

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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Photo by Vanessa Aquino

Eat This Course

By Aranza Gonzalez
Staff Writer

Señorita Aliecia Piña has been decorating cakes for almost as long as she can remember.

“I started decorating cakes when I was nine,” said Piña. “So by the time I reached 14, I would do a good job at it.”

Piña came from Compostela, Nayarit, a small town in Mexico, 23 years ago.

“My neighbor Antonia Ortega inspired me to decorate,” said Piña. “I went back to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico last year and took a decorating course.”

Baking a cake is a long process, Piña said, and typically takes two to three hours.

“When I decorate a cake,” said Piña, “it is like I am playing.”

Piña, who works in a Peruvian bakery decorating cakes, does not call her decorating style “Mexican.”

“My style does not reflect on a particular country or region or place,” Piña said.

Decorating a cake usually requires six ingredients and takes 40 minutes to bake. The five-pound cake serves 20 and sells for \$68.

“I have to put a lot of detail into it,” said Piña.

Piña teaches a six-week cake decorating class in Poly’s Parent Center Thursdays from 8 to 10:30 am.

“I bake six cakes and I teach them six different decorations,” Piña said.

Parents are not allowed to bake at Poly because a permit is required.

“I tell the parents what they need to bake the cake at home and how to make them,” said Piña. “They bring the cake ready here and I just have to teach them how to decorate.”

Piña, who taught at Strathern, Lankershim, Roscoe and Saticoy elementary schools, has taught the decorating class since 2011

Piña’s 20-year old daughter has learned cake decorating from her mom.

“She has been assisting me in four or five different schools,” said Piña. “She helps me out a lot.”

Like mother, like daughter.



Photo by Daniel Castro

ANNEX: Poly’s ninth grade center students will move here in January.

Teachers Tour New Building

By Yenifer Rodriguez
Editor in Chief

Authorized Rep (OAR) Dan Holmquist conducted the tour that included a look at a typical classroom, administrative offices, the library and the amphitheater.

“I think you guys will be happy with what you see,” Bennett said. “If there are any problems that we’ve missed, feel free to tell us now.”

The tour began in the administrative building, C1.

C1 will have a warming kitchen only, with food served out of Byrd’s cafeteria next door. Students will eat at the outside lunch area nearby.

Some logistical details are still being worked out, Bennett noted.

Students will dress for physical educations in the converted multi-purpose room. The remainder of the room will be coaches’ offices.

The library, originally designed as a computer lab, is on the second floor of the C building. The library will include 40 computer stations.

Two carts with 25 computers each will provide mobile labs for teachers.

A large double room on the second floor can be used as two classrooms

[See Teachers, pg 6]

Aca Deca Will Scrimmage

By Yesenia Caretero
Staff Writer

Poly’s Academic decathlon squad will get its first test in a scrimmage with 10 other District schools at North Hollywood High on

November 17. Fifty other District schools will also compete at five other sites on the same day.

“The scrimmage gives you a very good idea of what you have been working on, how good the other teams are and how your study compares to that of the other schools,” said Poly Academic Decathlon coach Brian Block.

The Academic Decathlon consists of seven multiple choice tests, two performance events and an essay.

Each team has nine members divided into three divisions based on grade point average: Honors (3.75–4.00 GPA), Scholastic (3.00–3.74 GPA), and Varsity (0.00–2.99 GPA).

Each team member competes in all ten events against other students in his or her division, and team scores are calculated using the top two overall individual scores from each team in all three divisions.

Block said right now the team has no idea how well they have done to prepare compared to the other schools

in the District.

“We have never finished higher than eighth in the scrimmage,” Block said. “Last year we finished 13th in the scrimmage and made it to state.”

A top ten finish would be a good indication that the team can go to state. Anything lower and the amount of work they need to do will increase, Block said.

“After the scrimmage, we have ten weeks to prepare for the actual competition,” Block said.

The scrimmage scores will also have a great deal of weight in determining the final nine-member Poly team.

The current eleven-member team includes Hannah Almonte, Maria De La Rosa, Jihae Snyder and Andrew Koh (Honors), Armen Aslanyan, Janet Cabrera, Reymundo Cano and Evaristo Capalla (Scholastic) and Luis Miranda, Lesleigh Millhauser and Paola Pereda (Varsity)

Capalla, Cabrera and Miranda were on last year’s team. The rest are new and young, juniors or sophomores.

“We went to state two years ago and last year,” said Block, “so this would be the training year. However, this year’s group is so smart they might be able to make it.”

[See Aca Deca, pg 6]

New Poly Policy Tackles Tardies

Crackdown overdue, says Parrot principal.

By Catherine Ramos
Staff Writer

Tardy Parrots will now be searched as well as processed through the online attendance system. Sweeps will be conducted at the beginning of all four periods. Administrative personnel will also patrol the campus during classroom instruction for students out of class without an orange vest and a pass.

“The sweeps will help us identify the kids who need help,” said Poly Principal Ari Bennett. “Ninety-nine per cent of our kids are not willing to go through the process of being searched every day. But there are a few that are and they end up on our radar in a really big way. Those kids are telling us that they need help. So we will provide counseling and support services and possibly alternative educational settings for them.”

Additional personnel will enforce the new policies.

“More man power or more Poly power, I guess you can say,” Bennett said. “The administrators made a commitment. I personally made a commitment to be out there and help and support, to be visible. We included the coordinators and the deans. We’ve made a commitment.”

Bennett said the need for a more thorough sweep program became increasingly evident.

“I tend to walk around school a lot,” Bennett said, “and I noticed that increasingly, there were a lot of students out of class. I also received a number of complaints from teachers regarding students being out.”

The issue was discussed at a safety meeting and again at an administrative meeting, where the new policy was devised.

“I believe it was Mr. Glen Lamos who made the recommendation to do searches at tardy sweep and I have heard that before and thought it was a good idea,” Bennett said.

Students should become accustomed to the new culture quickly, Bennett said.

“Ultimately, we want to implement Friday after school work service and Saturday work service,”

[See New Sweeps, pg 6]

Will Poly Go Pilot

Poly’s faculty is asked to consider LAUSD’s Pilot School model.

By Tracy Salcido
Staff Writer

Poly Principal Ari Bennett has asked Poly’s faculty to consider adopting a Pilot School model of operation.

Pilot Schools were created to be models of educational innovation and to serve as research and development sites for effective urban public schools.

Pilot Schools have autonomy over budget, staffing, governance, curriculum & assessment and the school calendar. These autonomies allow Pilot Schools to operate with greater flexibility in order to best meet students’ needs.

Pilot Schools were established in February 2007 when a Memorandum of Understanding was ratified by LAUSD and UTLA to create and implement ten small, autonomous Belmont Pilot Schools with a focus on creating new, innovative schools to relieve overcrowding at Belmont

[See Poly, pg 6]



Photo by Vanessa Aquino

Off Limits at Lunch

Math/Science building subject of cleanup.

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Photo By Vanessa Aquino

Killers on the Court

Six Lady Parrots with a passion for volleyball.

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OPINION

EDITORIAL

A Lack of Appreciation

Every school day at Poly, some kids disrespect teachers, disrupt classes and mock students who try to get "A's."

Every school day in Pakistan, teenage girls fear for their lives as they attend schools banned by the terrorist group the Taliban.

Parrots attending Poly get educated in a safe environment by teachers who care.

Teenage women in Pakistan have to risk their lives just to be educated.

Poly offers free AP/honors classes and after school activities. Counselors, principal, deans and security want every Parrot to receive a good education.

Fourteen-year old Pakistani education activist Malala Yousafzai was shot by Taliban militants on her way to school. Her city had been taken over by the Taliban and their radical Islamist philosophy.

How many Parrots slept through class, texted or ditched, wandered the halls or watched the clock today?

Malala is in a hospital in Great Britain with a bullet wound to her head. Shock waves from the bullet shattered a bone in her skull, and fragments were driven into her brain.

How many Parrots today didn't do their homework and

talked about other stuff when they were supposed to be doing group work?

Even if Malala survives, the Taliban has sworn to terminate her when she gets released.

Malala can't speak yet but she remains committed to education rights for Pakistani girls.

Did you go to your first period late and then message your "texting buddy" about how boring your class is?

While you're joking about the kid in class who actually cares about his education, a Pakistani teenage girl was probably risking her life just to read and write.

Some of you probably spent your afternoon eating a free lunch while another teenage girl was running from the Taliban attackers.

Are you so poorly mannered and ignorant that you can't see and don't appreciate the educational opportunities you have?

Teen girls in many Muslim countries aren't even allowed to go to school. What will their lives be like without any formal education?

Just take a look in the mirror today and ask yourself if you take your education for granted.

Maybe you shouldn't.

President Obama's acceptance speech

Tonight, in this election, you, the American people, reminded us that while our road has been hard, while our journey has been long, we have picked ourselves up, we have fought our way back, and we know in our hearts that for the United States of America the best is yet to come.

Democracy in a nation of 300 million can be noisy and messy and complicated. We have our own opinions. Each of us has deeply held beliefs. And when we go through tough times, when we make big decisions as a country, it necessarily stirs passions, stirs up controversy.

That won't change after tonight, and it shouldn't. These arguments we have are a mark of our liberty.

We can never forget that as we speak people in distant nations are risking their lives right now just for a chance to argue about the issues that matter, the chance to cast their ballots like we did today.

Our economy is recovering. A decade of war is ending. A long campaign is now over.

And whether I earned your vote or not, I have listened to you, I have learned from you, and you've made me a better president. I return to the White House more determined and more inspired than ever about the work there is to do and the future that lies ahead.

Tonight you voted for action, not politics as usual.

I am looking forward to reaching out and working with leaders of both parties to meet the challenges we can only solve together. Reducing our deficit. Reforming our tax code. Fixing our immigration system. Freeing ourselves from foreign oil. We've got more work to do.

But that doesn't mean your work is done. The role of citizens in our Democracy does not end with your vote. America's never been about what can be done for us. It's about what can be done by us together through the hard and frustrating, but necessary

work of self-government. That's the principle we were founded on.

This country has more wealth than any nation, but that's not what makes us rich. We have the most powerful military in history, but that's not what makes us strong. Our university, our culture are all the envy of the world, but that's not what keeps the world coming to our shores.

What makes America exceptional are the bonds that hold together the most diverse nation on earth.

The belief that our destiny is shared; that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations. The freedom which so many Americans have fought for and died for come with responsibilities as well as rights. And among those are love and charity and duty and patriotism. That's what makes America great.

I have never been more hopeful about America. And I ask you to sustain that hope.

I have always believed that hope is that stubborn thing inside us that insists, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us so long as we have the courage to keep reaching, to keep working, to keep fighting.

I believe we can keep the promise of our founders, the idea that if you're willing to work hard, it doesn't matter who you are or where you come from or what you look like or who you love. It doesn't matter whether you're black or white or Hispanic or Asian or Native American or young or old or rich or poor, able, disabled, gay or straight, you can make it here in America if you're willing to try.

And together with your help and God's grace we will continue our journey forward and remind the world just why it is that we live in the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, America. God bless you. God bless these United States.

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By Tracy Salcido

the
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EDITORIAL POLICY

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

CAMPUS

Four Parrots Are Questbridge Finalists

By Maureen Kang
Staff Writer

Poly seniors Valentina De La Rosa, Asher Jeong, Maureen Kang, and Itzel Martinez were announced as Questbridge National College Match finalists last week.

"I was sick the week I found out," said De La Rosa. "When I found out, I was so happy that I cried. I never actually believed that I would get in. Because I was rejected by the Posse Foundation, I was discouraged that I wouldn't get into Questbridge."

The Questbridge scholarship offers high-achieving high school seniors from low-income families the opportunity to attend the nation's best universities and colleges for free.

"I wasn't expecting to get in," said Martinez. "I couldn't believe that out of thousands of students nationwide I was selected as one of the finalists for the college match."

Only forty percent of the applicants are chosen as finalists. And each finalist has a roughly forty percent chance of receiving a full tuition scholarship. The process is highly competitive.



Photo by Vanessa Aquino

HOPEFUL: From left, seniors Itzel Martinez, Maureen Kang, Asher Jeong and Valentina De La Rosa are Poly's finalists.

Asher Jeong and Itzel Martinez were very familiar with the Questbridge process. The National College Match application was their second application to Questbridge. They had both applied to a different Questbridge scholarship as juniors.

"The Questbridge application as a senior was more meaning-

ful because the purpose of this scholarship is different," said Martinez. "The College Prep scholarship I applied for last year was mainly to prepare students for the college application, but this scholarship gives students full four year tuition to great colleges if matched."

Each step in the finalist process is long and tedious, requiring essays, recommendation letters, transcripts, a strong mindset and a lot of time.

"The Questbridge was very stressful," said De La Rosa. "The three essays worried me. But the worst was when all my short answers in the application were erased the day before deadline. I must have clicked on something. My computer is so slow. But I managed to submit my application on time."

The four Parrots all agree that getting to the finalist stage is rewarding.

"Being chosen as a finalist is a validation of my hard work and dedication to school," said Martinez. "It gives me hope for the future, that attending top tier schools is possible."

QuestBridge finalist winners will be announced November 30.

Workshop Offers Options for Parrots

By Adriana Garcia
Staff Writer

Poly sponsored a two-hour Educational Options workshop last Friday in the cafetorium for Parrots who are 80 or more credits behind. Seventy-seven boys and 42 girls were invited. Thirty-nine boys and 24 girls attended, along with 10-15 parents.

"Kids feel more comfortable making the transition when they actually see how many other students are also in the same situation," said Pupil Service Attendance counselor (PSA) Maribel Munguia. "By bringing the schools to the students, we are able to personalize the experience more and make it attainable and real for the student."

Representatives from SEA Pacoima, Sunburst Youth Academy, Cloud and Fire, Options for Youth-Burbank, Cal State Full Day, Pacoima Skills Center, Robert Lewis Continuation and North Valley Occupational Center talked to the students about the programs the schools offer.

Each school's program is different, Munguia said.

"Some of them offer an independent study format while, others are charter schools and some, like Sunburst Youth Academy, are live-in programs," Munguia said.

Some charter schools are all-day schools with about 100 students. Independent study programs like Options for Youth have students attend once or twice a week and get work to complete at home.

Students receive a high school diploma when they graduate. The programs are free and paid for through the state. The schools are accredited through the Department of Education.

Every school requires a lower amount of credits than a normal high school would.

Students have to pass the CAHSEE at the alternate schools.

Students attending these schools know they must adhere to school policies and rules or they will be "kicked out." These schools tend to be smaller, so the kids can't just ditch.

"In a big school like Poly, it is easier sometimes for students to fall through the cracks," Munguia said, "even though we do our best to try to keep that from happening."

Poly students who enroll in one of these other programs are not counted as dropouts.

"Having this workshop decreases our dropout rate," Munguia said. "Our graduation rates have increased as a result of having our students that are not going to graduate check into programs where they will be able to finish their diploma."

Students who leave Poly but do not enroll elsewhere at the end of the year are considered



Photo by Vanessa Aquino

COUNSELOR: PSA counselor Maribel Munguia conducted Options Workshop for Parrots.

"By bringing the schools to the students, we are able to personalize the experience"

dropouts.

Around 20 Parrots transfer to alternative programs soon after the workshop. As the year progresses, others do too.

Assistant Principal Jamille Kenion, dean Gilbert Ovanessian and counselors Artin Arhanian, Jay Longo and Lisa Jay also attended the workshop.

This year's Educational Options Workshop was the Poly's third.

Budget Cuts Hurt LAUSD Students

By Catherine Ramos & Alfredo Quezada
Staff Writer

The OPTIMIST sat down recently with Poly Principal Ari Bennett to get his views on budget cuts for schools. Here's what he told us.

What happens to schools if California's financial problems grow worse?

I think everybody is already serving well for their passion, for education and the mission-driven agenda. People will continue to serve, even with more budget cuts.

The question is, are we able to serve students as well, and I think clearly fewer adults is bad for kids and so it's hard to predict exactly what will happen.

The school district says if proposition 30 does not pass they could shorten the school year by 15 days. We're talking about cutting off access to instructional curriculum for students that is desperately needed. It's really a lose-lose situation if additional funding gets cut.

There's an impact on student test scores. If not felt in the short term, it will be felt in the long term.

Proposition 30 will help balance the overall state budget and also will prevent trigger cuts. The governor of the state of California and the legislature passed a budget that was based on proposition 30 passing. If 30 doesn't pass,

there would be cuts in the middle of the school year and it could mean more teachers losing their jobs, more support personal losing their jobs.

Proposition 38, on the other hand, is not just balancing the state budget, it's about bringing money directly into schools without it getting filtered through the agenda of the legislature or governor so per pupil dollars come in to schools and school districts and the goal of that is to put California on par with some of the other states that have made funding education a priority.

California is 47th in the nation in per pupil spending. A state like New York allocates about \$12,000 per student. Right now we're only paying about \$5,200 per student in California so it's HUGE. It is more than twice as much and even with that, that's not even the constitutional guarantee that California is supposed to provide every year.

Because of the budget cuts there's been underfunding in the state of California education by 20 percent and so what they effectively do is give the school districts an I.O.U. We know we are legally obligated to pay this, but we're only going to pay you 80 percent of it and then we'll give you an I.O.U. for the rest and then they pay it back like a credit card, but they continue to underfund it and so the impact on education in the state of California over the last five years have been absolutely enormous.

What is the impact of federal money on schools?

Federal money, like our Title I funding, is huge. For a school like ours, it would be in the neighborhood of two million dollars. That would be like 20 certified positions, 20 teachers, counselors etc. That would be absolutely devastating to our school.

Why the additional unassigned days?

The District uses unassigned days for historically high absentee days that end up costing the district and school sites a lot of money for substitutes for absent teachers.

We've had two unassigned days. They were for Jewish holidays and there are a lot of Jewish school teachers throughout the district, so that's historically been the reason why they've made it unassigned days.

When we were a year round, there were not enough instructional days to allow for unassigned days. However, now we are on a traditional bell schedule and on the same calendar as everybody else.

It's not just the cost. We don't have enough substitutes to cover all those absences. It just extends the instructional year one more day.

Hallway Lockdown

By Catherine Ramos
Staff Writer

Poly's Math/Science building and the old two-story classroom building will be locked and off limits to students during lunch and after school.

"Students were leaving trash in the hallway," said Tenth Grade Center Instruction specialist Pia Damonte, "and we were finding tagging every day."

Students eating lunch in these buildings were asked to clean up after themselves.

"We told students who were sitting there to clean up or we'll start closing the building if you don't," said Damonte, "and they continued to leave trash out."

Damonte and Tenth Grade Center dean Levon Yeganyan are in charge of the two buildings.

The old two-story classroom building also presented an opportunity for students to cause problems.

"We would catch students behind the building doing inappropriate things," Damonte said. "It's hard to keep eyes behind the walls where you can not see so it is just best to close the halls."

Teachers can get in and out of the buildings using their room keys.

Damonte said teachers who have classrooms in the two buildings have helped to keep the doors closed.

The new restrictions seem to be working.

"The hallways are staying clean and we haven't found any new tagging," said Damonte.

Students are allowed to eat lunch in a classroom but not wander in and out.

Damonte said the teachers affected are glad the doors are now locked.

MEDIA



Photo by Vanessa Aquino
SUCCESS: Math teacher Sarah Stevenson.

Girls’ Scores Top Boys

Math teacher Sarah Stevenson expects girls to do as well as boys in her class.

By Lisa Guardado
Staff Writer

Girls outscored boys on the latest CST, a first for Poly.

Ninth Grade Center math teacher Sarah Stevenson thinks she knows why.

“I think it was a mixture,” Stevenson said. “I think teachers are aware of guys scoring higher and we are just trying to improve scores for both the girls and boys.”

Stevenson is concerned that the increase for girls could be temporary, however.

“That’s actually the first thing I asked myself,” Stevenson said. “I hope it doesn’t. I hope scores keep going up for both genders.”

Stevenson says she doesn’t teach girls any differently than boys.

“I don’t believe I teach the boys and girls different,” said Stevenson, “but I do try new techniques each year so I’m not teaching the same as I did seven years ago.”

Stevenson says she focuses on vocabulary.

“I have students write each step and create like hint posters I put up on the wall,” said Stevenson. “I do cooperative learning, where they work with partners. I also teach with colors to help them remember the signs.”

“I always tell all my students they can do well if they try hard.”

Stevenson doesn’t feel she was discriminated against by her teachers because of her gender.

“But in middle school I noticed there weren’t many girls in my Honors math class,” Stevenson said.

Stevenson figured out on her own that society has lower expectations for girls regarding math skills.

“I heard in the news that scientists are always men,” Stevenson said. “When they came up with Title IX, it became pretty apparent.”

Poly’s math department is aware of the issue too.

“Now that we know that girls are scoring higher,” said Stevenson, “we talk about it at lunch meetings and ask why this is happening.”

Stevenson has some thoughts on what influences how girls perceive themselves and how they believe males expect them to act.

“I think it is from home,” Stevenson said, “how parents treat the child and what parents think of education.”

Math is for everybody, Stevenson says, but how much math a student needs depends on the job he or she gets.

“If you are not going to a university, you are not going to use some of the types of math we teach at Poly,” Stevenson said.

Stevenson says she tries to give her ninth graders word problems they can relate to.

“I do word problems on homecoming and cell phones,” Stevenson said.

Stevenson offers tutoring after school on Wednesdays. More girls attend than boys and the girls turn in their homework more than the boys.

“I think girls are trying harder. Those are the girls that I see attending my tutoring.”

Stevenson has been teaching nine years, eight of them at Poly. Stevenson teaches Algebra I, Intermediate Algebra I, Geometry and Assessment and Learning Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS).

Stevenson was recently interviewed by LAUSD’s internal magazine on the topic of girls and math.

Green Day Back to Basics

By Jeannette Buenrostro
Staff Writer

Green Day’s latest project, following rock operas “21st Century Breakdown” (2009) and “American Idiot” (2004) is a 38-song trilogy, “¡Uno!, ¡Dos!, ¡Tré!” The first album was released September 25.

“On the last record, I veered away from the pop-punk so much, to the point where I sort of drove myself crazy,” lead singer Billie Joe Armstrong told “Guitar World.” “So the new stuff just came naturally.”

The Southern California punk revivalists, who played their first gig in Vallejo in 1987, recorded the albums in Oakland with producer Rob Cavallo and did the mixes in a Tarzana studio.

“There was this power-pop thing happening,” Armstrong said. “Then it became, like, ‘Guys, no ballads. Let’s just write rock and roll!’ But all of a sudden ‘Oh Love’ came out. It’s not really a ballad, but it’s not a power-pop song either. It’s powerful, but it’s slower and it’s got a groove to it. It’s kind of something we haven’t really done before, and at the same time it’s pretty epic.”“We are at the most prolific and creative time in our lives,” Green Day said in a statement. “This is the best music we’ve ever written, and the songs just keep coming.”

Dates for the remaining elpees are 23 November 2012 and 15 January 2013. “This is the best music we’ve ever written,” said Armstrong. “Every song has the power and energy that represents Green Day on all emotional levels.” Armstrong said the trilogy’s sound will be punchier than the band’s



Google Image
PUNKSTERS: Reenergized Green Day goes back to it’s roots with streamline pop-punk trilogy.

previous rock operas.

“The new trilogy will be more power pop, somewhere between AC/DC and early Beatles. The first record represents more of that classic sound,” Armstrong said. “Then the second record has more of a garagey, party kind of sound. And then the third one is more reflecting.”

Green Day is best known for “American Idiot.” The album debuted at number one, won the 2005 Best Rock Album Grammy, sold 14M copies and was the basis for a one-act 2010 Broadway musical that ran for 422 performances and received Tony awards for scenic design and lighting.

The band’s 1994 Reprise debut, “Dookie,” em-

phasized the same themes and sounds as first wave punk bands the Ramones, the Clash, the Sex Pistols and the Buzzcocks.

Armstrong, the band’s primary songwriter, says seminal alternative rock bands like Hüsker Dü and The Replacements are big influences, along with the Who and Cheap Trick.

A cover of Hüsker Dü’s "Don't Want to Know If You Are Lonely" was the b-side to the "Warning" single. "Mr. Whirly" in Green Day’s "Misery" is a reference to the Replacements song of the same name.

Green Day’s other members are bassist Mike Dirnt and drummer Tre Cool.

FILM



Google Image
TWO JOBS: Director Ben Affleck also stars in “Argo,” a 70s thriller.

The novel version of Stephen Chbosky’s “The Perks of Being a Wallflower” has been praised for years. Now a film of the novel is reaching a new set of fans.

“Wallflower’s” centerpiece is timid high school freshman Charlie, who deals with returning to school after his best friend’s death.

Charlie starts the school year expecting a miserable time. But his bleak predictions are upended by the arrival of two new friends.

The friends, eccentric Patrick and free and endearing Sam, welcome Charlie to an “island of misfit toys,” misadventures and new friends who turn into family.

Transferring characters from the page to the screen can be a difficult task, but Chbosky succeeded beautifully.

Chbosky said Emma Watson instantly came to mind while looking for an actress to portray Sam.

“When I saw that scene from “The Goblet of Fire” where she stood in front of the steps with Daniel Radcliffe at the dance, and the way that she cried and the way that she was vulnerable—I just had an instinct about her as an actor.”

Watson conveys Sam’s broken disposition and tarnished history with care.

Logan Lerman, who starred in “Percy Jackson and the Olympians,” plays Charlie as delicate and mellow but adds a layer of darkness that runs throughout the film.

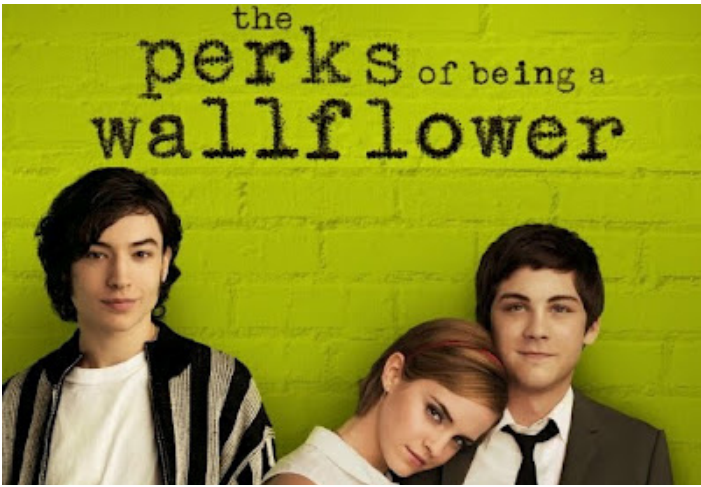
Ezra Miller is Patrick, the loveable erratic gay teen trying to deal with his secret love life and the difficulties that come with being queer in a non-accepting society.

All these characters have a side they hide. The three teens deal with their pain by storing it inside them and trying to forget the past.

Chbosky’s film shows that time moves quickly. Seeing Sam stand in the back of Patrick’s truck with her arms extended, hair blowing in the wind, and David Bowie’s “Heroes” playing in the background can make anyone realize that simple moments must be appreciated.

“The Perks of Being a Wallflower,” like John Hughes’ “The Breakfast Club,” is a young adult film with substance. Unlike teen fare like “Twilight,” “Wallflower” has meaning and purpose.

Chbosky has done an admirable job of translating a touching and relatable novel into a film with the same heart and message: people need to appreciate every experience in life.



Google Image
TENDER: Director/novelist Stephen Chbosky’s screen treatment works.

on an island of misfit toys

By Adrianna Garcia
Staff Writer

EVENTS

A GOOD MOVE

Staging the pep rally in the much more user-friendly auditorium made this year’s event a real treat.



By Tracy Salcido
Staff Writer

The highlight of this year’s Homecoming Pep Rally might have been the venue. For the first time, the event was held in the auditorium. The big stage and curtains, video screen, sound system, lighting and music effects, spotlights and plenty of A/C greatly enhanced the presentation.

Previous rallies were held in the decidedly less-accommodating, humid, stuffy and dimly-lit gymnasium.

The 2012 Pep Rally featured crowd-pleasing performances from Cheer, Drill, Band and two Poly Idol vocalists. All of Poly’s fall sports teams, Volleyball, Cross Country, Tennis and Football, also made appearances before a capacity crowd. A big screen showed photos and film of students from various clubs.

Poly mascots Joe and Josie made frequent appearances.

While they texted each other, their messages appeared on the screen onstage.

The video highlight of the rally was administrators, faculty and students doing a supercut sing-along to Carly Ray Jepsen’s “Call Me Maybe.” A clever edit and some standout performances made for a real crowd-pleaser.

New drum major Martha Tinajero led the band through three musical numbers, including “I Dream to Dream.”

Poly Idol 2012 winner Crystal Cruz and junior Elenoa Taulaki sang Mariah Carey’s “Heroes” while various images of soldiers and loved ones played on the video screen as some in the audience cried.

Leadership got on the Gangnam bandwagon as they jumped around to Asian rapper Psy’s video hit.

Parade grand marshals Gabriela Kazaryan and Billie Smith both made an appearance. UCLA grad Kazaryan has worked with more than 10,000 Parrots in her 20 years at Poly. She teaches Spanish Language, AP Spanish and Spanish Literature. Fourth-year faculty member ROTC Sergeant Smith served in the Air Force for more than 20 years before coming to Poly.

Poly’s Homecoming Court included 9th graders Max Figueroa and Jamie Avalos, sophomores Jose Dominguez and Ashley Mejia, juniors Armando Rodriguez and Dulce Amante, and seniors Cody Hart and Allison Diane Cevonte.

Poly Principal Ari Bennett also made an appearance, noting that this homecoming is his first as Poly’s chief Parrot.

“I’m proud of all Poly students and clubs,” said Poly Principal Ari Bennett. “I love how Poly sticks together and works hard on what they want.”

A rousing rendition of “Glory to Poly,” led by varsity football players and Cheer closed the proceedings.

Leadership sponsors Kitt Heilbron and Brian Le Claire MC’d the rally.



P
H a l l o w e e n



CAMPUS

Teacher Tour

[From Teachers Tour, front page]

or one large room. Other uses might include sheltering students from bad weather or holding P.E. classes when necessary.

“We’re planning on having eighteen teachers come over, plus two P.E. teachers and two resources teachers,” said Bennett. “You will have state of the art technology in your classrooms and everyone is getting a laptop.”

C1 also includes an outdoor amphitheater with a dramatic fanned and pitched steel roof that seats over 400 and an indoor auditorium with state of the art sound and lighting.

The tour then visited a typical classroom in building A1. A1 has 19 classrooms.

Classroom features include a teardrop microphone for the teacher to use for voice projection, amplified by four ceiling speakers and a ceiling projector for media viewing tied to the teacher’s computer.

Each classroom will have TV access to channels 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 28, 34, and 58, the District channel and wi-fi. The classroom teacher will have the ability to talk over a movie in progress.

All cables and components tied to the projector are stored in a media cabinet.

The teacher station will include a P.A telephone, a dimming control to set the levels of the lights and a VG connection for power point presentations with sound that can be run from an iPad. A motion will turn off the lights when the room is

unoccupied. The lighting system has a separate switch for the light at the whiteboard allowing relatively dim lighting in the room and full light on the white board.

Another lighting feature called “Quiet Time” overrides the motion detector for an hour, useful during a video, a presentation or an exam when there is little movement in the room.

Each classroom has a thermostat control set at the District’s temperature, according to Holmquist.

“If you want to be a bit cooler or a little warmer, it allows a few degrees of adjustment,” Holmquist said.

A light detector near the windows will automatically dim the lights during sunny days to save energy.

An infrared motion detector will also detect intruders when the alarm is set.

Holmquist noted that the Adult School building north of C1 will be fenced off to protect students.

“We expect most kids are going to stay here all day,” Bennett said. “Everything they’ll need will be here.”

Freshmen taking electives or sports will have full access to Poly classes, Bennett said. A campus aid will monitor students using the new bridge connecting the Freshman Center to the Poly campus.

Parrots with classes on both sites will receive a pass and an accommodation to provide adequate time for moving from one campus to the other.



BEFORE & AFTER: Parrot freshman will reach their new campus via the just-completed \$3.2M pedestrian bridge that spans Arleta Avenue. The bridge is fully enclosed and features elevators for disabled students.



Be an
OPTIMIST

New Rules By Sherwin Santy



Sweeps

[From New Poly, front page]

Bennett said. “We don’t have the funding to do that yet, but that’s coming.”

Bennett also commented on teachers who don’t do their part in enforcing sweeps.

“We need to support teachers,” Bennett said. “If that means me walking a kid without a vest and pass back to their class, then that’s my way of helping the teacher remember. It’s not punitive, it’s just, hey there, let’s be on the same page because it will make our campus safer.”

Every policy is a message, Bennett said.

“I wanted to communicate very clearly to our students that being in class is important to me and I think it is to all of our teachers and staff.”

Bennett believes his staff is fully committed to enforcing the sweeps.

“We have to support each other,” Bennett said. “We know there are District meetings, we know people are going to get sick. But that can’t keep us from making sure that the campus is safe.”

Bennett also plans to put a new skateboard policy into effect soon. Students will keep their skateboards in lockers while they are on campus and pick them up when they leave.

“We have already purchased skateboard lockers,” Bennett said. “As soon as we finalize the skateboard lockers that we like, we’ll get them installed and be ready to go.”

Poly Pilot

[From Will Poly, front page]

High School.

Bennett recently invited Rachel Bonkovsky, who manages instructional support services for LAUSD, and Eduardo Solorzano, former principal at San Fernando Middle School, to address the subject of Pilot Schools at a Parrot faculty meeting. That meeting took place last Tuesday.

“I’ve worked with Pilot Schools here in LA for five years,” said Bonkovsky.

Under the Pilot School model, teachers must be invited to sign an “Elect-to-Work” agreement each year.

“In most Pilot schools, the principal decides who’s going to sign the Elect-to-Work agreement,” Bonkovsky said. “You can choose who comes to your school, who stays at your school and under what conditions you are going to work here together.”

A governance council approves the annual budget, approves the elect-to-work agreement and evaluates the school leader, Bonkovsky said.

“There’s a lot of freedom and flexibility with Pilot schools,” said Bonkovsky, “but there’s also a lot of ways in which the school community holds each other accountable.”

“It’s just something put on paper,” Bennett said. “In the end, you guys are going to decide this.”

Bonkovsky answered faculty questions after her presentation.

Poly is currently in its third year of Program Improvement (PI) and could come under sanctions from the District as early as next year.

Aca Deca

[From Aca Deca, front page]

The topics and theme of the competition are given to the teams in March.

“The theme this year is Russia and the science is the space race,” said Block. “The team is learning a great deal on the break-up of the Soviet Union and the make-up of Russia prior to the communist state movement.”

Block said some team members are putting in a few hours a night.

“You can tell who is studying and who is not,” Block said. “After eight years of Aca Deca coaching, I’m very good at telling who is putting in the work and who is not.”

Poly’s four by four block schedule gives less time to work with a team, Block said.

“I’ve been coming in early mornings and after school and dividing the class in two in order to get them training,” Block said. “It has been very difficult for me and for the team as well.”

The team meets every day and holds workshops every other Saturday but Block expects the team to study at home as well.

“When they work at school I know how much they’ve been studying,” Block said. “when they work at home, I can’t tell.”

Most coaches don’t trust their students and force them to study at school and stay late.

“I hope my team won’t force me to go those extremes,” Block said. “I’ll find out on November 17.”

Science teacher Vanamali Tay and English teacher Wendy Elam are helping Block with training this year.

“They’re having difficulty fitting training into their schedules too.”

SPORTS



All Photos by Vanessa Aquino



ALEXIS
SERAFIN
Starting Setter

She has the best hands in our league. She hustles to every ball and never lets her team down. She works hard whenever she steps on the court and even when she knows she had a good practice or game, she will ask how she can be better.



ERICA MAGEE
Starting Middle Blocker

She is the most athletic on the court. Due to her athleticism she is definitely our go-to person and she is fine with that. She's a leader and is dependable when it's crunch time. She will definitely have league and city honors this season.



ERICKA TZIC
Starting Libero

She is one of our best defensive specialists. She has so much athleticism that with her capabilities she could be versatile. She should be playing front row. We plan to make this adjustment for the next season.



BRENDA
CAMPOS
Starting Outside Hitter

She has a lot of POWER. Our goal this season was to control her power. She's only 5'6 but she plays like she's 6'4. She's very smart and athletic.



ARACELY
VARGAS
Starting Middle Blocker/
Opposite Hitter

She has made huge improvements during the off-season. She has the potential to be a great volleyball player. It's just a matter of mentally preparing her. And she is very coachable.



CRISTINA RUIZ
Starting Outside Hitter

She is one of our most improved players. She dedicated herself during the off-season to be a better hitter for this season. She's aggressive and plays every ball like it's her last.

SPORTS

FOOTBALL



Photo by Daniel Castro
SENIOR NIGHT: Senior running back Horatio Barron saved a dismal Parrot season with a 151-yard, three touchdown effort against visiting Monroe. Poly won 29-0, ending the year 2-8.

Seniors Sink Vikings

By Rudy Guijarro & Felicia Rodriguez
Staff Writer

Parrot seniors Horacio Barron and Paul Duncantell combined for 252 rushing yards and four touchdowns to lead Poly to a season-ending 29-0 defeat of visiting Monroe. “Our seniors really wanted to go out on top,” said Parrot head coach Joseph Pierro. “They got tired of losing and wanted to finish the season strong and build momentum for our kids next year.” Poly’s ground game accounted for 361 yards, the most this season. Poly senior quarterback Roberto Rojas was 5 for 10 for 59 passing yards. Poly’s 420-yard total was also the most in a single game this season. A strong Parrot defense handcuffed Vikings receivers all night, contributing to the lack of pressure on Poly’s offense. “We trained for that all season,” said Pierro. “The difference was we executed. It all comes down to one thing and that’s execution.” Poly also recorded six sacks and two interceptions. “I am very proud of my defense tonight,” Pierro said. “It couldn’t have come at a better time than the last game.” Friday was also Senior Night. Poly (2-8, 2-4) finished a second lackluster season out of the playoffs and in the bottom half of the East Valley League. The hapless

Vikings (1-9, 1-5) did even worse, needing 50 points for their lone win against first-year Chavez (1-9, 0-6). Poly started 2012 with six straight losses, three of them scoreless. The Parrots’ offense scored only 23 points during that stretch. The first victory came with a resounding 54-12 rout of Chavez on October 12, but the following week Verdugo spoiled Poly’s homecoming with a 42-6 loss. Poly’s two quarterbacks combined for two passes and 10 yards in the air against the Dons. Barron had 66 yards rushing and the Parrots’ only touchdown, while senior tight end Michael Martin added 88 yards to Poly’s 271-yard ground total for the night. Poly then traveled to Grant, where a fired-up Lancer team made their homecoming crowd happy with a 33-8 win. Fumbles, interceptions and penalties plagued Poly’s game all night. “You can’t expect to win a game when you beat yourself over and over again,” said Parrot head coach Joseph Pierro. “We jumped off sides, we held, we fumbled the ball, we got intercepted.” Workhorse Barron accounted for 151 yards of Poly 255 yard total and the only touchdown against the Lancers. But Parrot fans did get a look at a Monkee. Grant grad Mickey Dolenz, now on tour with his old group, was part of the halftime homecoming parade.

TENNIS

Reflections on a Tennis Season

By Tracy Salcido
Staff Writer



DOUBLES KAREN CASTILLO

This year I learned that the more I practice, the better I get. I wasn’t good at first but I improved and believed in myself more. But I wish I could have hit more aggressively. I want to improve on strategizing where I want to put the ball and where to hit it. The easiest part of tennis for me was moving quickly to the ball. The hardest, I’d say, was hitting lobs.

SINGLES CO-CAPTAIN ANGELICA GUTIERREZ

As a team, we did much better this year, but we need to improve individually. We need to be more aggressive and practice more. I’ve improved, but I’m not where I want to be. We worked hard, but we didn’t stress how important serving is. We could have been more aggressive.

SINGLES CO-CAPTAIN ROSETTE LIMBO

I learned to be more competitive. I learned how to hit a slice. I could have served better. Serves can get us easy points. We didn’t practice enough. My goal next year is to make it to the play-offs, to step it up. It will be more challenging. I want the Doubles to improve individually.

SINGLES JESSICA GONZALEZ

This season, I learned that it’s better to get everything done school-wise before playing. This is my last year here and it’s sad. I’m going to miss tennis and everybody I got to meet through the years. I taught the girls what I learned and now I just hope that they make themselves even better. The most fun was gaining more skills in this sport and the least was being stressed about something and not being able to do my best in the matches.



TENNIS HEAD COACH EVAN RABINS

The East Valley League this year was really tough to beat. They were a lot more competitive. NoHo was the best in the league this year. They’re undefeated. Then Verdugo Hills, Monroe and us fourth. Then SOCES and Grant. I want the girls to rise above their mistakes in the matches that they lose. When we lose a game, I want them to get over it and still feel confident about themselves. I give the girls talks before each game. I want to see what mind set they’re in because sometimes they’re too confident, too sure they’ll win and other times they’re under confident. But I pump them up and make them feel confident, to let them know that we need to take care of business. I would like the girls to be more aggressive, more competitive. I want them to believe in themselves and not assume the other team is better. This year’s team was more competitive than last year’s. Last year we’d get blown off the court 8-1 or 8-0. This year we put more of a fight, 8-3 or 8-6, although the first-year players were still intimidated in the early matches. My doubles and singles really learned and came along. This year’s girls improved in every area - serving, hitting, moving their feet and learning how to be more confident. Next year will be a good year. I’m extremely happy with the team right now and really proud. They’ve come a long way.

VOLLEYBALL



Photo by Vanessa Aquino
ALL SET: Volleyball junior Cristina Ruiz.

Volleyball Girls Exit

Patriots spoil Parrot hopes for a playoff run with 3-2 win.

By Tracy Salcido
Staff Writer

Number 11 Birmingham (5-11, 2-8) defeated number six Poly (23-13, 10-2) 3-2 in a Division I first-round girls volleyball match played Monday at Poly. After an easy 25-12 win, Poly lost the next two games 13-25 and 18-25. The Lady Parrots tied the match with a tight 25-21 game four victory. Ericka Magee and Aracely Vargas had three aces each. But the deciding game went to a determined Patriot team, handing Poly a 13-15 loss and ending the girls’ post-season play. Magee had six aces and a “roof” (a top-of-the-net block). Birmingham plays Narbonne Wednesday in the second round.

SCHEDULE		
Date	Score	
Aug 29	Poly 2 @	Marshall 5
Sep 4	Poly 1 @	Fairfax 6
Sep 6	San Fernando 0 @	Poly 7
Sep 13	Poly 0 @	Verdugo Hills 7
Sep 20	Monroe 5 @	Poly 2
Sep 24	Poly 5 @	Grant 2
Sep 27	SOCES 5 @	Poly 2
Oct 1	NoHo 7 @	Poly 0
Oct 8	Poly 2 @	Monroe 5
Oct 11	Verdugo Hills 6 @	Poly 1
Oct 15	Poly 7 @	SOCES 0
Oct 18	Grant 1 @	Poly 6
Oct 25	Poly 1 @	NoHo 6