

The Poly Optimist

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JOHN H. FRANCIS POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL

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Photo By Erick Robles

POLY SHINES DURING RECENT VISIT BY NEW SUPERINTENDENT: *Poly principal Dr. Fries-Martinez presents Superintendent Brewer and LAUSD Chief Instructional officer, Secondary Ed, Robert Collins with Parrot Presents during their recent visit to Poly.*

Trimis Goes Downtown

Multi-tasking Parrot assistant principal Ed Trimis now Manual Arts new principal.

By Jennifer Rivera
Optimist Staff Writer

After 6 successful years at Poly, Assistant Principal Ed Trimis left to take on the challenge of principal at Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles.

While at Poly, Trimis' duties included running the Freshman Center, overseeing aspiring administrators program (LAYERS) and WASC.

Among all his assignments at Poly, Trimis overall enjoyed the two years he worked at the Freshman Center.



Photo By Erick Robles

OUTSTANDING DUO: *Ed Trimis (left) with Vice Admiral (RET) David Brewer III.*

“Because I feel I became very connected with the teachers,” said Trimis.

Trimis is also a fan of music and arts, seeing the music program grow made him happy.

[See Trimis Page 2]



Photo By Efrain Rodriguez

ROYALTY AT LAST: *Juan Martinez and Trizzia Tan.*

Homecoming 2006: Phantom Nights

By Diana Argueta & Jennifer Rivera
Optimist Staff Writers

On Saturday, October 28, Poly students gathered in the boy's Gym where this year's Homecoming Dance was held. Besides celebrating the culmination of Homecoming Week, the dance also celebrated the football team's victory at the homecoming game the previous night making this night even more special.

Poly's "activities policy" was rigidly enforced. Students without any Poly I.D. were not allowed entry even if they were part of the football team. Reportedly, three team members were not allowed in for lack of I.D. but the party went on without them.

The Halloween-inspired theme of the dance was "Phantom Nights" and, to fit the theme, the gym was deco-

rated in black and gold while students were encouraged to wear masks.

However, the main event, as always, was the coronation of Homecoming court. At 9:30 p.m., the dance came to a stop, the lights turned on, and everyone's attention directed to a corner of the gym where Juan Martinez and Trizzia Tan were announced as Homecoming King and Queen, respectively.

They did not receive their crowns at the time but Juan Martinez says he still felt, "Excited, butterflies all over." The dance then resumed and the DJ continued playing everything from hip hop to merengue, rock to reggaeton for the rest of the night.

The lights came on for the last time at 10 p.m., ending the dance.

Poly Welcomes Vice Admiral (RET) Brewer III

Poly's SLC's are models for success.

By Diana Argueta & Leah Tanner
Optimist Staff Writers

Newly-appointed Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent David L. Brewer III spent an afternoon at Poly recently looking at programs and instruction. Brewer, often referred to as the "Admiral," chose Poly because many of the programs already in place here may eventually be adopted by other high schools in the district.

"Your high school was selected because you guys are a great school," said LAUSD official Michelle King. "You guys are doing so much with the small learning communities, particularly your 9th grade and 10th grade houses and your 4 by 4 schedule. You have a lot of different aspects of what a comprehensive high school has to offer."

"We felt honored and privileged," said Poly Principal Janis Fries-Martinez about Brewer's choice.

A small group of district officials including Jim Morris, District 2 Superintendant and Maria Ochoa, Director Secondary Schools, along with Poly staff, ROTC cadets and Fries-Martinez, accompanied Brewer on his campus tour.

Brewer was taken to the Freshman Center first, followed by a short visit to a 9th grade math class.

As he made his way across the PE area later, Brewer shook hands and posed for pictures with students, wishing everyone good luck.

Next were visits to 10th grade English classes and the 10th Grade Center, where Brewer discussed the purpose and structure of the Center and joked with staff members.

He set a lighthearted tone throughout the day, downplaying the gravity of his high profile visit.

After the 10th grade Center, Brewer visited an Algebra 1 class. He talked briefly to a couple of students, asking how they were and what they were learning.

Brewer's last stop was the campus library, where he was introduced to Poly faculty and staff who are members of the

principal's Instructional Cabinet. He made a point to converse briefly with each member.

"I saw somebody that genuinely cared about all the people in the room," Fries-Martinez said later, "and took the time to find out where 40-plus people had grown up and what they do at Poly."

After the introductions, LAUSD Chief Instructional Officer Bob Collins talked about the visit. "What we saw at Poly today was a passion for kids," said Collins. "Not many schools have the commitment that was shown here today."

Brewer addressed the group

[See Brewer Page 3]

Bio Facts:

- Vice Admiral David L. Brewer III, born May 19, 1946, was raised in Orlando, FL and comes from a family of teachers. He became a third generation college graduate when he received a Bachelor of Science degree from Prairie View A&M University in the 60's on the advice and support of his English teacher aunt. He also graduated as part of the first Navy ROTC class at the historically black college.

- He joined the Navy with a master's degree in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College.

- He made the Navy his life and spent his first couple of years in service working to recruit other blacks into the Navy. Brewer later became a Navy Vice Admiral and Chief of the Military Sealift Command, overseeing supply chains for fuel, ammunition and equipment, and managing 8,000 people and 124 ships.

- As Chief of the Military Sealift Command, he was recently in charge of providing combat supplies for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as support for victims of the Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina.

- In addition to this, he was Vice Chief of the Education and Training Command, which oversees sailors' academic and personal development. He did not teach but led training for low-level readers in the Navy.

- Throughout his busy schedule, Brewer also found time to give "pep talks" to young people about staying in school and keeping out of gangs where he often spoke of his own formula for success: "Good habits plus goals minus drugs equals success."

- He finds inspiration in self-help and motivational books such as "How Good People Make Tough Choices" which helps shape his own philosophies.

- He retired as a decorated, three star Navy Officer in March 2006 after 35 years in service. Soon after, now former LAUSD superintendent Roy Romer announced that he would retire as soon as a successor could be named.

- He currently lives with his wife of 29 years, Richardene "Deanie" Brewer, a teacher, and has a 26-year-old daughter named Stacey who is a lawyer and works in New York.

THE POLY OPTIMIST

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the Editor are accepted and encouraged for topics relevant to our readers. Letters to be submitted must be typed or neatly printed in ink and must have the signature of the writer. Editors reserve the right to determine which issue the letter will be published in, and the right to edit the letter for grammar, length, and structure.

Correction Errors: In the case of errors, a written correction will be made in the following issue of the newspaper.

Trimis Moves Once Again

[Trimis From Page 1]

"It's been wonderful seeing the music program grow," said Trimis. "I'll always cherish the time I spent with the music and arts teachers, Isaacs, Patterson, Showalter... the entire group!"

Although very proud of all his accomplishments Trimis feels his most successful endeavor was the Freshman Center.

"The effect it had on our entire Poly school program and the rest of the district. It really is far-reaching. It's hard to argue with success, this is why so many schools are using some of the ideas we piloted."

Other triumphant projects Trimis worked on at Poly are the Tardy Sweeps, the Saturday Alternative to Suspension Program, and the Poly Renaissance in Education Project (SLC Program).

Trimis wants to see students "break through" academically.

"Improved academic achievement, SLC's, 9th and 10th grade houses, 4x4, and other improvements in school climate are the important ones."

Trimis said many encouraging words about our Parrots.

"Poly is such a wonderful place with wonderful kids. We have artists, we have brilliant kids, and we have kids who care. You want positives? Look at the toy drives, the blood drives, the Thanksgiving meal drive, AFJROTC, Peer Mentors, and all of the great artists. Our journalism class is second to none! I could go on and on!" Trimis noted.

As an A.P. you have many duties around campus, but it is important to stay positive and energetic, just as Trimis did.

"You need to see the good around you or you simply can't function. There are problems in every school in every part of the city."

Among great memories he had at Poly he fondly remembers when the school won KHS F.M. radio station's Campus Invasion Contest and "The Calling" performed in the Polygon, playing bagpipes at graduation, Freshman Breakfasts, Awards Nights and Twilight School Celebrations.

Born in Thessaloniki, Greece, Trimis was raised in New York, Tennessee, San Francisco and Half Moon Bay.

"I played piano in the LA Raiders Band at the Coliseum when they were here for one season," says Trimis. "It was cool."

He also played piano and directed a music review called "Broadway at Great America."

Less glamorous jobs were working in a pizza restaurant and being a cashier at a burger place, which he quit to play a \$50 gig with the rhythm section from the CSULA Jazz Band.

Trimis attended San Francisco State University for two years studying Music and Cal State Los Angeles for the completion of his Bachelor's degree in Music, Masters in both Music Education and Educational Administration and credentials in Music and Educational Administration.

Trimis is married with four children, Jessica graduating from Bucknell University and will teach in the Teach for America Program, Nicolas, 19, plays trumpet and guitar and is in Puerto Rico on a mission, Olivia 16, who will be playing drums in the Tournament of Roses Honor Band in the Rose Parade New Year's Day and Alexander, 11.

His first administrative job was as a specialist in the Grants Assistance Unit in the Central Offices of LAUSD for 13 months. Trimis learned to write grants, and how to do presentations to the School Board.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Scores Aren't Only Measurement

To Poly Optimist,

With respect, I disagreed with your title. The API is not or should not be the sole arbiter of our success (and in my view not a very accurate one), but other measures are far more important, for example: how many of our students will be decent, ethical people in the workplace? How many of our students will have learned to respect not only their superiors, but their co-workers and subordinates as well? If we impart not just knowledge and facts, but good values, social responsibility and ability to question and reason as educated citizens of a free and informed electorate, then we are succeeding. Those are part of our school ESLR's, but they can't be measured by standardized tests.

- Larry A. Carstens,
English Teacher

Students Concerned

To Poly Optimist,

We should put a stop to all the pollution in the air. Carbon dioxide and other air pollution that is collection in the atmosphere are some causes of global warming and the trend is accelerating. We should put existing technologies for building cleaner cars and more modern electricity generators into widespread use. That way, the air we breathe in won't be so polluted. We need new laws requiring industry to cut emissions of global warming polluting. From the looks of it, planet Earth is just getting more polluted and dirty, but hopefully in time we can turn around and put a stop to global warming.

- Rudy Cardenas,
Karen Carlos and Oscar Sanchez

An Insight To Winning

By Jennifer Rivera
Optimist Staff Writer

The King and Queen share their responses to the Optimist.

Q: How did you feel when you found out you won King/Queen?

Juan: Shocked and excited, butterflies all over.

Trizzia: Shocked, excited, wasn't expecting to win.

Q: Did you expect to win?

Juan: Sort of, but my big competition was the "star" of the football team, Cesar Valencia.

Trizzia: I was going against two well-known girls. It was a big competition.

Q: Do you get along with many students on campus?

Do you think that helped you win your homecoming title?

Juan: Yes I do, going to random people and telling them to vote for me, being nice.

Trizzia: Yeah, I try to. It helped me win.

Q: What is a goal you hope to achieve after you graduate high school?

Juan: Start a career, go to a 4-year university, and eventually work for a magazine.

Trizzia: There's a few, I want to go to school, hopefully fit school and work at the same time. Just be able to go to college.



The Optimist Wishes Everyone A Happy Thanksgiving!!!

OMG! Addicted to Text

Are today's teenagers addicted to text messaging?

An inside look to the world of a teenagers addiction.

By Jennifer Miranda
Optimist Staff Writer

Phones offer so much today, from free minutes after 9p.m, to free mobile-to-mobile, pay-as-you-go- plans, and even unlimited text messaging, but when does "Unlimiting" reach it's limit?

If you don't know about texting, think half e-mail, half cell phone conversation. They are written messages you send from your cell phone to someone else's cell phone.

Texting has become a teenager's addiction. Text messaging is the new e-mail. Industry experts say Americans now send about 12 billion text messages every month and the number continues to grow rapidly.

In 2005, the Mobile Data Association reached the highest record volume, when 133 million messages were sent. In the first six months of 2006, the number doubled according to CTIA-The Wireless Association, which calls themselves the voice of the industry.

A recent survey found that 80 percent of Americans aged 18 to 29 own cell phones, and 65 percent of those text message on a regular basis.

No longer does a teenager need a pen to write and pass a note across the room.

"It's so weird how some [teens] write text so fast, and without looking, it's like they're zombies," said Yaneth Lupian.

Ms. Shertzer challenged 12 of her students to survive a weekend sacrificing an electronic device that they used daily such as computer, TV, video games, radio, microwave, and of course, the phone. The catch was that the



teen would not have any contact with the item, the reward was extra-credit. Coming to the end of the weekend, only 1/3 of the students passed the challenge.

"Seeing the kids that actually succeeded in the challenge was really impressive," Shertzer said, "A lot of them realized how caught up their lives are wrapped up in technology."

The following are examples of "Text Messages":

LOL: Laugh Out Loud- **OMG:** Oh My Gosh- **TTYL:** Talk To You Later- **G2G:** Got To Go- **TCCIC:** Take Care Cuz I Care- **ROFL:** Rolling on the Floor Laughing- **KIP:** Keep In Touch- **<3:** Love- There's plenty more.

There are so many forms of texting, "I always send chain letters to everyone in my phonebook... there goes at least 5 bucks, in one message" said Lupian. Not only are there chain messages, but there are picture messages, and some phones even offer media messages. The question remains unsolved, whether or not teens abuse text messaging.

Industrial Model a Bad Fit For Students

English teacher Mischa Martin says politics is spoiling education.

By Rimon Elkotbeid
Optimist Staff Writer

In high school, Poly English teacher Mischa Martin was known as "the girl with many opinions." She hasn't changed.

"In my earlier years I used to have more time to teach Dante and Goethe," Martin continued. "Mastering that kind of content helps our students not only to hold their own at the top schools, but also to thrive. We teachers are pretty much in the same boat, longing to teach content and skill to our students in ways we know that work. Learning what works and what doesn't is what teachers do through years of dedication and experience."

Every curriculum and every class today is developed to accommodate the needs of the tests. Courses are taught by what the test contains, not what the subject really is.

"For decades public schools

have been modeled after the industrialized model," said Martin. "The kids are treated like cars, put through the same assembly line (school system), given the same parts (classes) and given the same requirements (programs). Problem is students aren't cars. That's why changing that model to small learning communities (SLC) is important. In many ways, SLC's break this assembly



Photo By Rimon Elkotbeid

STUDENTS AREN'T CARS: Martin and her views on the system.

bly line model."

Martin, a member of Poly's Math and Science magnet, be-

lieves one of the biggest problems with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) policy is that the treatment of teachers is always overlooked.

"If you look at how much less teachers are paid today and how they are treated for all they do it's a travesty. I mean, if we can't get what we need, which is a raise and better health benefits, for the important job we do, what else is there to do other than just strike, referring to ongoing contract negotiations" said Martin.

Martin never anticipated being a teacher, she said. It happened by accident.

She had a number of jobs prior to teaching, such as working at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and being an International and Faculty Student Advisor at the University of Wisconsin where she attended school.

"I hated the studio job I got from my friends, and since I had a masters degree in English, I decided to teach," she said. "By the end of my first year, I knew I would never do

Superintendent Brewer Sees Classes First Hand

[Brewer, from Page 1]

next, adding his own positive comments.

"I saw two things here today," Brewer said. "I saw teachers teaching and children learning."

"I looked at your test scores," he said, "the API, and I said "what will it take to get more of this curve?" That is, by 2008 to be at 700, by 2009 at 750, and by 2010 at 800. I'm going to challenge you. I believe in stretch goals; that's how I grew up."

Acknowledging Poly's Title I status, Brewer said he knew it wouldn't be easy.

"There are socioeconomic factors that you all are dealing with out here that the average school does not have to deal with," he noted.

"I always tell black and brown kids that the playing field will never be level," Brewer said. "You better learn how to run uphill. The best runners in the world run uphill. I had to run uphill when I joined the Navy. 250 black officers out of 72,000. Believe me, I ran uphill. And that's why I was able to make it."

Like most reformers, Brewer also talked about change.

"There is one thing you are going to have to understand,"

he said. "Change is tough. You cannot keep doing the same thing and expect different results. You have to do something different. Working hard sometimes is not the right thing; you have to work smarter and different sometimes."

After his comments, Brewer



Photo By Erick Robles

OBSERVATION: Brewer observes student learning.

and his staff had a buffet-style lunch with the principal and her Instructional Cabinet in the library and then debriefed with Fries-Martinez before leaving Poly.

"He said he saw real instruction going on in the classroom," Fries-Martinez recalled. "He saw a lot of dynamic individuals, teachers, students. He really felt a warm atmosphere and he picked up a sense that this

was a real school that centered on improving student achievement and that learning is important at Poly."

"I saw him asking students rigorous questions. He asked math questions. He asked them 'What do you want to do when you graduate?'"

So I knew that he really was interested in students, not just what they were doing that day, but goals for their lives," said Fries-Martinez.

When the visit ended, the principal was satisfied that Brewer had gotten a look at "the heart and soul of Poly High School."

"He didn't say he didn't have time, he took the time to stay longer than he normally would have stayed to see those things," she said.

"It was a great day, a great success," said Fries-Martinez. "I've gotten feedback after feedback [from district officials who accompanied Brewer] that it was an incredible visit."

"Admiral Brewer had a chance to see a huge high school with almost 5,000 students," Fries-Martinez said, "how well run it is and how absolutely personalized and caring the staff is and how connected they are."

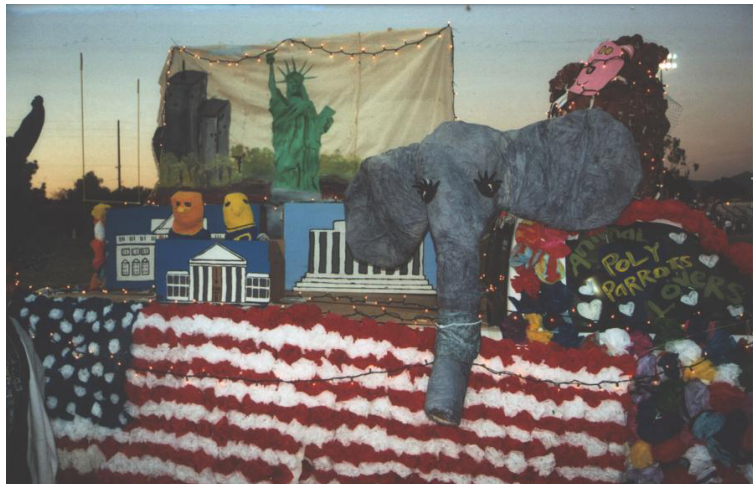


Photo By Efrain Rodriguez

ANIMALS ROCK THE PARADE: With hard work and massive dedication the Animal Lovers Club defended their winning streak taking home the prize!



Photo By Michelle Gonzalez

RE-ASSESSING: Poly Basketball Coaches look back.

A Look On The Season

Freshman basketball coach Joseph Hampel and sophomore counterpart Gregory Mack, along with General Manager Dave Bonino, assess the season.

By Michelle Gonzalez
& Meri Sarkisyan
Optimist Staff Writers

The Parrot freshmen and sophomore basketball teams just completed their 2006 seasons. Despite finishing with identical 3-7 records, coaches Joseph Hampel and Gregory Mack felt the two teams accomplished a lot. The Optimist sat down recently with Hampel and Mack for their views on the season. Below is that discussion.

Q: *Talk a little about the season - what went well, what did you struggle with, any surprises, games you lost that you should have won, challenges you didn't expect?*

JH: "A lot of people started out nervous and scared and eventually they started playing together and getting confidence in themselves and learning what we were trying to teach them."

GM: "Our season was pretty difficult. We have a lot of kids that we get in and we only have about 4 weeks to train them for everything, fundamentals, how to pass, and during the game it's more teaching so that's kind of hard."

Q: *What is the key to winning games in high school basketball?*

JH: "Fundamentals. A lot of these kids are not very good with fundamentals because they grew up in the parks and on the streets and you don't teach them fundamentals at those levels. So, when you get to the high school level, you have to have fundamentals."

GM: "Rebounds. High school is more of you're teaching, you're teaching how to pass. Varsity is coaching. You've got to run plays, you've got to have a strategy."

Q: *Would you say the season was successful and in what ways?*

JH: "I told these guys, this

is just a stepping stone for you guys. If anything, we got better as individuals and as teammates. I was happy for our kids, even though we didn't have a winning record."

GM: "I would say at the end, the way we came together. In the beginning, we would give up a lot, we would come out, we would destroy teams we would play hard, and then they would get down five, six points and they would give up, they would start yelling at each other. But in the last three games, we started to get together."

Q: *What do you think you accomplished this season?*

JH: "Just individual performances and gaining confidence in themselves and their teammates. What we started up with compared to what we ended up with is a big difference."

If I had my own little book of successful moments as a coach, it would be the players' individual improvements. We didn't have a winning record, but the way they got better throughout the season is what I'm very happy and glad to be a part of."

CSUN graduate Dave Bonino, who has been coaching at Poly for eight years, this year took the general manager duties for the frosh/soph program.

"Both teams went 3 and 7," Bonino noted. "But there was a lot of improvement from guys who could barely catch the ball in the beginning of the season to guys actually catching and making a play."

I think they came together as a team. At the beginning of the season it was nine individuals on both of the teams. Nobody knew each other. We only had two returnees, sophomores Omar Salazar and Joseph Ortiz. So I think that more than their record was the ability for them to work as a team."

Cable Shakes Sheiks, Defense Digs In

Parrots' fleet-footed running back and some gritty defensive plays provide plenty of football fireworks in 14-6 Poly win.

By Juan Carlos Sanchez
Optimist Staff Writer

Poly running back Terrell Cable ran for 163 yards on 20 carries and the Parrots won their Homecoming game 14-6.

Poly's defense made a strong showing early by forcing a punt on the opening Sheik drive, but the Parrots had to do the same after a failed 3rd down conversion.

Hollywood scored first on running back Gyasi Rivers' reception of a 35-yard pass from quarterback Freddy Garcia midway through the first quarter and the Sheiks were up 6-0 after a missed extra point.

Poly's first-half touchdown drive began with an interception by corner Ernest Walker. Runs by Cable and Valencia set up receiver Daniel Lopez, who caught a 12-yard pass from Sanchez in the end zone with 4:42 on the clock.

Poly led 7-6 at halftime.

A weak Hollywood kickoff and a strong return by Poly to start the third quarter began the Parrots' second touchdown drive. A 5-yard run by Cable and a 15-yard pick up by Valencia put the Parrots at the twenty-yard marker. Cable then sprinted through a hole in the line for twenty yards and the touchdown. Guerrero completed the night's scoring with an extra point and Poly



Photo By Efrain Rodriguez

DRIVE: Running Back Terrell Cable driving the ball.

led 14-6.

Throughout the game, Poly's defense showed resilience. Late in the fourth, Hollywood had the ball on Poly's one-yard line. Rivers' plunge up the middle on 4th and inches was stopped in mid-air by Poly's linemen and the Parrots took over on downs.

"That goal line stand was a very important stop for us. We did what we had to do," said Poly defensive lineman Luis

Fajardo.

On the final Sheik drive, defensive pressure on Hollywood quarterback Garcia forced a wobbly pass into the hands of Poly's Valencia and the Parrots ran out the clock.

The win was Poly's first Sunset Six League victory and third of the season.

"You all had a piece of this victory tonight," head coach Manny Peralta told his team after the game.



Photo by the Year Book Staff

GETTING READY: The team praying for a victory.

Coach Leaves Court For Classroom

After six seasons as the Lady Parrots tennis coach, Jerry Lee will go back to school.

By Heriberto Jaurequi
Optimist Staff Writer

History teacher and tennis coach Jerry Lee has announced that he will not be back next season as the girls' tennis coach. Lee will enter a Master's program in history in the fall while continuing his teaching duties at Poly.

When asked how he became interested in Tennis Lee said he started playing in high school. I still enjoy playing tennis very much and follow the development of professional tennis.

Roger Federer has to be my

favorite, because he moves so well on the court. I believe that movement is probably the most critical aspect in being successful in tennis. Also, Rafael Nada and Maria Sharapova, because they both have amazing mental focus and intensity.

Lee became Poly's coach when the previous coach felt she could no longer meet that commitment.

Lee spends about 90% of his time teaching technique, foot work, round strokes, and game strategies.

"And its not that easy" he says. The tennis program takes both physical and mental strength.

Lee's successes at Poly included having the girls return

for three years and make the playoffs that year, building relationships about good character, which includes hard work.



Photo By Erick Robles

HEADSTRONG: Lee standing firm for new career.