

The Poly Optimist

John H. Francis Polytechnic High School

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SLCs Get Revise

By Joshua Penado
Staff Writer

If at first you don't succeed, restructure.

That's the current plan for revitalizing the SLC concept at Poly.

"Our school is currently undergoing SLC reform," said interim SLC coordinator Chi-Sun Chang. "As you know, we have three upper level SLCs but now we are changing all that. As of right now, we have come to a consensus that we will only have two houses."

Fame, Habit and EHS will merge into two and be split in half equally, according to Chang. Each house will have half juniors and half seniors, or two mixed houses of 600 or 700 students.

"Students in the two upper-grade houses will have an equitable representation of students, with performance evenly distributed so there's not a better-performing house," said Principal Ari Bennett. "We want to make sure that there's a relatively easy participation or relatively even distribution."

How students will be assigned to each house remains undecided, however.

"My suggestion would be to just do it, then assign students and then allow students to request an opt-out into another house," Bennett said, "but we would have to make sure to keep that balance, so if we're opting one student out, then it would have to be a trade, so that we can make sure that there's a kind of equality between the academic caliber of both houses."

Each house will have an SLC coordinator and two counselors, Chang said.

"The current SLC system has a counselor and a coordinator," Chang said, "but they're in a class room all day, which means they don't have much time for SLC students. As a result, there's no faculty available to support students."

"With our new system, there will be staff assigned to students and a coordinator, so in total there will be three people to support that infrastructure and manage that unit."

Chang and Athletic Director Kim McEwen are expected to be the new coordinators.

Teachers from the core areas will be split between the two houses, but elective teachers will remain open to students in both houses.

That process too remains undecided.

[See SLC, pg 6]



Photo by Lirio Alberto

KICKIN': Cheer senior Elmy Martinez leads a spirited routine at Pep Rally.

Poly to Field Test Common Core

By Yenifer Rodriguez
Editor in Chief

Common Core testing is coming to Poly.

Poly juniors will take the Common Core Smarter Balanced Assessment for English and Math in April instead of the California Standards Test.

This is a "Field Test," meaning scores do not count this year and students will not learn their scores.

The test consists of multiple choice, performance task and constructed response questions. The new format provides a more detailed examination of each question.

Students are scheduled to take the Common Core field test the week after spring break, according to Bennett.

Only juniors will test this year. Next year, however, a full implementation is planned.

The new exam is online and has multiple choice and interactive responses. "Instead of having a multiple-choice option, the interactive portion will require the test taker to "drag" an answer to the right place," said Poly test coordinator Royce Stuckey.

According to Stuckey, 95% of juniors will take both the math and English test and the other 5% will take one or the other.

[See Testing, pg 6]

Parrots Second in Unified Finals

By Carina Orozco
Staff Writer

Poly's Unified basketball team placed second in this year's Northern League Basketball tournament at Poly, good enough for a slot in the city finals. Kennedy finished first. Other teams, in order, were Verdugo, Chatsworth, Canoga Park and Reseda.

"We did great and I'm proud of all my team," said Parrot head coach Jorge Ramirez. "We hope to go to city finals and win it all."

The Northern League Basketball Tournament is the first of four tournaments. The other three competitions take place next week. The top two teams from each tournament compete in the city finals at the Edward Roybal Learning Center in two weeks.

Each team's 16-player roster includes 11 special ed students and five general ed students.

The Parrots lost their opener to Verdugo, 27-22 before registering a 39-25 win over Canoga Park and a 32-31 squeaker over Chatsworth. Kennedy defeated Poly 33-27 in the tournament's final game.



Kennedy had wins over Chatsworth (25-9), Canoga Park (35-21) and Verdugo (24-7) before meeting the Parrots.

Unified seniors Kevin Cervantes, Kevin Delgado, Daniel Medina, Adrian Ramirez, Steven Ortega and freshman Mathew Hamilton all got plenty of play time for the Parrots.

Special Ed's Spirit Squad performed at the tournament and Poly senior Angel Aguilar sang the national anthem.

The Northern League Basketball Tournament is part of the Unified Sports Program, which brings both general and special education students together to play on a team and compete with other schools from the area.

The tournaments are the Los Angeles School District's (LAUSD) third as host and the second year LAUSD has partnered with Special Olympics Southern California.

In three years, the program has expanded from six schools to 28. The 28 teams are divided into four leagues and each league holds a tournament.

"From this experience, I want all my students to gain

[See Unified, pg 6]

Aca Deca Strikes Gold

By Yesenia Carretero
Staff Writer

Poly's Academic Decathlon team won nine gold medals, a school record, but placed 15th in LAUSD, three shy of a trip to the state competition next month.

"It is frustrating to me that a team that was so bright and worked so hard will not be getting much of the recognition they deserved," said veteran Poly Aca Deca coach Brian Block. "This team set a record number of medals. They had thirteen. No other Poly team has done that at District. They set a record number of gold medals with nine. The previous total was five. This team almost doubled it."

Block said a lack of experience didn't help.

"This was one of the brightest teams I've had," Block said, "but without the experience of having gone to competition before, some of the players just didn't know what to expect and I think that they were overwhelmed at the actual competition."

"The biggest challenge I had as a coach was that there were so many new students who had no experience in academic decathlon," Block said.

Senior Hannah Almonte had a perfect 12 in the Super Quiz and

won gold medals in speech and interview.

Senior Lezleigh Millhauser won gold medals for essay and interview and a bronze for speech.

"Lezleigh Millhauser scored

[See Aca Deca, pg 6]



Some Came Singing

Drama delivers Valentine's tunes.

By Nicolette Reneau
Staff Writer

The halls were alive with the sound of music on Thursday and Friday.

Twenty vocalists from Poly's Drama Club delivered Valentine singing grams to Parrots in classrooms all over campus. Sweet treats were included.

"I started the singing grams last year," said Drama teacher Katy Groskin.

Seniors Crystal Cruz, Miranda Brown and junior Audrianna Wilson were among the Drama Club singers who participated. Over 200 students were serenaded with songs like Bruno Mars' "Treasure" from "Unorthodox Jukebox" and Maroon 5's "She Will Be Loved" from their 2002 debut album, "Songs About Jane."

"About one third of the grams were delivered on Thursday," Groskin said. "The majority were delivered on Friday."

Grams delivered to classrooms required teacher approval.

"If a teacher prefers that grams to students in his or her class be delivered another period, in another classroom, we accommodate them," said Groskin.

Some grams were delivered outside of class.

Each singing gram runs about 30 seconds.



Photo by Lirio Alberto

Put the pedal to the medals

These two are worth their weight in gold. Medals, that is.

ACADEME - pg 4



Photo by Lirio Alberto

Poly's Big Five On a Streak

Tops in league and winners of 11 straight games, these Lady Parrots rocked.

SPORTS - pg 8

OPINION

EDITORIAL

Embracing Awkward

The first Academy Awards ceremony was a private banquet at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in 1929. Winners were announced three months before. 270 people attended.

Now the Academy has over 6,000 members. The ceremony is televised worldwide and takes place in Hollywood's Dolby Theater.

Stars dress to the nines and get their picture taken. Charismatic celebrities host the show and crack scripted jokes. Who won is a closely guarded secret.

The Oscars aren't just awards anymore, they're the year's most-watched production.

But the ceremony doesn't live up to its hype. All the Oscars are is awkward.

The four-hour broadcast has so many awards to hand out that, with the exception of major awards, winners have 50 to 60 seconds to give their speeches. If they don't make it, the orchestra starts playing and winners are ushered off stage.

So most speeches are awkward and rushed. Where's the

appeal?

The results, after all, are easily found online within seconds of each award. And notable acceptance speeches will be on YouTube.

So why watch?

I know a student who dreams of being a director.

"When we're older I'm going to have Oscar parties. But you're going to host them for me because I'm actually going to be at the Oscars," she says.

I know another who loves talking film.

"Let's become members of the Academy when we grow up. Oh no wait, I think you have to have some sort of degree in movie critiquing."

I understand that these awards mean a lot.

They're the highest honor a filmmaker can receive.

But I will never understand the fascination for the ceremony.

Awkward acceptance speeches have rendered the Oscars nearly unwatchable – and overrated.



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The Beatles Influence

The Beatles were the first band to use a recording studio as a writing tool, but they were also one of the first groups to use music as a way to spread social activism. During the Vietnam War, the Beatles epitomized the anti-war movement and reflected cultural and political beliefs of social revolution based on "peace, love, and happiness."

The Beatles culturally and politically impacted young people with their "psychedelic revolution" of music, causing protests against war and spreading peace. Some of their famous songs that spread these messages included "All You Need Is Love" and "Revolution."

Band members John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr were widely considered the most influential act of the rock era. Although the Beatles experimented with many types of musical genres, they were known for the "peace"

and "love" messages in their music.

Lennon was known as the rebellious one in the band, and strongly believed he could make an impact in the world.

McCartney was the creative one and motivated the band to expand their talents and creativity in their music.

Harrison was the lead guitarist. Although Lennon and McCartney were the lead singers, most of the albums included one of Harrison's compositions. Harrison, influenced by Indian music after a trip there, introduced the sitar to "Revolver" the band's seventh album.

Drummer Ringo Starr was the quiet one, but always upbeat and playful.

Together, the band wrote and played in a way that no one has before or since. Their ideas, creativity and personalities made the Beatles one of the most influential bands of all time.

Cutting Back on Line Cutting

"First come first serve" isn't necessarily true, especially on burger day. The smell of delicious burgers and seasoned fries creates longer lines than usual. And line cutters.

We've all witnessed such bad behavior. It usually goes something like this.

A student athlete is fourth in line and behind him is a freshman.

A group of fellow athletes casually greets their teammate and slowly merges into the line, laughing and joking.

When the freshman comes up to the window, the last burger and fries are gone. Line cutters got 'em.

Line cutters don't reveal themselves until they've done the deed. Some line cutters do it on a regular basis. And those who aid line cutters are just as guilty.

Victims come in three types.

The first is the complaining victim who will speak out about line cutters. But speaking out doesn't prevent line cutting.

Second is the unaware victim. He's distracted, talking to friends behind him, looking at his mobile devices or just looking elsewhere.

Last is the voiceless victim. He knows a crime is being committed but won't speak out. He's shy, intimidated or doesn't

want to attract unwanted attention.

Don't be a victim. The next time you encounter a line cutter, follow these steps:

1.) Breathe in and stay calm. Confronting a line cutter aggressively may result in an argument or a fight. Make this an opportunity to showcase your maturity.

2.) Ask someone else in line if he or she saw the crime being committed so you have a witness who can back you up.

3.) Confront the line cutter politely. Tap him on the shoulder and say something casual like, "Hey, the end of the line is over there."

4.) If the cutter isn't clueless or worse, he will move to the back of the line. If not, get the attention of a school staff member nearby and point out the offender.

Line cutting is rude.

Sure, there are special exceptions, like a friend who's got a broken leg or has a make-up test during lunch.

But otherwise, what gives a line cutter the right to cut in front of everyone patiently waiting?

Before that line cutter becomes an adult with a driver's license who cuts you off on the freeway, let him know his behavior is unacceptable. Or have a Poly staff member do it for you.

3 HE'S ON THEIR LIST

Magnet senior Rey Cano must have made a good impression. Ivy League stalwart Yale has invited this Parrot to get on board.

By Nicolette Reneau

4 TWO FOR THE ROAD

They don't come any smarter than these two scholars. We asked them exactly how they won all those Aca Deca medals. Listen in.

By Yesenia Carretero

5 NOSTALGIA TRIP

Ed Sullivan had a Sunday night variety show on CBS that all America watched in the 60s. On Feb 9, they saw the Beatles.

By Zein Delgado

5 LIFE IS GOOD FOR LEONARDO

When Martin Scorsese makes a movie about Wall Street excess, his go-to guy is Leonardo DiCaprio. Find out why.

By Emily Pintor

6 BEST PICTURE NOMINEE

Bruce Dern gets the role of a lifetime in Alexander Payne's reflection on Nebraska, relationships and coming to terms with life.

By Adrianna Garcia

7 FOR STARTERS

Poly's Lady Parrot varsity basketball squad had a stellar season. Here are five reasons why.

By Yesenia Carretero, Adrianna Garcia, Nicolette Reneau & Christine Maralit

8 ON THE MAT

Poly's boys wrestling team met some pretty tough characters at the regionals. But the Parrot squad still managed some fifth place finishes.

By Joanna Rosales

8 FAIR PLAY

When three of Poly's top wrestlers sat down with the OPTIMIST recently, they gave us the inside story on the art and science of wrestling.

By Joanna Rosales & Yesenia Carretero

8 SEEDING BY BRAILLE

Poly's basketball girls got Sylmar in the first round of the city playoffs, and head coach Tremeka Batiste smelled a fish.

By Joanna Rosales

8 COACH TALK

After a rough start, Poly's Lady Parrots put together an 11-game win streak and finished first in league. Coach Batiste explains it all.

By Tanneshia Acosta



the
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor must be typed or printed in ink and include the writer's signature. The OPTIMIST reserves the right to edit submissions. Send letters to Rm.14 or Mr. Blau's box.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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

INTERVIEW



Photo by Lirio Alberto

Magnet senior Rey Cano may be going to Yale in the fall. The OPTIMIST recently interviewed the Parrot scholar to find out how that came about. Here's what he told us.

I got a "likely" letter from Yale - a promise of acceptance as long as I don't blow up my senior year with bad grades or unlawful acts. I will quote the "Likely letter" to give you a sense of what it means:

"I am writing to notify you of your likely admission to Yale's class of 2018. Congratulations! Having reviewed your exceptional application, we feel confident that as long as you maintain your current level of academic performance, the Admissions Committee will be sending you a formal letter of admission on March 31, 2014.

You are one of only a small number of applicants who will be receiving this type of early notice from Yale. We take this step in order to applaud your accomplishments, begin providing you with a thorough introduction to Yale, and invite you to a select on-campus science and engineering weekend in February."

It feels really awesome because I had heard of this secret and very rare likely letter, that literally only 1% of applicants get every year, and I just couldn't believe I got one. I am being invited to a full paid trip to Yale to participate in the YES-Weekend (an event for likely letter recipients), so I am excited to see one of the most prestigious universities in the world upfront for a few days. I also have the same perks as any admitted student. I full have access to the admitted students website, Bull-Dog Days (another on-campus Yale event in April) registration, and the Facebook page (which is run, surprisingly, by Yale).

I was sick on a Monday and I was lying in my bed watching YouTube videos and then I got a call from Yale. I was told that my reader loved my application and took my application to the approval process early and the Dean of Admissions agreed and admitted me early.

When I heard the news, I couldn't believe it I literally couldn't contain my emotions during the call. After the call, I started jumping around my house and screaming that I got into Yale. It was really a surreal moment for me.

A "LIKELY" YALIE

By Nicolette Reneau
Staff Writer

“ I THOUGHT I HAD NO CHANCE BECAUSE IVY LEAGUE SCHOOLS ARE EXTREMELY SELECTIVE. SOME 30,000 PEOPLE APPLY AND AROUND 1,600 GET IN... AND I GOT A PRESTIGIOUS EARLY NOTICE, I NEVER EVEN DREAMED OF THIS BECOMING A REALITY. I WAS ONE OF THE LUCKY FEW. ”

I thought I had no chance because Ivy League schools are extremely selective. Some 30,000 people apply and around 1,600 get in. I never even dreamed I would get a prestigious early notice. I was one of the lucky few.

I heard about Yale from Ms. Martin and a visiting student. My friends Jihae, Andrew and Gi-Min also inspired me to apply because they had told me things about Yale I had never considered.

I had advice from Dr. Lehavi and Mr. Gomez that made me a stronger applicant. Mr. Gomez told me the importance of school and Dr. Lehavi helped me discover college math courses.

The Magnet was also a great base of support. I cannot stress enough how much Ms. Couchois and Ms. Bryan helped me.

I took Calculus in 10th grade and just finished Multi-Variable Calculus with an A. I attended the UC-Davis Summer program during my 11-12th grader summer. I had also participated in quite a bit of extra-curricular activities such as Band, AcaDeca, and the Robotics Club (a club I co-founded).

All of my activities opened my eyes to new things because I've tried multiple things, in multiple years. I went from Band to Aca Deca, then to Robotics. These transitions really made a difference in my high school experience. I think being curious about math and activities helped get me passionate for math, music, academics and computers.

I don't know if I am going to attend Yale. I know most people would jump at the opportunity, but I have to consider all things, such as my other college choices and my financial aid. I am eager to see the campus when I go there in mid-February.

Most people would expect I know what I want to do, but truthfully I do not. I want to do something that involves heavy amounts of math. I love math. I am planning to go into college as a math major.

I applied to Princeton, Harvard, Columbia, Dartmouth, Brown, The University of Chicago, MIT, Carnegie Mellon, and Williams. I really, really like all of these schools. In total, I applied to around 23 schools. I am no longer considering some schools since my Yale notification.

I have not been accepted anywhere else yet. Normally decisions come out by April 1. I got an early notification of admittance from Yale because of my good application. I hope I have a very tough decision May 1, the day you choose what college you will attend. It all makes me very happy that colleges eventually do see all the work that goes into one application. It is eye opening.

My hobbies include working with computers, playing video games and playing music. I love music, and I love to play the piano and write music. I have not stopped playing music even though I quit band. I love writing music for the piano and other instruments. It is also a great way to pass the time. Sometimes I practice for hours on end. I also play the guitar, drums, piano, tuba, and clarinet.

I am a Mexican-American. My dad was born in America of Mexican descent and my mother was born in Jalisco, Mexico. My sister was the first to attend college and graduate from high school from my family. She went to UC Riverside to study art. I am part of the first generation in my family to attend college and graduate high school.

My parents did not really know what I needed to do to go to college so it was hard for them to motivate me academically, but they did and do heavily support me in all my academic pursuits. The magnet served as my academic motivation. The tight community helped me gain all the motivation I needed to do work.

ACADEME

MAKING THEIR POINTS

Two of Aca Deca's finest talk about this year's experience.

Hannah is a twelve

Can you remember the twelve questions from the competition?

I don't remember them. I remember the first one was the hardest question because it was a music question. This year we did twelve questions, two from each subject, and they're in a kind of random order. They read the question and give you seven seconds to answer. You put in an answer and they tell you if you're correct. Then they raise these little card thingys to show the audience what the score was.

The first question was a music question and music has been the hardest subject the entire year. I thought I was going to get it wrong. So I was thinking to myself "I have to get a perfect." What ended up happening was I saw the first question and I said 'oh god, I'm not going to get a perfect, I'm going to get this wrong.' I always get it wrong when I second guess myself, but in that moment I told myself "I'm not going to second guess," and I didn't. I got the right answer and I did this little dance thing on my seat.

From then on it was smooth sailing. I think every other question was fairly doable. I think they were doable to the point where I don't remember the questions they asked. But then we got to question eleven. It was an economics question. Economics is okay for me, it's not too difficult. I was confident I got it right. I put in the answer.

They project the answers on a screen and they display the number of people who locked in each answer choice and I saw that most of the people on the floor put the same answer I did. The guy read the question again and the right answer. The answer was not the answer I put. I was really devastated.

I came back to my coach and I was so sad I was like "I was so close, I was so close." He said "which one did you get wrong?" I said number eleven. Apparently most of the coaches agreed that my answer was the right answer. Most of the people put in the same answer I did.

So the coaches challenged the answer and they gave me the point. I got the perfect score.

Talk about the scrimmages.

We did the official one with LAUSD. That one I think went better for half of the team and didn't do too well for the other half of the team. Half of the team kind of went above their targets and the other half were close but not quite there. I had the highest honors score ever in the past five years. I was the top scorer for that one.

For the Grant scrimmage, we got together with Grant and El Camino. I think we scored more or less the same thing we did on district, but I know for a fact I scored lower on that one because it was a harder test. They give us the second most difficult test in a set. There are different levels of difficulty. I don't think I was that prepared for that one because it was in the winter.

The Super Quiz this year was weird. Last year, we went to district and to state and they only had scantrons.

This year we had electronic clickers and they made it more difficult. I remember scholastic saying they had a lot of trouble. They thought they could change an answer in the seven second window. But they couldn't.

We were going to cheer them on. But when you're sitting in the audience and you see all these ones or zeros and not twos or threes, it is like 'oh my god.' We hoped the points stay with our top scorers because out of the nine people competing, only six scores count, two from each category (Honors, Scholastic, Varsity).

So we were hoping the points stay in the people who we know are going to be our strongest people in every category. But that isn't what happened for scholastic or varsity. It was nerve-racking.

How was the Aca Deca experience for you?

It's a lot of work. We started studying for this season a couple of months after last season. We go on to summer, we go on to winter, and every now and then we give up some Saturdays to go to some workshops. We stay late hours, especially as it gets closer to competition. It is one of the most difficult things you can do in school, because people do other things too. We have people in tennis, college classes, clubs. They're well-rounded.



Photo by Lirio Alberto

DECATHLETES: Magnet junior Hannah Almonte and senior Lezleigh Millhauser have a laugh over their success in the Aca Deca Super Quiz.

Lezleigh Had a Laugh

Do you remember what questions you were asked at the Super Quiz?

No. I like to not think about Super Quiz because I didn't do as well as I thought I would. What typically happens is that for Varsity and Scholastic the questions are harder which is kind of counterintuitive because you would think you give the harder questions to the Honors but they give the harder questions to the Varsity and Scholastic members. I'm in Varsity and they give us hard questions that we just did not know. We had to guess. It was really hard. I lost my pride that day.

Walk us through the Super Quiz.

I got up and did all the morning necessities, got dressed, made sure to bring my team jacket. I had my own ride to the school. The team hadn't arrived when I got there.

We took the seven tests and then for Super Quiz, we got a break for a bit. Then we went to this basketball area, near the gym where they were going to have the Super Quiz. Hannah's boyfriend Kristopher went on a 7-11 run for us and I got a coke, some people got an Arizona and I think Shannon Snyder got a slurpee, like a huge slurpee right before the Super Quiz and we drank sugary drinks to get us pumped.

On the way into Super Quiz, we sang a song that Mr. Block wrote. It's a parody of one of the musical selections that we had this year. We're always the most obnoxious team during Aca Deca.

We were pumped to see everybody perform, but once we saw the questions, we were kind of like 'oh no, this might not end well.' After the Super Quiz, I was just quiet and angry because I wanted to do well and I didn't do as well as I thought I did. Overall it was a really fun experience.

How did the award ceremony go?

Oh god, Hannah is going to kill me. So at the award ceremony, Hannah got an award and I think it was a gold medal in speech. What we did was, when

we got an award, we hugged our teacher Mr. Block and we went up to get the award. She hugged him, then she fell over, it was so funny. We couldn't stop laughing throughout the whole ceremony. That was the best part.

Of the ten Aca Deca topics, which ones are you best at?

Art. I'm really good at formal analysis, which is analyzing a painting, or contextual analysis, which is looking at the artist and the patron. I just clicked. Like different types of paint, what you do with clay, I just loved it.

Basically for art you get a resource guide with selected works, you get a dozen or so works of art that really represent that theme or time period for that year. You have to study those and the artists. Some other vague sorts of things as well.

Then there's art history, which is Michelangelo and stuff like that. There are genres in that time period, like expressionism. I don't know, I just get it.

I love interview. I love expressing myself through speech. It's something I take pride in, being able to show people who I am, which I think is a pretty good person, showing people how unique I think I am and how I differ from other people. I like setting myself apart.

My last subject that I really like is between lit and essay, because I love writing, whether writing myself or reading other writers and analyzing their work. I just love literature, it's so good.

I've always been an English person, but it is hard to pick, because I love the works that we had this year, like "The Sun Also Rises," and that genre of writing because its morbid and sort of morose.

I also like writing essays. We had to write one for Aca Deca and I loved the opportunity to show what knowledge I had of the literature this year. And winning a medal was really awesome.

This year's Aca Deca theme topic was the Great War. What did you learn about it?

I always thought that war had its consequences, like the death of soldiers and stuff about the economy, but I never really knew how it affected people. You really see that through the literature.

There were these young men who were writers who died in the war and you really see that come through in their writing. Authors were like 'no one lives forever and life is really ephemeral, let's show

that through this piece of literature,' which I really like.

These writers were called the "lost generation." They wrote about their experiences with the war, about drinking more and becoming very promiscuous and things like that. I like seeing the effects of the war. Everyone knew people were dying horribly from poison gas and barbed wire.

Why did you join Aca Deca?

I first joined because my brother was in Aca Deca and the coach wanted me in, so I just thought why not. I didn't think it was going to be much because I've seen it before. It's wasn't me going in blind. I saw my brother do it before and it was just taking tests and stuff, so I didn't think much of it at first.

A few months in, I realized that it's really a fun process and I see why people do it. There are these people that come in that you don't know or who are just acquaintances and you get to know them on a personal level and you become friends with these random people by just taking tests and studying, which is a bit weird, but fun all the same.

I always found myself to be a comparatively intelligent person, especially with speaking or writing. For me, joining Aca Deca was never about if I could succeed, it was at first just a club where I would go and take tests after school, no big deal. But the advantage to me was my love for art history and my ability to speak eloquently. That's what made me think I could do well in Aca Deca.

How much was stress an issue?

Stress is a big issue, especially this year compared to last year, because I had a lot of core classes during the competition, especially in January, when we went to the actual competition. I had a government class, a physiology class and all these classes. I had to beg teachers to give me extensions.

Was Aca Deca worth the struggle?

For me, it's not worth the struggle for the medals and all that, it's worth the struggle when you bond with these weird insane people. You build these friendships that just feed your soul. That is worth all the studying, all the cramming, worth all the times that my mechanical pencil would snap, it's worth all of it.

MEDIA

It Was 50 Years Ago Today



By Zein Delgado
Staff Writer

On 9 Feb. 1964, much of New York stopped what it was doing and turned on the television. Impresario Ed Sullivan was featuring a combo from Liverpool, England called the Beatles on his Sunday TV variety show, and New Yorkers didn't want to miss it.

By 8 pm that night, five songs and 60 minutes later, the four lads had set New York and the rest of America on its ear. Pop music was never the same.

America's teens already knew who the Beatles were.

"I Want to Hold Your Hand," leaked to DJs in December, 1963, sold 250,000 copies in the first three days after its release on the Capitol label headquartered in Hollywood.

By January 10, 1964, well before Ed Sullivan, the single had sold over one million units and hit #1 on Billboard's top pop music charts by month's end.

In the weeks leading up to the Beatles trip to New York, Beatlemania went viral. Radio stations played the band's music nearly non-stop; teenage fans sported "Beatle" wigs, and stickers across the country warned, "The Beatles Are Coming."

Four thousand fans and journalists greeted the Beatles when the British group's Pan Am Flight 101 landed at John F. Kennedy airport, New York.

Reporters who expected to burst the bubble of Beatles popularity instead were captivated and amused by the quartet's personalities and clever answer to inane questions. These boys were media-savvy long before anyone coined the phrase.

After the press conference, John, Paul, George, and Ringo were all driven in separate limos to their suite at the upscale Plaza Hotel, where they were overwhelmed by fans and screaming teenage girls.

Harrison caught a bad case of the flu but still managed to play that first night. The broadcast drew 73 million Americans viewers, a record number for a single TV show. The theatre, of course, was packed with screaming teens.

"It was Ed Sullivan, and it was a big show," said Ringo Starr. "We didn't know while we were playing that over 70 million people were watching."

The Beatles played the upbeat "All My Loving," a sophisticated version of the Broadway hit "Til There Was You" and "She Loves You," a rocker written by Lennon-McCartney that featured all the trademark early Beatles song elements. In the second half hour, the band played "I Saw Her Standing There," with Paul singing lead, and "I Want to Hold Your Hand." All were originals except "Til There Was You." The whole performance was live.

Two months after the Ed Sullivan Show, the Beatles occupied all of the top five positions on the top selling pop singles.

The Fab Four played Washington Coliseum two days later, Carnegie Hall the following day and flew to Miami, where they performed a second time on Ed Sullivan's show (outdoors) on February 16.

The Beatles third appearance on Sullivan was taped during the Feb 9 performance and featured Lennon doing "Twist and Shout," an Isley Brothers number. They closed the show with "Please Please Me" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand," with Lennon and McCartney sharing the vocal chores.

The Beatles then flew home to England, where

they were greeted by 3000 British teens.

The four mop-tops returned to America for a month-long tour in August of 1964, which included a gig at the Hollywood Bowl. Two more tours, in 1965 and 1966, were the last the Beatles would do. Their last gig was in San Francisco.

The group did one more Ed Sullivan show. They taped a five-tune performance on Aug 14, 1965 and then toured America for another month. The show ran September 12.

The Beatles were a breath of fresh air for a nation troubled by a Cold War with the Soviets, the assassination of a beloved president two months earlier and a civil rights movement growing increasingly violent.

"The country was in a collective depression," said "Meet the Beatles" author Steven Stark. "To have these incredible fun and funny guys show up, almost from outer space – which is the equivalent of what England was in those days – was incredibly energizing for people."

CBS broadcast a salute to the Beatles on Febru-

ary 9th, 2014, exactly 50 years since the performance on Ed Sullivan. The special was filmed in the West Hall of the Los Angeles Convention Center on January 27th.

Lennon was murdered in 1980 and Harrison died of throat cancer in 2001, but the surviving members of the group, Starr and McCartney, attended and performed at the special.

McCartney admitted to being hesitant at first. "When I was first asked to do the show, I was wondering if it was the right thing to do," McCartney said. "Was it seemly to tribute yourself? But I saw a couple of American guys who said to me, 'You don't understand the impact on America of that appearance.' I didn't realize that."

The tribute featured Maroon 5 doing "All My Loving" and "Ticket Ride," Stevie Wonder playing "We Can Work It Out," Jeff Lynne singing Harrison's "Something," John Mayer and Keith Urban playing Lennon's "Don't Let Me Down," Katy Perry doing Paul's "Yesterday," Dave Grohl rocking through "Hey Bulldog" from the "Yellow Subma-

rine" album, John Legend and Alicia Keys with "Let It Be," Pharrell Williams with another Harrison hit, "Here Comes the Sun," and more.

Starr took a solo turn with "Matchbox," "Boys" and "Yellow Submarine." McCartney then took the stage to perform "Birthday," "Get Back" and "I Saw Her Standing There."

Finally, the two surviving Beatles did a medley of "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," "With a Little Help From My Friends" and Paul's seven-minute ode to Lennon's son Julian, "Hey Jude," to end the special.

"If it weren't for the Beatles, I would not be a musician," said drummer/guitarist Grohl (Nirvana and the Foo Fighters) during the show. "I loved their groove and their swagger, their grace and beauty, their dark and their light. The Beatles knew no boundaries, and in that freedom, they seemed to define what we know today as rock and roll."

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

the Big Bad "Wolf"

Martin Scorsese's latest looks like excess taken to excess, but there's more here than meets the eye.

By Emily Pintor
Staff Writer

Wall Street stock brokers don't exactly have a great public image, but veteran director Martin Scorsese's latest film brings the negativity to a whole new level. It's not the Mafia Scorsese is after this time. It's capitalism.

"The Wolf of Wall Street" is a tantalizing and boundary-pushing three hours of provocative and hilarious filmmaking. Scorsese's 49th feature and his fifth starring Leonardo DiCaprio. The chemistry shows in their work.

Based on a true story, the "Wolf" is Jordan Belfort (DiCaprio), a scheming penny stock broker who makes the big time – a Wall Street firm of his own. The roller coaster ride shows Belfort at the top, with all the money and power in the world, and at the bottom, with hardly anyone by his side.

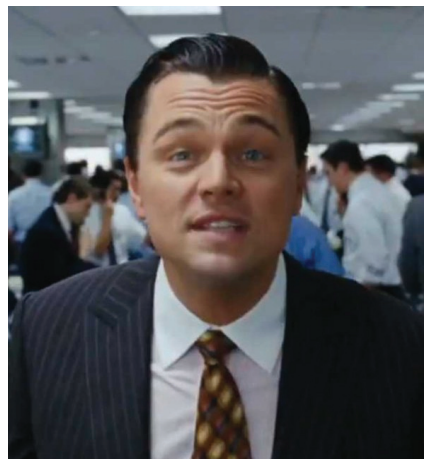
Terence Winter handled the tricky task of adapting Belfort's memoir, creating a greatly flawed but easily understood anti-hero. Much of the dialogue is directed at the audience, with Belfort as the narrator of his own tumultuous rise and fall.

Matthew McConaughey takes a brief turn as young Belfort mentor Mark Hanna who shows him the art of being a stock broker. The essential ingredients, Hanna says, are liberal doses of self-fulfillment and artificial stimulants (this newspaper can't print what McConaughey actually said).

Belfort begins as an innocent dreamer and ends as a self-destructive addict. He finds stardom through Stratton Oakmont, a stock brokerage he creates that separates rich businessmen from their money. A roomful of young brokers desperate to be just like him do the actual selling.

"Wolf" is a front row seat at Wall Street's excess. Belfort has outrageous parties at the office, buys endless amounts of drugs and goes anywhere his heart pleases in his own private helicopter and his own private yacht.

But Oakmont's business model skirts the law and sometimes breaks it, attracting the attention of F.B.I. agent Patrick Denham, played with subtle understatement,



ment by Kyle Chandler ("Zero Dark Thirty"). An anxious Belfort spends the rest of the film trying to cover his tracks and hide his fortune in a Swiss bank.

DiCaprio has the role of lifetime as the charismatic and crazed stock broker with exuberant cockiness and charm. Co-star Jonah Hill is over the top as Belfort's best friend and partner Donnie Azoff, a fitting second fiddle to Belfort's confident guile. Hill seems to be having the time of his life.

Australian newcomer Margot Robbie plays Belfort's sultry wife Naomi with a working-class Long Island accent and plenty of sex appeal. Robbie might be all the eye candy money can buy, but as the relationship begins to unravel, she becomes more nurturing mother than trophy wife.

Veteran actor/writer/director Rob Reiner is Belfort's father, constantly angered by and yelling at Belfort for his antics. Reiner's presence reminds the audience that underneath the corruption and addiction,

Belfort is human.

Chandler as Denham is on the "right" side of the law, but Scorsese plays him more as a pawn in the federal government's bureaucracy. This isn't a morality play. It's more cat and mouse, with capitalism as the only inevitable winner. Denham wants to take Belfort and his crew of money-hungry degenerates down, but out of righteousness or jealousy is left to the audience to decide.

"Wolf" is energetic, bold and racy, but it doesn't take sides. Wealth and power are as American as apple pie, Scorsese says, and Belfort is an all-American.

Addiction and immorality are merely the symptoms of corruption, not the cause. That lies deeper in human nature and the American dream. "Wolf" is no more than capitalism taken to its natural extreme. Few who see Scorsese's film will walk out thinking Belfort is the villain in this piece.

People are greedy and addictive by nature, implies "Wolf." Once given a taste of wealth, that hunger is hard to satisfy.

CAMPUS

NEBRASKA
STATE
OF MIND

By Adrianna Garcia
Staff Writer

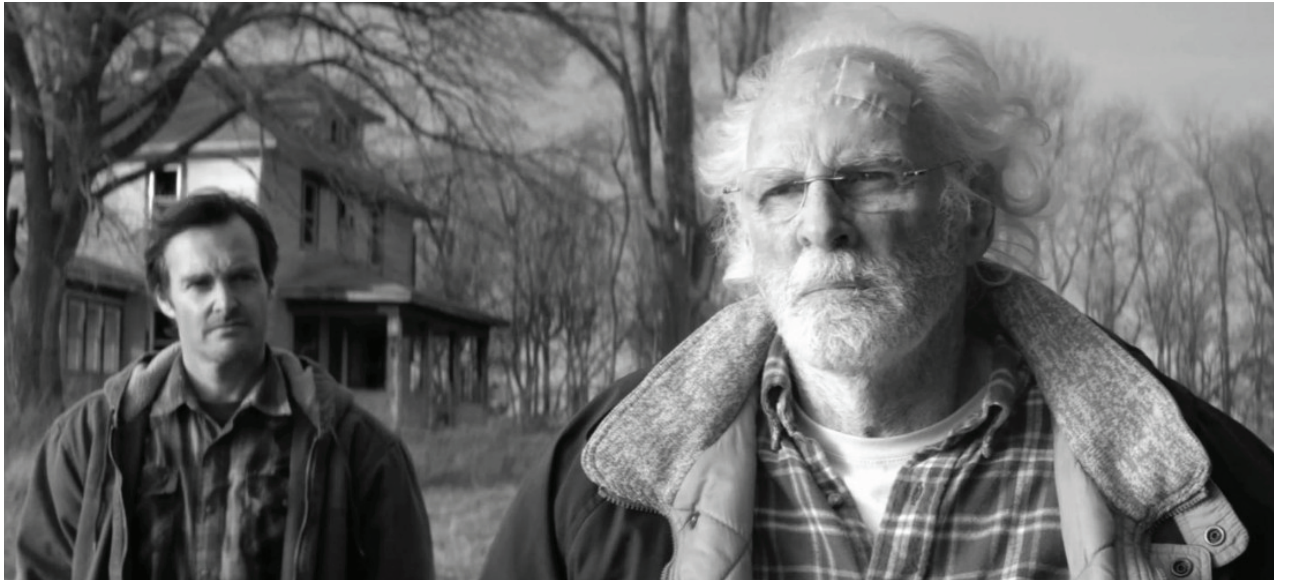
“Nebraska” is as honest and simple as its landscape. Directed by Alexander Payne (“sideway”) and filmed in black and white, the film tells the story of Woodrow Grant (Bruce Dern), an old man on his way to Lincoln, Nebraska to pick up a million dollar prize he won in a contest.

The contest is a marketing scam, but younger son David (Will Forte), who sells stereos at the Mid City Superstore, agrees to take his father to Nebraska to prove there is no million dollars.

Along the way, David learns a lot about Woody, and begins to understand why his father is the silent, closed off alcoholic he’s always been.

“I think many of us have experiences with fathers who are loving and nice, but somehow they’re on another planet,” said Payne.

The director, who typically writes his own screenplays, optioned “Nebraska” from first time screenwriter Bob Nelson.



Google Image

FAMILY AFFAIR: Will Forte (left) and Bruce Dern work out father/son issues in Alexander Payne’s road picture, “Nebraska.”

“Nebraska’ is based on my family,” said Nelson. “And Woody is inspired by my dad, a mechanic, a very trusting and nice guy.

“I borrowed as much as I could from real life,” Nelson said. “The people you see are very much like the people I grew up with. Hard working farmers who didn’t talk much but had these wicked senses of humor.”

Film veteran Dern says Woody is the role of a lifetime. “I’ve been in good films, but I’ve never had a part that just hit me immediately, like, ‘This is something I can do,’” said Dern.

Sometimes the film is as bleak as its black and white scenery, but Payne said color was never an option.

“When I first read the script, the nature of the screenplay suggested a visual style in black and white,” said Payne. “Ninety per cent of the movies I watch are in black and white.” “The studio was completely against it. Everyone was against it except me and the cinematographer.”

But Payne got his way, and “Nebraska” has collected several Academy Award nominations, including best picture, actor, supporting actress, cinematography, directing and original screenplay.

Aca Deca’s Gold

[From Aca Deca, front page]

6,666 as a varsity,” Block said, “the highest varsity score we have ever gotten at Poly. To give you an idea of how high that score is, she outscored her brother, who is currently going to Carnegie Mellon, by 84 points. She scored 24 points higher than a student who right now has a likely letter to get into Yale. For a varsity student to score that well is huge. And she was not the highest score on the team.”

Seniors Jihae Snyder and Kristianne Villarta won gold medals in interview and speech. Mayra Benitez won a gold medal in speech and a silver in interview.

Shannon Snyder won a silver medal in interview.

Two students, Almonte and Jihae Snyder, had over 7000 total points.

The current scoring rules make every competition critical, with little or no margin for error.

“We didn’t do bad in the Super Quiz. It’s just that the way that they now score, the Super Quiz is worth so many points that you can literally jump over another team just by having an outstanding Super Quiz performance,” Block said. “The North Hollywood team came in 12th and did just that.”

“If one person has an off day, we

don’t get to go to state,” Block said. “We were a little flat at the Super Quiz. One or two people got nervous and didn’t give their best performance. Had we been on fire there, we would probably be going to state right now.”

Block said he was pleased with the team’s performance, however. “They were all reliable,” Block said. “They pretty much all scored what I asked them for. Six members of the team got medals. To give you an idea of how difficult this is, the team that went to state two years ago got only four medals total. This team had three times as many.”

Stress is always a factor during the months and months of intensive preparation and study.

“A large part of Academic Decathlon is dealing with stress,” Block said. “The material is too hard, it does take time to do. The question is, now that you’re in a stressful situation and you’ve committed to doing well and your team mates are depending on you, how do you handle this? And a lot of it results in team mates respecting each other and trying to learn how to manage their time.”

“No one likes stress,” Block said. “How everyone handles stress varies. At times, it resulted in them

working harder. At times it resulted in them walking out of the room, at times it resulted in students getting ill. So stress can vary.

“We have a phrase in Academic Decathlon, ‘pressure is a privilege.’ Learning to handle stress is very important to succeed later in life. It’s nice to give students that type of stress and see how they handle it and how they grow. Many of the students on this team are much better off having gone through the experience. In fact, all of them are, because they put a little extra stress on them now.”

Testing

[From Poly, front page]

Testing will take place in the main campus library as well as rooms 84, 90 and 96.

Approximately 100 students will test each day and testing is expected to last seven days. Juniors will miss their period two classes. The bell schedule will be normal.

Juniors will either take Algebra 2 or Summative Math, depending on their level of Mathematics.

According to Principal Ari Bennett, Poly’s magnet will receive one cart of iPad tablets and the comprehensive site will receive three carts, all with keyboards, to help with testing.

Bennett and Stuckey have yet to determine the logistics on how the iPads will be implemented into the testing process.

Students will learn whether they are taking just the English, just the math or both after they log in. Students will log in with their state student IDs.

No one at Poly has seen the online test, including Bennett and Stuckey.

Bennett expects that the state will use Smarter Balanced assessments for all core subject areas in ninth grade, tenth grade and eleventh grade.

Tenth graders will take the CST Life Science test April 7 and 8 during period one. The CST will remain in its traditional test booklet and answer document format.

SLC Restructured

[From SLCs, front page]

“It’s going to be a process,” said Bennett. “It’s not going to be one person making the decision.”

“At the next SLC meeting, what will likely happen is that we’ll come up with proposals and create a draft of what it would look like,” Bennett said. “Based on that, there will be a discussion, revision, etc, and after that we’ll take it to the SLCs and departments to collect additional feedback and then we would refine from there until we have something that satisfies everyone.”

Measuring the effectiveness of the restructured SLCs is also under discussion.

“We decided to look into criteria that could provide that information,” Bennett said, “and one of the subjects we decided to look into to make surveys for our students to determine if this structure is working well for them and do they have the support they need.”

“We’re also going to look at the percentage of students that complete a post secondary plan,” Bennett said.

“We designated certain data indicators to monitor a student’s progress,” Chang said. “One is the CTE passage completion rate, because the whole point in the SLCs is to be career and college ready.”

“We will look at their SAT scores and SAT participation rates. If they both rise, then we know we’re doing a good job.”

“For example, if a student says he or she is really interested in cooking, then that student’s counselor would put them in a one-year class with Mr. Higgins. We would check whether or not they finished all four classes or if they dropped out after the first.”

“If we see a student did well in their cooking class and wants to continue, then we would set them on a career path of culinary arts to help them continue on to college or get a job after high school,” Chang said.

“One of the ideas of an upper grade SLC is to provide more indi-

vidualized support for our students,” Bennett said, “and so that would be a requirement of the new houses, to go through and sit down with every student and to determine what their hopes and dreams are and what they plan to do after high school and help them create a “road guide” of sorts to achieve their goal.”

“Our biggest fear is that once you graduate and we shake your hand, the next day you don’t know what to do,” Bennett said. “We want to make sure to avoid that by having a career pathway for every student, whether it be a university, community college, a certification program, or even an intern job.”

The process for assigning core teachers to each house is also undetermined at this time.

“We haven’t planned that yet,” Chang said. “There’s really no set course, but we do plan on preventing one house being cooler or better than the other.”

“I think we will be able to prevent preferences, like students currently have in our system,” Chang said, “by not dividing the electives so that we don’t make any one house look more appealing.”

“We will also focus more on the students future by helping them prepare for college with more “college prep” like classes. And each House will be in charge of themselves, not me or the vice principal.

Bennett remains optimistic.

“I would make the point that all schools, new or old, have difficulties implementing anything,” Bennett said, “although old schools have the trouble of already enrolled students.”

“In my mind, what makes Poly unique is that we have had a lot of success implementing new policies, because we are good listeners and can be flexible and make adjustments along the way.”

“The ninth grade center was created in an adjustment process and had enough success that we decided to create a tenth grade center,” Bennett said.

Unified Basketball

[From Parrots, front page]

character,” Ramirez said. “I want them to gain pride and be able to walk around our campuses, out in the street and the world with their heads held up high.”

Parrot senior Kevin Cervantes said the tournament helps the special needs students feel like champions.

“They are something special,” Cervantes said. “We are trying to help them get a victory and win a trophy. It’s all about them, and that’s how it should be.”

Melissa Erdmann, a manager at LAUSD Sports for Special Olym-

pics Southern California, said the competition is not about winners and losers.

“I think the biggest thing is for the students to realize that everyone has differences,” Erdmann said. “It’s just a matter of embracing people with differences and it becoming the norm.”

Erdmann also sees this event becoming more widespread in the future.

“We are seeing a high level interest from other LAUSD schools, so we will continue to see this branching out into different leagues,” Erdmann said.

SPORTS



By Adrianna Garcia, Nicolette Reneau,
Yesenia Carretero and Christine Maralit
Staff Writers

Photo by Lirio Alberto

LADY PARROT STARTERS: Monica Perla (top left), Bella Lopez, Stephanie Gurrola, Isabelle Chaidez (top right) and Elenoa Taulaki.

STAR POWER

ISABELLE CHAIDEZ,
freshman point guard and shooting guard.

I have to look inside all the time and look at the other shooters to know if they're open. I call out plays and become the tempo of the five. If they forget what we have to do or they're falling behind I try to remind them.

The Monroe game stands out because we lost. We weren't following the rules. We thought we had the game and it would be an easy win so we just lost our intensity.

Batiste wants me to look up and practice on my left for the big games.

We've been winning so often because we're playing and thinking like a team. We work well with each other.

I think the five of us bring more intensity and speed to the team. That really helps.

We do both kinds of defense. Man on man is better for us because it's a challenge. There's pressure and footwork involved. If we ever want to play in college we'll be used to it.

When Batiste told me I was not only becoming a starter but one on varsity, I was shocked. It's not common for a freshman to be on varsity and especially be a starter. It was a big opportunity for me. I never thought I could get into varsity in my freshman year. It feels great. But it's a lot of pressure because you start off at your own speed with JV and these girls are faster. I was playing slower but now I'm used to the speed and it's pretty easy.

I went to Byrd middle school.

I practice my basketball even when we're out of season. My older brother Gabriel plays for the boys freshman team here.

Me and my brother started playing when we were young. My mom wanted us in sports at a young age. She thought it would make our lives better and have a better childhood than she did. We played on park teams.

I think I'm going to play basketball for all four years of high school. I want to play for college too.

BELLA LOPEZ,
junior shooting guard

I have some responsibilities off the court. If any girls are sad or down, I try to cheer them up. On the court, I pretty much just play my part, which is shooting. I contribute that way.

The second Monroe game stands out. We lost the first time but we won the second time. The second one was probably our best game. We played hard the whole game and we played together as a team. It was just awesome. I don't remember the score but I know we won by six points. It was a close game.

Defensively, Batiste wants me to make sure the person I'm guarding is limited on their points. Offensively, all I have to do is score.

We've done well this season. I think it's because we got closer this year, so I think that really helps, having that chemistry. And of course, our coach. She really helped us.

We do a lot of man-to-man defense, but it depends on who we play. I'm more comfortable with man-to-man.

Sometimes I feel pressure to score a certain number of points during the game. If I don't, then I feel like I didn't do my part.

I want to go to college out of state. I like Boulder University in Colorado. In California, I like UC San Diego.

I'd like to go out-of-state, just for the location. I'd like to be somewhere different. I want to get away from LA because it's ugly.

My little brother plays basketball for Poly. He's on the JV team. He's 14.

We started playing because our parents just didn't want us to be lazy. They set us up in the park leagues. I was twelve when I started playing. I'm also on Poly's track team but I definitely like basketball better. I hate track.

I don't really have a favorite basketball team, but I do have certain players that I like. I worship Kevin Durant.

STEPHANIE GURROLA,
senior power forward, center and post-up

We set up at the block, post up, call for the ball, and the guards usually pass the ball to us. We do a quick drop-step and shoot the basket. We get most of the rebounds.

I guard the biggest girl on the other team and I block a lot of shots. I'm 5'9. I rebound and if I get trapped I pass the ball to someone else to make the shot.

The rematch with Monroe on January 24th was big for us. The first time we played them in league we lost by one point. They were undefeated in league for the last 54 games and we ended that streak. That put us at the top of our leagues.

It was a big game because everyone was involved, we all communicated with each other and we all played like one big team. We all supported each other.

My jump shot percentage is around 60%. I get like 6-7 rebounds a game and a couple of blocks a game.

I was trying to get a basketball scholarship, but it just didn't really work out. Pierce recruited me to play basketball so I'm going to play for them.

I'm interested in two fields, athletic training and pediatric oncology so I can work with kids. I'm going to Pierce because I don't really know what I want to do, so once I figure it out I'm going to transfer.

I practice during the season, the pre-season, and the after season because I'm on a travel team. It's like a club team outside of school.

I'm in track. I've done long jump since 10th grade and triple jump since 11th grade.

I play all year round. I have friends come over to shoot hoops at my house or we'll go to the park and play.

I started playing by myself in elementary and then I joined a team in middle school, but it wasn't really official until freshman year.

MONICA PERLA,
junior point guard.

I bring the ball down and pass it to other people or take it for myself to make the basket. I have to be a leader on the court and tell them where to go. My strongest areas are dribbling the ball and looking for people that are open.

I'm 4'10. Sometimes it does cause trouble because a lot of people are taller than me but sometimes it's a good thing because since they're taller I'm faster than them.

I don't think I did as well when we played Monroe. It was really competitive. Allison and Kiana were the biggest competition for that game because they're the big scorers.

I'm on a travel team so I play outside of school when I can and work on my game. I've been on a travel team since last year. It's in Balboa Hills.

I started playing in seventh grade at Madison Middle School for fun. Ninth grade was the first year I joined to play competitively. I wasn't really good. I was a benchwarmer.

I worked over the summer with my brother so he helped me on my dribbling and my shooting and I got better. Batiste saw that I was getting better. In tenth grade, I was finally a starter and that was my goal. That was what made me want to work harder I was tired of being on the bench.

I like basketball because I feel comfortable when I play. I feel like I can be myself and I feel like I'm awesome when I play.

My brother influenced me to play basketball. He didn't play or anything but he was good at it. I would play with him before I ever joined the basketball team. My friends also influenced me because they played too.

I run track here. I've been doing it since my freshman year. I do the triple jump, the 400, and the four by one. I'm best at the four by one because it's not only me it's four people. It gets me faster and conditioned for basketball.

ELENOA TAULAKI,
senior center and post up

I think the most difficult part of being a basketball player is when I'm thinking negative or doing something for the first time and I'm nervous. You know those times when you over analyze yourself and it gets to your head.

Last year was our first time in playoffs. We played Sylmar here and it's funny, because we're playing Sylmar again this year but over there. We were tied in OT and we made a basket, so that meant we're in the lead. And I turned and knocked over a girl to get the basket but instead of running down the court, which is what I should've been doing, I helped her get up because I saw her struggling to get back up. And that's what got me nominated for a Good Sportsmanship Award for NCIF with Ms. McEwen. We won the game too.

I would like to play pro ball if it's possible. Why not?

After high school, I hope to get into a four year college and start over like it's a freshman year.

I was interested in UCLA for shot put but now I'm pretty much okay with any school.

In five years, I'll be hopefully getting my bachelor's degree in psychology. And coaching at a school with basketball, volleyball or track.

I was raised everywhere. I was born in Riverside but my mom and dad wanted to raise me in a different environment so we moved to Spokane, Washington in a small town called Springdale. Spokane's pretty white washed.

We lived in Spokane until sixth grade. Then my dad got called on a mission to Reno, Nevada. He's a church missionary. After Reno, I moved to Ontario, California. Halfway through my freshman year at Chaffey High School, I moved here and went to Poly.

I was in basketball there but I wasn't really committed. I was more into volleyball and track.

SPORTS

WINTER WRAPUP

BREAKING NEWS

Poly Gets Top Seed in Semis

Sylmar is next after fourth seed Parrots' 75-68 win over South Gate Wednesday.

CIF CITY SECTION DIV II QUARTER FINALS					
QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
SOUTH GATE	12	23	19	14	68
POLY	16	13	24	22	75



Photo by David Simms

WINNERS: Junior Jose Esqueda dunks during Poly's 61-53 first round Division II win over Maya Angelou Friday at Poly.

Boys Wrestling Fifth at Regionals

By Joanna Rosales
Staff Writer

Poly's Boys Wrestling team was eliminated in regional play at San Fernando High on Saturday, ending their season.

"Since we are a first year school, a lot of our wrestlers weren't seeded high because they lacked experience," said Parrot head coach Terry Gillard. "A lot of our wrestlers had to battle from the bottom in the first round, facing number one seeds."

Poly had four wrestlers finish fifth, including Jesse Perez at 126 pounds, Josh Hartman at 172 pounds, David Serrano at 182 pounds, and Robert Benavidez at 220 pounds. Anthony Rivera at 197 pounds placed 6th.

Poly needed to finish first, second or third to advance to the City Championship.

The regional tournament featured teams from 13 high schools. "Some of these schools that have been around for years," said Parrot head coach Terry Gillard. "Their wrestlers have had four or five years experience and got first, second or third."

"Our guys were up against some of the toughest wrestlers in the region, including Ventura County and Orange County," Gillard said. "In our region, we had two wrestlers who placed in state. One of them won a state championship."

"It was a tough season. For our wrestlers to step up to the arena for the first time and for us to get five places in regionals was satisfactory to me," Gillard said.

The girls wrestling team placed third in the City Championships at San Fernando High on Friday with 146 points. First place San Fernando had 179 points and Panorama City scored 172 points.

The boys finished second in the East Valley League at 3-3.

Boys BBall (22-8, 9-3)

League: second place behind Verdugo's perfect 12-0.
Streak: two losses in last three regular season games.
Seeding: 4
Playoffs: 75-68 win vs South Gate in the second round of the Division II playoffs.
Next: semi-finals vs Sylmar at Kennedy High on Mon.

Girls BBall (19-9, 11-1)

League: tied for first with Monroe.
Streak: 11 wins
Seeding: 9
Playoffs: 50-49 loss to Sylmar in the first round of the Division III playoffs.

Boys Soccer (7-7-5, 5-4-3)

League: fourth place behind Monroe, Chavez and Arleta.
Streak: two wins in last nine games.
Seeding: 17
Playoffs: 1-0 loss to South East (19-8-6, 6-4-2) in the first round of the Division I playoffs.

Girls Soccer (4-9-5, 3-5-4)

League fourth place behind Verdugo, Arleta and NoHo.
Streak: four losses and two ties in last six games.
Seeding: 20
Playoffs: 2-0 loss to Huntington Park in the first round of the Division I playoffs.



Photo by Lirio Alberto

PLAYOFFS: Parrot Bella Lopez in Poly's 50-49 loss to the Spartans in a first-round Division III playoff game at Sylmar.

Tough Loss for Lady Parrots

The Lady Parrots basketball squad suffered a 50-49 first-round playoff exit at Sylmar Friday, despite a 20-point fourth quarter.

Junior Monica Perla scored a three-pointer with 30 seconds left, but Poly couldn't get the ball back before the clock expired.

The Spartans built a nine-point lead in the third after leading by four at halftime.

"I wouldn't say they dominated us in the 3rd quarter," said Parrot head coach Tremeka Batiste. "They were up by 13 at the end of it, but the score for that quarter was 16-7. Sylmar averaged its points. We just couldn't make a basket. We missed layups and free throws."

Senior Gurrola finished the night with 14 points and nine rebounds and junior Bella Lopez added 11 points and five rebounds

"When your back's against the wall, you can either crumble or go down swinging," said Batiste. "Stephanie Gurrola started swinging. In the 4th quarter, she scored seven of our 20 points and was on her way to scoring more until she fouled out"

Gurrola also fouled out on a play that appeared to be teammate senior Elenoa Taulaki's mistake.

Taulaki pulled down 14 rebounds, ten on the defensive board, scored nine points and had two blocked shots, but was three for nine from the line. Gurrola was two for six in that category.

Poly freshman Isabella Chaidz scored eight points, including a three, and was three for four from the line.

The defeat broke an 11-game win streak by the Lady Parrots.

"Both teams should have been seeded higher," Batiste said, "and should not have faced each other in a first round game."

Batiste contended that the people who ranked the teams in Division III didn't seem to know much about the teams.

"It was like the teams were seeded blindly," Batiste said. "We finished third in league last year and had a weaker schedule, but we were seeded higher then we were this year. Finishing first in league after facing elite teams in the preseason didn't factor in our placement."

Poly finished league play tied for first with Monroe.

"I'm still going through the 'what if's,'" said Batiste. "I need another week to get over the hurt before I can really analyze the game with a clear mind. The only thing going through my mind right now is it wasn't supposed to end so soon."

QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
POLY	13	9	7	20	49
SYLMAR	14	12	16	8	50

Wrestlers Three

The OPTIMIST recently interviewed three top wrestlers on Poly's new squad. Here's what they said.

Tristan Anguiano, Senior

The toughest part of wrestling is lasting the whole six minutes. Fatigue sets in and your whole body gets tired. It is hard wrestling all six minutes because you are using pure muscle and a lot of cardio. You have to have a lot of stamina and endurance.

There are three rounds and each one is six minutes. It doesn't sound that tiring but when you're wrestling, you're using every muscle and it's tiring.

The hardest matches were where they put me up two weight classes, wrestling guys 20-30 pounds heavier than me. I had tired them out and it made me tired because I had to drain all their muscle and stamina.

I feel like a lot of us did really well, including me. I was bumped up two weight classes that day and a lot of us did what we could. Chavez is a three-year team, we are a first-year team. I'm very proud that we actually came in second compared to the other schools like Monroe and Vaughn. They've been wrestling three to four years as well. As a first-year team, we have come along really well, from our varsity to JV and our girls.



Yahira "Rebecca" Manchame, senior

Wrestling is about your mentality and your confidence level. Once you step out on that mat, it's just you and your opponent, nobody else. Your team is there to support you, but once you get on the mat your goal is to take them down and pin them as fast as you can. The faster, the better. It's less work and it takes less effort and you get less tired.

So far, I've gotten two muscle sprains at practice, one on my calf, where I had to be in crutches for two weeks, and one on my arm. We were playing this game called king of the ring and pretty much you have to stay within the circle while people wrestle. If your two feet were out, you lost. This guy's knee landed on my arm, so my whole arm got sprained. It lasted for two or three days.

Wrestling is coed, so we practice all together. We split into groups, but I like to wrestle guys more because I know that they can take it.



Eduardo Contreras, Sophomore

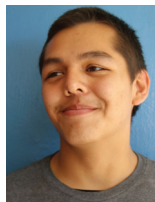
The toughest part of wrestling is not knowing who you are fighting. They could be bigger than you or stronger than you and that's pretty hard to do.

My hardest match was Monroe, because the guy tried to purposely hit me twice, but I won. He almost broke my arm and he head butted me.

The Chavez match was pretty good because we tried our best and we are a first-year team, so it's still pretty big that we went this far. Even though we didn't take first, it is still a pretty good place.

We could've worked harder and practiced a little bit more to get the feel on how to beat them.

I'm hoping that we keep the program and that nobody messes it up and that we get stronger and that we get more medals.



Coach Batiste on the Basketball Girls

By Tanneshia Acosta
Staff Writer

The Lady Parrot varsity basketball squad ended their season with a 50-49 loss to Sylmar in the first round of the CIF Division III playoffs.

Poly finished tied for first in the East Valley League with Monroe, winning their last 11 games.

Varsity girls basketball coach Tremeka Batiste reflected on the year. "We made a lot of progress since the start of league," said Batiste. "We had a rough start. We lost the first five games. So to turn it around and win league was a great accomplishment."

"We didn't have the confidence, we weren't whole in the beginning," Batiste said. "We were missing Monica Perla. When Monica came back, the team got their confidence and was whole again. When she came back, we started winning."

"Our league play was great. The girls played with confidence. They played like the team I thought they could be and made me proud."