

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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OCTOBER 2012

Romney Gains Ground

By Nam Woo
Staff Writer

Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney turned in a surprisingly strong performance in the first of three presidential debates last week.

President Obama, on the other hand, seemed listless and uninterested.

Minutes in to the debate, Tweets, Facebook and TV reporters had Romney as the winner and Barack as ineffective, almost immediately changing Romney's status from behind in the polls to neck and neck.

The challenger used the debate to attack Obama on health care, jobs and other issues. The president's reluctance in firing back gave Republicans hope that their candidate may yet connect with the American public.

Romney managed to highlight the main themes of his campaign: lower tax rates, less regulation and the repeal of "Obamacare." At the same time, the nominee also fended off Obama's demand for details on how to pay for his proposals and safeguard Americans' well-being.

Obama failed to discuss key points of vulnerability for Romney. Obama failed to criticize Romney's recent comment at a private dinner party that 47 percent of Americans were dependent on the government, even though the Obama campaign was running the comment in their TV ad campaign.

Obama's stuttering such as "For -- for -- so if you're -- if you --" did not really give a strong impression either.

Obama did attack Romney for his lack of detail on how he would cut tax rates at every income level without increasing the national debt.

"If you believe that we can cut taxes by \$5 trillion and add \$2 trillion in additional spending that the military is not asking for," Obama said, "and you think that by closing loopholes and deductions for the well-to-do, somehow you will not end up picking up the tab, then Gov. Romney's plan may work for you."

Romney held his ground. He said he would reduce income tax rates without adding to the deficit and without reducing "the share paid by high-income individuals."

"Virtually everything he just said about my tax plan is inaccurate," Romney retorted. "I'm not looking for a \$5 trillion tax cut."

While Obama plans to raise taxes on the wealthy to reduce the deficit, Romney simply wants to fill loop-

[See Presidential, page 6]



Photo by Jasmine Guevara

AND THE WINNER IS: Idol winner Crystal Cruz (right) and runner up Audri Wilson react to the announcement of the voting for Poly Idol.

Cruz Control Junior Crystal Cruz is Poly's "Idol."

By Yesenia Carretero
Staff Writer

Junior Crystal Cruz was apparently the only one surprised that she won this year's Poly Idol.

"When I found out that I won, I was in shock," Cruz said. "I didn't think I was going to win because I messed up on my performance."

Cruz was referring to her request to stop the music about thirty seconds into her take on Amy Winehouse's "Valerie."

"I couldn't hear the music," Cruz said. "I thought I was singing too late but I actually started to sing early."

"I felt my performance would be off if I kept singing, so I told them to start the song over again."

Cruz, the last of the three finalists to perform, waited for the instrumental tracks to restart.

"It felt like a nightmare," Cruz said, "but it was actually real life so it was even worse. I felt like I lost my chance of winning."

Cruz says the Parrot audience helped her get back on track.

"When I heard the audience was still cheering for me, even though I messed up, I felt more confident," Cruz said.

[See Cruz, page 6]

Parrots Get Upward Bound

By Jasmine Aquino
Staff Writer

Parrots taking college prep classes with North Hollywood students at Upward Bound North Hollywood (UBNH) won't have to share facilities any more.

This year, a new Upward Bound Sun Valley (UBSV), under Director Agustin Rivera, will serve only Poly students.

"This is a very delicate and pivotal time," Rivera said, "This is the worst recession the country has been in since the Great Depression. Students need to take advantage of the few services available to them."

"Poly has done a lot over the past few years to raise their API and the graduation rate," said Rivera. "Now Upward Bound Sun Valley can contribute to that effort."

Upward Bound emerged out of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Upward Bound's goal is to increase the rate of high

school students from low-income families graduating from post-secondary education institutions. Notable alumni include Oprah Winfrey and Angela Bassett.

UB offers students a variety of free services: college/career guidance and mentorship, individualized educational planning, a summer enrichment program, financial aid advising and assistance, access to academic tutoring, and college/cultural field trips.

UBSV funding will come from a new five-year federal grant.

Parrots currently in UBNH will remain there. UBSV will take only new Parrots. But Parrots in both programs will now have on-campus tutoring during the week available at Poly.

Saturday academies, field trips and all other services for UBSV Parrots will begin in January.

"The students make this program successful," said Rivera. "We just give them the tools."

Edible Incentives Perfect attendance equals pizza party.

By Yesenia Carretero & Javier Valdez
Staff Writers

Parrots in five classrooms recently ate free doughnuts under Poly's new Attendance Improvement Program. The only catch: 10 days of perfect attendance.

"The classes are always very excited," said Pupil Service Attendance (PSA) Counselor Maribel Munguia. "Overall, we have had pretty good attendance this year."

The program specifies doughnuts for the first ten days that every single person in class is present and not tardy, ice cream for the second ten days and pizza for the third. The ten days do not have to be consecutive.

Tardies and doctor appointments count as absences. Athletes attending games and CAHSEE test taking are not absences.

On an average day, about 2% of Poly students are absent. Ninth grade tends to have more absences.

Last Monday, the tenth graders had a six percent absence rate, with 41 kids absent. Twenty-six seniors were absent.

"The goal district wide is that at least 71% of kids attend school at least 96% of the time," Munguia said. "Last year we met the criteria pretty much every month. Our kids were coming at least 66% of the time. This year it is 71%."

Absences tend to increase right around the holidays and on Mondays

and Fridays.

"We can have books, computers, fun activities, resources, and copies," Munguia said, "but all of that costs money. When students miss school, we don't get the money we were supposed to get from the state."

For example, in August 2011 Poly lost \$57,522.00 because of absences. This year Poly lost \$26,129.00 although. In September 2011 we lost \$69,835.00 and this year we only lost \$53,163.00, so attendance is better.

An absence without a note is considered unexcused. After ten days, an unexcused absence becomes truant.

About 20% of absences are legitimate.

Vacations during the school year are not officially allowed and are not legitimate absences.

[See Perfect, page 6]

Dodging for Dollars

By Miguel Gutierrez & Catherine Ramos
Staff Writers

Poly sports teams raised \$887 for the Toy Drive during a Thursday Dodge Ball event held in the Cage before a capacity crowd.

Seniors Raymundo Rosas, Kurt Capua, and Victor Sanchez were in charge of the event.

Raymundo and senior Fernando Moreno had talked about having a dodge ball game between football and basketball. After the event was approved, Raymundo decided to ask other Parrot teams to join in the fun.

Each team had from six to 10 players on each side with up to four substitutes.

Dodge ball rules call for players to rush to the center of the field to retrieve the dodge balls and attempt to hit opponents with the balls. Crossing the line to the opponent's side is not allowed and any player who steps off the court is out.

Participants included Cheer, Drill, Boys' Varsity Basketball, Girls' Varsity Softball, Girls' Varsity Volleyball and Boys' Varsity Baseball with 10 players on each team.

Cheer dominated Drill, taking out three Drill players in the first 8 seconds of the match.

[See Perfect, page 6]

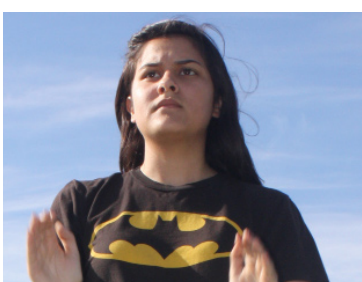


Photo by Vanessa Aquino

Girl Power in the Band

This "Sir" is a lady.

PEOPLE - page 3



Photo By Jasmine Guevara

Girl Power on the Court

These two give us a season preview.

SPORTS - page 7

EVENTS

Los Angeles Gets Another Icon

By Alfredo Quezada
Staff Writer

Los Angeles is the historic space shuttle Endeavour's final resting place. Below is a brief survey of the vehicle's past and its noisy arrival in the Southland.

The History

Endeavour's first mission, STS-49, was in May 1992. Endeavour has traveled into space 25 times, leaving the atmosphere at more than 17,000 miles an hour. By the end of its final launch in May of 2011, the Endeavor had logged 122,883,151 miles. Endeavour was the fifth and final NASA space shuttle to be built.

Endeavor replaced the Challenger, destroyed on January 28, 1986 with all seven crew members aboard.

Endeavour's name derived from a national competition involving students in elementary and secondary schools.

Endeavour was originally scheduled to be decommissioned in 2010 after 18 years of service but it was postponed.

Ken Phillips was the aerospace curator at the California Science Center who first thought of bringing an orbiter to the museum in 1991.

The Flight – 9/20/2012

The Endeavour made its last trip from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida to Los Angeles International (LAX) on September 20.

The shuttle sat atop a modified Boeing 747 called a Shuttle Carrier Aircraft (SCA) for its final journey.

The California Flyover – 9/22/2012

The Endeavour completed its final voyage Friday, flying as low as 1,500 feet over some of California's most distinctive landmarks.

Leaving Edwards Air Force Base on Friday morning, Endeavour headed north, buzzing the state Capitol in Sacramento, circling the Bay Area and soaring over a Golden Gate Bridge packed with onlookers.

Then the shuttle turned south, crossing the Monterey Peninsula on its journey to Los Angeles, home of the nation's 40-year shuttle program.

Over Southland Icons

Endeavour flew down the coast from Santa Barbara to Huntington Beach before cruising over the Griffith Observatory, the Hollywood sign, the Getty Center, Queen Mary, Disneyland and the NASA facilities and factories where it was designed, built and assembled.

In downtown Los Angeles, City Council members suspended their meeting so they could watch the shuttle soar over City Hall. The 27th floor observation deck was packed.

Along the bluffs in El Segundo, dozens of people arrived as dawn broke. Others had camped out.

At Griffith Observatory, hundreds of people jockeyed for photo spots. The parking lot was filled to overflowing more than three hours before Endeavour's arrival.

At Disneyland, people gathered outside the entrance to the

park, cameras and phones poised.

Shuttle sightings from points across the Southland lit up Twitter.

"Just flew over my head!!!" tweeted actor Tom Hanks, who played Apollo 13 Cmdr. Jim Lovell in a movie. "Don't see this every day. Never will again. The Spaceman in me just went berserk."

The Preparation

To prepare Endeavour for its 12-mile (19-kilometer) parade, NASA's team removed the orbiter from the back of the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft (SCA) and loaded it onto a modified overland transporter.

The 155,000-pound Endeavour was carefully raised using a two-crane device so the transporter could drive in underneath. The shuttle was then lowered on to the wheeled platform.

The cranes, as well as a network of cables that served as wind restraints, were anchored to the airport's apron by 200 attach points earlier drilled into the tarmac. The de-mate process was done overnight to avoid the deafening noise from arriving and departing airplanes, which could interfere with the critical communications between the 30 people working the operation.

Endeavour was then moved into a United Airlines hangar for further

preparation for its transport and display.

Inside the hangar, technicians removed the aerodynamic tail cone that was added for Endeavour's ferry flight from Florida, repositioned the shuttle's replica main engines from their tucked-for-flight orientation and installed nozzles on the orbiter's maneuvering system pods. The crew cabin was reconfigured for the science center's curators.

The SCA was flown to NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., on September 24 to serve as a parts donor for NASA's SOFIA airborne astronomical observatory.

The Parade – 10/13/2012

On Oct. 13, Endeavour will travel the streets of Inglewood in full public view from Inglewood City Hall to the California Science Center at Exposition Park, where it's expected to arrive by dusk.

Along the route, Endeavour's delivery will be celebrated by a musical dance and aerial performance choreographed by actress Debbie Allen. A Toyota Tundra pickup truck will handle the towing duties for the last leg of the trip before the shuttle as part of a partnership and sponsorship to raise upwards of \$500,000 for Endeavour's permanent display.

The Exhibit

On October 30, the California Science Center (CSC) at Exposition Park will put Endeavour on display.

Endeavour will be open to the public, free of charge, housed in the Samuel Oschin Space Shuttle Endeavour Display Pavilion, a large hangar that was recently built beside the center's main building.

The shuttle will be exhibited atop the transporter.

Endeavour will rest atop a recreation of its launch pad, complete with twin booster and external fuel tank, inside the Samuel Oschin Air and Space Center. The Center is expected to open by 2017.



the OPTIMIST

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3 MARCHING ALONG

Poly senior Martha Tinajero is a quick learner, a multi-instrumentalist and now Poly's drum major. Find out how she did it.

By Jasmine Aquino

3 THE LUNCH ALTERNATIVE

If you think your English class is tough going, imagine moving it back a few centuries and overseas as well. That's what English teacher Michelle Martin does at lunch with the Parrots who attend her seminars on French and Medieval Lit. Bring your powdered wig.

By Jasmine Guevara

4 POP IMPORTED

Forget about those Timberlake-type boys bands. Korea has something better – K-pop. Polished, packaged and exported, these oh-so-perfect teen groups and their Seoulful hip hop are coming to America. Read all about it.

By Maureen Kang

4 CAN YOU SAY "GANGNAM?"

We can't either, but you still need to know about Psy and his dance video. It's cheesy, off-the-wall and downright irresistible.

By Maureen Kang

4 BFF

"End of Watch," a buddy cop movie, is highly watchable, says the OPTIMIST's movie critic. Get in the front seat and cruise South Central in this film about good cops and bad guys.

By Adriana Garcia

5 KYDS HAS A DANCE INSTRUCTOR

Meet Ozzy Mora, journalism major and former runway model and now KYDS dance instructor. If you don't sign up after reading this, you just ain't got rhythm.

By Yenifer Rodriguez

5 STAYING AFTER SCHOOL IS FUN

KYDS is Poly's afterschool program, the best alternative to babysitting your little brother anyone could think of. Don't go home at 3:01, sign up for a bunch of classes, from Dance to Drivers Ed.

By Yenifer Rodriguez

6 GRAY ON GRAY.

Dylan may be older, but the man who wrote "Blonde On Blonde" in 1965 is still writing, singing and on the road rocking. Read about the contents of his 35th album for Columbia Records and then go buy it.

By Lisa Guardado

7 HEAD GAMES

Find out what Parrot hoopsters Stephanie Gurolla and Bella Lopez are really thinking about when they're playing basketball in this two-for-one interview.

By Rudy Guijaro

8 CAN YOU SAY VICTORY?

Wins have been hard to come by for Poly's football team this year, so the Chavez "contest" was anxiously awaited. The Eagles generously allowed fifty-four Parrot points and Poly's first win of the season. Bring it on, Verdugo.

By Rudy Guijaro & Felicia Rodriguez

8 NOHO YES, VERDUGO NO

The volleyball girls beat a determined Huskie squad 3-2, but lost by the same score to Verdugo. The Verdugo rematch came out worse. Find out how and why in this season review.

By Tracy Salcido

8 RECORD BREAKER

Cross Country's Isabel Ochoa broke her own record (20:03) in the three-mile with her recent 19:30 time. After you read her thoughts on the zen of running, you'll know why she's driven.

By Catherine Ramos



the
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PEOPLE



Photo by Vanessa Aquino

CONDUCTING: Senior Drum Major Martha Tinajero at work.

She's Got the Beat

Parrot Senior Martha Tinajero is Poly's first girl drum major since 2001.

By Jasmine Aquino
Staff Writer

POLY SENIOR MARTHA TINAJERO is this year's marching band Drum Major. Tinajero is the first girl since 2001 to earn the title.

The drum major, positioned at the head of the band, is responsible for providing commands to the band regarding where to march, what to play, and what time to keep. Tinajero keeps the band organized and structured.

"It is such a huge honor to hold this position," said Tinajero. "I'm all about girl power and music is truly my passion so becoming drum major is just an amazing way to start off my senior year."

Tinajero joined beginning band in seventh grade at Richard E. Byrd Middle School. She had little experience with music and no idea what instrument she wanted to play. Tinajero ultimately chose the flute.

"The flute is such a magnificent instrument. It's light and has a soft sound. I often find myself swaying when I play ballads on my flute," said Tinajero.

Beginning band culminated into advanced band during her eighth grade year. Poly's 2008-2009 band attended Tinajero's eighth grade spring concert and recruited her for the upcoming school year.

Tinajero joined marching band her freshman year at Poly and enjoyed the experience.

"I had never marched before so it was tough and a lot of hard work in the beginning," she explained. "But as soon as I got the hang of keeping time with my feet and playing at the same time, I never wanted to stop."

Tinajero progressed quickly and was first chair flute by her

sophomore year. She also learned to play the piccolo.

Poly's concert band performed at the 2011 Las Vegas Heritage Music Festival with a repertoire that included Cory J. McBride's "Agua's Whelm," a piece with a piccolo solo. Tinajero performed the solo as a sophomore and helped win the band win a Silver plaque.

Tinajero also learned to play the trumpet in order to join the Los Angeles Unified School District All-City Honor Band. She marched six miles in the 2011 Rose Parade as a sophomore.

Tinajero joined again her junior year as a baritone player and marched in the 2012 Rose Parade.

"That was a really rough thing I put my body through. The baritone weighs more than 15 pounds and I have to keep it up to play non-stop while marching high step (raising your knee up to about your waist) for six miles," said Tinajero. "Although I was practically dead by the end, it was an unforgettable experience."

The field show for this year's marching band is music from a Broadway production called "Les Misérables." Tinajero has to memorize the music for all the sections of the band and make sure they sound good as a whole.

Tinajero, who also plays saxophone, is ready for the challenge.

"The only thing that sucks is the band has to call me 'Sir' when I tell them a command because they're addressing the position and not my gender," laughed Tinajero.

The championship band will attend competitions this fall, including the 30th Annual Granada Hills Highlander Marching Band Competition on November 10.

Four other girls also head the band: Assistant Drum Major Diana Escobedo, colorguard Co-captains Natalia Aparicio and Elisama Miguel and drumline's Drum Captain Jasmine Aquino. The four girls will accompany Tinajero in all the award ceremonies.

What's for Lunch?

By Jasmine Guevara
Staff Writer

Tired of the same old cafeteria food every day?

For some lucky Parrots, Magnet English teacher Michelle Martin cooks up an alternative twice a week.

On Tuesdays, it's French Literature. On the menu are "Tartuffe" by Moliere (1664), Candide by Voltaire (1759), and "Nana" by Emile Zola (1880).

On Thursdays, try a Medieval Lit entrée. Choose from "The Inferno" by Dante (1317), "The Decameron" by Giovanni Boccaccio (1353) and "The Canterbury Tales" by Geoffrey Chaucer (late 14th century).

"My inspiration for giving these seminars was the kids," said Martin.

"They were begging for an intellectual challenge, and I figured, what the heck. I made the announcement and they signed up on the spot."

Martin's seminars offer students a glimpse into the world of intellectualism.

"French and Medieval literature are not usually available to our students," Martin said, "and there is so much to be learned."

Both seminars are full subscribed and students are enthusiastic.

"I think it is a really good experience," said junior Luis Curiel. "I'm learning that you can use analogies and metaphors to express how you feel and even become famous in the process."

Having impressive reading to reference on college apps and in interviews with top schools is extremely important, Martin said.

"Most of the books we read are not taught at the high school level, and that makes the kids stand out," said Martin.

Rafael Rubio took the French literature seminar and was asked to discuss his reading at every college interview he had. The interviewers were impressed and told him he would fit in quite well at an Ivy League school, according to Martin. He is now freshman at Columbia.

"I think the seminars are a good experience for college," said junior Mayra Navarrete. "Without the seminars, I probably wouldn't have ever thought about reading these books. I am learning a lot about the medieval time period, and a lot about the authors of the books we read."

Martin says she enjoys sharing her knowledge with the kids and seeing their intellectual development blossom.

"I have some things I can share," Martin said. "But you have to up your game for these students. They're wicked smart and very ambitious."

Both seminars are open-ended and will continue to meet until the material is covered. Students are expected to write essays for two out of the three books they read. Gold, silver and bronze medals will be awarded to the top three students in each seminar.

In a typical meeting, Martin gives the students the historical and literary background of the author and the work.

"We read parts of the work in question and then we dive into discussion," Martin said. "Thirty minutes isn't much time so we have to scramble."

Martin graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison with a major in Italian. She got her masters in English Linguistics at Wisconsin. Martin has teaching credentials for English and Social Studies.

Teaching the seminars is fun, Martin says.

"There aren't really very many people I can talk to about this stuff," Martin said. "The Medieval period is one of my favorites, and I've read a massive amount of French literature. I'm a compulsive reader and read between 45-50 books a year, mostly literary criticism, history, philosophy and literature. And of course murder mysteries."

Martin calls herself an autodidact on the seminar topics.

"Virtually everything I know in these two areas is self-taught," Martin says. "I just love to learn. The fact that I'm self-taught is important for the students to know. Hopefully, it will inspire them to take responsibility for their own life-long learning."

Whatever Martin is doing seems to be working.

"I am learning a lot about the time period," said junior

Kevin Escobar, "and the perspective people had on society, their lifestyle, how they viewed the Church and the government."

"The books in the seminars have taught me how to analyze and interpret an author's writing style according to their environment and influences," said junior Josselyn Barahona.

"The Medieval seminar resembles a book club in which we can share our opinions and interpretations about the book," said junior Daniel Castro. "Our teacher gives us a deeper insight into what the writer is trying to illustrate by tying in ideology, politics, and the beliefs of the time. The seminar exposes us to classic books and helps us interpret them."

Whatever Martin is serving, these Parrots are eating it up.



Photo by Jasmine Guevara

MEDIA

The Korean Invasion

Brits are so Sixties.
The next wave is coming from Korea.

By Maureen Kang
Staff Writer

Girls' Generation. Do you immediately think of nine youthful goddesses and their sexy synchronized dance moves to the upbeat, Madonna-like music?

Ever heard of Gangnam Style, the horse-riding dance, currently a world favorite?

If you have, then you're hip to K-pop, an up-and-coming entertainment tsunami that has conquered the Asian music charts and is beginning to do the same here. K-pop adds over two billion dollars annually to Korea's national income.

So, what is this K-pop that introduced musicians like Psy, Wonder Girls, DBSK, and Girls' Generation to the world?

K-pop is a mix of Asia and the West, a sort of Asian soup seasoned with American spices, an amalgam of Western synths, rapping, and urban beats and Korean dance moves and charm.

Most K-pop songs today have English verses. Popular songs like the Girls' Generation (So nyo shi dae) "Gee" start in English, "Aha! Listen, Boy! My First Love Story!"

So how did Korea, a country of less than fifty million people, become a force in the music industry?

Twenty-nine year-old computer scientist Jon Toth can tell you. He never expected to obsess over Girls' Generation. But then it happened.

"You think you love them, but then you see Tiffany point directly at you and wink, and everything else that exists in the world just dis-



Google Image

SO CUTE: Tiffany, Yoona, Sooyoung, Taeyeon, Hyoyeon, Sunny, Seohyun, Yuri and Jessica.

appears," Toth said. "You see Sooyoung look you dead in the eye and say in English, 'Thank you for coming.'"

Girls' Generation and the other K-pop "idols" are each managed and controlled by a particular entertainment agency. Each group gets its own music, style, choreography, and image.

The agencies handle all aspects of the groups' careers, from record sales to television appearances, acting as managers, agents and promoters.

The three most famous agencies, S.M. Entertainment, JYP Entertainment, and Y.G. Entertainment, have scouted twelve to nineteen-year-olds from all over the world. S.M. handles Girls' Generation, BoA, and Super Junior. JYP has the Wonder Girls. And YG manages Big Bang and 2NE1.

Some groups are notable for featuring different ethnicities and backgrounds.

F(x), a K-pop group formed by SM Entertainment, includes Victoria and Amber (Chi-

nese) and Krystal, Sulli, and Luna (Korean). They each speak Korean.

EXO-K and EXO-M is a sort of dual group, with the six boys of EXO-K living in Korea and the six boys of EXO-M living in China. The subgroups release the same songs simultaneously in their own countries and languages.

"It may be a Chinese artist or a Chinese company," says S.M. founder Soo-Man Lee,

"but what matters in the end is the fact that it was made by our cultural technology. We are preparing for the next biggest market in the world, and the goal is to produce the biggest stars in the world."

YG, though smaller in revenue and size, also has its share of successful K-pop acts.

Psy's "Gangnam Style" is a worldwide video hit. Big Bang's "Lies" was number one on the Korean charts for seven consecutive weeks.

Most K-pop groups depend as much on their good looks as their music.

Makeup and plastic surgery help to create a Western-inspired look. Korea is the world leader in facial plastic surgery. Many Asians go to Korea to have their faces chiseled to look like the Korean stars.

The look is just one aspect of the K-pop formula for success.

"Every little thing is thought out. Every song is like a mini epic," said Interscope Records exec Neil Jacobson, in charge of making Girls' Generation's debut American album,

In America, the idols' Korean charm and purity sets them apart from American groups like Chris Brown, Nicki Minaj and Rihanna.

American producers like Swizz Beatz want to do collaborations between Korean and American artists, rather than stress differences between the two cultures.

"It'll be the start of a global phenomenon," Beatz said.



People grab their shades and throw their arms up, cross their wrists, and gallop side-to-side. Why? They've gone crazy over South Korean "Seoul rapper" Psy, 34, and his "oppa gangnam style."

Psy's flashy, cheesy, and over-the-top music video, "Gangnam Style," has logged about 280 million views on YouTube since its July 15 debut, earned world-wide recognition, received several award nominations in the UK, the U.S. and Canada and topped the iTunes Charts in 31 countries.

"Gangnam Style" logos and images of the goofy horse-ride dance are being plastered on French fries, new clothing lines, Halloween costumes and the Harvard Business Review website, according to an LATimes story. And of course there are the usual branded mugs and t-shirts.

Gangnam, says Psy, is actually a small district in Seoul, comparable to what Beverly Hills is to LA.

The subject of the video's lyrics are the discreet-by-day and wild-at-night women who live there.

"I describe it as noble at the daytime and going crazy at the night time," Psy said, "and the lyric says I am the right guy for the lady who is like that."

The classy attire is a fashion sensation not only in the entertainment world, but also in business and politics.

"Gangnam Style" has become the new "Macarena," the 1994 song/dance craze that swept the nation with whacky, corny dancing.

The video, best known for its comical horse-galloping dance, has inspired random flash mobs and parodies. One local and now well-known spoof called "Lifeguard Style" was created by thirteen lifeguards. When city officials saw the video, they fired the lifeguards.

Psy asked the city council to reconsider their decision.

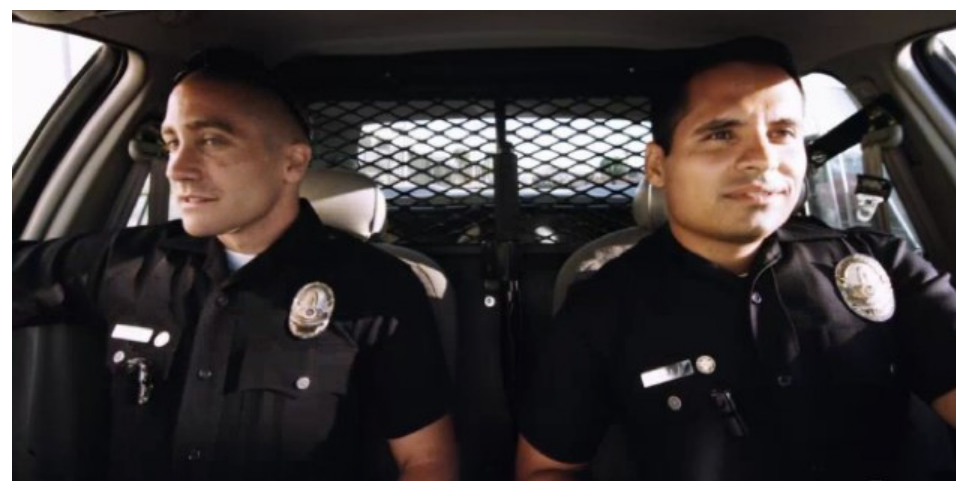
"I really want to help them out," said Psy, "because that's not fair. What did they do?"

The lifeguards are still unemployed.

Psy Cool

Gangnam Style. It's the new Macarena.

By Maureen Kang
Staff Writer



Google Image

BUDDIES: Jake Gyllenhaal and Micheal Pena cruise South Central in search of drug cartel.

Cops with Feelings

"End of Watch" looks like the real thing, gritty and well acted.

By Adriana Garcia
Staff Writer

You're looking through the windshield of a speeding squad car. Bright sunlight flashes off the dirty South Central neighborhood. In front of you, the speeding car stops at a dead end. Two males exit the vehicle and begin shooting at you. A brief exchange of bullets. Two criminals crumple to the ground, dead.

Just another day at the office for 20-something LA cop Brian Taylor (Jake Gyllenhaal) and partner Mike Zavala (Michael Peña) in director David Ayer's gritty docu-style "End of Watch."

Ayer ("Training Day"), who also wrote the script, nicely captures the brutal reality of what it's like to be a police officer on the mean streets of South Central LA.

Gyllenhaal and Peña are involved in a series of traumatic incidents before accidentally running into the works of a notorious drug cartel. When the two officers arrest some of the cartel's men and interfere with the dealers' business, the cops become the cartel's number one target.

Much of the film involves Gyllenhaal and Peña in a series of wildly entertaining conversations that make audiences laugh and admire the bond the two really have. Peña pokes fun

at Caucasians' obsession with flavored coffee and Gyllenhaal needles Peña about Hispanics' quinceañera celebrations.

Gyllenhaal does a decent job channeling a character who aspires to do more with his life. Taylor doesn't just want to be a run-of-the-mill cop, he has bigger dreams to chase. And he wants to find a nice girl to settle down with.

Peña's character has a comedic presence that stands out throughout the film and lightens the overall mood.

"End of Watch" is that rare action film that also contains real characters instead of the cardboard cutouts seen in the typical explosions and gun shots flick.

This versatility makes "End of Watch" easy to like.

Ayer's dialogue is uncensored the way conversations are in real life. The rest of the cast, including Anna Kendrick as Gyllenhaal's love interest and America Ferrera as a fellow officer, are real people that make every scene credible.

The documentary style, with cameras on the actors and inside the squad car, as well as plenty of hand-held camera work, adds an element of realism to the film that makes for entertaining viewing.

"End of Watch" is a buddy movie that works because the bond of friendship between Gyllenhaal and Peña is natural and believable.

KYDS



Photo by Jasmine Guevara

KYDS WORK: Former runway model and new KYDS dance instructor Ozzy Mora knows her way around hip hop and ballet.

You Should Be Dancing

Get your salsa on with KYDS instructor Azalea "Ozzy" Mora.

By Yenifer Rodriguez
Editor in Chief

Never in a million years did I think I was going to be a dance instructor. This company called Star Dreams was looking for a dance instructor and I wanted to try something different so I applied. I have experience dancing but not as a teacher. My personality and the way I presented myself sold me to my boss and she loved me.

I'm in charge of 40 little kids. It's a struggle because I have to have patience. They're one and a half to five years old. Some are still in diapers. I have to baby them and tell them how to clap.

I've worked there a year and a half.

I wanted to teach high school students because I wanted a different environment and different atmosphere.

I think I got the job because of how enthusiastic I was about teaching kids and I knew how to put together concerts and competitions.

They told me how much these girls wanted to be dancers and be presentable at concerts.

So I was like wow, imagine what I can do for older kids that are kind of stuck. I think they do their best for me because I'm close to their age but my mentality is like an old lady. I know that I can balance my youth and show them how to be an adult at the same time.

I really want the KYDS kids to be able to learn not only to be dancers but to have goals, to be overachievers. I want them to talk to me not only as a dance teacher but as a person, as a role model.

I want these kids to be like me or more than me. That would make me happy, just knowing that I left a little bit of an imprint on them. I hope when these girls graduate, they say, you know what, Ms Ozzy was super young, she motivated us, she didn't stop and I want to be like her.

I love the kids. I love how humble these kids are. At other schools some kids take for granted the programs that they have. These kids really take it serious.

These kids are super humble, super understanding, they're hard workers. Of course they're kids and they're going to slack off but they get right back to it. They really make me feel like I'm doing something right.

I want to be a motivational speaker. This is good practice for me to help these kids achieve something in their life which is dance.

I have the heart and soul to teach dance. I've been dancing for a long time so I understand being a dancer and wanting someone to teach you well.

It's my first time working with KYDS.

Most of my influences are choreographers like Shane Sparks. Folklorico, merengue and Azteca were my first dances. They really gave me the rhythm to do hip hop, ballet and lyrical. It was much easier for me to appreciate the culture and different

Azalea "Ozzy" Mora is the new KYDS dance instructor. Ozzy spoke with the OPTIMIST recently about her class and other topics. Here's what she said.

types of dances and that's what I want to teach the kids.

I have a lot of girls and guys coming in and out of the class and we're still working on technique, their strength, their endurance.

We don't have our uniforms or duffel bags or anything yet so when we perform its probably going to be for the talent

show in December so when we do present ourselves it's a good presentation.

We're named Blue Sky Reality Dance. I just finished the shirts and they have a Parrot on the back.

Right now I'm teaching salsa and a little bit of merengue and hip hop. Next is ballet.

Most of my kids are beginners and it's a lot harder for me to teach at a certain level because most of them have never danced in their life or they have danced but it's a different type of dance. I would say I only have one girl right now that is pretty advanced but I can't teach at her level because we're a team.

We practice Wednesday and Thursdays but we're trying to do it everyday. It depends on my schedule too because it's pretty hectic.

In two weeks, I'm auditioning leaders and co-leaders. I'm not naming them captain or co-captain or anything like that because our team isn't big enough and I want to have two leaders and a co leader. Basically they're going to be in charge of communicating with the girls, making sure we're all on point.

If I come late one day I want them to be able to do warm ups with them or be initiative and so I'm having those auditions in two weeks.

I want the audience to see that these boys and girls have been working hard. I want them to be like wow these girls started with nothing and now they're something. I want the audience to feel like they're moving when they're dancing.

I'm very young and I've accomplished a lot at my age and that's what I want to show these girls. I want to dedicate this year to the kids and see what happens.

I was acting when I was 7. I started modeling when I was 13. In high school I got an agent.

I did runway for Brazilian designers when I was 13-14. I really liked it. It was a different experience for me and definitely being in the industry has changed my thoughts.

I was auditioning to be in a Randy Jackson music video when I was 16. I didn't go because my mom wanted me to focus on school. It was the best decision because college has definitely changed my life and opened more goals and opportunities.

I've performed at the Ford Amphitheatre, local community centers, my college, my high school and competitions.

I'm a broadcast journalism major at the University of La Verne. I have a year and a half left.

Before Poly I worked as a co-host at Latino 96.3 and Sirius XM radio.

KYDS Offers Kids Stuff

The OPTIMIST sat down recently with KYDS manager Josue Arias to talk about the after-school program's new classes and instructors. Here's what he told us.

The Classes

Cyber Patriot is a national cyber defense campaign where kids can join a team here at Poly. They'll get a computer and they'll learn how to protect computer from things like viruses and cyber terrorism.

They compete and if they win the local competitions they get to go to Washington, D.C.

We just hired the instructor and I picked up the computers today. So we're just waiting for the instructor to finish his paper work so he can set the class up.

I am really excited for our new **Dance Class** that Ozzy has started. I really love the KYDS Crew class because they put together events that kids really enjoy.

Ozzy Mora has been performing dance for a very long time. She has choreographed different styles of music like hip hop, ballet, jazz. She stood out from everyone else we interviewed because she wanted to focus on physical fitness and making sure the girls would have the stamina to finish the dances.

I'm also excited about the afterschool music club, the opportunity to record at Idol Tuesdays. Idol Tuesdays are a non-profit that we're collaborating with. They record artists for free.

Normally they record already established artists but I asked her if we could have some of our students' record there and she was for it. Now the kids in the music club are working towards making that a reality. They're working on songs to record and give out to their friends.

The **Culinary Arts** class was closed for a couple months because there were some issues with the facility. There was a gas leak and the floor had lifted so it wasn't safe for the students to be there. We had issues with the refrigerator. One of the

engines blew up so the fridge didn't work for a while.

Brad Katz helped get the custodians to work on the facility. We had also the refrigerator fixed. It was great collaboration. It took a month and a half to fix everything.

The class reopened on Sept 17. They started cooking the 24th.

Chef Art Luna, who teaches at Mission College, he's a professor there, is the cooking teacher. His assistant is Jennifer Mendoza.

Drivers Ed is always a popular class that we'll be doing in October or November. We offer kids free classes to get their license/permit. At this point I don't have an instructor but I imagine it'll probably be someone on staff.

KYDS crew always has events. They did a karaoke on Sept 28. That was very fun. We're giving out free food for the ones who get the courage to sing.

They all started putting together a dance on October. It's a Tim Burton theme.

We had a field trip on September 30 to a College Summit where you can get a whole bunch of information about schools. They give free information about their classes, scholarships, grants, etc. It's in Pasadena.

Goals

We keep reinventing ourselves. We assess the program constantly to see if there are classes that aren't working and if they aren't working we find ways to make them work.

My goal for KYDS is to be a program that students want to participate in and the administration is proud of.

My favorite thing about working at Poly is the students. All the kids that are in a program are all friendly, nice and they're willing to learn and be involved in our activities.

Bio

I attended CSUN. I have a bachelor in literature.



Photo by Vanessa Aquino

MANAGER: Josue Arias is in charge of Poly's KYDS program providing after-school classes.

I've been playing drums for 20 years.

When my band broke up I decided to go back to school for my masters in non-profit management which was something I really enjoyed because I manage a non-profit company.

KYDS is a non-profit program. So I'm getting work experience and I'm getting my masters. My ultimate goal is to be an executive director of a non-profit.

I've always loved non-profits. I think that non-profits are special and I ended up always working around non-profits even though I was a musician I was always volunteering. I volunteered at one in Panorama called Positive Alternatives for Youth (PAY). We worked for at risk youth there. We did gang prevention. We had a campaign called "from walls to canvas." We helped taggers understand that you don't have to do your art on the walls illegally. You can put them on canvases and sell them and make a living out of it.

I was at Arleta High as an assistant manager in the KYDS program for a year and a half before coming to Poly.

This will be my third year in KYDS.

MEDIA

Still Standing

At 71, Dylan remains at the top of his game.

By Lisa Guardado
Staff Writer

Anyone who hopes to understand Bob Dylan's new album, "Tempest" will need to do some historical research.

After all, Dylan was signed to Columbia records in September of 1961. His first album was released the next year.

The question to be answered: how has Dylan, 71, stayed relevant for 50 years? Most singers are long forgotten and usually dead 50 years after their first hit.

Dylan has stayed relevant and forceful as an artist for five decades because he is a brilliant songwriter and always changing. The protest folk singer who played Newport and wrote "Blowin' in the Wind" in the late 50s/early sixties transformed himself into the rock singer with an electric guitar singing 1965's "Like a Rolling Stone" at that same folk festival.

After a 1966 motorcycle accident, yet another Dylan emerged. "Lay Lady Lay," from 1969's "Nashville Skyline" was a one-take love song done in Nashville using studio musicians.

In 1975, Dylan released "Blood on the Tracks," his most important album since 1965's "Blonde on Blonde." He also went back on the road, first with the Band and later with the Rolling Thunder Revue. Once again Dylan was making powerful music, both as a performer and a songwriter.

Dylan got religion as the decade closed, turning from his Jewish faith to Christianity. He released four largely religious albums in the early 80s with brilliant material, including "Gonna Change My Way of Thinking" and "Every Grain of Sand."

If fans were dismayed, they only had to wait. Dylan delivered another new version of himself with 1997's "Time Out of Mind." The album took three Grammys, including Album of the Year.

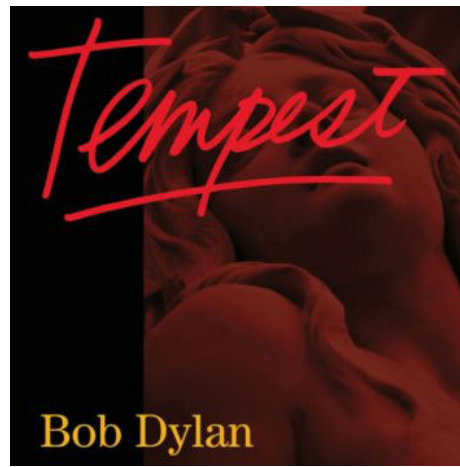
The century turned and Dylan added to his legacy with "Love and Theft" (2001), "Modern Times" (2006) and "Together Through Life" (2009). He had a new sound, a new band and new songs that were as strong as anything he'd ever written.

Dylan's reputation has always rested on his lyrics, which place him in a category of one. His influences are English and French poets and philosophers, English folk songs and American bluesmen, iconic Americans Jack Kerouac and Woody Guthrie.

After fifty years, Dylan has plenty of acknowledgement - an honorary Doctorate from Princeton, membership in the Grammy Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the ASCAP Founders Award, France's medal of Commandeur Des Arts Et Des Lettres, a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, an Academy Award for Best Song in 2000, a Pulitzer Prize, the National Medal of Arts and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to name a few.

So "Tempest" came with high expectations. And the reviews have been glowing.

The sound is similar to Dylan's recent works and includes the same players.



The title cut is a dramatic 45-verse recounting of the Titanic story, historically accurate and cinematic, 14 minutes long.

The pale moon rose in its glory
Out on the Western town
She told a sad, sad story
Of the great ship that went down.



Google Image

FOLKIE: Minnesotan Bob Dylan was discovered in Greenwich Village and signed to Columbia.

The night was black with starlight
The seas were sharp and clear
Moving through the shadows
The promised hour was near

The ship was going under
The universe had opened wide
The roll was called up yonder
The angels turned aside

"Tempest" has another epic in "Tin Angel," a murder ballad about a tragic love triangle.

I'll have no more of this insulting chat
The devil can have you I'll see to that
Look sharp or step aside
Or in the cradle you'll wish you died

Just like Woody Guthrie, Dylan's mentor, Dylan borrows freely. "Early Roman Kings," for example, plainly uses the riff from Muddy Water's "Mannish Boy."

Like the early Roman king
They're peddlers and they're meddlers
Sluggers and muggers
Wearin fancy gold rings
All the women going crazy
For the early Roman kings

"Roll on John" tells the story of Beatle John Lennon's murder.

I heard the news today, oh boy
They hauled your ship up on the shore
Now the city gone dark, there is no more joy
They tore the heart right out and cut him to the core

Shine your light
Movin' on
You burned so bright
Roll on, John

The most commercial of the 10 "Tempest" track, "Duquesne Whistle," has a beat that swings, an acoustic sound and simple lyrics
I wake up every morning with that woman in my bed
Everybody telling me she's gone to my head

Listen to that Duquesne whistle blowing
Blowing like it's gon' kill me dead
"Decades ago, Dylan's characters, allusions and turns of phrases were the subject of academic study," said the Associated Press reviewer. "That this inscrutable lyricist can continue to amaze, amuse, befuddle and bedazzle past retirement age is something to behold."
It sure is.

Dylan is currently on tour and will play the Hollywood Bowl with his longtime band on October 26.

Debate

[From Presidential, front page]

holes in the federal budget.

In other words, Romney is planning to increase the spending while keeping the federal revenue at bay. The plan relies on the economy getting back on track as spending increases.

Obama took \$716 billion from Medicare recipients to pay for his "Obamacare," according to Romney, arguing that Medicare would suffer as a result.

Romney said his plan would retain traditional Medicare for those who are retired or near retirement, but would offer vouchers for younger people who wanted to choose their own insurer.

Education and green energy were other debate topics. Both nominees agreed that advancement is necessary for a better America.

Republicans were delighted with Romney for being aggressive but not going overboard at the same time. Many were surprised by Obama's cautious, listless rebuttals.

New polls say Romney gained ground with the debate, while Barack's numbers dipped. With the election only a month away, Democrats hope the outcome of the next debate put their candidate back in the lead.

Cruz Crowned Idol

[From Cruz Control, front page]

Confident enough to convince the audience Cruz should be the new "Idol."

"I feel like I did okay," Cruz said. "I gave it my all because messing up the first time made me want to do the best I could the second time."

Confidence isn't a problem for the young singer.

"Not to be cocky, but I felt confident about making it to the finals," Cruz said. "I'm proud of myself because I actually won, even though I messed up and I could've done better."

Cruz had some nice words for the other two finalists, Audri Wilson and Hannah Almonte.

"Everyone deserved to win, because they gave it one hundred percent too," Cruz said, "but I was the lucky one who won."

As usual, the auditorium's sound system wasn't up to the task.

"I was using a clip mic so moving around made it hard to hear me," Cruz said. "I didn't want to walk around with a regular microphone and have to drag the mic cable. But the clip mic didn't really project my voice."

"Valerie" was not Cruz's first choice either.

"I was going to choose "Four Twenty" by Joss Stone," Cruz said, "but we couldn't find the instrumental to it so "Valerie" was my back-up."

The Cruz family was there for the big win.

"My family was in the whole first row throughout my performance," Cruz said. "They were screaming and happy. My mom told me she was crying like a baby."

Tears of happiness, no doubt.

Perfect

[From Edible, front page]

A student is allowed three days to attend a funeral in another country and one day otherwise.

Magnet attendance is better and higher. Special education historically has been lower than the average attendance rate.

The correlation between attendance and academic achievement is high, Munguia said.

A truancy notification is sent out whenever there are three or more unexcused absences and that could be three unexcused absences to a period or all day. The next step is a parent conference

According to the law, parents have a duty to ensure that their child attends school between the ages of six and eighteen years old on a daily basis.

"We have automatic notifications sent to the parents," said Munguia. "We have assemblies where we notify the parents of the laws.

Dodgeball

[From Dodging, front page]

Softball easily defeated Volleyball with many Softball players still in the game.

Varsity Baseball played Varsity Basketball next. The match was fast and furious, with Basketball coming out on top.

Girls' Varsity Softball took out Cheer in the last match of the day.

Math Teacher Sean King MC'd the proceedings.

We have an educational options workshop for parents with a student who misses a lot. Parents with a student who is behind in credits might consider an alternative

Being to class on time is also important. "Part of our job as a school is not only to help make sure kids get good grades but to raise responsible individuals," said Munguia, "and being on time is important. Each of us must be on time for jobs, for interviews, for appointments."

"Tardies are seen by our staff as negative and we want to work to improve them."

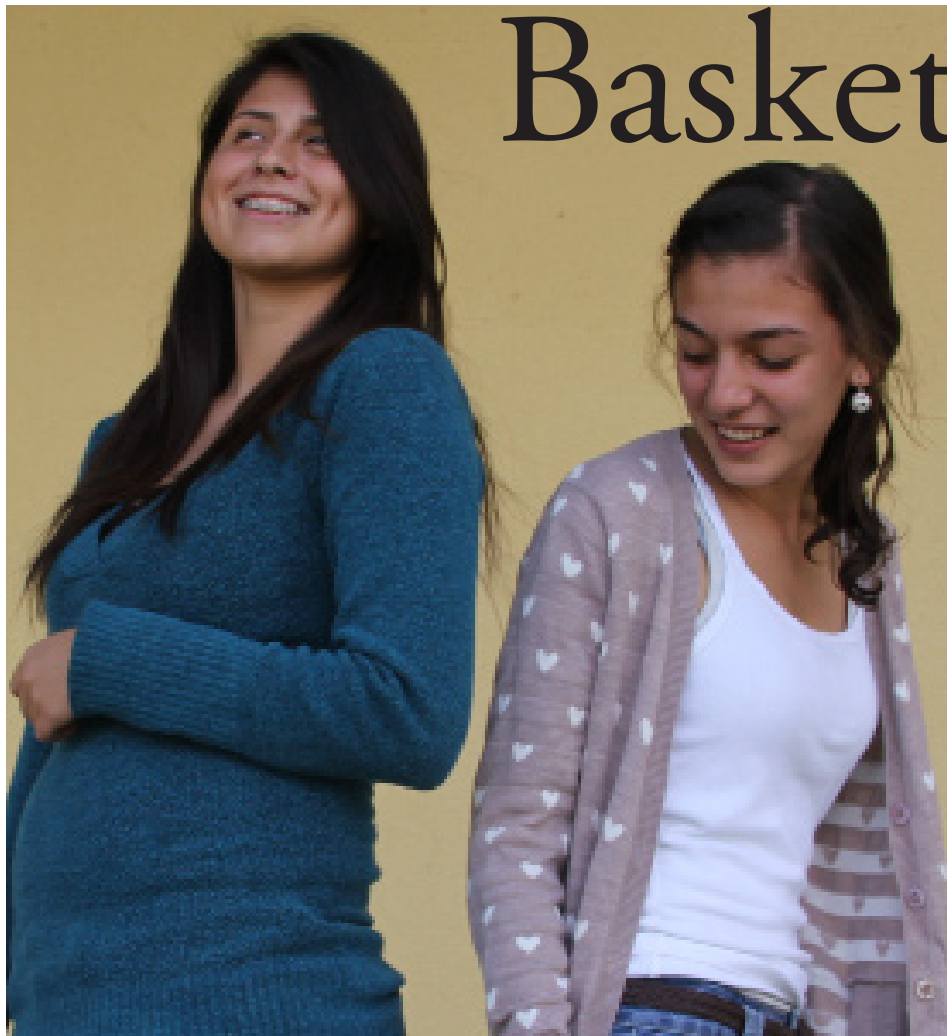
We do home visits for students with 15 or more absences," said Munguia.

So who paid for the doughnuts?

"I get donations from the community," said Munguia.

SPORTS

Basketball Girls



When it comes to basketball, these two Parrots are in a zone of their own.

By Rudy Guijarro
Staff Writer

Bella Lopez
Senior - Shooting Guard

What drew you to basketball? After all, it's a pretty physical and demanding sport. You won't look pretty after a rugged game?

I was in 6th grade and it seemed interesting at the park and I did it to make friends. I don't care if I get dirty after a game it just shows I did a good job.

Any basketball girls in the family like mom, for instance?

No I am the first generation to play basketball in my family.

Do you have more dresses or blue jeans?

I wear mostly jeans but I am still very girly haha. I only wear dresses to parties.

How do you stay in shape, besides what the team does? Do you have a workout routine? What is it? Do you watch what you eat?

I play basketball a lot outside of school and I really don't have a workout schedule. I eat a lot but just homemade food no fast-food.

Are your role models feminists or sports stars or maybe politicians or singers? Who motivates you?

I like to watch old basketball videos from the 80s and 90s. Sometimes I even watch them before I play a game.

What are your personal tricks for finding a way to be successful when you're having a bad night, for example, with your shooting touch?

I take a deep breath and listen to my coaches' advice and just stay positive. My coach motivates us when we're down,

They say the best remedy for an off shooting night is a lay-up. Do you agree? Does it work for you? Why?

I don't do lay ups I shoot more within the perimeter. Most of us are perimeter shooters.

What puts more points on the scoreboard, athletic skill or the psychological edge?

Both because you need the athleticism to play well and you need the psychological part to keep going.

Are most of your basketball role models guys or girls?

Guys are the mostly my role models because the WNBA is too new and it's not as advertised or funded as the NBA.

What's the most important thing a coach can do for a player? Why?

I think its motivation. When your down on a game or when you don't feel like trying, your coach is there too push you to your limit or get you hyped for a game

Why do you have so much trouble making free throws when there's nobody guarding you and you're pretty close to the basket?

I get really nervous because the crowd seems so loud when it's just you and the basket and people are either cheering for you or booing at you.

Stephanie Gurolla
Senior - Post

What drew you to basketball?

When I was 11 my parents made me play at the park and I ended up liking it a lot. Yea my hair gets really greasy but that's what showers are for.

Any basketball girls in the family?

No I am the only one in my family.

Do you have more dresses or blue jeans?

I like to wear skirts and dresses when necessary but I mainly wear shorts and jeans.

How do you stay in shape?

I play basketball nonstop after practice I go to the park and play until dark. I only watch what I eat during season but when seasons over I eat like a pig but I still play so I don't gain weight..

Who motivates you?

I get motivated when I watch the WNBA because they are just so awesome and I really like the Sparks. But I also like the Thunders and Lakers of the NBA.

What are your personal tricks for finding a way to be successful when you're having a bad night, for example, with your shooting touch?

I make it up with a good defense and choosing my shots wisely instead of getting frustrated and repeating my mistakes.

They say the best remedy for an off shooting night is a lay-up. Do you agree?

I just like to drive in or shoot from the perimeter. I don't prefer doing lay ups.

What put more points on the scoreboard, athletic skill or the psychological edge?

I think they go hand in hand because your mind has to be aware of your physical abilities and if you don't believe in yourself then you're not going to reach your full potential.



PHOTOS: Seniors Stephanie Gurolla and Bella Lopez will lead this year's Basketball team.

Are most of your basketball role models guys or girls?

Mostly guys because to me the NBA is more entertaining.

Are you a better athlete than your boyfriend?

I don't have a boyfriend at this time.

What's the most important thing a coach can do for a player?

Keeping your head up during a bad game, coaches know exactly what to say to keep you going.

Why is making free throws sometimes difficult? After all, there's nobody guarding you and you're pretty close to the basket.

That is what I have the most trouble in because I start thinking way too hard and once you're thinking too much it seems impossible to make a shot.



SPORTS

THE BOX SCORE

Poly	14	7	24	8	53
Chavez	0	6	6	0	12



Photo by Daniel Castro

FOOTLOOSE: Senior Paul Duncantell had 56 yards on 11 carries in Poly's 53-12 victory.

Poly Piles On 53-12

Seven TDs break an eight-quarter drought as Parrots get first season win.

By Felicia Rodriguez & Rudy Guijarro
Staff Writer

Chavez has a snazzy new football facility, green, clean and well-lighted. The football team is brand new too and it showed.

Poly had no trouble pounding the inexperienced and undersized hosts Friday in a lopsided 53-12 win, putting the game away with a 24-point third quarter, Poly's biggest ever under head coach Joseph Pierro.

"It feels great," Pierro said.

Poly scored in every quarter, totaled seven touchdowns and racked up 217 yards on the ground.

"Chavez's defense was weak upfront," said Poly senior quarterback Roberto Rojas, "their line backers weren't very aggressive."

Rojas believes better practices are also partially responsible for the strong Parrot effort.

"There was definitely improvement with our guys this week," said Rojas, "more effort in our practice and even more in the game."

A Rojas pass to senior Paul Duncantell got Poly

on the scoreboard early in the first. Poly junior Senior Horacio Barron's 40-yard run on third down put Poly up 14-0.

A Duncantell fumble in the second quarter resulted in Chavez's first TD. But Barron scored again to give the Parrots a 21-6 halftime advantage.

Chavez ran a quarterback sneak for his second TD, pulling the Eagles within nine.

But Poly quickly ended any Chavez hopes for a close game.

Parrot sophomore De'Anthony Hawkins picked up 39 yards for a first and Barron scored from the 35 yard line.

Poly got two more scores, one from junior running back Luis Pereda and another from senior Michael Martin to end the third up 45-12.

Parrot wide receiver Armando Vargas scored Poly's last TD, with Barron adding the two-point conversion.

The Parrot win was Poly's first since October of 2011.

The point total was the most ever under second-year coach Pierro.

Poly (1-6, 1-2) hosts Verdugo (4-3, 3-0) Friday.

Mission Accomplished

Verdugo losses hurt, but girls volleyball team is 20-11, 6-2 and headed to playoffs.

Assistant Varsity Girls Volleyball Coach Melissa Gillard sat down recently with the OPTIMIST to talk about the season so far and the playoffs. Here's what she told us.

By Tracy Salcido
Staff Writer

NoHo Victory.

We knew prior to the game that beating North Hollywood would put us at a three-way tie for East Valley League Champs.

Game 1: We made minimal errors and our serving was aggressive. We got six aces in the first set. It was a fast and simple game, 25-14.

Game 2: We lost 26-28. NoHo had a strategy that we couldn't adjust to. We made too many unforced errors.

Game 3: We shanked balls left and right. Our setter was running all over the court. We lost 26-28.

Game 4: Coach Gallardo told the girls that "if they do not play to their potential she will not coach to hers." Their response was a 25-16 win.

Game 5: We came out even stronger and playing better than the first and fourth set and won 15-10.

Verdugo Rivalry

The two Verdugo matches were completely different on a competitive and mental level. In the first match, we came out fighting but couldn't finish. After the loss, the girls talked about what they needed to do against Verdugo to win and they all understood we were up for a league title.

The second match was the worst volleyball we've played as a team. Our players weren't talking, they weren't executing, they weren't playing like a team, and worst of all they weren't playing to their potential.

Strengths and Challenges

We have the capability of making it to the Div I. Championships, but only if we play the way we are coached.

Our weakness is allowing our mental game to become an issue during play. That leads to poor execution.

The girls don't realize their potential, chemistry, talent, athleticism and dedication, so it's hard sometimes for them to put their passion in the game.

As any coach would say, "I can't coach heart!"

Playoffs

We will be in the Top 10 in Div I. Playoffs. Our seeding is based on pre-season play, league play and tournament play. We play Sylmar, who will also be in the Top 10 in Division I. Playoffs at the end of



Photo by Daniel Castro

STRETCH: Junior Brenda Campos.

league play. That will be an important match.

We have a great chance to make it to the championships but the girls have to want it, especially more than the coaching staff. They have great potential but they need to get out of their slump and come to play COMPETITIVE volleyball.

Coaches

Head Coach Gaby Gallardo- Alumni Volleyball Player, 1997 Champion, Player of the Year 1997, All City, All League, MVP. Third season as head coach for girls and fourth season coaching boys.

Gallardo is competitive and volleyball is her number one priority. If you aren't on her page you aren't on the right page. She can and will take you to where you need to go if you follow instructions.

Assistant Coach Melissa Gillard - Alumni Volleyball Player, All City, All League, MVP. Third season coaching varsity. JV Boys Volleyball Coach for five seasons.

"I'm very competitive and passionate about volleyball because of the coaches I had. Gaby and I had Mr. Jimmy Ikeda and Jason Klinger as our coaches and we call Poly Volleyball "Ikeda Volleyball."

She Loves What She Does

Cross Country's Isabel Ochoa turns in a strong performance and sets a new record.

By Catherine Ramos
Staff Writer

Cross country junior Isabella Ochoa recently bested her own personal best 3-mile (20:03) with a time of 19:30. The OPTIMIST wanted to find out what makes Ochoa run. Here's what she said.

I'm pushing my body to its limits as much as I can but it is still the beginning of the season.

My sister inspired me to be in cross country. When I would go to her competitions I was inspired by how powerful and graceful she looked as she ran.

Running is my passion, and greatest talent. When I don't run I get nervous because I have to waste my energy.

Runners run to find peace. You have to be in tune with your body. You have to care for it, as if it were the most precious thing on earth.

I love how accomplished I feel after a race or work out.

I do think I can run as fast as I think I can, but I'm still improving so I'm not there yet. I believe I can run faster than my physical strength

When I'm going downhill and the hills are steep, I feel like I'm flying.

The last several minutes of a run are the most important because that

is when the athletes are running with the last bit of energy they have. It is the longest, and most painful because this last part demonstrates which athletes are the champions. "It's not who starts first, it's who finishes first."

You train by slowly building up your stamina and endurance. Every week you increase the mileage. On days you don't do long runs, you do a speed workout to work on your kick (sprint) in the last mile of the race.

My longest run without stopping is one and one half hours.

My favorite places to run are Pierce College, Griffith Park and the Burbank Mountains.

A normal training session for me is one and one half to two hours. I run about six to seven miles on the weekend

My friends are athletic. Most of them are runners. Some are volleyball, basketball, or softball players. We sometimes talk about running, when we ask each other about practices, or how we performed in our games/competitions.

The boys and girls in cross country become really close. At the end of the season, we're practically brothers and sisters.

My coach has played an enormous part in helping me set my record. He runs with me and teaches me how to improve my form. He encourages me to break my time, and inspires me to become city champion or hopefully even go to state. In the races, he tells me to go faster, or to maintain the pace and slowly pass the girl in front of me.

I plan to hit the record (17:30) held by Belen Mendoza. She is my inspiration. I haven't met her, but I have seen pictures of her racing and she looks fierce.



Q & A

Do you ever get "in a zone" running?

Yes. I block everything out and focus on the ground ahead of me. If I focus on my breathing I lose my focus.

Is being an athlete about trying to break records?

Yes, but it is also about beating your personal records, not just city or school records. It is also about accomplishing your goals such as going non-stop in a run that is challenging.

If you had a bad day, does it affect how well you run?

Sometimes. Depends if you let your problems get in the way of your race. When you race, you leave all your problems aside, and focus on what you have to do.

If your doctor said stop running, what would you do instead?

Swimming or kick-boxing.