL YOU PURSUE A CAREER AS A VOCALIST AFTER HIGH SCHOOL? AS AN ACTRESS?

Maybe, I'm not sure. Because I want to be a doctor

WAS RENT YOUR FIRST MUSICAL/PLAY?

Yeah.

THE SOUND SYSTEM WASN'T WORKING. DID THAT BOTHER YOU IN ANY WAY, UPSET YOU OR HAMPER YOUR PERFORMANCE?

Yeah if they would have heard what we were singing I think most of them would have understood it more.

HOW MUCH BETTER WOULD THE PRODUCTION HAVE BEEN IF THE SOUND SYSTEM WAS WORKING?

100%

SUMMER SNEAKS

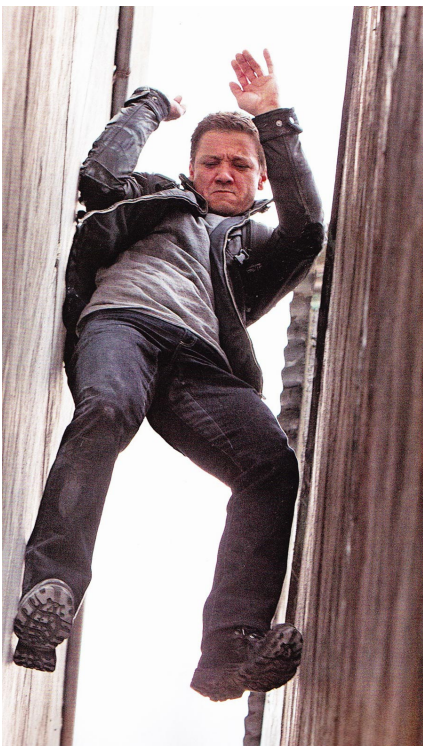
May brought a demi-god, a super soldier, a billionaire genius, two stone-cold assassins and The Hulk as movie goers got a jump on summer. The comeback of Agents K and J and a disappointing reunion of Burton and Depp also vied for America's discretionary dollars.

But the best is yet to come – the all-American summer blockbuster. Here's a sneak peek at upcoming summer movies that should not disappoint.

Brave ~ June 22

Animation sensation Pixar, after a break last year, is back with their first female hero. Merida (Kelly Macdonald) is a skilled archer, the daughter of King Fergus (Bill Connolly) and Queen Elinor (Emma Thompson). Set in the Highlands of Scotland, a land of age-old customs and unruly lords, Merida soon finds herself in a world of trouble, beset by a "beastly curse." In the course of saving her land and undoing the curse, Merida discovers the true meaning of bravery.

AUGUST



The Bourne Legacy ~ August 3

"Bourne" series director Paul Greengrass decided not to return for a fourth installment, Matt Damon (Jason Bourne) too, so screenwriter Tony Gilroy was given the director's chair. "Legacy," which picks up where "Bourne Ultimatum" left off, is not based on the Robert Ludlum novel. Jeremy Renner will play Alex Cross, an agent connected to Treadstone. Rachel Weisz ("The Constant Gardener") and Edward Norton ("American History X") join the cast, while Joan Allen, Albert Finney and Scott Glenn all return for another go.

Premium Rush ~ August 24

For the summer finale, director David Koepp ("Ghost Town") takes to the busy streets of New York City. The film centers on a NYC bicycle messenger (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who picks up a package from Columbia University. Things get out of control when dirty cop (Michael Shannon) chases Gordon-Levitt and the envelope around the streets of New York. Gordon-Levitt makes the shift from the indie scene to a slick action film. During production, Gordon-Levitt had his own action sequence when he collided with a car on his fixed gear. That stunt cost him about thirty stitches. Ouch.

Prometheus ~ June 8

The master of suspense, director Ridley Scott, is back. Scott is known for cult hits such as "Alien", "Blade Runner" and "Gladiator". This time he tackles a prequel to his groundbreaking 80's phenomenon: "Alien". A team of explorers discovers a clue to the origins of mankind, and this journey takes them to the darkest parts of the universe. What was supposed to be an intellectual exploration soon becomes a battle for the future of the human race. Noomi Rapace ("Millennium Trilogy"), Michael Fassbender ("Shame"), Charlize Theron ("Monster"), Idris Elba ("Luther"), and Guy Pearce ("Memento") are the stellar cast.



Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter ~ June 22

In 2009, mash up novels became best-sellers for imaginative author Seth Grahame-Smith. "Pride, Prejudice and Zombies" turned Jane Austen's romantic treasure into a zombie fest. A year later, Grahame-Smith made President Lincoln a "vampire hunter." It was a storyline Hollywood couldn't pass up. Director Timur Bekmambetov ("Wanted") has a wonderful special FX perspective and producer Tim Burton is a master of visual delights. Newcomer Benjamin Walker plays the president and Mary Elizabeth Winstead ("Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World") is his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln in this blend of historical events and vampires.

SUMMER MOVIES THAT SIZZLE

By Shean Santy
Staff Writer

The Campaign ~ August 10

Will Ferrell and Zach Galifianakis, who once teamed up for an Adult Swim skit, join forces this summer as they vie for a congressional seat. "Eastbound & Down" writer Shawn Harell scripted. SNL's Jason Sudeikis and veteran John Lithgow ("3rd Rock from the Sun") are also in the cast.

The Expendables 2 ~ August 17

Chuck Norris, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis and Jean-Claude Van Damme join Sylvester Stallone, Jet Li, Jason Stratham, Terry Crews, Dolph Lundgren, and Randy Couture in this ensemble actioner.

JULY



The Dark Knight Rises ~ July 20

The epic conclusion to Christopher Nolan's Batman trilogy is set eight years after "The Dark Knight." Batman takes responsibility for Harvey Dent's crime, causing Gotham's finest to launch a manhunt for the Caped Crusader. Batman encounters Catwoman / Selina Kyle while preventing villain Bane from destroying the city. Christian Bale, Gary Oldman, Morgan Freeman and Michael Caine reprise their roles as Batman/Bruce Wayne, Detective Gordon, Lucius Fox and Alfred. Anne Hathaway ("Rachel Getting Married") is Catwoman and Tom Hardy ("Warrior") is slated for the Bane role. Supporting characters could be the key: Joseph Gordon-Levitt ("Inception") plays rookie cop John Blake, Marion Cotillard ("La Vie En Rose") is Miranda Tate and Liam Neeson is back as Ra's al Ghul.

Beasts of the Southern Wild ~ July 6

A Sundance Film Festival hit that won the Grand Jury Prize using unknown and unprofessional actors. Hushpuppy, played by six-year old newcomer Quvenzhané Wallis, lives in a soggy patch of the delta known as the Bathub and talks to animals and her missing mother.

The Amazing Spider-Man ~ July 3

Peter Parker is back but this time Andrew Garfield ("The Social Network") dons the Spidey costume. The reboot of the Spiderman franchise, based on the comic book, explores Parker's past, focusing on his high school life. Parker will also try to win the heart of his crush, Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone). Attempts to discover his parents' past lead him to Oscorp and Dr. Connors (Rhys Ifans), the villainous Lizard. The feature of the web shooters are a plus and trashing the organic web ideology was a good idea. Marc Webb ("500 Days of Summer") directs his second feature film, skillfully blending Spiderman's comic book history, action-packed special effects and the romantic chemistry of Garfield and Stone.

SPORTS

LONG DISTANCE DANCER

Track star Graciela Vargas' passion is folklórico.

By Sandy Barba
Staff Writer

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE RACE?

My tenth grade year, we were at Glendale College and I was in the 4x4. I was a sprinter at the time. I believe this race helped me see what I could do.

During that race there were varsity girls too and I wasn't used to that, so I got intimidated. So I started running and the by the end of the race, I realized I was in the front. That race made me see that I was actually faster than I thought I was and that I could be so much better.

WHAT IS YOUR MINDSET? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT?

That I have to do my best and be the best that I can be. I also think that I have to have the courage and determination to finish the race.

I think about all the things that I've learned during the week, like pumping my arms, striding, breathing properly and all the advice that my coaches have given me in order to improve my time.

What motivates you to keep pushing through a race?

How I'm going to feel when it's all over. I might feel so much pain and all but by the end I just want to know that all the work that I put in during the week at practice paid off in the race.

WHAT MAKES A RUNNER GOOD?

Determination, strength, and courage. Without any of those, I don't think you can get very far. You need the determination to keep on coming to practice and completing the work outs, you need the strength to always give your best. You also need the mental strength. Your mind has to be in the race in order for you to perform well and push past the pain. And you need the courage to not be afraid and to go further than you think you can.

HOW DO YOU PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A RACE?

On the day before, you start motivating yourself and telling yourself things like today I'm going to get a personal record, I'm going to do the best I can. Then during the day of the race, you just relax and drink a lot of water so you can be hydrated for the race.

DO YOU GET NERVOUS?

In my first years, I would get nervous and my heart would be pounding. But now, I've grown more confident so I just get on the track and think that these girls might be good but I have the potential to be better.

WHEN DID YOU START RUNNING TRACK?

At the end of ninth grade.

WHO INTRODUCED YOU TO TRACK?

Mr. Rivera. I was in his biology class and there were a lot of runners in there and they would all encourage me to start running track.

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN ON THE VARSITY TEAM?

I started the varsity team in my junior year. I wasn't the best athlete in my first two years of track. I still needed to learn a lot and by my junior year I started to become better and see who I really was as a person and a runner.

WHAT EVENTS DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN?

I participate in the mile and the two-mile races.

YOUR FASTEST TIMES?

My fastest mile time is five minutes and fifty seconds and my fastest two mile time is twelve minutes and 38 seconds.

YOU'RE TEAM CAPTAIN?

Rivera gave me the role as a captain, but I take it more as a leader during practices. I feel like if I'm a leader in getting people to advance and telling them not to give up



Photo by Catalina Murillo

FOOTLOOSE: Poly runner Graciela Vargas wants to dance folklórico.

DO YOU PLAY ANY OTHER SPORTS?

I don't play any other sports but I have been dancing folklórico for eight years.

DO YOU PLAN ON RUNNING IN COLLEGE?

No I don't. I want to continue dancing. It's one of my main passions. I'm going to join the folklórico team in Northridge.

WHAT IS THE TEAM GOAL?

The team goal is to give every race our absolute best and hopefully make it to city and state finals.

WHAT HAS THE TEAM DONE FOR YOU?

The team helped me go from being a really shy girl to actually talking to people more. I have also gained great friendships. I feel as if my teammates are all my brothers and sisters.

Playoffs End in Van Nuys

Volleyball boys didn't bring the firepower to avoid elimination.

By Shean Santy
Staff Writer

Van Nuys ended the Poly Volleyball boys playoff hopes with a 3-1 victory in the second round of the Division I playoffs at Van Nuys Tuesday, May 8.

But not before the Parrots made a last stand in games three and four.

Poly lost the first two games in a hurry and looked out of sync in the process.

Then came the fireworks.

"Game three starts and it was a different ball game," said Parrot assistant coach Melissa Gillard. "The energy, the passion, the competitiveness. . . Gaby looked at me and I looked at her."

"It's game time. They're up now," said Parrot head coach Gaby Gallardo.

Van Nuys called their first time out of the match at 13-12 Poly.

"We always want to have our opponent call the first time out," said Gillard. "So when Van Nuys head coach David Chae screamed 'Time out! Time out!' we could feel the momentum build for our boys."

Poly kept the ball in play for the majority of the time.

"We shut down their opposite hitter. We're playing great defense. We're hitting the ball away from the block. It was a great set," Gillard said.

Gallardo called time when the Wolves edged ahead at 22-21. Then Van Nuys called time as Poly took a 23-21 lead. The Parrots took one more time out tied at 23.

"Game to 2," Gallardo said. "Whoever wants it more is going to win."

Poly wanted it more, winning 25-23.

But when Game four started, Poly was back to playing like they did in games one and two.

Gallardo made adjustments without calling a timeout, but Poly got lost.

"We couldn't defend their outside hitter," Gillard said. "It was just too much for our boys to process at once."

Poly called time with Van Nuys up 11-6 and then a second and last timeout down 20-11.

"In my head, I'm telling myself 'If we lose without a fight, these boys are going to regret this moment for the rest of their lives,'" Gillard said.

"Then, in the blink of an eye, our boys are fighting.

We're playing with the same energy and momentum we had in game three. We're playing smart and effectively."

Van Nuys finally called a timeout leading 23-17.

"Our boys were well aware that they were two points away from ending their volleyball season," said Gillard.

After the timeout, Poly had long rallies.

"The ball was not hitting the floor on our side," Gillard said. "Each point we got, we celebrated."

But trading points wasn't going to work and Van Nuys ended the match and Poly's season with a 25-19 win.

Poly finished the year 17-11 and placed second in the East Valley League at 8-2. Eugenio Moreno, Francisco Xavier Montalvan, Victor Vela, Ruben Jimenez and Ruben Rodriguez were selected for the Senior LAVCA Academic Volleyball Team with a 3.0 G.P.A or higher.

Simple Twist of Fate

Coin toss flips Parrots out of playoffs

By Alex Kang
Staff Writer

A coin toss took Poly baseball out of the playoffs.

"We tied for second with Grant and Arleta," said Parrot head coach Gabe Cerna, "but we lost our spot to a decision that was made with a coin flip."

Poly finished the season 10-21 and 7-5 in the East Valley League.

"I had big expectations from this team this year because of the two arms we had," Cerna said.

Cerna was talking about junior Josue Moreno and junior Alejandro Lopez.

"I am disappointed with the team," Cerna said. "The players underachieved."

Cerna cited a weak offense as part of the problem this year.

"Pitching was already there," Cerna said, "We did not make the playoffs because of our lack of offense."

The split with Grant didn't help. The Lancers pounded the Parrots 11-1 before Poly returned the favor with a 6-2 win at home.

"Grant was also put in the 13th spot," Cerna said, "and losing to them on the road put us down."

Last year, Cerna's second as Parrot head coach, the team was 10-16 and finished fourth in league at 4-6. Cerna said his best year at Poly so far was his first.



Photo by Diane Alvarado

PARROT: Pitcher Josue Moreno.

"The first year I was here," Cerna said, "We came in second, made the playoffs and lost in the first round to Cleveland."

But Cerna says he always likes to look on the bright side.

"This year we started three sophomores, Alonzo Hernandez, David Reyes and Octavio Marquez, every game," Cerna said. "They are going to be even stronger next year."

"I expect us to be a lot better and contend for the league title with the emergence of Josue Moreno and Alejandro Lopez on the mound," said Cerna.

No Parrots Left in Playoffs

Parrot #2 singles Jae Choi loses 6-1, 6-0 in Carson after teammate #1 Andy Choi falls 6-1, 6-1, ending Poly's season.

By Alex Kang
Staff Writer

Andy and Jae both made the singles playoffs. Talk about those matches.

With Andy first of all you needed to understand there are 24 students allowed and some aren't even going pro. But going to the tournament is an honor. Andy has been there the last three years, counting this one, since 9th grade. He gets low C's so that leaves him playing the top players.

In the last three years he has won one match. He usually runs into a student that will play pro or get a scholarship. This year Andy got a draw against El Camino, a top school in the district and lost in the first round. We usually play El Camino in the pre season and this year, as usual, they beat us, seven-zip without anyone winning a set. Andy got a difficult draw first round.

Jae got into the tournament for the first time this year. I was really proud of our team since only teams like Pacific Palisades and El Camino usually get the honor of having more than one student in the tournament.

Jae got a very good draw. A student dropped

out of the tournament and Jay played in his place. As a result, his first opponent was not that difficult as Andy's. Jae won the first round 6-3, 6-3.

Jae had a Micro Econ AP and couldn't take the second play in Balboa Park and had to reschedule to a shortened day on Friday. Then we had to drive over an hour to Carson, where Jae had to play one of the top players, who didn't have to play a first round. The long trip, the ability of the other player and Jae feeling under the weather and tired after the AP exam was a bit too much and Jae lost 6-1, 6-1.

Who are the top competitors in the tournament?

Andy and Jae know a few of the players in the tournament But Pacific Palisades has been in a league of their own for three years beating El Camino each year. They have to be among the best in the tournament. Some of the players in El Camino have their parents and private instructors attend their matches.

Are you coming back?

I would like to come back next year as a coach. Coaching after school activities takes a great deal of time and dedication. Since I also coach Academic Decathlon, I felt it was very difficult to attend both activities. The tennis

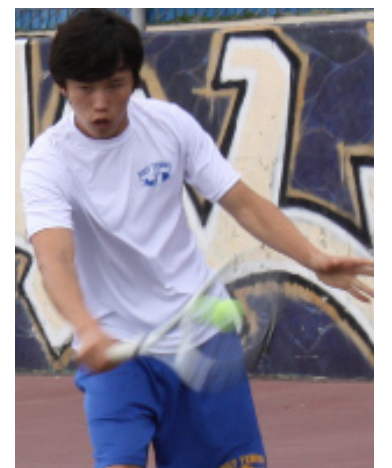


Photo by Marielle Reyes

PARROT: #1 singles Andy Choi had a strong season for coach Block.

team missed making the playoffs by one point. I blame myself for not giving them the time and felt I let them down. They could use a coach that isn't held to just direction. With two coaches, I am confident this team will be in the playoffs next year.