Evaluations stir up mixed feelings for teachers

■ Student evaluations, an old Poly tradition, continue to be controversial as Nassel considers modifying them.

By JUSTIN WORLAND
Editor-in-Chief

For decades, Poly's Upper School administration has asked students to fill out midyear course evaluations assessing their teachers. While the method of conducting these surveys has changed over the years, the controversy that surrounds them has not. Upper School Director Jamie Nassel is in the initial stages of reviewing how the surveys are conducted and the efficacy of the surveys themselves. At the same time he is looking for ways to have both students and teachers reflect on what it means to evaluate each other.

The evaluations are intended to give teachers the student perspective on their courses. Ideally, these assessments identify potentially dangerous areas that can be addressed while at the same time pointing to the successes of the course.

Yet for many teachers, the evaluations are a cause of great anxiety. Among the primary causes of evaluation-anxiety are the often personal evaluations that students submit berating teachers for poor job performance. While students who write these evaluations cite flaws in a class, they often include unnecessary personal criticism of teachers.

Nassel believes that these evaluations are often "harsh and hurtful" especially if a teacher is receiving a number of them all at once. He cites an evaluation that is several years old as an example of a negative review that although relatively mild is definitely detrimental to a teacher. "I would suggest that this teacher perfect [his or her] teaching style rather than continue teaching in this manner which is pointless." Nassel argues that such unconstructive reviews are not only useless because they offer no guidance but that a teacher... See EVALUATION, page 2

GIP speaker explains impact of upcoming World Cup

■ The Global Initiatives Program hosts an evening event with John Turnbull to discuss the implications of the upcoming FIFA World Cup to be held in South Africa.

By VERONICA WICKLINE
Assistant news editor

John Turnbull of Atlanta, Georgia spoke to Poly students about the political causes and ramifications of South Africa hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup on Thursday, March 4. Turnbull is one of many speakers that Poly teacher Roger Ipswich has asked to give lectures as part of the Global Initiatives program.

Turnbull explained that Africa has wanted to host the World Cup for decades, but that the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has shied away from allowing any African country to host the games because African countries – excluding South Africa – have struggling economies. Hosting the World Cup brings pride and prestige to a nation, so when FIFA granted South Africa the right to host the 2010 World Cup, political leaders eagerly seized the opportunity.

The tempered excitement of the elite white society organizing the games contrasts with the ecstacy of the lower class composed of black and partially black South Africans. The lower classes eagerly await the World Cup because soccer is the favored sport of the impoverished communities. In contrast, the white elite in South Africa spend their time on the whole is rugby, with cricket second; the upper class generally considers rugby and cricket nobler sports than soccer, which is looked down on as child’s play.

Shadows of the recently-ended South African apartheid linger in more facets of the South African social structure than sport preferences. Suburban communities, which were originally established for whites only, show signs of great economic prosperity. The ghettos of black and partially black South Africans show signs of financial turmoil. These geographical wealth discrepancies have played into the planning of the World Cup.

In Cape Town, many South Africans wanted to build a stadium for the semi-finals near the lower class communities. Building the stadium in an area like Soweto would provide the lower class communities. Building the stadium in an area like Soweto would provide the lower class communities. Building the stadium in an area like Soweto would provide the lower class communities. Building the stadium in an area like Soweto would provide the lower class communities. Building the stadium in an area like Soweto would provide the lower class communities. Building the stadium in an area like Soweto would provide... See SPEAKER, page 8

建设工程继续在北校区

■ The parking lot, which is scheduled to be opened in the Fall of 2011, nears completion while the rest of the school braces for upcoming construction and renovation.

By SARAH PATTERSON
News editor

In an online article of the $93 million Campus Plan, Head of School Debbee Reed claims, “When the campaign is concluded, and construction and renovation are completed, the Poly campus will feature optimally sized and equipped classrooms, libraries of integrated technology, state of the art science labs, better performing and visual arts studios, and more green spaces. As the school year enters its final stage, so does the construction of the first phase of Poly’s ambitious Campus Plan. The north campus space that previously housed many lower and middle school classrooms and administration facilities has been transformed into a massive construction zone. If one were to drive past the site today, he or she might witness the transportation of a historic building to a new location, or a construction truck dumping cement into a newly built foundation. However, concealed to passersby is a brand new, two story underground parking structure. With space for over 250 cars, the structure will provide parking for faculty, parents and students in the lower, middle and upper divisions when it opens in the fall of 2011.

However, the completion of the parking structure is only the beginning of a multi-faceted, campus-wide remodel scheduled to occur over the next three years. Currently, the parking structure is undergoing various finishing touches, including the installation of lighting, fire sprinklers, an elevator and a staircase. In the coming weeks, construction will begin above ground. Diane Binney, director of the development office, oversees the fund raising for this ambitious campus plan. In describing the upcoming construction, she said, “Historic North Campus buildings designed by architects Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey in 1907 and Gordon Kaufmann in 1927 will be renovated, while newer buildings will be replaced in a style more consistent with the historic buildings.” She continued, “New buildings and facilities will be centered on new and existing courtyards, echoing the original campus layout.”

The North Campus will be reconfigured to provide a more distinct separation between lower and middle school divisions. Currently, middle and lower school classrooms and lunch areas are virtually mixed. The addition of a new library and media technology center, however, will provide separation between campuses while offering students in each division separate study and storytelling areas.

The North Campus plan also includes the addition of renovated visual and performing art spaces and new science labs for the middle school. The building that used to house the teachers’ lounge, health office and music rooms will be restored as a cafeteria and gathering space for the lower and middle schools, and the addition of new playgrounds and courtyards will offer areas for students and teachers to socialize and play.

At this point, North Campus construction is ahead of schedule and under the projected budget. However, the administration and development office continue to raise money through the annual fund, en... See GARAGE, page 8

Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors competed in a series of events as a part of this year's Rivalry Week that took place on the week of March 8. Keeping with Rivalry Week tradition, the seniors won a solid victory. For more coverage see Life page 6.
Faculty looks to make Poly “greener”

The school’s new Sustainability Committee examines ways to make the campus more environmentally friendly.

By LILLIAN MECUM
Staff writer

Throughout the North and South campuses, students are often seen tossing away their soda cans after lunch into blue recycling bins. Hand-drawn posters reminding students to pick up the studios wrappers adorn lamp posts and columns and members of MESA are spotted gathering empty water bottles after school. While it is evident that students are making efforts to protect the environment, Poly’s faculty has also taken the next step in making our community more energy-efficient and less wasteful.

A small faculty group, headed by Ann Nelson and including Greg Feldmeth, Susan Bartow, Debbi Youngstrom and Kimberly Hatch Harrison, has recently formed Poly’s first Sustainability Committee. The group was formed last spring, with a mission to “educate and enhance awareness about conservation and to pursue practical solutions to environmental problems.”

The committee’s first action was to send out a faculty survey in order to begin getting a general idea of how much effort was already being put in by teachers to use resources responsibly. Teachers were asked if they modeled sustainable practices in their classrooms and offices, such as conserving energy (turning off unused computers, limited use of air conditioning / heating) and using paper effectively (double-sided printing, narrow margins).

Upon reviewing the surveys, the committee got the feeling that though teachers were aware of different ways to use resources wisely and was willing to do even more to help. Many faculty members even said that they were eager to take suggestions from the committee to incorporate more ways of modeling sustainable practices into their teaching.

The committee noticed that there was no “uniform behavior” for a particular pattern among the faculty in how they choose to conserve energy and resources. “Everybody has their own methods and ways of doing things,” said Dr. Harrison.

When Reed learned of the students’ efforts, he saw it as an opportunity to bring the faculty members and students together.

Reed stated that “Student leaders and faculty leaders have to develop a collaborative relationship with one another.”

The small faculty group felt that “Our community needs a voice.”

Students of the Environmental Science class proposed ways to reduce Poly’s carbon footprint in January. Their proposals were part of Poly’s larger effort to become more environmentally conscious.

By ANNA WOHL
Assistant news editor

Originally designed as part of the Lower School Parents’ Evening around five years ago, a group of board members, administrators and parents recently met to discuss the school’s current condition at the annual State of the School Meeting.

With a slightly different format each year, the State of the School Meeting presents an opportunity for parents to be informed about the school’s finances and future plans.

This year, the meeting was held on both February 10 and 11 in order to accommodate working families.

Although Head of School Debbie Reed has delivered formal addresses at previous State of the School Meetings, this year’s meeting’s format differed; instead of writing an address, Reed recalls that she “spoke from notes about the school’s program and about the strength of our community.” In addition, the faculty discussed the construction project and our fundraising efforts.

As one of the school’s most important and relevant issues, Reed noted that the ongoing construction project was discussed. The meeting, Reed noted, emphasized the fact that construction continues to be a high priority for the school’s community.

In addition, Reed talked about the upcoming construction project issues that will impact the school’s community.

Following Reed’s screening of the school’s annual budget presentation, and a question and answer session, the faculty continued to support the school’s offering of course enrichment that means they are opposed to improving them. Fochetta takes issue with many of the questions as being too vague and not knowing how to improve the problem. “Do this mean he is lecturing too little or too much? Does it mean he is wasting time? Or maybe it means the student is not paying attention.”

Teacher Evaluation Questions

Teacher Evaluation Questions

Students are to rank teachers on the following:

1. Class time is efficient and productive.
2. Classroom presentations and discussions are conducted in a logical, clear manner.
3. Assignments are clear and given with enough lead time.
4. Grading policies are clearly explained.
5. The atmosphere in class is one that encourages students to ask questions and participate in class discussions.
6. Graded assignments are returned in a timely manner.
7. The homework load in this class is manageable.
8. I find the teacher interested in my growth and learning.
9. Students then describe the positive aspects of the class and offer suggestions to improve it.

Fletcher conducts his own survey of the students and lists answers that are applicable to his course.

In the end, the one thing that all teachers seem to agree on is that students should be sincere and respectful in their evaluations. Teachers are not supposed to be mean and nit-picking, but if the criticism is too harsh and unfocused it simply is not useful. Nelson puts it simply: “Students need to write something that improves teaching rather than something that just punches a teacher in the stomach.”

While Hamilton appreciates the comments she receives from students, she feels that experienced teachers typically know what works best and how to run their own courses. She also feels that in order to really foster growth and improvement of Upper School classes, the school should encourage academic departments to have faculty members evaluate each other.

Despite the criticism, teachers seem to agree that regardless of the flaws, students’ evaluations deserve to remain at Poly. Hamilton says, “Having laid out the flaws, I still think it’s important for students to be able to give input.”

Fochetta explored the possibility of changing the evaluation forms altogether when he first began as Upper School Director but the faculty wholeheartedly supported keeping the current form.

Students also greatly value the opportunity to give teachers feedback. For many, the evaluation process is an opportunity to give feedback.

Junior Olivia Russak says that while she occasionally writes an evaluation that is not positive, she always makes her criticism constructive. She says, “In an environment where students don’t have much say in terms of curriculum, it’s necessary for students to have a safe way to voice their concerns.”

The emotionally draining negative evaluations are admittedly rare, according to Hamilton, but their impact should not be underestimated.

The PAW PRINT 2
MARCH 17, 2010
The complexities of diversity at Poly

By WESLEY DEVOLL
Student contributor

Every year, members of the junior class write an essay on the theme of "race for English class, a task that relies heavily on rhetorical devices to comment on some aspect of society or some social injustice that they feel needs addressing. I read their essays being composed, when sitting in the room, to try to include a device in every sentence, and inevitably some of them just felt forced. Everyone was expected to do it—less nuanced than originally intended. In fact, junior Eddie Ryan decided to write his speech on the danger of the rhetorical device, citing Hitler as his primary example of someone who incited evil through the use of persuasive language.

Eddie was one of a few brave students who volunteered to deliver their speeches in front of the entire school at Morning Meeting. Aubry Walker was another. Aubry attempted to tackle the charged issue of race and diversity at Poly. It's a topic I think a lot of students would be reluctant to confront and one that certainly stirred up some minor controversy among some members of the senior class (as obviously caught The Paw Print's attention).

To be honest, I didn't enjoy Morning Meeting a little bit less. Aubry was a friend of mine, and I'm not sure I could have articulated exactly why. I think the source of my discomfort was the use of some extravagant language that this kind of assignment encourages. The time has come, I think, for Aubry and the rest of us to develop a language that is not as clearly ill-considered.

I think Poly deserves more credit than Aubry was willing to give. Diversity isn't an either/or selection between black and Latinx students in our school, we have gay students, straight students, students of many different ethnicities and from a variety of religious backgrounds and political persuasions. It is true that we have only had our first (and very successful) Diversity Day. So we the students and Poly's administrators value diversity, and I think Poly graduates enter the real world with an appreciation for people's differences, equipped with all the skills the necessity to navigate the global community that Cuseo mentioned adequately and with an open mind.

As far as you are tired and usually about the merits of affirmative action, I think it's important to consider a point that Aubry didn't mention. There is such a thing as both meritocracy and diversity in this country, even in Pasadena, and unlike a Harvard or a Princeton student, you can't move to a need-blind admissions policy. Aubry wants Poly to take a more active approach to diversifying the student body, but expressing the importance of that is not enough. I'm sure the admissions staff takes race into account when evaluating a prospective student's application and that the financial aid, if need be, will be there. The idea of aggressive as Poly's resources will support.

I agree with Aubry's assertion that the economic benefit from a more diverse faculty. I've talked to multiple faculty members who agree. In my 14 years at this school, I've had one African-American teacher; the vast majority have been white. I also think that sending admissions representatives to public schools and not just the other private schools, would bring some very interesting students to Poly who would enrich this community. These are the ways Poly needs to move forward in the future, a path that Aubry has proposed. As Cuseo discussed. The ethnic composition of Poly's community may never exactly mirror California's "kaleidoscope of cultures," but we can work to improve and come closer to that ideal.

By MADISON SHECKEL
Senior staff writer

Weekends, next to funnel cake, are the best things in life. On Saturday, a man is given roughly 58 hours of freedom to watch every YouTube video, comment on every status and listen to every Khia song I can possibly stomach. However, this is an ideal situation. Normally, my weekends tend to go something like this:

Friday, get home from school around 3:30, stare at ceiling until parent's get home, go to dinner to celebrate the Sabbath (usually with a nice cheeseburger), watch some terrible, maybe not even Cesar Everett, stay up until one in the morning making lists like “Books I Need to Read,” “Celebrities With Blonde Hair and Brown Eyebrows (Because That’s Tyrannically)” and “Lists to Write.”

Saturday: wake up in the morning feeling like a recovering coma victim, grab my glasses, get out of bed.

“I'm gonna have this kitchen
Before I leave, brush my teeth with a toothbrush
The room that makes sense
Sunday: do homework, receive message from Jordan Kuete, any: “How do I get to be in your column?”

And that’s how it is. I mean, occasionally I hit up some celebrity shindig or make an appearance at the hottest movie premiere. We all do, right? Because the ceiling wouldn’t let me tell you about that time I went to Lollapalooza and [edited for content].

Next time, to say was a long time before I ate green jelly again.

Anyways, back to weekends. I wanted to tell you some interesting things I came across during one of my week ends of writing. My mother, sister and I were at Maggiano’s at The Grove for some female family gathering. It was great except for the female family get-together. After two hours of tension and ravioli, we finally were released, and my mother wanted to take my sister shopping. She was looking for a new pair of shoes and insisted on buying skate shoes.

Since she doesn’t skate, take pictures of skaters, read skating magazines or play Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater. Logically. So we walked through The Grove looking for something to accommodate my sister and of course there’s some simple as black shoes. On Saturday night, I was side singing a song about nothing other than gravity and relating it to the pitfalls of young love as if fifty million people haven’t done that before. Although we had found a safe haven inside of Nordstrom but I was soon proved wrong.

I was eating lunch with department stores. First of all, they smell like car salesmen in elevators that play a Muzak station like Shaq Beach. Second, there are counters and registers everywhere and yet if you're looking for something small, chances are you'll be lost in the wrong place. Third, they don’t have free samples.

Nordstrom had all of these problems and one more. We walked into the shoe section which in and of itself is a problem, but then I see a DJ. ‘There’s a DJ in the shoe section, He’s got his headphones around his neck, one earcup lifted to his right ear, and is wearing shoes that look like he just died from one of the women’s fashion shows. Frankly, I was appalled. Nordstrom had a man, was actually paying this guy, to set up his laptop next to the rack, and just watch him bob his head like some overenthusiastic middle-schooler at a Fall Out Boy concert. It took his sister ten minutes to realize they didn’t have any skate shoes and that was ten minutes of my life I will never get back ever. I devoted ten minutes of my precious life to that middle-aged white guy in Nordstrom whose name was probably Dean or Chad. I hate that guy.

Then we went to a wage. I can’t fun of that. But my mom did. And finally we went to a family friend’s house to play Wii and make our own pizzas. I know, 8 years old. My mom even made me up to cooking shopping. And that’s the reason I’m throwing me for a loop. We were in H&M and my mom throws their free magazine in my hand and told me to keep it. So I was flipping through it, looking for inspiration and all I saw was a bunch of tall skinny girls wearing lose and shapeless clothing. I know it’s cliché to lament the media’s portrayal of women and their

Although I am one of the more racially diverse people on campus, I’ve never thought of demanding that our administration do more black/chinese/japanese/french/spanish/english/scottish students, that is, if, for any exist, I also have never had any issues fitting in here based on my heritage.

Andrew Turner ‘12

My cynicism increases with the weight of the hours

I’ve always thought of Poly as a diverse community, and I don’t think we need to change anything.

‘- Steep Cercero ‘11

Poly could diversify specifically the faculty and the socioeconomic status of the student body more, but I think it is also important to give Poly credit for the diversity that already exists within the community. It is up to the community to make sure Poly continues to be welcoming to people from all backgrounds.

-Amy Robles ‘10

Compiled by Alisononn Schniede and Regina Zmudzin

OPINION
MARCH 17, 2010

THE PAW PRINT
Exploring the ramifications of a Poly education

By HAYDEN BETTS
Assistant life editor

Just after finals, I was walking behind a clump of unacademic-looking freshmen, and couldn’t help but overhear a piece of conversation. One said to the other, “I’m nervous because I feel like I should be nervous, but the thing is that I don’t have anything to be nervous about.”

I couldn’t help but laugh to myself at the statement in its simplicity and complete honesty so well summed up the woes of a Polytechnic education. It was at once comforting and terrifyingly frightening to know that this state of mind constantly asking for productivity was a shared one. What scared me was a continuation of the very same thought.

What is the purpose of this roller-coaster ride through academia? What is the worth of this world where so often the value of hours and days arrives a few months after the fact, all condensed by some amazing process and evaluated with a single letter as mandated by the all-powerful rubric?

Effort is not fairly redeemed just viewing those letters though, no, of course not. The Ivy League students grappled with the fact that they had Austria good student just what it is they want.

There’s one catch though; those guys, whoever they are, aren’t just impressed with the classes they take now they need somebody to be a community servant, an athlete and an artist. The applicant will then think to himself, well I can help things along 40 or 50 and well I’m not artistic, so I’ll take an extra AP to compensate for that one.

David Brooks, in an article titled “The Organization Kid” shines light on the education students receive at Poly. He argues that “everything is a means to an end” for students like those that finds such a welcome home on Poly’s Upper School campus. However, Brooks’ article is not about freakish high school students grappling for college, it is about a high school student grappling for positions in graduate schools and in jobs. It goes without saying that this trend is always looking towards that stepping stone, to the detriment of the present, does not stop with college acceptance letter. It seems there will always be a pie in the sky and we will always be looking for the next candidate, just as qualified, just as smart vying for a piece.

The original liberal arts curriculum, of which Poly is a direct descendant had a revolutionary intention. Its students were not being trained to do one thing as had always been the case in the past, but were taught a multitude of skills from which to choose. Even more important than the quantifiable skills the students would learn was the abstrac- ativity to think that Renaissance educators felt would naturally come with the curriculum.

However, in the past five hundred years, something has happened: through one process or another, education has become so specialized and focused about the concrete benefits learning is said to provide. Brooks attributes it to the ever-burgeoning competition that begins before high school and continues through college. Com- pletely, it is a funny thing, for it leaves little time for foiling around but tends to re- quire those in charge to do so in the realm of even more than anything else. It seems that the liberal arts educators figured this out and applied in the diversity of the teachings taught. The teachings of the traditional five subjects, previ- ously an opportunity, simply becomes an addition to the burden, “school.”

Students who try to effect change be- cause they believe it in and not just be- cause of a class.

The argument that students are so hesitant to work for change is unfortunate; stu- dents should feel that if something is truly bothering them they can approach an administrative staff. Here from all that I’ve seen, while members of the administration do not always act on student views, they are always ea- ger to listen and react to the students. Often members of the community see the need to improve something at Poly or believe in something is wrong, it is their ob- ligation to their peers, colleagues, etc. to address those issues. Talking to the administration is a good first step.

One thing I want to address is the difference between people who have legitimate concerns and those who just want to gripe and, for lack of a better word, complain. Poly often take to complaining when things get difficult or take a turn for the worst. We often moan about the difficulties of the system that we’ve got caught up in. I admit to doing this myself on occasion. It’s important to recognize the difference between things we complain about and what we enjoy but still enjoy or still want to be a part of and things we complain about and what we have no control over.

When the only prerogative to under- stand such terms is for a test in West- ern Civ? An individual that reasons and understands only in pursuit of the grade is not only not fulfilling the ideas of a liberal arts education, but actually op- posing them entirely. Where the liberal arts curriculum originally sought to get rid of the idea of training a child for a career, it has ultimately reinforced this concept. It seems the most popular mode of vocational training in prep schools consists of learning the skills to be a student in a prep school.

What is the pawn in this preparation game supposed to do? Find a passion? Too risky. Run away, work scrubbing the sides of a transcontinental freighter for 3 years, serve as esteemed ambassador from Liechtenstein to Turkmeni- stan and eventually fall in love with a goat farmer living on a small green isle

Editorial: effecting change at Poly

Weeks before I began this piece, I was already racking my brain for po- tential editorial ideas. This is my last editorial and, as such, I feel that an article on change is the appropriate way to bring the article that would have some sort of profound impact on our community. Left with no clue as to how to proceed, I began to think about the whole situation in which I found myself: I was racking my brain to find something wrong with Poly to write about. I was looking for something of some sort of egregious injustice when there was truly none to be found.

So, today, rather than advocate a specific change, Poly based upon some silly personal quirk or concern, I’m asking those that feel the need for change to push for it. I’m also asking the administration to continue being open to this change and to new ideas from students.

Currently, I am not the first person on campus to encourage students to take such actions to aid the commu- nity. Classes such as the Environmental Science elective offer students the op- portunity to present recommendations regarding environmental sustainability at Poly. Juniors often choose to write speeches for their English classes and topics related to our community whether the issue is diversity or AP exams. Finally, Poly even has a senior English course entitled Memoirs and Social Change that requires that students take an active approach to issues in the com- munity.

While these classes get students in- volved, sometimes I think that students are only willing to challenge the status quo within the confines and protections of a class. Additionally, in the same way that an editorial force me to find things I disagree with, I would love to explore the option of writing or take a stance in Morning Meeting, we need to ask ourselves if we really believe in what we’re complaining about. For the most part, we find ourselves in difficult situations by choice.

In summary, for those who may be sometimes lost in their ramblings, Poly is great but it’s not perfect. If you see something that you think is wrong, work to fix it, but be sure it’s something worth fighting for.

You may wonder: what have The Poly’s print editorials ever accomplished? You would be right in your thinking: looking at the last year of editorials and the school’s subsequent actions, The Poly’s print’s were indeed rarely acted upon. What’s important is that we made our views known and that, hopefully, our opinions will leave some sort of lasting impression. Hopefully, when the Board of Trustees is looking to name a building, they’ll consider bringing Bobby’s editorial and where the students stand. Hopefully, when Poly’s finance team is looking at how to construct the budget, they will consider Aubry’s speech. Hopefully, when the fac- ulty is evaluating potential new courses they’ll take a look at last year’s German language’s speech and consider offering challenging courses that don’t carry the AP designation. While I don’t necessarily agree with everything my fellow students argue, I have tremendous respects for their efforts and hope that Poly’s future students will continue the tradition.

All any of us can really do is try and hope for the best.

Weeks before I began this piece, I was already racking my brain for pos- tential editorial ideas. This is my last editorial and, as such, I feel that an article on change is the appropriate way to bring the
Plea to the class of 2011: be supportive

By OLIVIA RUSSAK
Opinion editor

And so it begins. The beginning of the end and the end of the beginning. It is, in all of its daunting glory, the college counseling process – the culmination of the Poly student’s high school days and the senior year as the seniors prepare for the moment when the college counselor starts to talk about the looming deadline of making college applications. It is a load slowly winding down, the class of 2011 is rapidly starting the college rituals of counseling classes, parent meetings and spring break. Time seems to always be one step ahead of us.

What I’m writing about isn’t quite unique. For years students have lamented over the tension between the thirst for success, the frustration of failure and the pain of leaving the familiar. In a 2008 issue of The Poly Review, Editor-in-chief emeritus Leslie Brieun wrote “Halfway through senior year, I’m realizing that time is not on my side. In a mere six months I’ll be spending my last day at Poly with my class, and I’ve never appreciated this community more.”

Just this year, the issue of publishing the announcement list in The Poly Review raised concerns. The Memoir and Social Change English class, taught by Julia Davis, argued that publishing where each student will matriculate was essentially disrespectful, in vasive and at times inaccurate: “a delicate and emotional issue for many.”

This year, The Poly Review then responded in saying that it is simply a list of facts, that “how people react to these facts does not fall under the purview of the paper.” They also added that the list is of great interest to the community, which it undoubtedly is. To this, I have no clue where I stand on the issue.

I was speaking about this debate in one of my college counseling classes. I, admittedly, was spacing out after picking my mind trying to answer a question asking what keeps me gives me the most inspiration. Images of old stuffed animals came into my mind, but I quickly dismissed them as trite.

Then I thought of a piece of lined paper dated August 28, 2009. It was from the week prior to the first week of school, when my mom and I decided to write a list of everything I thought would be weird if I called at about my death on application’s?” seemed like a question to keep myself.

For some reason, I thought again about the college list debate. I realized that there is one aspect of both articles that remains true: that we need to support each other no matter what.

So to the junior class – to those of you I’ve known my whole life and those of you I hope to know my whole life, this is my plea to you. So you make it through the trips, stop perceiving your resumes, stop writing your journal entries. Stop writing... What do you love to do? What do you want to do?

Do you want to see a volcano and the Galapagos Islands and the Great Barrier Reef and anything interesting and beautiful there?

Do you want to carry an Olympic torch or solve a Rubik’s Cube or present an award at the Academy Awards or play in a band?

Don’t be blinded by admission, don’t be blinded by rejection, don’t be blinded by competition. Be there for each other. You might want to know that there is time that time will always be just one step ahead of us. If you have a little over a year left together, and if you think about it that way, suddenly you might find there’s a little more time on your hands.

Creativity neglected once again

By AMIR MOSALLAIE
Assistant opinion editor

In the process of constructing this year’s Tufts University application, Lee Coffin, associate admissions counselor, sent a YouTube video from a friend. After watching the video, Coffin thought to himself, “If this kid applied to Tufts, I’d admit him in a minute.” Subsequently, Coffin gave high school seniors the option to submit a video as part of their application.

The application guidelines: “Submit a one-minute video that says something about you.” Nearly 1,000 Tufts applicants submitted short videos to complement their application.

My initial reaction to this option – which Tufts administrators knew would undertake – was pure excitement. I found it incredibly refreshing to see a new, public, and present on a college application.

What are three words that best describe you? “I don’t know...I have been writing in your life that changes you (50 words or less)...” But that’s not to say Tufts’ application is completely different than that of any other institution. It is a personal statement; it’s a written essay, as well as three short answer questions. However, there is an optional essay, which includes seven choices for students to choose from. The course range from writing a short story to creating something out of a single piece of paper. The one-minute video was one of these options.

Once Tufts’ application deadline arrived and YouTube was bombarded with supplement videos, I could not stop watching them. I think I may have watched every single one – it’s a testament to Stella Schiller’s breathingacho reenacted monologue to Amelia Downs unforgettable math dance. While the videos offer us viewers some much appreciated entertainment, they offer admissions officers so much more: a true glimpse into an applicant’s character. Then these supplementary videos allow students to show off a piece of themselves that is impossible to display in a written essay.

Even more important, Tufts’ quirky application foreshadows the type of university it is. The option to submit a short video about virtually anything not only offers students an opportunity to be creative or unique but also has the ability to confirm a student’s idea that Tufts is the school for them.

I was surprised when articles in The Boston Globe and The New York Times regarding Tufts’ new application option were met with criticism. While many were impressed with Tufts’ initiative to inject creativity into the college admissions process, others were not.

Comments on The Times website ridiculed Tufts for being naive enough to allow students to submit videos as a means of getting into college. Others argued that the option only favored wealthy applicants, as they were more likely to have cameras, computers, and such. Tufts, however, contended that nearly two-thirds of applicants who submitted videos also applied for financial aid.

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Memoir and Social Change Class creates protest posters

Last week, seniors put up posters for the Memoirs and Social Change course. This class, which is in its fourth year at Poly, aims to provide students with the tools to make changes in the world. So far, the elective, taught by Julia Davis, has stayed true to this goal of encouraging students to explore challenges in the world and to effect social change: the class’ most recent project has been creating posters protesting issues in the Poly community. If you looked around the Poly campus last week, you may have noticed these posters at various locations around the Upper School—posters were placed not only around the courtyards and classrooms, but also by the library, in the senior room, and on Arden Lawn as well. These projects were completed using a variety of mediums, the most popular being construction paper and posterboard (though some were done digitally and even in chalk).

The posters reflected student opinions on issues ranging from the administration to the importance of arts versus sports. However, the most popular issues by far were recycling and campus cleanliness: the McWilliams courtyard and several of the patios were adorned with posters that clearly demanded that students pick up their trash and clean up after themselves. One poster presented an image of two anthropomorphized trash cans, while another sarcastically pointed out the simple steps of cleaning up: “1. Pick up trash. 2. Walk to trash can. 3. Place trash inside.” These seemed to be effective at conveying their message. “While most people still left trash behind, I noticed a few who were making a more conscious effort to be neater,” says a member of the senior class who asked to remain anonymous.

The reactions of the Poly community were mixed. Some students found the posters creative and engaging, while others held a slightly more critical perspective. “I liked the idea and found many of the posters interesting. However, I feel like some of the meaning was lost because students were unable to tell whether or not the posters were meant to be ironic,” says Aileen Lewis, a current junior.

Another student, senior Sagar Pujara, comments, “I thought most of the posters were pretty funny. Most people talked about them, but some people didn’t really [notice them].” This seems to be the general consensus among the student body—because the posters were up for only a few days, many students did not get the opportunity to view them. Also, the fact that they were not heavily publicized and were sometimes slightly hidden from view did not allow students to fully enjoy them. However, the majority of students appreciated the concept of the posters and the initiative taken by the members of the English IV class. “I enjoy nothing more than when my fellow students get involved in issues they feel strongly about,” says Ed Ryan, a member of the junior class.

However, several posters sparked much debate among the student body. A poster regarding Poly’s image was one of the most popular as well as most controversial posters displayed. This poster, which was exhibited near the junior patio, questioned the possible discrepancy between the appearance and the reality of the Poly community. In large lettering across the top, the poster had the word “community,” with a phrase describing Poly descending from each letter; however, under each phrase was a flap that lifted to reveal words describing a perceived “reality” about the Poly community. “The poster regarding Poly’s image and what it actually is stuck with me...I left a lot of comments, basically applauding the more controversial poster’s courage,” explains Ed Ryan.

Overall, though many didn’t have an opportunity to view the posters, they seemed to be a success. Davis says, “The entire class came together as a community, and it was amazing the way they took initiative...In this way, they surpassed my expectations. This was so rewarding.”

The posters only indicate the success of this newly added elective. Hopefully, these posters will become a tradition for years to come.

Sabrina Wu and Marta Steranovic

While the ASB introduced the first ever “Rivalry Year” for the 2009-2010 school year, Rivalry Week itself was just as spirited. The battle of the classes was kicked off by opening ceremonies in Garland, where each of the class flags was unveiled to the fierce background music composed by junior Tim Calabro.

Events and Winners:
Monday: Lunch: Egg toss (freshman class); “Simon Says” with Brad Hall (junior class)
Tuesday: Morning Meeting: Trivia Contest (senior class); Lunch: Dodgeball Preliminaries (junior class and senior class)
Wednesday: Morning Meeting: Human Bowling (junior class); Lunch: Dodgeball Finals (senior class) and Tug of Peace Preliminaries (junior class)
Thursday: Morning Meeting: Karaoke (sophomore class); Lunch: Tug of Peace Finals (junior class)
Friday: Lunch: Slip-n-Slide Relay (senior class); Water Balloon Fight (senior class)

Rivalry Week is perceived by many as one of the ASB’s largest responsibilities. This year we decided to extend the madness to a yearlong activity. It was a daunting challenge, and we had our successes and failures. Being the first year of its inception, there was no precedent of how to run such an activity. Challenges included coming up with new games that were engaging, fun and fair. The organization behind the effort was daunting and at times a lack of time and ability got the better of us. Nevertheless, the seeds of fruitful Rivalry Yeas to come have been planted through our endeavors. Where Rivalry Year has become really useful is providing a reason for us to meet often and practice working together. By the time Rivalry Week rolled around, things went smoothly, and we were able to bring innovations such as introducing super-soakers into the water balloon fight, karaoke and the slip-n-slide. These are a result of the creative and hard work we put in throughout the year. The joy is only surpassed by others enjoying the experience. The fun should continue to happen. I would like to thank everyone who would have been unable to attend limiting us.

Eddie Ryan

A recap of the trials and tribulations of Rivalry Week

Two parts of a senior’s poster for the Memoir and Social Change class.
Faculty Profile: Rob Mikels

Poly athletic trainer Rob Mikels has served as a vital part of the school’s Athletic Department and a valued member of the Poly Community for ten years. In an interview with the trainer most commonly referred to by his first name, “Rob,” he expressed his gratitude and appreciation for being a part of the school community.

Fascinated with sports since his youth, Mikels knew early on that he wanted to pursue a career in athletics. Although he did not initially know which direction his interest would carry him, once he began a program for a sports medicine major, he was hooked. “It was a career that kept me close to athletics, and at the same time allowed me to help athletes stay healthy and active, and when they sustain an injury help them rehab back into play,” he notes. Initially aspiring to go to physical therapy school, Mikels was then blessed with a wife and kids and decided that the time was not right to pursue a career in physical therapy. “Being an athletic trainer at Poly has been a great career,” he remarks on his decision, “and this is a great environment to work in and to help people work with.”

Born in Simi Valley California, Mikels and his family later moved to Minnesota for six years. Upon returning to California, he attended Villanueva Christian High School before matriculating at Azusa Pacific University, where he received his BA in Sports Medicine. While in school, he particularly enjoyed playing basketball, baseball and volleyball. He never participated on an organized volleyball team until he went to college, where he joined his school club volleyball team. According to his current athletic endeavor, Mikels comments, “Right now I play on a church softball league that keeps me young and active.” He also tries to play a game of basketball whenever he can.

Football and basketball are, admitted, the two sports Mikels finds most interesting to watch, mainly for the extensive strategy involved in both and their intense and fast-paced natures. Mikels has a length list of teams that he supports, and the UCLA basketball and football teams are among his favorites for college sports. His favorite professional team is the fifteen-time champions Los Angeles Lakers. He is also a Vikings and Colts fan and an L.A. Dodgers supporter. In terms of his work at Poly, Mikels explains that each day is different and depends on the season and sport. He attends to anywhere from ten to twenty athletes a day preparing athletes for practice, looking at injuries from the prior day and dealing with injuries during practices or issues with athletes during games. According to Mikels, among the most crucial skills for being a successful athletic trainer are the ability to understand the workings of the body, knowing how to look for various injuries and being able to properly tape athletes to prevent or manage injuries. “At times you need to be personable, an encourager and a motivator. You need to be assertive when the situation calls for it and available and approachable to students, parents and faculty,“ Mikels notes.

“Some of the most stressful moments of my job are probably during football season,” Mikels admits. During the middle of a game, a player may get injured on the field or run off the field, appliances must be brought to the player and determine the extent of the injury. Mikels must try to evaluate the injury quickly but as accurately as possible to judge if the player can return to the game.

Alternatively, if the athlete is lying on the field, it is Mikels’ position to approach the player and perform all the right steps to make sure the athlete is in a stable enough condition to walk off the field. He elaborates, “Even though it is enjoyable to watch the games (not just football, but all sports), you have to be ready at any moment to step in and help whoever needs it. You always have to be prepared for anything.”

Despite all of the understandable stresses of his career, Mikels always smiles lightheartedly on the sidelines of just about any Poly game and has enjoyed countless rewarding moments throughout his ten years working at Poly. He explains that his proudest moment thus far was when the 2008-2009 yearbook was dedicated to him to honor him for his contributions to the school. “That showed me that what I am doing means something and that hopefully I am making a difference to the health and lives of students,” says Mikels. His chief goal while working at Poly is to focus on keeping the students healthy and aware that if they are injured, to help them rehabilitate and get back into their sport as soon as possible.

What Mikels enjoys most about his job is that as an athletic trainer he not only helps to encourage and strengthen the lives of the students physically, but he also does so in any other capacity that they may need. “I can be an ear for them to listen, a shoulder to cry on, and a good sounding board. If a student is nervous about going into the training room is a place that can take the stress and demands of school away from them for a short time,” he notes. While there are undoubtedly many long nights and struggles as an athletic trainer, Mikels is certain that he is in the right place here at Poly.

“Lastly,” Mikels explains in a final note, “the past few years have been tough personally with my family, as many of you know, which has made life in and of itself very stressful. You add that on top of long hours and many injuries and games, and that just adds to the stress. Being able to come to a place where students, parents and faculty open up their hearts and arms to you helps take some of that stress away and gives me motivation to want to come to work and serve all of you.”

The majority of the sounds that come out of Julian Chávez’s computer can never be heard by human ears. Why, one may ask, would somebody create music without intending to share it? The answer to this question is love and raw excitement for the act of creation, and it is at the heart of Chávez’s operation.

At the beginning of tenth grade, Chávez had no experience with electronic music. Although Chávez has appreciated music for his entire life, he never had an interest in creating it. It is a vast understatement to say that Chávez has changed a bit since then. He’s through by his junior year; Chávez has performed in venues from Los Angeles’ avant-garde performance center The Smell to Poly’s own brick courtyard. He has also invested innumerable hours at his computer mixing, sampling, creating beats and writing software, all of which he melds together into finished tracks.

Chávez’s sojourn into electronic music art form began at the prompting of a friend, who both pushed the music and the process behind its formation on Chávez. In the beginning, Chávez viewed creating new sounds to be a mathematical journey just as much as a musical one. As a result, he focused his efforts on writing positive rather than using existing music at the top tracks.

With the discovery of the depth of the electronic music scene and several influential artists such as Toro y Moi, The Ruby Suns and J-Dilla, Chávez gained a profound excitement for the music itself. At this point, he all but abandoned his programming and began working on creating and establishing his own sound in original tracks.

Because of the nature of modern electronic music, it is extremely difficult to describe in words what constitutes Chávez’s “sound.” One track can fluctuate between a pounding g-funk beat, the organized chaos of industrial noise and the surreal sonic landscape of classical impressionism, or combine all of these sounds at the same time. Although established artists attempt to group themselves into several of a seemingly endless stream of precariously named sub-genres (Chill wave, Dub step, Deep house, Italo disco, etc.), new categorizations spring up constantly. This trend is a result of the undeniable fact that electronic musicians are doing what has never been done before. The best option is and always will be simply to listen.

In order to fully appreciate what Chávez and other modern electronic artists do, a certain understanding of the music’s history is vital. There is a widespread but mistaken belief that electronic music is for dancing, and dancing alone. To think of electronic music as only dance music would be as naive as to consider all acoustic music as classical. While the public’s association of electronic music with dance is what has brought this form of music into the public eye, it has also, arguably, been a detriment that has kept electronic music from being recognized as a legitimate art form. However, a retinue of largely American artists is constantly challenging this conception, and as a result testing the very boundaries of what constitutes music.

Many of these artists are based in the Los Angeles area, and have been invaluable in Chávez’s development. The music scene in Los Angeles, Chávez frankly notes, “is like a rotting corpse that attracts all the talented flies.” According to Chávez, there are several cities with music scenes as easy to get into and as tolerant as the one hosted in Southern California’s megatropolis. This seemingly undesirable monolithic musical corpse serves as a breeding ground and “safe” place for many untaught but original musicians to learn, and maybe even become something. “After they get big,” Chávez says, “they go to New York.”

Chávez’s role in this ecosystem is unique, partly because of his innate mathematical skill and mostly because of the passion that inspires him to wield it.

Hayden Betts

Hayden Betts(THE PAW PICTURE)
Roger Ipswich explains history curriculum and lack of AP courses

The Paw Print interviews history department chair Roger Ipswich on the progression of the history curriculum at Poly.

By ELLIE MALCHIONE
News editor

The Paw Print: How does Poly’s history curriculum compare to those at other high schools?

Roger Ipswich: Our curriculum is geared to traditional courses and also to AP courses, if they are required. The state of California says we only have to teach United States history, but the Educational Testing Service (ETS) colleges expect to see a course in history of civilization as well. Most schools teach a course similar to the civilization course called World History. We offer a semester of World Cultures and a year of European History instead.

TPP: How have you seen the history curriculum change over your career at Poly?

RI: When I came to Poly in 1960, we were using an 1890’s curriculum: Ancient History in ninth grade, European History in tenth grade, more Euro History in eleventh grade and U.S. History in 12th grade. We’re still doing the same core curriculum, but the biggest difference is in the senior electives. There was one year-long class called COMPASS (Comparative Political and Social Systems). Now we have Geography Moses, for whom the Honors Day History prize is named.

TPP: When did we institute senior electives?

RI: The present multi-elective program began in fall of 1976. Moses was appointed as department head and headed the course in Electives (he was a stock market buff) and I started History of Mass Communications (I mentioned in journalism and had been a newspaper reporter).

The idea of high school students selecting courses they wanted to take was a novelty then, but the program took off and hasn’t stopped growing since. Some of the courses that have come and gone are History of Mathematics, Ancient History, Women in History, Renaissance History, American History, Contemporary American History (1945-1995), Urban Studies, Psychology, Toward the Year 2000 (future studies, 1990-92) and American Government. We also used to offer a lot of subjects in the senior year: Ancient History, World Religions and (for 20 years) California History. I taught them all. In 1992-93 I was on sab- byatical and studied cultural geography and area studies at UCLA and felt that was where our school courses were headed. I started the World Cultures program in 1993 and since then we’ve offered five different courses (Middle East, China, Latin America, Africa and Pacific Rim) with five different teachers.

TPP: Why has Poly’s history cur- riculum been crafted the way it is currently?

RI: I’ve been here 40 of the Up- per School [history] department’s 50 years and there has always been a commitment to global is- sues, resulting in the freshman World History and senior se- nior electives that reflect an inter- national perspective. Also, there’s been a tradition of intellectual openness and exposure to a variety of courses and ideas. We’ve offered social science and humanities courses that didn’t fit in to our department structure as phi- losophy, religion, ethics, econom- ics, urban studies and psychol- ogy. We’re trying to get the [history] requirement to be specific required courses; the other year features choices, and we find students learning and performing better in the classes they get to choose.

TPP: Why does Poly offer only one Advanced Placement history course?

RI: The school has plenty of AP courses, so we offer AP United States History for those who want an accelerated course and the AP exam, two years rather than three years. The only other one we could offer is Eco- nomics, World Geography and American Government, but those are year-long courses at most schools. We’ve chosen shorter, introductory courses for interest rather than resume-building. That might change in the future, but Poly students aren’t exactly short of AP opportunities. In addition, Western Civilization is a regular course, but with review sessions to prepare anyone who wants to take the European History AP. About a third of the class does, and scores are almost as high as on AP U.S. It’s not listed on tran- scripts as AP, and there’s no grade bump-up.

TPP: What negative aspects do you see in AP history courses? What positive aspects do you see?

RI: Only the idea that ETS sets the course content, not the in- structor and it’s a pretty rushed pace. If people want them, fine. So far the department has decided that standardized testing isn’t go- ing to call the shots for our pro- gram. Poly courses are accelerat- ed and substantive no matter what the subject, so no one’s losing if they don’t opt for AP.

TPP: Do you foresee Poly chang- ing or expanding its curriculum to include more AP history courses in the future?

RI: Beats me. Never say never.

Lunch in the Board Room Series introduced

Juniors and seniors meet with distinguished adults in monthly lunches organized by the admin- istration and development office.

By CALEB LEE
Staff writer

As a leading educational institution, Polytechnic School prides itself in offering diverse opportunities for its student body. One such opportunity is the recent lunch in the Board Room, an invitational series for Poly juniors and seniors this year. In these lunches, selected students get a chance to meet as a group with leaders in the community who have distinguished themselves with their achievements in a certain industry, or field. The speakers are also selected for their passion and ability to connect students with questions of leadership, each from a slightly different perspective and professional background. Each student is invited for his or her specific interests. Some of the leaders featured in the lunches have been Dr. Jacqueline Barton, head of the Chemistry Department at Caltech, Bill Gross, founder of Idealab, Chris Poole, Poly’s President of the Board of Trustees and CEO and President of JAMS and Alison Bowden, CEO of The Huntington Library.

The main organizer of the lunches, Elizabeth Dooley, the Polytechnic School Special Projects Coordinator, said that “the hope was that these events would broaden students’ perspectives on what ‘leadership’ looks like or means in the real world, each from a slightly different focus such as leadership style, gender roles in leadership, the pathways to career, as well as entrepreneurship.”

Junior Matthew Lochner, who went to Poly because of Gross said, “There was a lot of interaction between speaker and audience. On the whole it was very educational, someone as undoubtedly successful as Mr. Gross. Afterwards, I felt that the prospect of life in the real world felt much less remote and much more possible.”

Senior Maggie Burdige also attended a lunch that featured Barton and felt that the event was “very motivating, and gave her new perspective of the world around her. ‘It was a very inspiring to hear from a woman who is so successful. She truly gave us the impression that, even as women, we are not discouraged without acting like men and just succeed on our own merit.”

Upper School Director Jamie Neilson also feels that this program has benefited Poly student community and inspired students about their future career. “These kinds of opportunities for Poly students to learn about different kinds of leadership from people in the community who have gone ‘out for it’.”

Neilson continues, “Having this kind of small-group contact with people who have done some is a chance our students wouldn’t get otherwise, and we hope that it will give them ideas for how they can approach leadership in the Poly community and beyond.”

There have been over 200 lunches in the last 3 years since the last construction project (with the creation of the Upper School), and facilities need to be updated to support Poly’s excellent aca- demic program.”

When asked about the impor- tance of the project to the Poly community, Director of Build- ings and Grounds Dale Rasmus- sen said, “We are building for the next 100 years. This campus has not been updated for the school for the last 100, but the addition and renovation of buildings is necessary for the school to maintain a reputation as a school committed to academic excellence.”

In an evening event held at Boswell Library, John Turnbull explains the impact of the first World Cup held in Africa.

In an evening event held at Boswell Library, John Turnbull explains the impact of the first World Cup held in Africa.

Speaker Continued from page 1

Prior to the first World Cup, Brazil’s black goalkeeper, Barbosa, could not stop a game-deciding goal. Uruguay won the match, and Barbosa became Brazil’s scapegoat. Brazil did not see another black goalkeeper into the World Cup for decades.

FIFA tries to use its influence to promote equality in instances of racial discrimination. South Africa was allowed to compete in the World Cup only after its government officially ended apartheid in 1994. Despite these racial controversies, the lower class communities of South Africa still buzz with soccer fever. These days, South Africa as a whole emulates hope. In its recently formed nation, South Africa expresses a goal – equality under the law and equal rights for all people, including those concerning sexual preferences and colors.
Winter season recap: all five teams have postseason success

The Paw Print staff voted on the most inspirational athlete and sportswoman of the winter season: Matthew Diephuis on the varsity boys basketball team and Zara Miller on the varsity girls basketball team.

By DANIEL WOHL
Sports Editor

At the conclusion of each season, the Sports section assesses the performance of the Sportsmen of that season. The nominees, who are chosen by the Sports Section staff, are then asked to vote on the winner by means of the entire staff’s votes. An athlete voted number one is assigned six points, for a number two ranking, the athlete is assigned five points, and so on.

This season, three players were nominated from boys basketball and boys soccer. The three from soccer are senior sweeper Matthew Diephuis, senior goalie Matt Morrish, and sophomore midfielder Ibanez. The three from boys basketball are junior guard Daniel Wohl, junior forward Hunter Merriman and junior forward Justin Worland were nominated.

This year’s Sportsman of the Winter Season is Matthew Diephuis. The 5-11, 155-pound guard for the boys basketball team anchored an impressive defense that allowed only 3 goals in regulation in its last 13 games. In addition, Diephuis proved to be just as valuable on offense, making a key goal in a playoff match against Buckley. For his efforts, Diephuis was also awarded Prep Prep Deleative MVP.

This season, two players were nominated from girls basketball: sophomore Michelle Miller and senior Julia Brown. Junior Katie Gancedo and freshman Sarah Merz also received nominations for other sports, and junior Olivia Russak and Kate Carlson were the nominees from girls soccer.

The Sportsman of the Winter Season is Matthew Diephuis, who was undeniably impressive, averaging 26 points per game for the team (at the state). With no other player on the team averaging double digits in points per game, Miller almost single-handedly led the team to the CIF Prep Prep State championships. Interestingly, she is the first two-time winner of this award (and the first to win unanimously twice), as she was also the 2009 Sportswoman of the Winter Season.
Baseball swings for higher fence after it leads off strong Portland team in the area according to the Pasadena Star News. A large por-
tion of the team had recently just returned from semifinal playoff
runs in soccer or basketball, and as a result, some of these players had
difficult adjusting to Monrovia’s talented pitcher. The team could
only muster three hits in the course of the game and lost 3-0. Junior
Jordan Kutzter commented, “Play-
ging great teams like Monrovia ex-
plains our weaknesses. We realized
after that game that we can have
a great pitching performance by
[minor] Matt Saeta and still lose if we don’t hit and play defense.”
Accordingly, this defense played a
major factor in the game, as only
one of Monrovia’s three runs was
earned—the other two were resul-
ted from fielding errors.
Putting the loss behind them,
the Panthers played San Marino the following day, interestingly,
players from San Marino and Poly con-
cluded the summer and played as one team in summer league. Coach Wayne Ellis hoped to neutralize San Marino’s familiar-
ity with some of the team’s players. There-
fore, Kutzer, a player who with not participate on
the summer team, started on the mound for the Panthers. The lack of familiarity did not bother
him, as the Titans were able to score three runs in the fourth inning to take a 4-2 lead. Lead-
ing Prep League MVP Charlie Baxter came on to shut out the Titans and held the Ti-
tans scoreless the rest of the game. Then, with
two outs in the bottom of the sixth inning, junior
Brian Holman drove in a run to cut down the lead to
one. Baxter came up next and hit the ball right up the middle to drive in two runs and take
the lead. Following Baxter, Kutzer hit a line drive double to left field, giving the Panthers a 7-4 advan-
tage, a lead they would sustain until the end of the game.
The Panthers then easily won their next two games. Saeta turned
in another brilliant pitching ef-
court against Gabrielino, and
Michael Newkirk hit a home run, paving the way to an 8-3. In the 3DQWKHUV 3DVDGHQD
following game against the starting pitcher, and after some
poor fielding in the first inning, the
Panthers found their groove. Kutzer hit a bases-clearing double and senior
Matt Morish hit doubles as the Panthers won 8-3 again.

This victory set up an impor-
tant game against the tournament’s host, Arcadia. Before the game,
Saeta commented, “The game against Arcadia will be big. If we
can get the win, it will be huge for our confidence heading into league play.” The Panthers started out well. Kutzer pitched three score-
less innings and the team had a
1-0 lead going into the bottom of
the fourth inning; however, with
two runs in the inning, Arcadia
rang off a string of hits and scored
four runs. Junior Hunter Merry-
man believes “Arcadia figured him (Kutzer) out.” In relief of Kutzer,
Holman and Morish combined to
pitch the final two innings, but Ar-
cadia was able to hit them as well, and the Panthers fell 9-1.
With a record of 3-2, and the
only losses coming to such solid
teams, the Panthers look to be
in good shape heading into league. The Prep League typically does
not have great teams other than Poly—in fact, the Panthers have
won the league championship in each of the last 15 season. To coun-
ter their weak league schedule, the
Panthers try to play a strong non-
league schedule. Later in the season,
they will play La Canada, Marinazana, and
Sage Hill. Mor-
ris states that “playing good teams early on readies us for the CIF play-
offs.” Sage Hill looms as an especially im-
portant game, since Sage Hill is ranked
third in the division, just behind the
Panthers. Though Sage Hill will certainly give the Panthers an in-
dication of where they really stand in the division, Kutzer says, “We beat Sage Hill last year in the sec-
cond round of CIF so we know what we’re capable of against them.”

Though the team had so much success with so much youth, Mor-
ris emphasizes that is important for the team to stay focused: “A lot of
this season is about picking up where we left off, and finishing the season for us last se-
aon. It is easy to get caught up in the ‘We’re going to win CIF!’ vibe that we have with such a strong team, but we need to avoid that. It is about putting runs on the board, pitching
well and playing sound defense, just like we know we can.”

Sophomore Jack Birkenhuel heads to third on a ground ball. His pinch-hitting has been a nice contribution to a tall, but not fast team.

Golf drives for Prep League success, hoping to topple Viewpoint

After falling short last year to Viewpoint and Webb, the varsity
golf team hopes to surprise their opponents and thrive and capture the Prep League title.

By BRIAN HOLMAN Assistant sports editor

The Poly golf team has a tal-
tened, experienced lineup, which
bodes well for their potential suc-
cess this season. Five of six start-
golfers are returning from last
year’s 9-8 squad, and the team has added some fresh talent to rein-
force these five.

One of the returners is junior
Croi Griffin, who won first team all-league and team MVP awards last season. On Griffin’s talents, junior Kevin Fohrer commented, “Croi is an incredible player. He
is really consistent and has the po-
tential to have an under par round here and there.” Indeed, Croi of-
ten shoots in the low 30’s and 40’s, numbers that often lead the team.

Rivaling Griffin for team-lead-
sing scores this year is freshman
David Trejo. Despite only play-
ing three matches so far, Han has already established himself as a highly skilled golfer. Griffin notes that, despite his youth, Han is both “calm and confident.”

In a match against Temple City, Han scored an impressive 2-over par 38. Furthermore, as he is only a freshman, he has the potential to
improve greatly. As Fohrer simply stated, “The sky’s the limit with him.”

While Hong and Griffin post low scores, senior four-year starter and
captain Bobby Samuels provides veteran leadership on the course. Sophomore Victoria Morgan is also a steady presence. “When-
ever our team has an off day, she is the one person who we can really count on,” mentioned Fohrer.

Finally, senior Scott Nomura, sophomore Kelsey Kawana, and Fohrer add depth to the team, and all are able to post scores in the low-to-mid 40’s.

The team’s roster has translated easily to the scoreboard, if not the team’s record. The team began the season with two losses, a 216-203 a 218-207 defeat against South Pasadena and Temple City respectively.

Still, the Panthers’ average team score for these two games, 217, was well below last year’s average of 226.8. (In a sport where six golf-
ers play and the lowest five scores are taken, this relief trans-
lates to about two strokes lower per player). Highlights include Griffin’s 1-under 35 against South Pasadena and the aforementioned 38 by Hong against Temple City.

The team then won two match-
eds, a forfeit against Marshall and
an 337-234 victory against Bell Jeff. Griffin and Nomura were both ab-
sent in the Bell Jeff match, and the team overall played poorly, result-
ing in a higher team score.

Nevertheless, the two missing golfers gave an opportunity for others to step up, including Fohrer, who is regaining his form after not playing last year. The golfers shot well enough for a victory, even-
ing the Panthers’ record at 2-2.

The team hopes to be consistent when it begins Prep League play on the 16th with a double match against Viewpoint and Webb. Viewpoint has dominated league in the past few years, but graduated four starters.

Samuels contends, “With a stronger team than we’ve had in years past, and a weaker View-
point team, we have a good chance of beating them.”

Fohrer looks forward to the first time in five years. Viewpoint lost some re-
markably talented players.”

After Viewpoint, the Panthers have a few matches against Flintridge Prep in the an-
nual battle for the “Mystic Nib-
lick,” given to the team with the lowest total score through the two matches.

Poly has earned the trophy two years in a row, and seeks to repeat the feat this season. Although it will be difficult, if Poly can accom-
pomish these two goals of beating Viewpoint and winning the Prep League rivalry, the chance for a league championship will remain high.
Volleyball rebuilds after tough season

The varsity boys volleyball team works on restructuring of offensive and defensive strategy in order to improve on last year’s finish.

By JULIA BROWN Assistant sports editor

After a disappointing finish last year, with a 4-4 record in league (7-12 overall), this year’s boys varsity volleyball team looks to surpass last year’s record and contend for a league title.

The team has yet to improve upon its impressive 2008 season, where the boys equalled a record of 14-8 and progressed through the second round of CIF before narrowly losing to Laguna Blanca, 2-3. In 2009 the team failed to build off of the 2008 team’s success.

With new coach Becca Willis leading the team with help from assistant Mike Talamantes, this year’s squad hopes that Willii’s no-nonsense attitude will help the squad surpass last year’s record. Sophomore captain Michael Saeta comments, Willis and Talamantes “make us work really hard at practice but I know the work we are putting in will definitely pay off when we begin league play.” The team hopes to contend for the Prep League title.

This year’s squad has gone to great lengths in order to ensure a successful season; both the offensive and defensive strategies were completely reorganized. The team’s enthusiasm for the new approach is evident as Colin Woolway notes, “Our offense and defense have taken some getting used to, but we’re pretty confident because we’ve improved a ton since the beginning of the season.”

The Panther’s reorganized squad proved victorious in its first match against Webb, shutting out the Gaults 3-0. Kevin Capahart led the Panthers in kills with 14, Saeta led in assists and aces with 24 and 5, respectively. Woolway led in digs with 8 and Mark Loyola led in blocks with 2. The team is 3-4 overall and 1-0 in league.

The starting lineup consists of sophomore Loyola and junior Matt Capahart at middle, senior Evan Robinson and junior Kevin Capahart at outside, sophomore Saeta at setter, sophomore Woolway at opposite and junior Chris Levin at libero. With newly restored confidence in their coaching staff, all the players have to do now is learn to work as a team if they hope to content for a league title: “We aren’t working together as well as our coach had hoped,” says Saeta, “but Becca is trying to create greater team camaraderie by fostering more team events so we can all get to know each other.”

Although the team definitely displays restored confidence, before they can excel it is evident that they need to learn how to play as a team. Still, Woolway states, “I personally feel pretty confident that we’ll go far.”

Sophomore Colin Woolway spikes the ball against Viewpoint following a set from fellow sophomore and Captain Michael Saeta.