The Upper School junior English classes will organize and prepare a mock political election to gain a better understanding of this year’s ongoing presidential race. The election will be between six different candidates: Anisha Cook, Joshua Bally, Charlie Goff, Jack Corti, Caroline Harvey and Zack Burn. Each candidate will represent the platforms of their respective English class.

To begin the project, each junior class discussed the major controversies in American political discourse, paring the list down to what they felt were the five most important topics. Subsequently, each junior individually researched and wrote about one of the five selected subjects, articulating his or her personal views on the issue. Each class then assembled a “class platform” based on the five best papers written by their peers.

“We really wanted to take political parties out of the equation,” said English teacher Cotter Donnell. “I believe this allows us to have thoughtful and substantive discussions about things that are important to us.” Each platform will eventually be printed and distributed throughout campus.

In addition, each class elects a candidate to represent it in the upcoming school-wide election. The candidate is in charge of memorizing the platform and presenting it to the rest of the campus in both a speech and a debate. For the ongoing stage of the project, each junior class will be split into speechwriting, film-making and advertising sections, which will all work together to sell their candidate and discredit their competition.

The project stemmed originally from eleventh grade English teacher Julia Davis’s idea to simulate which political positions Jesus Christ might have taken had he run as a presidential candidate in the United States. After the idea failed to come to fruition, Davis and fellow English teachers Carina Marion and Cotter Donnell worked collaboratively to develop a simulation more comprehensive and applicable to the current presidential election.

“After the Jesus project was abandoned, we came up with the idea to instead have kids take real political issues and really run for president among the widest demographic available to us,” said Marion. “I think it’s really fortunate that we eventually decided to. The junior English class is all about analyzing information, crafting a well thought-out opinion and being able to articulate that opinion. We in the junior English department often stress that our students need to research and analyze what is currently going on in the world, and this seemed like the perfect way to get them to do it.”

Similarly, Davis hopes that students will enjoy themselves while learning about the importance of rhetoric to craft comprehensive arguments. “Political campaigns are really just about persuasion and rhetoric,” she said. “There’s nothing more effective at helping the juniors remember rhetorical skills than having them utilize these skills in order to persuade other people. In addition, one of my main goals is to have each class feel the tension between running their candidates on principles and running the candidate on rhetoric and propaganda.”

Both Davis and Marion were pleased with the fact that the project allows students to develop creative talent to validate those skills in order to serve the project. “I’m really happy that the project allows for creative expression,” said Davis. “If you have a student who’s a great artist, he or she can help use visual art to advertise for his or her candidate. If you have a student who’s a great persuasive writer, he or she can use his or her skills to help craft an articulate speech.”

Anisha Cook, the elected candidate for Davis’s C Period class, will be running on a platform centered on the economic, the educational system and foreign policy. “I was deeply honored after being nominated,” said Cook. “It’s slightly nerve-wracking, but it’s also exciting. I’m glad that we’re able to work together to create a successful, cooperative, and cohesive ‘nation’ that ensures equality and a better life for all.”

On the week of October 29 – November 1, the six candidates will deliver speeches during lunch periods and debate the various political issues in morning meetings. The debate will be orchestrated by ASB’s Daniel W. McVay, co-star of the Emmy award winning political drama The West Wing. On November 6, Upper School students and teachers will vote for the candidate of their choice.
Trips week in photos

Underclassmen embark on weeklong journeys into the great outdoors

Courtesy of Natalie Triester, Ezra Sunshine, Anna Lamb, Diana Leon, Graeme Somerville, Kiki Yang and Rachel Erickson
Poly recognized with CIF Character Award

By DANIEL ZHU
Student contributor

Polytechnic School was recently awarded the CIF Southern Section’s Champion for Character School Award for exhibiting outstanding sportsmanship, character, and integrity in athletics. Poly’s athletic program was selected for this honor out of the almost 600 schools in the Southern Section.

Athletic Director Steve Beermann credits his predecessor, Chuck Ellis, for promoting ideals of sportsmanship conduct and integrity in the Poly community. In the same capacity, Beermann has continued Ellis’s work by advocating fairness and candor in all aspects of athletic competition.

“We’ve been living by the principles praised by the award for many years,” Beermann said. “Poly has always been practicing fairness and equality not only in its athletic program, but all throughout the school, and it was rather nice for someone outside the Poly community to recognize this achievement.”

Poly’s emphasis on mutual respect is especially apparent in the student section during rivalry games. Poly students usually restrict themselves to cheering for their own athletes. Senior Courtney Foster said, “We cheer to support our friends and classmates. As the Poly student body, we want to represent our school proudly, but we also want to promote respect for other teams.”

By JULLIA WOHL
Assistant news editor

Taylor Reid, the former Assistant to the Upper School Director, returned to Poly in the beginning of October to read an excerpt from her soon-to-be-released novel: Forever, Interrupted.

While Reid worked at Poly, she was a close friend to both students and other faculty members. Reid has been a Poly faculty member for almost six years; however, the finished the first draft of her first book in under a month. Her successive drafts were completed in less than two weeks from the time she left Poly.

Reid initially viewed writing strictly as a hobby. She started to consider writing as a potential career option only after her mother, one of her biggest fans, suggested that Reid begin writing full-time.

Forever, Interrupted is about a couple that meets, falls in love and marries too quickly. After the unexpected death of the husband, the wife struggles to develop a stronger relationship with her mother-in-law. Reid hoped to craft a novel that would explore the effects of quickly falling in love, the horror of loss and the power of female relationships.

In the same vein, Reid has remained committed to her passion for writing and put them into context – her personal experiences and how she created the story – was fascinating and exciting.”

Reid is now working on the finishing touches of her novel: hiring a publicist, designing the cover art and writing her acknowledgments and dedications. In addition, she is currently writing the first draft of Forever, Interrupted.

The New Zealand students perform in Upper School morning meeting

Poly hosted cross country runners from the Auckland Grammar School in late September through the Global Initiatives Program.

By NATHAN LEE
Assistant news editor

Sponsored by the Global Initiatives Program, the Upper School hosted New Zealand students from Auckland Grammar School’s cross-country team late last month. Poly students had the opportunity both to learn about New Zealand culture and introduce the visitors to American culture. This visit marked AGS’s fourth to Poly since 2003.

“The number one purpose [for the visit] was the opportunity for interaction between peers from different cultures,” said Rick Caragher, the head of the GIP at Poly. “Through face to face interactions, we had a chance to take down cultural barriers, learn from one another and become aware of issues that may not be so apparent in our own country.”

The visit was one of this year’s many GIP-sponsored opportunities for Poly students. As Poly also actively participates in joint programs in Beijing, Finland, France and Japan, The Global Initiatives Program works with schools across the globe to open opportunities for student interaction across diverse cultures.

Because they were all part of their school’s cross-country team, the New Zealand students were paired with Poly’s cross-country athletes for homestays lasting two nights with each Poly student. The Poly New Zealand team running and living in Pasadena on September 27 arrived in New Zealand two days later.

During morning meeting on their first day at Poly, the students performed the Haka, a native New Zealand tribal dance often performed before sporting events to intimidate opponents. Accented with intensive collective movement and nautical language shouts, the Haka was a fine demonstration of authentic New Zealand culture and offered a refreshing perspective on the performing arts.

Later that day, the students visited Griffith Park and ran to the iconic Hollywood sign before touring the major hotspots of Southern California. On Friday night, the Poly students brought the New Zealanders to the varsity football game at South Pasadena High School, giving them a “true American experience.” Despite the fact that Poly lost in a close game to Bell-Jeff high school, the AGS students thoroughly enjoyed their experience and enthusiastically cheering on the Pirates.

“THE NEW ZEALAND students really seemed to be having fun at the game,” said AGS Freshman Eliza Walper. “Some of them pulled out the programs and were cheering on our players by name.”

Later that night, the AGS students are dinner with the Poly cross-country team at senior football player Eda Yu’s house, enjoying an authentic American dinner together. The Poly students taught the New Zealanders how to play pool and interacted with them in a casual group environment. The response from the Auckland Grammar School students was overwhelmingly positive, with many having enjoyed the interactions with other students from a different country. Many of them also enjoyed the hospitality of the hosting Poly families.

“What an experience! Staying with the Bills was everything I had imagined the stereotype about an “American family to be,” wrote AGS student A. Meltzer. “Massive snow before school and a house with an American flag flying high and much more. They treated me with absolute respect like I was their own. Overall, it was a great experience! The American football was, of course, the best.”

After their visit to Pasadena, the Auckland Grammar School students plan to race at other cross-country invitees in California, as well as stay for a couple weeks in Hawaii.
Morality is not religion, nor is it law. Laws are not morals — they are merely a codification of them, a construction invented by humans to explain why it is wrong to commit certain acts. And religion is no different. In his 2007 speech, “Faith in America,” John Winthrop claimed that complete separation of the church and state is impossible because state decisions are moral decisions and moral decisions, of course, require morality, which is synonymous with religion. He is incorrect. Complete separation of the church and state is possible, and not least because religion and morality are not the same thing.

Religion is a human construct imposed upon morality as an attempt by humans to systemize something that they do not understand: why is it wrong to do certain things? That God decreed it to be wrong is a much simpler answer than the one a psychologist might give. With religion, there is no gray area: things are simply right or wrong, done or not done and one needs no further understanding than that to be “moral.” Religion creates the idea of a mysterious higher power with all the answers so that we don’t have to worry about finding them for ourselves. God knows the answer, God forbids immoral behavior, no more thought is needed on our part. And so religion is ranked very low on the ladder of moral reasoning simply because it eliminates any need for moral reasoning at all; our moral reasoning is all performed for us by a conveniently unreachable God.

Morality cannot be religion, nor can religion be morality just as the Dewey Decimal System cannot be a book or a book cannot be information. Neither numbers nor data, nor a set of numbers with assigned and accepted meanings. Religion only avoids the issue by simplifying something infinitely complex. Morality is not a human construct as religion is; it is a human creation. The most basic “laws” of morality encompass the things we take for granted: do not murder, do not steal, do not employ violence, do not commit adultery, etc. And as Roark points out, “man with an eye to self-preservation” has a large number of moral convictions. [Morals] are not unique to any one denomination. They belong to the great moral inheritance we hold in common (Faith in America, 2007). But why, if religions are so complex and different, would these ideas have appeared in the same form across so many religions? Because they are survival instinct. Whether or not your society is Christian or Buddhist or Muslim or Zoroastian, it will not survive if every member of the community goes around killing people. So it is better to not kill one another, for the preservation of the species. And so out of this instinct developed the great “Do’s” and “Do nots.” The Ten Commandments are not intended to prove what perfectly moral people the Jews were, but to ensure the survival of their society, to prevent it from collapsing in upon itself and vanishing. The case is the same in John Winthrop’s “A Model of Christian Commonwealth.” Winthrop describes how a community must function as a single unit in order to survive and prosper through a metaphor of the body for a community. Winthrop claims that “all true Christians are of one body in Christ” and thus “all the parts of this one of Winthrop’s seven hundred would have died, and died alone. But together, they had a chance. Together they could build and farm and defend and mount and rejoice as support one another. And it was for this reason that Winthrop called upon each and every one of them to follow his lesson about society whose “sensiblenes and Sympathy are so particular to one so well provided with common advantages” (A Modell of Christian Charity). From this, his last point, it looks as if Winthrop himself understands some of the complexities of morality.

Whether his audience recognized as much is doubtful and so the tie to religion is understandable, even if Winthrop did completely understand that morality was not religion but a means for a community, a society, a species to avoid extinction and to thrive. The simple idea that a higher being somewhere had decreed that they, the Puritans, should work together to build a perfect body joined together by love because this war Jesus’s body and God’s work is a much easier one to grasp than the highly complex moral implications of survival. But this does not change what Winthrop’s moral code was accomplishing; it ensured the survival of the whole community by promoting working together and prohibiting acts performed for purely selfish purposes.

**Article continued online at polywp.org**
Movie review: Ben Affleck’s Argo

By JOHNNY FRANKS
Staff writer

Every fall, Apple releases a new iPhone and, every fall, the hype for the new release surpasses that of the last one. Because Apple always adds a few new features to persuade people buying the phone, statistically the iPhones have been selling out faster and faster each year. For the iPhone 4S, online orders took about a month to be shipped. This far surpassed Apple’s expectations and caused a major backlog of the device. Online orders took about a month to be shipped.

So what is great about the iPhone 5, and why are people flocking to get their hands on one? Quite simply, the iPhone 5 is a better phone. It is faster, thinner and lighter than the iPhone 4S. The A6 processor is twice as fast as its predecessor and the iPhone’s RAM (virtual memory) was upgraded from 512 MB to 1 GB. The iPhone 5 also received a display improvement, stretching the screen to four inches in height in order to provide a better gaming and video-viewing experience.

Another major change was the size of the iPhone charging port, which went from about one inch wide to being only to a centimeter wide. The new Lightning cable features built-in security chips and faster charging capability compared to the former MagSafe cable. This change was also required to fit more internal hardware into such a thin phone.

While Apple enhanced the phone’s hardware, they also improved the phone’s operating system (iOS) in order to introduce over 200 new features. With the iPhone 5’s new iOS 6 software comes numerous beneficial additions. Yet some still question whether paying such a high price for this new smartphone is worth it.

One of the features, the revolutionary Maps application, is the result of Apple severing its contract ties with Google amidst patent wars and corporate rivalry. Despite the long-term benefits of having complete control over its navigational system, Apple has suffered as a result of its hasty undertaking of its very own Maps project.

While Apple decided to drop Google Maps, they decided to create their own service, which is understandably quite a task. While the current Maps application run by Apple is still decent, it lacks a number of listings and features such as street view, which was useful for identifying what locations looked like. Not to mention that sometimes, Maps provides completely wrong directions. While these issues with Maps are annoying right now, they will be fixed in a reasonable amount of time, and there should be nothing to worry about.

Along with the Maps update, Apple made massive improvements to the well-known voice assistant Siri in iOS. Siri was introduced last year with the iPhone 4S and has come a long way. iOS 6 allows the user to ask Siri new and advanced questions, making Siri far more useful than previously people had speculated. Despite all this, people are still not too satisfied with the new tag.

The reality is, if you are looking for a new phone, don’t be so quick to jump on the iPhone 5. The iPhone 4S is still a competent smartphone and reasonably cheaper than the iPhone 5. But in all all, the iPhone 5 is no fluke. If you feel you need to upgrade that old flip phone or that beaten-up iPhone 4, purchasing an iPhone 5 won’t be something that you’ll regret.
Anyone who has ever worked with senior Rita Grosbard can attest to her remarkable talent and character both on and off the stage. Her confidence and ability to live in the moment come from her self-awareness, which translates into genuine, sincere acting that affects audience and cast members alike.

“Through theatre, I get to express sides of myself that I would not normally get to express, and for me it’s a really important expression of self,” Grosbard commented.

Grosbard first performed in a play in the eighth grade, though she has been taking acting classes for as long as she can remember. Despite the fact that she started performing relatively late, it has become an integral part of her life. She has participated in as many of the musicals and fall plays at Poly as possible, including Chavez Ravine, A Few Good Men, Beauty and the Beast, Villegiatura, Sweeney Todd, and Widows, which debuts this fall on November 8.

When asked which production she is most proud of, she is quick to respond with Sweeney Todd. As an assistant director, her role in the musical extended far beyond her own character. She influenced the development of the big picture and the significance of the story as a whole. Grosbard commented, “It was really interesting because you’re not focused on one aspect of the production; you’re focused on the entire production. It’s not about what my character wants or how my character gets from here to there. It’s more about storytelling, and that was really valuable.”

Grosbard continually seeks challenges and opportunities to grow as both an actress and a person. Since starting out at Theatre 360 in Pasadena, she has attended prestigious programs such as the Cherubs Summer Theatre Arts Program at Northwestern University and the Carnegie Mellon Pre-College Drama Program. Grosbard affirms that she has learned an extraordinary amount about herself and humanity in general from the performing arts. “Acting made me a lot more sympathetic to other people because when I try to put myself in other people’s shoes for theatre, I develop more of an interest in understanding how other people feel. It can’t substitute for legit experience, but in many ways it’s the next best thing.”

When asked for advice to other aspiring actors or underclassmen interested in theatre, she said, “Just do it! And the more you do it, the better you’ll get at it. Don’t be afraid; take a risk. If there’s an eighty percent chance you’ll look like an idiot and a twenty percent chance that something great will happen, then it’s worth it. You are going to make something great happen.”

In this year’s fall play, Widows, Grosbard’s skill and finesse will be applied to the character of Sofia Fuentes, an old woman living in Chile whose family has disappeared, kidnapped by an individual in Augusto Pinochet’s regime.

When asked what she has learned from the Upper School theatre program, she explained, “Forgive yourself immediately. Acknowledge your own worth. If you put yourself out there and genuinely try, that’s the best thing you could possibly do. Be a genuine and good person, and then the rest will follow in terms of acting and in terms of life.”

- Erin Lee, Assistant life editor

The artwork shown above represents samples from the AP Studio Art class (alphabetically by class): Kelly Berg ’14, Madelyn Drolen ’14, Brock Hudnut ’14, Anna Scheckel ’14, Hana Svitek ’14, Jianna Xiong ’14, Sarah Bellack ’14, Erin Annick ’14, Cat Davidson ’13, Rachel Ng ’13, Katie Yun ’13, and Ella Young ’13.
The Paw Print conducted the Polytechnic School vote survey with questions designed to gauge the political opinions of Poly’s Upper School students. There were over 215 respondents to each question, about 60 percent of the student body.

The first question asked: “If you could vote or are voting in the November 6th election, which candidates for president and vice-president would you choose,” allowing students to choose between the Obama/Biden and the Romney/Ryan tickets. 142 students said they favored the incumbents, while 76 students favored the Romney/Ryan pairing.

Students chose from self-labels of conservative, moderate and liberal. Only 17 percent–37 students—identified themselves as conservatives. This outcome, paired with the fact that 35 percent of students surveyed favored Romney/Ryan ticket, suggests that Romney is drawing substantial support from moderates at Poly.

Question three drew a hard line, asking: "Has President Obama done enough to improve the economic situation in the last four years?" A majority of students, 117 of those polled, answered that Obama has not done enough to improve the economy, while 71 students answered that he has (32 students abstained). When the October employment numbers come out a few days prior to the election, and negative result could further erode voters’ evaluation President Obama’s job on the economy. But at Poly, student voters were, in general, rather forgiving of his performance in comparison to voter included national surveys across the country.

The next survey question tackled the serious issue of U.S. military commitment in the Middle East: “Should the U.S. withdraw its troops from Afghanistan by the year 2014 regardless of the situation?” For those less politically inclined, this question posed a more ideologically-orientated choice to express their opinion. Of the 218 ballot respondents, 102 believed that—at any cost—U.S. troops should be out of Afghanistan by 2014 while only 61 students thought the situation needed to be assessed first. Either way, the next president will continue to grapple with the U.S.’s unpopular military involvement in the Middle East.

Over the following questions, students expressed majority support for universal healthcare and the right of a woman to an abortion, while they voted against the use of religion as a political guide. The results of these questions suggest that social issues sway Poly voters more than economic issues. In response to the question, “Is the country headed in the right direction,” 117 students responded “yes,” a surprisingly high number given the much lower national poll support in concurrence. Rasmussen Reports released a national poll asking the question, "Which direction is the nation going?" in which 55 percent of the American voters surveyed responded that the nation was going in the wrong direction, while Real Clear Politics, a political analysis organization, showed that 55 percent of Americans believe the U.S. is headed down the wrong track.

As a whole, President Obama has garnered considerable support at Poly, perhaps not so difficult a task at a school located in such a liberal state. There were over 215 respondents to each question, about 60 percent of the student body. However, this notion’s premise is false, as the decision to align the Republican Party with Christian ideals was not based on religious ideology, but on political strategy. In the middle of the 20th century, the GOP was an economically conservative party with an immaculate track record in foreign policy, but it lacked a clearly defined position on social issues. The Democrats, on the other hand, utilized pro-white, conservative Christian social views in order to maintain control of the South.

The political landscape shifted when Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson began a series of Civil Rights reforms, alienating a large portion of the pro-white South. In 1968 Richard Nixon capitalized on Johnson's political gaffe by adopting Christian social views that had previously been associated with the Democrats. Nixon dominated the South and comfortably won the election. The GOP has clung to these views ever since, despite growing opposition from Democrats and Republicans alike.

As opposition mounts, the reasons behind the GOP’s insistence on maintaining these views have become increasingly unclear. Economically conservative states such as Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin lean left because they refuse to accept the stringent views of the Republicans. More liberal states such as California, New York, Massachusetts and Maryland are essentially handed to the Democrats as well. Meanwhile, the South—the group of states the Nixonformula he used to align the GOP with Christianity—is too economically conservative to vote Democrat should the GOP liberalize its social views. Up until now, the GOP has elected not to change social views because they have been very successful, winning six of ten elections since 1968. However, with growing division amongst party members and a visceral distrust of all things Obama, don’t be surprised if another four years with Barack provides the necessary impetus for the GOP to shake its obsolete, Christian views and focus on its traditional strongholds conservative economic and foreign policy.
The Panther’s Lair

Question: Does the fact that we live in a state that is pretty much decided in terms of political preference lower your incentive to register to vote when you reach the voting age?

No, it does not, because my family and I personally are Democrats, so any vote I personally cast will be part of the majority in our state, which would be to my advantage. I don’t think anyone should not vote just because of their state’s political preference—everyone deserves a say, and their vote will count somewhere along the way.

Being a Democrat, I think that I would want to vote in every election and add a vote to the Democrat cause. Because the goal of all Democrats is to keep the Republicans out of office, the only way that you can do that is by voting. Despite the fact that it probably would not make a difference, it’s better to be safe than sorry.

The Liberal political preference that is prevalent throughout our state does not lower my personal incentive to vote/register, but rather boosts my incentive. As I am representing a political minority, I feel as though it is my duty to express and explain conservative beliefs through voting. I partake in voting against the norm so that my views may be heard, regardless of the situation of the state.

I was lucky enough to turn 18, the voting age, months before the presidential election. For my 18th birthday, not only did I receive presents, but I also was given a voter registration form. I eagerly filled it out and mailed it in. I feel as if voting is my right and privilege as an American citizen, and I cannot imagine not participating in this and every election to come.

—Brennan Hart ’16

Electoral college, electoral relic

By DAVID RODGERS
Opinion editor

Sitting at the lunch tables over the past month and a half, I’ve heard plenty of political chatter. But among the multitude of topics, from Barack Obama’s debate performance to Mitt Romney’s entertaining jokes at the Al Smith dinner, one sentiment has cut to the forefront of almost every discussion: students simply don’t know whom to support.

Do I vote for Obama and hope he fulfills the promises he makes this time around, or do I support Romney’s vague plans for the future? Do I put my faith in Obama and his rhetoric, or do I assume Romney’s 47% comment wasn’t directed at me?

You see, the difficulty is not choosing which candidate is best for our country, but rather which candidate will do the least harm.

While there are certainly staunch supporters of both sides, the political season has revealed to me that our electoral system is failing us. Our views shouldn’t be automatically painted black or white. Our opinions should make a serious push to modify or eliminate it.

The Electoral College has been a mainstay in our country’s voting process since our founding fathers deemed a potential popular vote as a danger to the nation. While that might strike you as an odd concern, it’s important to realize how different our nation was over 200 years ago. The rationale behind the Electoral College centered on a fear that a tyrant could potentially manipulate the majority of the United States—around only 4 million citizens at that point—into electing him president. Simply put, Alexander Hamilton and company did not trust the population to make the right choice—a reasonable sentiment in those days when the fear of British takeover was about as common as finding a Starbucks in Los Angeles.

Despite the fact that the Electoral College may have been an appropriate feature two centuries ago, it’s obsolete in 21st century America. It subverts democracy and makes utter mockery of the principle of one man, one vote. Take the situation presented by living in California for example. As a seemingly unmovable “Blue State,” California represented roughly 13-million voters in the 2008 presidential election. Of those, 37% voted for John McCain while 61% voted for Barack Obama. Due to the winner-take-all policy, Obama collected all 55 electoral votes, while the 37% who voted for McCain and the 2% who voted for different candidates received nothing for showing up to the polls. Now I can understand that if you’re a Democrat or a supporter of Obama, you may simply shrug this off—it’s just the fair rules of the game, right?

Not necessarily. Let’s rewind to the 2000 presidential election—George W. Bush vs. Al Gore. The United States as a whole cast 48.4% of their votes for Gore while Bush received 47.9% of the popular vote, but due to the Electoral College process, Bush received four more electoral votes than Gore and was thus proclaimed the winner. In other words, the majority of our nation wanted Al Gore in office, but we were given Bush instead.

Still shrugging this off? Hopefully not. The idea of democracy is predicated on the fact that the voice of the nation be represented by the majority of the population, not the Electoral College—usually does an accurate job of conveying the wishes of the majority, we cannot afford to let our country be run by what “usually” works, because when “usually” fails us, we all suffer.

While it seems unlikely that an outright elimination of the Electoral College has a place in our country’s near future, an amendment to the winner-take-all system is necessary in order to ensure that voters receive a voice for their vote. The Republicans of California, the Democrats of Texas, the Independents of New York, the Libertarians of Florida, have long since had their voice heard by the rest of America. It’s time to ensure such citizens be guaranteed the value of their vote. To do otherwise is to subvert democracy, eroding the foundation of our city upon a hill and challenging the value of a citizen in America.

Compiled by David Rodgers
Photo by Nate Young / The Paw Print
Immigration and the Constitution

LUKE ASPERGER
Assistant opinion editor

The debate over illegal immigration in the United States has grown heated in recent years as a result of economic struggles and rising debt at both the state and federal level. Some on the far right call for drastic measures such as mass deportation and the complete sealing off of our border with Mexico. Others call for legalizing illegal immigrants and creating a burden for the rest of society. Some even go so far as to say that any children of illegal immigrants, even if born in the United States, should be deported as well. However, these arguments trivialize the real issues and gloss over crucial facts.

Most of the arguments in favor of deportation or stricter border patrol rest on the misconception that undocumented immigrants suck up the nation's resources, weigh down the economy, and steal jobs from American citizens. While it is true that some government spends money on public services such as education and health care for undocumented immigrants, the consensus among economists is that immigrants undeniably yield a net benefit to the economy.

First, contrary to popular belief, undocumented immigrants do pay taxes. All pay sales taxes and more than half pay income and payroll taxes, thus contributing to Social Security and Medicare even though they will never receive the benefits of either. The estimated annual tax contributions of undocumented immigrants total around $16 billion.

Second, our economy depends on the availability of cheap labor forces, from agriculture to construction to gardening and more. Without these immigrants, Americans would see prices on many consumer goods soar, especially those for food.

Consumers are not the only beneficiaries of illegal immigrants: a constant flow of low-wage labor increases the opportunities for high-skill, high-wage labor. It is a myth that immigrants steal jobs from American citizens, as there is little demand for low-wage or low-skill positions. The national unemployment rate may be high, but few Americans are willing toil in the hot sun for ten hours a day for $7 an hour.

Last year, Georgia passed HB 87, a law that cracked down on illegal immigration. To be perfectly honest, last year, Georgia saw nearly $400 million in economic costs in lost profits for employers and higher prices for consumers. Without cheap labor, we would never have had the economic boom of the 1990s, and the current recession would have been much more severe. One of the key reasons hypotocritical to criticize illegal immigration so vehemently when illegal immigrants formed this country, when every one of us has illegal immigrant blood in us?

Any advocate who is truly serious about severely limiting illegal immigration should think carefully about exactly who the faces of illegal immigration are. In addition to a cheap labor supply, we have students whom we already invested taxpayer money in, we have educated minds already integrated into the workforce and we have teachers such as Paly's own AP U.S. History teacher Jose Melgoza, who migrated to the U.S. illegally from Mexico.

Mr. Melgoza, who wrote his undergraduate thesis on illegal immigration, reflected, "Extreme anti-immigration policies don't help us. If I were really wanting to solve the problems brought on by immigration, we need to get past our xenophobia and deal with the real economic, political, and social issues. The blame is just as much on us for demanding this cheap labor supply as it is on them for coming here... Imagine doing what these immigrants are doing. They're leaving behind their homes, their families, their history, and their culture. That's the person I want in this country who leaves behind everything to try to make things better. This is part of the American dream. That's who we are at our history. Where would we be without immigrants like Andrew Carnegie?"

A New York Times/CBS News poll found that 74% of Americans believe that illegal immigrants contribute to the economy, but economists across political spectrum agree that this is absolutely false. While there is no simple path for immigration reform, we cannot begin to address the issue until we stop the spread of hate-filled and uninformed arguments.

We have not fallen into the same economic crises as Europe because we have such a large and inexpensive labor force.

There is a reason why most Republican lawmakers, despite their vitriolic campaign rhetoric condemning the influx of illegal immigrants into the United States, rarely push sincere immigration reform when they are in office. There is a reason why Bush, even while calling for more secure borders and stricter immigration policy, never made meaningful efforts illegal-immigrant. The true impact undocumented immigrants have on our country is far too complex to be condensed into 30-second sound bites or partisan attacks.

The debate on immigration brings up important moral questions to consider. How can we be so quick to condemn illegal immigrants when our nation's entire history is simply the story of immigrants trying to make better lives for themselves? Is it
Strong displays of endurance carry cross country to league finals

By JP OLINSKI and HUNTER WORLAND
Sports staff

Finishing near the top in recent races, the boys and girls cross-country teams have exhibited strong potential for league success. With Prep League finals at the end of the month, the Panthers are set to challenge the reigning boys league champions, Flintridge Prep. In last season’s league finals, the Panthers finished third both in the girls and boys races. However, the team only graduated six seniors out of a team of thirty-four.

The Panthers most recently competed in the Mt. SAC Invitational, where the team faced larger schools from across Southern California in the swepstakes race, and one familiar rival: Flintridge Prep.

Although Poly did not win their respective races, the teams showcased the depth needed for future success and finished high in several events. Sophomores Dylan Hanel and Richard Hathaway finished among the top thirteen in their events.

In key matches, Senior Kelly McGee have consistent runs, placing them in third in league. The following two weeks away, the team hopes to make a run in the CIF tournament this year. Last year, the team advanced to the second round. Junior Michael Chen, Electra Lang, Maddy Mendell - 1st place.

Women's invitational, senior Michael Caughron currently has the Prep League's fastest full-length race time at 15:46. However, three Flintridge runners trail Caughron by only a few seconds.

Gancedo continues to lead the Panthers on the girls side. Poly looks to her to finish strong and lead them to an impressive Prep League finish.

Girls tennis cruises through league play, CIF hopes on the rise

By OLIVIA TREISTER
Assistant sports editor

As the fall season progresses, the varsity girls tennis team continues its successful season. The girls have dominated in several recent games against Webb 17-1, La Salle 15-3, Flintridge Prep 16-2 and Mayfield 16-2.

Against Mayfield in their most recent match, freshman Samantha Collins recorded her first two varsity singles wins, taking on Mayfield's number one and two girls. The Panthers currently have an overall record of 9 wins and 5 losses, placing them in third in league. With the early rounds of CIF approaching, the team hopes that its leadership will lead to victories in the postseason.

The members of the girls tennis team suggest that the leadership from co-captains Aria Griffin, a senior, and Elissa Boghosian, a junior, are the roots of their success. Sophomore Anna Lamb recently showcased the depth needed for success and finished high in several events. Sophomore Dylan Hanel and Richard Hathaway finished among the top thirteen in their events.

Sophomore standout Evan Gancedo races herself midway through the race. Evan Gancedo finished the varsity race in eighth place with a time of 17:23. Sophomore Will Hubsch finished the varsity race in eighth place with a time of 19:38.

In the boys varsity sweepstakes race, senior Michael Caughron finished sixth out of 98 runners with a 16:04 time, once again, establishing himself as the squad's frontrunner. After getting 21st place out of 236 competitors in the Rosemead Invitational, Caughron currently has the Prep League's fastest full-length race time at 15:46. However, three Flintridge runners trail Caughron by only a few seconds.

Gancedo continues to lead the Panthers on the girls side. Poly looks to her to finish strong and lead them to an impressive Prep League finish.

Fencing results

SCSFL Novice Tournament
Mens Foil:
John Rodgers - 3rd
Townsend Walzers, McDonald - 7th
Leo Galvan - 10th
Sean McMahon - 12th
Nicholas Terrile - 13th

Women's Foil:
Diana Leon - 3rd
Emily Dickinson - 7th
Amelia Bren - 13th

Gryphon Team Foil #1
Mixed Team Foil
Michael Chen, Electra Lang, Maddy Mendell - 1st
Emily Gifford, Brandon Lew, Maddie Kim - 2nd
Sofie Henskel, John Rodgers, Cole Minot - 4th

Successful run to CIF promising for boys water polo

By JP OLINSKI
Sports editor

As the 2012 season enters its final stages, the boys’ varsity water polo team looks to continue their success after advancing to the Oxnard Tournament. The team also hopes to make another deep run into the CIF playoffs after two years of reaching the finals. After obliterating most league opponents, the boys look to continue their success in key matches.

Junior Spencer Rogers and senior Kelly McGee have consistently propelled the squad to victory. Rogers leads the team in scoring with 78 goals. Roger’s fellow junior Brock Hudnut has also been a consistent source of excellence as he leads the team in assists and could possibly break Poly’s record.

In the recent Oxnard Tournament, the squad drowned all opposition in the final stages, the boy’s varsity water polo team won the tournament.

The Panthers currently have an overall record of 8-0 and 9-0 in the Prep League. The solid record also highlights their superiority in Division V and their near-perfect record will hopefully translate into a deep CIF run and possibly redemption from the previous two years of CIF finals defeats. Rogers commented, “Every game someone else steps up to play and I think we’re going to be a very dangerous team in the playoffs since we play as a team and don’t really rely on any one player."
After a tough stretch in its schedule, volleyball hopes to push to finish line

By Charlie Ramirez
Assistant sports editor

The Poly girls volleyball team's season appeared to be fading away after a tough start, with a 6-7 record and three losses in their first league matches. But after a strong showing over the past few weeks, the Panthers find themselves climbing their way back up the Prep League standings.

“Our team is made up of so many new players making it a slow start where each of us had to find our footing and see how we worked together,” said outside hitter sophomore Deedee Logan.

Junior and fellow outside hitter Natalie Treister added, “I think our team really turned it around after the Mayfield game because we saw our potential. Since then, we've stepped up the intensity and showed our disappointment that came with the loss. Despite scoring five touchdowns and having the home-field advantage, the Panthers suffered a defeat to Bellarmine-Jefferson. The packed stands of orange and white roared in excitement as senior running back Jake Zelek made a key eleven-yard run with just two minutes left on the clock.

With Poly in the lead by seven, the Guards retaliated with a four-yard run in the final seconds on the game. The Guards trailed by two, with four seconds on the clock, as they prepared to go for a game-winning two-point conversion. The conversion was successful, sealing the non-league game for Bellarmine-Jefferson.

With a 5-2 record, the Panthers fell 50-49 in a tough defeat to Bellarmine-Jefferson. The packed stands of orange and white roared in excitement as senior running back Jake Zelek made a key eleven-yard run with just two minutes left on the clock. The Guards trailed by two, with four seconds on the clock, as they prepared to go for a game-winning two-point conversion. The conversion was successful, sealing the non-league game for Bellarmine-Jefferson.

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Athlete of the Issue

Dani Smith

Senior Dani Smith has played a vital role in the success of the varsity girl’s volleyball team. Having been on varsity for the entirety of her volleyball career, Smith has consistently proven that her abilities are critical to team success. She has developed into a strong team leader, one underclassmen teammates can look up to. Sophomore Deedee Logan commented on Smith’s role as a leader, “Dani is always looking out for us; as a senior she is seen as a natural leader and I think I speak for all of our team when I say that she sets an example that all of us want to follow.”

With seven seniors on the roster, the squad is not lacking in upperclassmen. However, Smith has demonstrated her leadership consistently giving the squad a much-needed role model. Her leadership has led this team to a current record of 12-8.

Junior Ana Acosta stated, “Dani has been a core member of the varsity volleyball team this entire season. She is a great leader and mentor on the team, and her skills as a setter have been influential to our success. Our team has many new members, including myself, and leaders like Dani have brought our team so close together that we are now able to compete against very united and difficult opponents. Dani is such a talented player, and she has left big shoes to fill for our future setters.”

- Ian McKnight

Athlete of the Issue

Michael Caughron

Poly’s cross-country program has produced runners that have consistently proven themselves in the Prep League as well as in CIF races. Senior Michael Caughron has proved to be no different. Throughout Caughron’s Poly career, he has consistently posted solid times and has made a name for himself in the Prep League.

Since his first varsity race freshman year, Caughron has continued to dedicate himself to the sport, running year round including in track and field last year to help stay in shape for the fall. Junior Lev Asimow commented, “Michael’s effort and consistency bring the whole team up with him. His work during practice also can be seen in his quick time at Mt. SAC this weekend.”

As Caughron finishes his final season and last chance at a CIF medal, the cross country team knows it will miss his presence next year. But his times and his inspiration to the rest of the team will leave a mark as a model for the future.

- Ian McKnight and Caleb Lee

Athletes On the Spot

Guilty Pleasure Song:
If I could be a teacher I would be...
My nickname for myself is...
Best movie of the year:
2012 election is...
Hidden Talent:
Coolest place I’ve been is –

Athlete and Sport

Guilty Pleasure Song
If I could be a teacher I would be...
My nickname for myself is...
Best movie of the year:
2012 election is...
Hidden Talent:

Tim Goodwin
Cross Country
90’s Britney
Senora Navarro
I think Bowflex suits me well
Moonrise Kingdom
as a registered voter I should know, but I don’t
I think being cynical can be a talent
Inca Trail

Aria Griffin
Girls Tennis
Don’t have one; I am loyal and true.
Mrs. Fox
That Young Ariel
Nacho Libre
the first election I got to vote in
Can hold my own in a game of Call of Duty
Jumping Sky High at Disneyland’s Big Thunder Mountain

Electra Lang
Fencing
Bobbleheads by One Direction
Ms. Marion
Oncoming Storm
Spiderman
malarky
Clacky tongue thing

Curtis Toyota
Football
I don’t feel guilt
Dr. Platon
Sparky
Ted
unfortunate
Card Tricks

Kelly McGee
Boys Water Polo
Send Me on My Way (no guilt, all pleasure)
Senora Pendorf
Brian Fantana
Bridge to Terabithia
Big Bird
Billiards and Male Gymnastics
A Brick Tamland Pants Party

Lauren Lantry
Volleyball
Tighten Up by The Script
Mr. Feldmeth
Lo Lo
The Dark Knight Rises
Can sing kinda really well... in the shower
Top of a mountain in the wilderness in Alaska

Compiled by JP Dliniski, Sports editor