Poly to implement New Media Psychology course in the spring

By MAYA KENNY
Staff writer

How has the advertising of items such as candy, cereal and e-cigarettes evolved to target younger demographics through media? Do people use technology as a form of escapism from the world, and if so, why? How have history and power been modified and influenced by media?

These intriguing questions are at the center of what will be explored in the Psychology of New Media elective course this spring. The class will be led by Upper School Technology Integration Specialist Beverly Goldin, who described it as the “understanding of how media affects people…, culture and our communities.”

This elective was created by Laura Holmgren, who, as an English teacher, has been interested in “emerging forms of communication and interaction,” which have come up in her class discussions.

When asked why she created this course, Holmgren replied, “I proposed the class because so much of our understanding of the world comes through interactions. New media has the ability to challenge yourself in a wide variety of subjects that may not be offered in the core curriculum.”

“Students will learn about the broad topic of media psychology through a variety of books, such as the Cognitive Psychology of Mass Media, current events and independent projects. Goldin hopes that the culminating project will involve presenting research about a specific question or subtopic within media psychology that interests the students. Sophomore Eleanor Vietech, who will be taking the class, said, “I am most excited about learning about media and advertising, as well as broadening my understanding of the connection between these subjects and psychology.” Vietech also noted that projects could be a great way for her to develop her own interests within the curriculum.

The Poly community is certainly excited and has high hopes for the Psychology of New Media elective. As Vietech said, “I think it is also very valuable to be able to challenge yourself in a wide variety of subjects that may not be offered in the core curriculum.”

Poly Arts Student Council hosts second PASCapalooza

By AUDREY KIM
News editor

Although many Poly students spend their remaining free time before the start of school relaxing, their lack of work, the Poly Arts Student Council (PASC) used the end of their summer vacation to begin planning for the second annual PASCapalooza.

PASCapalooza is an entirely student-run event that features the talent of student artists. To plan the event, members of PASC reached out to artists and bands from schools all over the Los Angeles area.

This year, PASCapalooza ran on September 14 from 2 to 6 p.m. on Babcock Field. Open to students and non-students alike, the attendees were able to enjoy hamburgers, fries, lemonade, cookies and ice cream (which served as a welcome respite to the heat) from two different food trucks.

Attendees could also partake in art-related activities, including drawing on a communal art wall and designing and making their own bracelets or t-shirts. Additionally, attendees had opportunities to vote on and purchase student artwork while they listened to the various student bands.

Student artists set up booths, selling items ranging from handmade jewelry to homemade clothing to ceramic bowls and vases.

“It was a blast! It was really hot out, but selling my pieces with friends and listening to live music made it a lot of fun,” said junior Tori Kim, who sold her own earrings, bracelets and necklaces.

“I liked the casual environment of selling and how all of the vendors went around and supported each other. It was really interesting to see what other people have been working on,” added Kim.

Particularly with school course loads starting to pick up, PASCapalooza provided students with a much-needed break to relax and enjoy the community’s artistic talents.

“The energy was fantastic,” said senior PASC member Wally Corngold. “I loved meeting new people and discovering new student artists.”
Tamara Smith
Dr. Tamara Smith is excited to share her lifelong passion for animals and the environment as a new member of the Science Department. Coming to Poly as the AP Biology and Psychology teacher as well as the Science Olympiad coach, Smith has taught all levels of students at schools ranging from the Washington State University to Westridge School in Pasadena.

Smith grew up in Oregon in a farming community and raised sheep, chickens, pigs, cattle and two ducks. When she was growing up, she was one of the first girls in Oregon to play on a boys soccer team. She received a bachelor’s in Environmental Biology and Management from the University of California, Davis. Over the course of her teaching career, she has taught physics, chemistry, biology, environmental science, statistics, anatomy and physiology, herpetology (the branch of zoology concerning the study of amphibians and reptiles) and the biological evolution of music.

Smith says her favorite hobbies are training dogs, reading, music and running in marathons; she has finished races as long as 100 miles before. In sports, she supports Newcastle United of the Premier League and cheers on the Oregon Ducks, the Portland Trail Blazers and the Seattle Seahawks.

“I’m delighted to be at Poly, and I love this community of talented teachers and students,” said Smith.
- Gianni Notaro

Kyanh Tonnu
A new school means a new start, and Kyanh Tonnu is excited to learn as much as she can. Tonnu will be teaching French for both middle and upper school students. Specifically, in the upper school, she will be teaching AP French Language and Composition. Before joining Poly, Tonnu taught English and French at the Marlborough School in Los Angeles.

So far, Tonnu loves the environment on campus and in her classes. Although Tonnu did mention that she was a bit nervous teaching boys, as she previously taught at an all-girls school, she feels that her classes are flowing well, and she loves her students.

Inside the classroom, Tonnu uses techniques to respond to the chemistry of the room. In other words, she caters to the dynamic of the room to enhance the learning experience. Tonnu loves discussion and believes the best way to be a teacher is by knowing who your students are.

Junior Deborah Hong, a member of Tonnu’s AP French Language and Composition class, says, “I love Mrs. Tonnu because she has so much respect for her students, and she is always there to listen to what we have to say.”

With love for the outdoors, Tonnu enjoys exploring the city with her friends. Tonnu hopes to bring a new set of eyes and experience to the Poly community. For the upcoming year, she hopes to take in as much as she can. Poly is delighted to welcome her to the Upper School community.
- Audrey Cho

Cynthia Crass takes on new role as 9th/10th dean
With the beginning of a new year comes change for everyone, including Poly’s teachers. This year, Cynthia Crass, who has been working primarily in the Performing Arts Department for many years, will now be entering a new role as a ninth and tenth grade dean and coordinator.

When asked about shifts in responsibility that accompany this title change, Crass replied that she will simply have "more meetings" and "more conversations with a wider range of students.”

Additionally, Crass hopes to pursue more administrative leadership to help teachers and advisors. She is excited to connect with students and to help them “be their best selves.”

“[Crass] seeks inclusivity, diversity of thought and creativity and also encourages those same values in all of her students,” said senior Kate Salembier, an enthusiast of both Crass and herself. “She is a compassionate, friendly and approachable individual,” added Salembier.

Crass’ impressive level of organization and dedication is deeply respected by a wide array of students, who feel that her many traits that have made her such an esteemed teacher will translate into her new positions and impact the experiences of many more students.
- Katie Huntsman

Christine Hadley
Do you want to talk about your favorite anime or video game? If you do, the long-term Upper School Chinese substitute Christine Hadley will gladly strike up a conversation.

Before coming to Poly, Hadley taught at the Trinity Valley School in Fort Worth, Texas. Now she teaches Chinese II, III, IV and AP in the Poly Upper School.

So far, Hadley’s favorite part of Poly has been the people.

“Since the moment they brought me to campus for my interview, I could already tell that the people here were very ready to welcome a new member,” Hadley expressed. She noted that the connection she has made with the community is very important to her.

Hadley is most excited to see what this school year has to offer. Because she will be at Poly for only a year, she plans to get involved with as many activities as she can.

“T’ll treasure this year and just enjoy the ride,” Hadley stated.
- Charlotte Hart

Paul Geisler
After learning ten languages and 12 instruments, joining the Poly Upper School as the new registrar should be easy for Paul Geisler.

In his new role, Geisler supports the school’s day-to-day operations by maintaining records and searching for inconsistencies in and analyzing data. On top of that, he is also the AP coordinator and college counseling associate.

While Geisler has only been at Poly for a few weeks, he has decided that what he loves most about Poly is how strong of a connection there is throughout the entire campus.

Before Poly, Geisler held the position of registrar at Bentley Upper School in Lafayette, California. Outside of his duties at school, Geisler is most looking forward to watching the spring musical and other performing arts productions.

Junior Maggie Grether mentioned, “His niche interests never fail to make advisory interesting. He loves to share his passion for language and music with students and gives us linguistic puzzles to enjoy!”
- Chloe Liversidge

Rashad Evans
New Upper School Debate Coach Rashad Evans is no stranger to success in student debate. As a college sophomore, Evans won the Cross Examination Debate Association national debate championship, and as a coach, he led two college teams to national debate championships. Only three weeks into the school year, Evans already feels at home with the Poly students and faculty.

“Everyone’s been very welcoming and supportive, especially for someone new like me. So they’ve made me feel at home,” said Evans. Evans last coached at Wake Forest University, located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. When asked what he would like to change about Poly’s current debate program, Evans said that he would like to add more options in order to broaden its possible debate formats.

Freshman debater Lorenzo Blanco agreed that Evans has already begun to bring change to Poly. “Coach Evans has introduced me to a whole other way to debate and I’m really excited to start the season,” said Blanco.

Additionally, Evans’ favorite topics to debate were climate change and energy policy. “For any job, it’s not just what you can give, but it’s also what you can get out of it,” commented Hadley.

Hadley wants to let the Poly community know how grateful she is for this opportunity, and she hopes to have a lot of fun with her students throughout the year.

“I’ll treasure this year and just enjoy the ride,” Hadley stated.
- Charlotte Hart

Faculty Changes

Kyanh Tonnu enjoys exploring the city with her friends. Tonnu hopes to bring a new set of eyes and experience to the Poly community. For the upcoming year, she hopes to take in as much as she can. Poly is delighted to welcome her to the Upper School community.
- Audrey Cho

Paul Geisler, new registrar at Poly, is excited to bring change to Poly. “Since the moment they brought me to campus for my interview, I could already tell that the people here were very ready to welcome a new member,” Hadley expressed.

Christine Hadley, Poly’s new Chinese II, III, IV and AP teacher, is looking forward to getting to know her students. “Since the moment they brought me to campus for my interview, I could already tell that the people here were very ready to welcome a new member,” Hadley expressed.
Nearly half a million people speak American Sign Language (ASL) as their first language, so when juniors Donya Jadvar and Sarah Ryan learned that the Polytechnic Upper School had no clubs or classes to teach signs, they were inspired to start their own. Joined by faculty leader and Spanish teacher Laura Rodriguez-Duran, the ASL club is a social group in which the Poly community can learn about and practice sign language. Students of all knowledge levels are encouraged to join.

According to Ryan, the language is uniquely interesting and simple to learn because of its structure. She noted, “Unlike learning Spanish or French, ASL comes from English. It is something that is based on your own language. It’s reinterpreting it instead of having to learn a brand new grammatical style- things like participles, phrases and conjugations.”

The founders also hope to help the local deaf community by increasing people’s knowledge of ASL. Ryan mentioned, “Some times daily activities like ordering food or just making friends can be difficult for deaf native speakers.” Learning even the basics of the language can make a world of a difference. Jadvar noted, “If you know the alphabet or simple terms, you can really get through a conversation easily.”

And even for those who do not choose to pick up ASL, the club still hopes to keep the issues the deaf community faces in the minds of the school. Jadvar recalled, “I don’t know how many times I’ve said I’m starting an ASL club, and people say, what’s ASL?”

Faculty advisor Rodriguez-Duran expressed, “the ASL club will be a fantastic opportunity to increase public awareness of deaf issues, and we encourage anyone who wants to learn more about the language or about the deaf community to join the ASL club.”

Mental Health Advocacy Club

By MEGAN HA | Assistant news editor

While Poly supports mental health on campus, junior Alessia Checcone finds that these issues are still stigmatized and wants to see real change occur through the creation of her new Mental Health Advocacy club. Checcone first became interested in forming a club focused on breaking the stigma around mental health near the end of her sophomore year when she realized that mental health issues were becoming a growing trend.

“I find that we as the Poly community oftentimes unknowingly neglect the long-term stress of its students. [Poly] tends toward a more competitive mindset, creating a large amount of stress for its students in an environment that all too often forgets that there are more relaxed facets of high school as well,” said Checcone. “I’ve noticed this mindset commonly being set forth, where Poly students acknowledge the stress in their lives, but fail to do anything about it.”

The Mental Health Advocacy club has a number of activities planned to help students at Poly become more interested in mental health topics and teach students how to become better advocates for themselves. Checcone hopes to work closely with faculty advisor and Upper School counselor Andrea Fleetham to help students destress around Block Days and AP week and learn more about mental health during National Mental Health Awareness Month in May.

“I’m glad that Poly is in a place where we can have a club focused on mental health and that we have so many students interested in advocating for mental health and wellness,” said Fleetham. “We take a lot of care with our physical health, but when it comes to mental health, we don’t always put that in the same category as being well.”

Finally, Checcone notes that the Mental Health Advocacy club is not an affinity group, and that students don’t need to have any kind of mental health diagnosis or know anyone with a mental health diagnosis to join the club. She encourages all members of the Poly community, especially those with an affinity for advocacy, to take part.
On Saturday, August 31, the Poly ASB hosted the annual ASB dance. The theme was “Area 51,” inspired by the internet joke surrounding the Air Force base in Nevada.

According to ASB president Beau Gillam, the cabinet thought the theme would be “applicable and funny” for the opening dance of the year.

In order to promote the dance, the ASB cabinet, dressed as an alien task force, drove to Palmdale to film a skit. The video was shown during an Upper School assembly on the first day of school.

Per tradition, students were invited to dress up in accordance with theme. Outfits ranged from simple alien antennae to all-out costumes complete with sunglasses, bandanas and camouflage. The cabinet supplied antennae and glow sticks at the entrance to match the atmosphere.

According to Gillam, “The ASB’s main goal was to make the dance fun and enjoyable for everyone.” It included a bouncy house obstacle course, cotton-candy, drinks, pizza and of course, dancing.

Alien inflatables were hung up all around the outside of Founder’s Hall and by the bouncy house. In the words of sophomore Brandon Takahashi, “It was a great way to start the school year!”

By LORENZO BLANCO | Staff writer
Welcome back Panthers! While we have only been in school for four weeks, it somehow already feels like it’s been going for four months. We can speculate about what distorted our perception of time—beginning the year with a five-day week, jam-packed schedules or the muggy September days—but any such reflection could never alter reality. Summer is but a distant memory, and change that we cannot. Now that we are here, let’s grab our backpacks, sharpen our pencils and hit the ground running.

Dear Community,

This year is a momentous one as it marks the 60th anniversary of the Upper School. To celebrate this milestone and to honor the work that has been done to make this year’s newspaper possible, we thought we should take a look back at the history of Poly publications.

In order to better understand what and who came before us, we dug into the archives and talked to editors from the last few decades. In interviews, various former staffers described the role the paper played during their respective tenures at Poly and what they might have changed given the opportunity to do so. We hoped engaging with the history of this institution, through the people who have shaped it, could help us glean insights into what has worked best, what has not and what the continual publication of The Paw Print means for our community.

Since the Upper School’s founding in 1959, Poly has had a tradition of publishing student voices. This practice dates even further back institutionally, far before the creation of the Upper School, to Poly’s opening in 1907, when, as just a lower school, it published the aptly named Elementary Life, a quarterly report written by the students.

Following a break from any consistent paper or magazine, Poly students started publishing Patio Pages in 1925. Every cover was made out of linoleum and had stamps of intricate artwork. In 1954, one Patio Page issue detailed Albert Einstein’s visit to Poly and the many encounters students had with him as he strolled down California Boulevard on the way home.

The article described students mesmerized by his iconic hair rather than by the content of his speech.

After Patio Pages ceased printing, the school continued to publish various magazines and newsletters but struggled to settle on a name or system that could provide a consistent, robust platform for student voices.

In 1988, Upper School students published the first issue of The Paw Print. One of the editors we spoke to was Joe Mathews ’91, currently an editor at Zócalo Public Square, who believed The Paw Print filled the role of serving a large and increasingly diverse student body. He explained that it functioned as an investigative paper, publishing several articles on cheating scandals at the school and other original reporting.

According to Mathews, the team prided itself on sharp, witty writing and an egalitarian structure, where everyone had equal status as a writer and editor rather than a role within a defined hierarchy of editors like the one The Paw Print now has.

He also described a friendly tension between different factions of the school. For example, if Mathews wrote that the boys’ basketball team was not faring well, Coach Brad Hall would take offense and push back on the critique. Overall, Mathews described a highly dedicated group of student journalists trying to cover as many aspects of school life as possible.

Bobby Samuels ’10, currently a member of Bolt, a Silicon Valley startup, presided over The Paw Print more recently. His claim to fame is that he and his team reported on the re-naming of Gosney Hall to Founders Hall after the connection of Poly benefactor Paul Gosney to eugenics and the Holocaust came to light. He remembered spending hours in the archives trying to understand how such a connection had not been exposed prior.

On a lighter note, he and his co-editors published a very innovative April Fool’s edition, a sarcastic and well-written jab at Poly life. Samuels later went on to be President at The Harvard Crimson. Upon reflection, Samuels wished that all the sections of The Paw Print could have been made to be as impactful as the Opinion section, as he noticed each individual section played a powerful role in their own right at The Crimson.

The most recent editor we spoke to was Belén Cahill ’17, now a junior majoring in English with a concentration in Film and Media Studies at Barnard College. Cahill described being a highly opinionated student at Poly. She credits The Paw Print for helping her to develop the research and investigative skills needed to lend credibility to her opinions.

At college, Cahill soon learned that the framework behind The Paw Print was a special experience because, if a student had an idea, he or she would almost always be able to write it and get it published.

She juxtaposed this structure to college newspapers, where articles are generally assigned.

Cahill described her final article, which was an ex-post on her Poly experience that contended that Poly had started to behave like a corporation rather than a school, as incredibly meaningful to her.

She interviewed teachers about the change in Poly over the years and meticulously labor over each sentence. Despite the fact that she received blowback from the community about the content of her piece, she still remembers it as a highlight of her editorial years.

All of the editors had several things in common: a passion for Poly, a love for Greg Feldmeth (Assistant Head of School and advisor to The Paw Print until the 2017-2018 school year) and a belief in quality reporting. We know The Paw Print will continue the legacy of being a paper known for its journalistic integrity and freedom of expression. Please reach out with any questions, thoughts or suggestions to thepawprint@polytechnic.org.

Here’s to a memorable year!
Jewelry making and Etsy shop

I started making jewelry this summer! This all began because of a creative final project for my English class on The God of Small Things. I made whimsical, abstract mobiles of the Meenachal River and bent out wire for ripples and decor but also for small charms to represent symbols that appeared throughout the book. After designing and making one line charms for things like Pappachi’s moth, Rahel’s snake (bangle) and a rose (among other things), I discovered how much fun it was to play with wire and restrict myself to one line. When I finished the project, I had some leftover wire and bent out two roses for earrings. Then a whole hoard of ideas, and a Pinterest board pushed me further to make monstera leaves and apples and fox faces. As I started spending more time making jewelry, mostly with a combination of wire from a local bead store and old craft supplies I’ve had for years, I found that I was making more pieces than I really needed, and decided to open up an Etsy shop. Having an Etsy shop has been such a cool experience! I’m learning how to price products, package them, ship them off and deal with customer service. So far, I have had seven orders on my shop (one was from a person from New Zealand), two reviews and maybe around five (mostly custom) that I have done for friends. I love making things, especially customs (like the fox one) where I have to think up a new personalized design! - Tori Kim

London fashion program

Lola Roberts and I attended a fashion design program hosted by Central Saint Martins, located in London. Central Saint Martins is a wonderful art school with plenty of famous alumni, which first drew me to the program.

It was a two-week course in which the main focus was creating a full look including an outfit, a backdrop and props using very unconventional materials (construction paper, wire, paint, paper maché, etc.). It was pretty difficult at first, but we were given full creative freedom. We ended up with a professional photoshoot of our model and scene we created. It was very gratifying seeing our tedious work come to life. Lola and I had a wonderful, wonderful time in London. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

- Ava Livingside

"I learned so much about the art of fashion during this camp. It really was a unique experience in which I was able to create a variety of pieces in unconventional ways. It was a challenging experience, and I found myself outside of my comfort zone, but overall, I really enjoyed the program."

- Lola Roberts

Summer of art: exploring student summer art projects

Having a break from the rigor of the school year provides students with a chance to branch out and indulge themselves in other activities that they enjoy. For many artistically inclined students, summer is a time for them to explore their abilities, start projects, attend programs, enter competitions and even start small businesses for selling their art. We decided to feature a few students who talked about diving deeper into their artistic interests during summer 2019.

Othello, the Dreamer of Washington

I created a modern adaptation of William Shakespeare’s Othello that is called Othello, the Dreamer of Washington and is set inside a 2020 presidential campaign. I began writing the play in February 2019 and began rehearsing with my cast of Poly students in August 2019. The play’s performance is on Saturday, September 14, 2019. The play stars Tori Kim, Laila Ward, Kristen Hargelin, Simone Cundieff, Willa Jackson, Anika Erickson, Sophie David and Dyanne DiRosario. The crew includes Imogen Adelaide, Andra Lazardo and Sean McHugh. In my version, Othello, a young, first-generation American congresswoman from New York who makes headlines daily in Washington for her progressive policies, is running for president. She is a Dreamer, both in identity and in ideology. My adaptation begins on July 16, 2020, the exact day next year that the Democratic nominee for president will be chosen at the Democratic National Convention. Othello has just won the Democratic nomination for president, and the play opens with her acceptance speech. The very ideas that Shakespeare wrote into his play about around 500 years ago are very pertinent to today’s political climate. At the moment, one of our country’s most politically charged and controversial topics is immigration, one that many people in our country sadly believe is a struggle between them and “the other.” I decided to adapt Othello as a response. The rest of the play’s characters are involved, in one way or another, in the presidential campaign. The action takes place in three locations: Milwaukee, Wisconsin (at the Democratic National Convention), Washington, D.C., and in Miami, Florida. I am so excited to see the play performed for the first time and am incredibly proud of my cast and crew for all the dedicated work they have done to prepare!

- Clementine Rice, one week before the performance

"As an athlete, the later start has been particularly helpful in accommodating my practice schedule. However, the adjustment of getting out later is a lot more difficult than anticipated. I either have to get to school really early or really late because if not, I am driving to school in the middle of rush hour traffic!"

- Cayla McFarlane ’20

"I have mixed feelings on the later start schedule because while I have enjoyed being able to sleep in an extra 30 minutes every morning, practices after school tend to start and end later, which has affected my free time set aside for work. I get home at a later time than usual and am forced to grind out all my work while trying to get to bed at a decent time."

- Jackson Stimmmer ’21

"I usually get [to Poly] about the same time as I got here before [the schedule change], but I do have flexibility just in case. At the end of the day, it seems like the afternoon goes by quicker! But for me it doesn’t really matter that much, it doesn’t affect the very first part of my morning at all. One challenge that has been early dismissals... athletes are missing more of class!"

- Laurianne Williams

"Personnally, the later start hasn’t impacted me too much. I enjoy the later start in school because I’m not much of an early morning person; however, I don’t like how everything gets pushed back by 30 minutes, like sports practices. And because we get out later from sports, I’m not really able to do homework in between the time in which we get out and when club water polo starts for me, which is at 7 a.m.

- Liz Fogassa ’23

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- Jackson Stimmmer ‘21

Compiled by Megan Kelleher, Life Editor
Welcome, Maya Stoycheva!

The Poly community welcomes its newest foreign exchange student, Maya Stoycheva, who joins the junior class from Kazanlak, Bulgaria. Stoycheva, who will be hosted by the McConnell family, arrived in Pasadena through the American Field Service (AFS) program. A junior athlete, Stoycheva will be taking AP English Language, Biology, ATIC, Spanish I, US History and Digital Arts. She is particularly excited for Biology, Spanish I, US History and Digital Art.

So far, Stoycheva has noticed some key differences between the public school system of Plovdiv, Bulgaria and Poly. At school in Bulgaria, she said that she was expected to write much shorter — usually two to three pages long. When asked about the 10-12 page paper she will be writing, this is a requirement for the US history course. Stoycheva said that she looks forward to honing her writing skills.

Moreover, as opposed to 65 minute classes at Poly, classes at her boarding school were only 45 minutes.

Outside of core academic classes, in Bulgaria, Stoycheva was involved in creative writing and was the lead vocalist of a rock band. Therefore, she is interested in joining both the creative writing and the spring musical.

Additionally, Stoycheva noted how appreciative she is for the McConnells’ kindness and looks forward to spending the year with her host family. Host Anna McConnell noted how Stoycheva’s family was very excited about Maya’s arrival. “When we read her profile, our family was really open about who they were voting for and would try really hard to convince us to vote for [their candidate] even though we couldn’t vote,” explained Burke.

With plans to return to Israel in her future, whether it be for a gap year, college or enlisting in the Israeli Army, Burke hopes to continue her studies of Hebrew and Jewish history and to build an even stronger connection to her Jewish identity.

Another experience from which Burke gained valuable cultural insights was when her class interviewed a number of Israelis during election season about their political views.

“It was so interesting to hear all these different people’s views on issues, especially when it was when her class interviewed a number of Israelis during election season about their political views,” Burke said.

Welcome, Maya Stoycheva!
These streets were made for people to live and die on

by Barker Thompson

When friends of mine from different cities visit my house, they ask about the streets more than anything else. They are narrow, windy, and unforgettable. They are sidewalkless and to walk down the hill we have to crawl in the middle of the street, hoping that a car doesn’t come calling for our lives. Sometimes we see bouquets of carnations along chainlink fences, and we know that early in the morning today another drunk twenty-year-old was killed by a car going too fast or not fast enough.

My mother leans over and tells us that the flowers are fake and that jaywalking is a death wish. At stop signs, teenage skateboarders drum on the sides of Volkswagens, and police officers conduct stake outs on busy corners to catch new drivers on phone calls with worried mothers.

My friends ask why the house down the street looks like butter but smells like ashes.

It burned down back in 2009 when the family was away. They came back griping about burned windows and suitcases to their home in crumbs. Word on the street was that the son slept on embers that night. I wonder if he misses the roast.

Or my friends could ask why our neighbor Cindy lives alone in a two-story house.

Or why she walks the streets like she’s afraid of them.

I was young when her husband was still alive, she Walking Man. He would trek the streets with a folded newspaper in one hand and his dripping red mind in the other.

My mother told me he walked because it hurt if he didn’t. I was eight and hadn’t felt the graceless of “chronic” yet. You could see it in the way his rotting apple skin shriveled into itself like an apology. One day we didn’t see the Walking Man on his daily route. I didn’t know that be and Cindy had a paczaki or that you could kill yourself in one.

And in the street she was screaming. And in the street she was crying. She was holding his dripping red mind right to her chest in the street.

But ask about the streets, and I know why: they take you places without asking for permission.

I’m not afraid of the streets --- just where they can take me.

Artist of the issue: Realism painter Sophie Phinney

In seventh grade, Sophie Phinney took her first art class at Poly. Uninterested in other art electives such as dancing or orchestra, Phinney decided to opt for painting. What began as a last resort to fulfill credits quickly morphed into a passion for painting and drawing.

Now a senior, Phinney is taking her second year of AP Art with Mr. Bieldvedt. When asked about Phinney’s performance in the classroom, Bieldvedt expressed, “She is a leader this year: she is always focused on her work, her dedication to art has allowed her to perfect her technique and combine it with her identity and American heritage and nature.”

Sophie Phinney elaborates, “I think that having the skills to find my identity, which really taught me things about myself,” Phinney commented.

It was very interesting to see the contrast between these two different cultures [Chinese and European] in this scene,” Mr. Bieldvedt commented on Phinney’s 2018-2019 concentration.

Taking art classes every year at Poly, Phinney has had an immense amount of practice with painting and drawing. Her dedication to art has allowed her to perfect her technique and combine it with her identity in order to create beautifully meaningful pieces.

Phinney elaborates, “I think that having the skills to be able to express yourself through some kind of creative medium is really important. So, whether that is learning an instrument or how to draw, I think that is very important because everyone needs some way of expressing themselves.”

Phinney has undoubtedly developed her artistic abilities over her four years with Mr. Bieldvedt. “Sophie continues to grow her skills, and she is becoming more and more trusting and independent. She makes a lot of unique choices when painting. There’s a lot of big differences when it comes to the content level and independence level,” details Bieldvedt.

In the future, Phinney hopes to continue creating breath-taking, personal pieces inspired by her Chinese American heritage and nature. The Poly community looks forward to seeing where Phinney will run with her artistic talent in the upcoming year and beyond!
Freshman Feature: welcome class of 2023!

Inspired by the annual, end-of-the-year “Senior Feature,” this “Freshmen Feature” asks similar questions directed at the incoming class with the hope that the feature can introduce the freshmen to the community and can serve as a capstone for the class to look back on in four years. Of the 96 students in the freshmen class, 57 responded.

The class of 2023 is one of diverse opinions, back-grounds and expectations for their Poly experience.

When asked about their biggest fear for high school, 40% of the respondents said that their big-gest worry involved the increase in workload and tests. The other 60% of students mentioned a mix of “time management,” “academic pressure,” and “meeting academic goals” as their biggest concerns.

Though many expressed worries about acclimat-ing to high school, 21% of the freshmen responded they were excited about “meeting new people” and learning more about their classmates. 16% wrote they were looking forward to the freedom Poly’s Upper School provides, and another 16% listed after school sports or dance team as activities they were most enthusiastic to join.

One student said, “I am most excited to be part of this new community; I hope to make new friends, build lasting connections, and of course learn and grow as a person.”

In terms of pop culture, Taylor Swift accrued 12% of the votes for favorite musician followed closely by Shawn Mendes with 9% Tyler the Cre-ator. The Beatles and Khalid were also fan favorites for this category.

Responses for their favorite celebrity were almost equally as varied but were also led by Taylor Swift who received 7% of the votes. Chris Hemsworth, Anna Kendrick, Mindy Kaling and Tom Holland were other celebrities thrown into the mix.

“The Office” was voted favorite TV show with “The Good Place,” “Stranger Things” and “Jane the Virgin” tied for second place.

The freshmen remain divided on their favorite movie with everything from the Shrek quartet to The Proposal to This is 40 and Pride and Prejudice receiving votes.

Overall, the class of 2023 is eager to explore themselves and their passions with the help of the Poly community.

-Compiled by Megan Kelleher, Life editor

Due to rounding, the figures for some graphs do not add up to 100%. Further, the respondents to the survey may not reflect the freshman class as a whole.
The Straight Pride Parade in Boston: students speak out

By BARKER THOMPSON and AIDAN RAWLINSON
Student contributors

At a writing program I attended this summer, a rumor spread that in one of the poetry workshops, a student had stated very matter-of-fact something along the lines of, “you can only write good poetry if you have experienced hardship.” The other program attendees responded with shock, anger and resentment.

Coming from a place of privilege with regard to race, gender identity and other pieces of his identity, the student had implied that his poetry was never going to be good enough because he had never experienced true hardship in his life.

About two weeks ago, the Boston Straight Pride Parade took place. It was hard to enjoy my Labor Day weekend while looking at images with wide smiles waving in the air, seeing the jingling things like “Make Normalcy Normal” which the parade participants view as a majority groups were being “excluded” from the general narrative. To me, there are astonishing parallels between the Straight Pride Parade and the parades that have been experienced and implied that major groups were being “excluded” from the general narrative.

From what I have gleaned from research into the motivations behind Straight Pride Parades, the participants themselves, this student’s mindset is remarkably similar to the overall reasoning behind Straight Pride. Today, LGBTQ2+ people are achieving incredible increases in legal rights, representation and general visibility, and the participants of Straight Pride were upset with this progress because, in their minds, more attention for queer people means less attention for straight people.

This shift is exactly what the Make-America-Paradise in the United States report that the community they face the threat of execution for having homosexual relations. People have today, and we celebrate those who have been jailed for their sexual orientation and gender identity — whatever they may be — certainly need to be actively validated and respected. However, we also need to understand that some stories need to be heard more than others and that the voices that have been historically silenced need to be listened to more than the ones that have been loud for centuries.

In my mind, the participants of Straight Pride Parade wanted everyone to listen to their stories, but we have heard these stories of the straight experience time and time again. In fact, that is about all we hear: Mr. and Mrs., husband and wife, groom, his and hers, breadwinner and housewife. These words start to get stuck in my throat, and it is when I feel myself choking that I know something is wrong here.

You do not need to experience hardship to deserve respect. But you do need to respect those who experience hardship.

— Barker Thompson

When first hearing about the Straight Pride Parade in Boston, Massachusetts, I chose not to react publicly. This meant not posting on social media in response to the parade, not texting groups of friends about my opinions on the event and not talking with your friend group, your family, your high school or your town, but that does not mean they do not exist in other friend groups, other families, other high schools and other towns.

Second, we all have stories that matter, and our identities — whatever they may be — certainly need to be actively validated and respected. However, we also need to understand that some stories need to be heard more than others and that the voices that have been historically silenced need to be listened to more than the ones that have been loud for centuries.

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The discrimination and abuse that queer people have today and we celebrate those who have never been jailed for their sexual orientation and gender identity — whatever they may be — certainly need to be actively validated and respected. However, we also need to understand that some stories need to be heard more than others and that the voices that have been historically silenced need to be listened to more than the ones that have been loud for centuries.

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When first hearing about the Straight Pride Parade in Boston, Massachusetts, I chose not to react publicly. This meant not posting on social media in response to the parade, not texting groups of friends about my opinions on the event and not talking with to the president of the Straight Pride Parade. Clowns, people with wide smiles, green face paint have never been normal, so why were they advocating for normalcy? I’m Pennywise, but you are far from a traditional guy.

The people holding straight pride signs have likely never heard that 15.9% of hate crimes are aimed at queer people, 78% of transgender people report facing harassment in the workplace due to their gender identity and that 42% of LGBTQ2+ people in the United States report that the community they live in does not accept them. Some people also probably fail to understand that gay marriage was only legalized four years ago, that gay sex was illegal in parts of the United States until 1962, that hundreds of thousands of gay men died during the 1980s because the government ignored AIDS until it reached the straight community, and that thousands of queer people outside of our country still face the threat of execution for having homosexual relations.

Straight people have always been allowed to marry, they have never been jealous for their sexual orientation and they have never been executed for being heterosexual. I, too, imagine that it is “Great to Be Straight.” It’s “Great to Be Straight” when the heteronormative world we live in makes heterosexuality a huge privilege.

Queer people have Pride parades in order to celebrate the progress made in our community. We celebrate Stonewall, we celebrate our bravery, we celebrate the ones who fought for the rights queer people have today and we celebrate those who have sacrificed themselves for progress.

In comparison, what would one celebrate at a Straight Pride Parade? Being privileged? Benefiting from the status quo? Facing no obstacles having to do with sexuality? To the people who organized or took part in the Straight Pride Parade: educate yourself because, right now, you look pretty stupid.

— Aidan Rawlinson
A new freshman’s take on diversity efforts at Poly

By NYLA CROSS
Student contributor

Two. Before we started school four weeks ago, there were two black girls in Poly’s class of 2023. I am a new student at Poly, and I’ve only been here for a few weeks, but I’ve already gotten very familiar with the black students on the Upper School campus. It wasn’t that hard to learn all of their names, grades and interests because we can all fit into one room.

This is not surprising to me at all. In fact, our familiarity with each other is uplifting. I went to Chandler School, a small private school just across from the Rose Bowl, before I came to Poly. There were only five black students in our grade, a number close to what we have now for the Class of 2023.

One of the reasons why I chose to attend Poly was because it had a more diverse community. But what does that really mean, and why did I even care? Something I’ve discovered throughout my time in private school is that there seems to always be an insufficient number of students of color. I find myself being the only black student in many of my classes and extracurriculars. I may not speak for every minority, but at least I am in a minority. I may not feel eyes burning into my skin when sensitive racial topics come up and when I feel like no one else understands my experiences. When you try to explain, you just end up in a tangled mess of “Well, I had no idea!” When you say nothing, your classmates, peers or even faculty fail to notice, and they can’t be blamed because “how were they supposed to know?”

When a student of a minority group sees another student of that same race, there’s an instant connection. An instant rush of joy because you’ve found someone who is like you, who may understand you, who may help you feel less alone.

I give my fellow black classmates handshakes and nods, and even if we never talk outside of Black Student Union (BSU) meetings, we are bonded for life by something as simple as race. That connection alone instantly makes us friends, supporters and family.

As much as I still struggle with being one of only a few black students at Poly, I am not complaining in the slightest. When I found out Poly had an entire club dedicated to black students, I felt more included than I ever had. I knew that there were people older than me who are like me, who care about what I am going through and who understand my needs.

When I came to one of Poly’s first events for the Class of 2023, I looked around at all of the incoming students and realized I was the only black person. Again, not shocking in the slightest. And there it hit me, like a wave, the feeling of loneliness and isolation. I thought to myself, “How am I the only one? I probably look insane right now, everybody notices me in this crowd.” And yet, I still praise Poly for its diversity. Why? Because diversity isn’t just race or ethnicity or even the cold hard numbers. It’s also the effort.

Poly Upper School has countless affinity groups relating to race, religious affiliation and sexual orientation. It’s clear that the staff and other students want to provide a place where everyone can belong and be authentically themselves. Every day I come to school, walk to the freshman patio and look around at all the students from different walks of life. I attend BSU meetings and help plan and organize our events, and I realize I am part of a bigger cause. I eat lunch with the other black girls in Ms. Winlow’s office and crack jokes. And I realize: this is the right place for me. I am just where I need to be. I am safe, I am comfortable, I am supported, I am appreciated and I am not alone.

To those brainwashed by extremists: climate change is not real

By ALESSIA CHECCONE
Staff writer

Lots of angry people appeared on TV today in Edinburgh to rail against the city council that banned a group of little kids from holding signs on Princes Street for some protest against climate change.

Had these children attended school, they would have probably had a clearer view of reality and even grown to gain a “natural instinct for science,” like President Trump. We, the climate activists of our nation, are the only ones with enough of a natural instinct for science to see the truth.

The fossil fuel industry is currently suffering relentless attacks from these so-called climate activists, all for simply exposing the Green New Deal for what it is: an authoritarian communist plot to steal Americans’ freedom and cast the world into energy poverty.

As the smart, British gadfly Lord Christopher Monckton, 3rd Viscount of Monckton of Brenchley notes, “Wild predictions have been pronouncedly exaggerated.” President Trump eloquently observed in his recent appearance on “60 Minutes,” “You have scientists on both sides of the issue,” the so-called credible liberal scientists and the much more renowned man (of course) who runs the fantastic blog, DeSmogBlog.com.

The truth is simple: The planet is heating the way it should have for the past 12,000 years of mankind’s existence. Carbon emissions, according to Republican Tom McClintock, have been greening the world — just look at Australia’s Great Sandy Desert.

In fact, carbon emissions have so many ecological benefits that we ought to demand subsidies for gas companies rather than face some kind of stupid carbon tax scheme that threatens to send our country back to the pre-industrial era — or possibly the Stone Age. Even the great intellectualSigma Phi Episol frat brothers got caught up in the fake news from these “scientists” that proclaimed that beer prices will be expected to rise due to something about the weather affecting barley.

Clearly tree-hugging losers need to take a look at the fake news they spew and how it has a negative effect on Americans. We reached out to several ‘reputable’ scientists to comment on whether climate change will truly increase the price of beer, and none of them have yet to write back. We will be sure to update the Poly community when more information on the price of beer becomes available.
Poly students on the 2020 Democratic primary thus far

I first heard of Bernie Sanders as an eighth-grader during the 2016 Democratic primary. Sanders, initially polling in the single digits, aroused the nomination of well-known Democrats, tons. Sanders’ young people, and working-class candidates came up short on many Clinton’s estabpolitics. Although he lost primary, Bernie sparked a real revolution, and now he hopes that those who have been historically marginalized are ready to support him all the way to the White House.

As a self-proclaimed Socialist, Sanders is the most progressive candidate running for office. He will force America to push boundaries that have been left untouched and reexamine phenomena many would rather keep covered.

While this so-called radicalism is scary to some, a restructuring of society is needed for the many people who have been left out of the economic, social and political progress of the last century. Polling first among Latinos, second among African Americans and receiving the highest number of donations from working-class people out of any candidate, Sanders’ message is already spreading among disenfranchised people.

Vying for the time for Polyt to get on board. With 55% of our nation’s wealth concentrated in the hands of one percent of the population and 45% of the population underinsured, now is not the time for business as usual.

Growing up in a generation where, for the first time since the Great Depression, we are projected to have a lower standard of living than our parents, it is in our best interest to elect a president who will fight to ensure that all people have access to the American Dream. That president is Bernie Sanders.

Benjamin Hudnut

In 2020, I want a president who can ford the corporate cesspool and political quagmire of Washington. I want a president who won’t buckle in the face of moneyed interests, a president who knows what’s broken and how to fix it.

Fortunately, Elizabeth Warren has the experience, the tenacity and the 43 detailed plans to get it all done. Unlike other politicians, Warren is steadfast in her convictions and unwavering in her condemnation of big corporations and support of working-class Americans. Throughout her time as a Harvard Law professor and a senator, Warren has stayed true to the issues that initially moved her to public service and hasn’t let Washington, DC mold her into a soulless, cookie-cutter politician.

From the start of her political career, Warren has been labeled as “hectoring” and “school-marmish” by critics. But last week during the Democratic debate, instead of distancing herself from the critiques, Warren embraced her history as a public school teacher, emphasizing her experience with inequality and misgiving that shape her policy positions today.

Warren commits herself to the issues that matter, has consistently demonstrated herself to be the most convincing and level-headed debater in the race, and has actual solutions to the problems we all care about.

-Maggie Grether

Kamala Harris is, first and foremost, a lawyer. What does this mean for her campaign to be president of the United States? It means that she brings the realism, pragmatism, depth of thought and concern for the people that we need going into this election. When responding to the issues most of us are concerned about, Harris gives us plans that are detailed and realistic while still taking our rights and humanity into account.

When it comes to the complex yet pressing issue of illegal immigration and detainment at the border, Harris, above all, wants to alleviate the mistreatment of families and amend the broken promises of our current administration. She has also pinpointed concrete issues, such as Section 1325 of US immigration law, that need to be amended in order to solve a bigger problem.

In that same vein, it’s clear that Harris is deeply committed to solving climate change while in office and has released a detailed plan with concrete ideas like the Carbon Tax. I agree with her unflinching stance on gun control, push for universal healthcare and call for ending student debt.

Beyond simply her policy, Harris is a strong woman of color whom I see as a huge role model, and, as a woman of color, I would be overjoyed to see her in office. In a time of uncertainty, lack of transparency and flat-out lies, the best way I can see to straighten things out is with Kamala Harris in 2020.

-Olivia Jessner

When it comes to politics these days, I look for a candidate who has fresh ideas, who is willing to work across the aisle and who is willing to say the things that need to be said.

-Pete Buttigieg

There is an impending disaster in the United States: millions of Americans face the threat of unemployment due to automation. Despite the devastating impact that the fourth Industrial Revolution has had and will continue to have on Americans, only one candidate seems to care.

Andrew Yang, an entrepreneur and founder of the nonprofit organization Venture for America, has proposed the Freedom Dividend, a universal basic income of $1,000 a month for every American adult. The Freedom Dividend encourages people to work, improves mental and physical health and cushions the potentially grim effects of automation on the American people.

Though I am excited about the Freedom Dividend and his other proposals (like having a White House pickleball court), Yang’s approach is the most promising part of his campaign.

One of his campaign slogans, “Not left. Not right. Forward,” perfectly encapsulates his desire for the unification of the American people, a characteristic that many of his running mates perpetuate.

Instead of using anecdotes to bolster his arguments, Yang’s humanity-oriented appeals to voters from a wide array of political affiliations, ranging from disaffected Trump supporters to progressives.

Undeniably, many people view Yang as a long shot. He is not polling comparatively well, and he does not have much name recognition. However, given his expertise, solution-oriented and timely policy, and grassroots support, Yang shows a lot of promise. If our goal is to prevent Donald Trump’s reelection, then Andrew Yang is a candidate worth considering.

-Caitlin Wu

Beto O’Rourke manages to pack the policies and convictions of a post-recession adult into the public image and persona of an early-2000s liberal.

By campaigning in seemingly futile or insignificant areas such as Bland County, Virginia, where more than 82% of voters are Republicans, O’Rourke shows a dedication to reaching out to voters from across the country. Furthermore, after last month’s mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, O’Rourke returned to his home state not to scourge for votes but to personally comfort and fundraise for victims.

Finally, unlike other candidates, O’Rourke doesn’t get tunnel-visioned about one issue. He focuses on everything from climate change to gun control to universal healthcare to immigration reform, putting energy toward the issues that the American voters care about.

-Dylan Halsted

Marianne Williamson’s mystical presence and faith in the goodness of humanity have gained her a reputation of being a dreamy hippie who posts convoluted memes on her Instagram in lieu of the more performative and accepted publicity thirst of her fellow candidates.

But her platform, which has drawn bipartisan support, consists of a diverse array of policies, including most notably financial reparations for African Americans and Native Americans in an attempt to address the United States’ history of systemic racism. This stance, as well as Williamson’s Project Angel Food, which provided meals to people affected by the AIDS crisis, serves as a testament to her compassion and empathy.

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Sarah Chin

September 20, 2019

the paw print
Football remains undefeated under Schmoke's expertise

By GIANNI NOTARO
Staff writer

Football has kicked off the season with a bang, nothing three victories in a row.

Coach Chris Schmoke said, “The team has shown resilience and executed well down the stretch.” He also mentioned the team would benefit from starting games faster and making sure to protect the ball more to reduce turnovers.

The large number of upperclassmen on the team has been a significant advantage for the Panthers this season. Senior Thomas Mcconnell said, “We are coming into this season with a lot of returning starters. Obviously, we hope to translate that into winning.”

So far, those returning starters have made a big impact. Senior running back Jackson Triester has rushed for an impressive 540 yards and eight touchdowns on 52 carries and has caught five passes for 116 yards. Senior quarterback Trent Steele has passed on 52 carries and has caught five.

Sophomore Colin Mathews for 99 yards and a touchdown, as well as one rushing score. Junior Connor Henderson has rushed for an impressive 316 yards and two scores as quarterback Trent Steele has passed for 116 yards. Senior quarterback Trent Steele has passed for 116 yards.

Steele has passed for 540 yards and eight touchdowns, earning 3rd and 11th place respectively.

Patricia and Caroline Hashimoto and Samuel Johnson-Lacoss, the Panthers did see notable finishes from seniors Rebekah and Caroline Mathews.

The team defeated Campbell Hall 42-13 last Friday. Both sides of the ball had a major role, with the defense creating turnovers. Impressive rushing and receiving games from multiple players powered the offense. Poly finished with five interceptions, helping the defense maintain dominance throughout the game. Following the team’s win last Friday against Campbell Hall, Schmoke became the most winningest coach in Poly eleven-man football history, with an all-time record of 56-15. At the end of the game, Schmoke was surprised when two players ambushed him with a cooler filled with ice water.

Speaking about his new achievement, Schmoke said, “The kids won all of those games and we have great assistant coaches. It is more important to me that we have won four CIF academic titles and that the boys are good human beings.”

Poly football has accomplished some impressive accolades over the course of the program, and the dedicated student-athletes look to continue that tradition this year.

Riddle of the Month

How did the fans know before the baseball game started that the score would be 0-0?

Answer: All baseball games start at 0-0.

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San Gabriel, CA 91773

Fencing works with new coach Laelia Nguyen

By NATALIA MATHIAS
Staff writer

Under the leadership of new head coach Laelia Nguyen, the fencing team is working to become tournament ready before the team’s second match of the year at College of the Desert. After the first tournament at Gryphon on Sunday, the young team is aiming to improve their skills and strategies.

Junior Rufus Marcussen said, “It was a very tough tournament, but I think it was good for our team to go out there and compete. I think the new fencers benefited a lot. They got to see how other fencers their age were performing, and now they can modify and adapt.”

Although the team is relatively inexperienced, the Panthers did see notable finishes from seniors Caroline Hashimoto and Samuel Johnson-Lacoss, earning 3rd and 11th place respectively.

With a large influx of freshmen fencers for the new season, the team has been training to improve skills with the hope of raising ratings later in the season. Guided by veteran fencers Rufus Marcussen, Patricia and Caroline Hashimoto and Samuel Johnson-Lacoss, the team is quickly improving.

“We are working a lot more on tournament preparation. We have also been doing a lot of drills with the new freshmen to make sure they are match-ready. And there are a couple of standout freshmen who I think will do very well,” Marcussen said.

With new strategies and fencers, the team is poised for dramatic improvement in the upcoming tournaments. Marcussen said, “We have been videotaping a lot of our bouts which has been helping us a lot. This year we are just trying to improve and raise our ratings.”

Games to watch

October 4
Boys football versus South Pasadena

Boys varsity football will play South Pasadena High School on their turf on the Friday after Trips Week. The Panthers will hope to keep their winning streak alive as they face off against the Tigers at 7:00 p.m.

October 7
Girls volleyball versus Westridge

Poly’s varsity girls volleyball team faces Westridge again for their second league matchup with each other. In the first match, Poly won 4-1, but each set was only won by a small margin. Go support your Panthers as they fight to maintain their league status on their home court!

October 8
Boys water polo versus Flintridge Prep

The varsity boys water polo team will meet rivals Flintridge Prep in a league match at home. Poly’s team will be presented with tough competition as the Rebels are currently placed in Division IV, compared to the Panthers in Division VII.

October 10
Girls tennis versus Flintridge Prep

The Panthers’ varsity girls tennis team also plays league rival Flintridge Prep at Arcadia Country Park in a few weeks. The Rebels are currently in Division V and the Panthers in Division II.

Junior Varsity

BOYS FOOTBALL
Next game:
October 3: Poly vs. South Pasadena At home, 4:00 p.m.

GIRLS TENNIS
Next match:
September 20: Poly vs. Westridge At Muir, 3:45 p.m.

BOYS WATER POLO
Next game:
October 2: Poly vs. Brentwood At home, 5:00 p.m.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL
Next game:
October 2: Poly vs. La Canada At home, 5:00 p.m.
Cross country is optimistic for upcoming season after impressive start

By ASHNER SINGLA
Staff writer

Poly's boys and girls cross country teams have had an electric start to their season thanks to impressive performances by returning runners as well as a few freshmen standouts.

For the first meet of the season, the Panthers traveled all the way to UC Santa Barbara for the Gauchos Invitational. There, the Panthers competed against athletes from schools located locally in Los Angeles and ranging all the way to San Luis Obispo.

At UCSB's course, seven Panthers competed against athletes from schools ranging all the way to San Luis Obispo.

The season began to look more promising for the team after they defeated Milken Community High School with a final score of 220-300. Andy Schneider said, "The girls have some rust to shake off but are trending upward."

One of the team's strengths this season has been the strong leadership of the upperclassmen. Junior Maddy Kwei and senior Taryn Kim in particular have been crucial to the team's success, Schneider explained. "Maddy and Taryn have shown tons of leadership and have been key influencers in setting the tone for this season."

The team's small roster has been challenging at times, but it has also worked to the Panthers' advantage. The team's dynamic has been a major asset for the Panthers this season. Kwei said, "We have only five people this year, so everyone shows commitment and dedication to our team."

Though the Panthers are maintaining a positive outlook for the rest of the season, the team will still need to put in some work if they want to position themselves for a strong league showing, Schneider said. "They are working on becoming more consistent to prepare for having a shot at league."

With important games against Westridge and Buckley coming up, it will be crucial for the team to carry their momentum through the rest of this season and into the prep league finals.

Girls golf aims to keep momentum

By LIZ FOGASSA
Staff writer

The varsity girls golf team had a disappointing start to the season, losing matches against South Pasadena and Temple City, 229-208 and 261-199 respectively. However South Pasadena and Temple City are two very strong teams, and although the team came up short in both matches, the team saw measurable improvements.

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Girls tennis starts season undefeated

By JACKIE SABBAG
Staff writer

The varsity girls tennis team has kicked off their season with 5 wins, and hope to continue their streak through the beginning of the season. After beating Mark Keppel High School 16-2, they tied with Brentwood School 9-9, but the team recovered to beat South Pasadena High School, Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy, Temple City High School and La Salle High School.

Senior Yumi Balthazar credits the team's early success to her teammates and their experience.

Balthazar added, "We have a lot of talented and flexible players who are able to win matches in both singles and doubles, which has been both impressive and extremely helpful in allowing us to move around our lineup while also securing wins."

Bogaard concluded, "We definitely have a lot to learn, but I think as a team we're all doing amazing, and I think if everyone keeps up the dedication, we can be successful this season."

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By JACKIE SABBAG
Staff writer

The varsity girls tennis team has kicked off their season with 5 wins, and hope to continue their streak through the beginning of the season. After beating Mark Keppel High School 16-2, they tied with Brentwood School 9-9, but the team recovered to beat South Pasadena High School, Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy, Temple City High School and La Salle High School.

Senior Yumi Balthazar credits the team's early success to her teammates and their experience.

Balthazar added, "We have a lot of talented and flexible players who are able to win matches in both singles and doubles, which has been both impressive and extremely helpful in allowing us to move around our lineup while also securing wins."

Bogaard concluded, "We definitely have a lot to learn, but I think as a team we're all doing amazing, and I think if everyone keeps up the dedication, we can be successful this season."

Girls golf aims to keep momentum

By LIZ FOGASSA
Staff writer

The varsity girls golf team had a disappointing start to the season, losing matches against South Pasadena and Temple City, 229-208 and 261-199 respectively. However South Pasadena and Temple City are two very strong teams, and although the team came up short in both matches, the team saw measurable improvements.

One of the team's strengths this season has been the strong leadership of the upperclassmen. Junior Maddy Kwei and senior Taryn Kim in particular have been crucial to the team's success, Schneider explained. "Maddy and Taryn have shown tons of leadership and have been key influencers in setting the tone for this season."

The team's small roster has been challenging at times, but it has also worked to the Panthers' advantage. The team's dynamic has been a major asset for the Panthers this season. Kwei said, "We have only five people this year, so everyone shows commitment and dedication to our team."

Though the Panthers are maintaining a positive outlook for the rest of the season, the team will still need to put in some work if they want to position themselves for a strong league showing, Schneider said. "They are working on becoming more consistent to prepare for having a shot at league."

With important games against Westridge and Buckley coming up, it will be crucial for the team to carry their momentum through the rest of this season and into the prep league finals.
Young water polo team looks thrive under new head coach

By DAVID MATHIAS
Staff writer

The varsity boys water polo team is currently in a reconstruction year, having lost many graduating seniors from last year. The team now has only two active seniors and is very junior and sophomore heavy, but under the leadership of new coach Sean Grab, the team has achieved the solid record of 4-2.

Although this is only Coach Grab’s first year, he has made a large impact. Grab’s coaching career is extensive as a player and a coach. He was a decorated high school player, scoring more than 100 goals in two years at UC Davis, played for clubs in Spain and most recently played and coached for the Alumni Water Polo Club, back-to-back Men’s Senior National Champions. He also coached at the Rose Bowl and Occidental College and brings this breadth of experience to Poly’s pool.

Junior Sean Zheng notes that Grab works hard in practice and focuses on fundamentals like conditioning, endurance and speed in the water. Grab also wants to improve individual skillwork and the mental fortitude needed for the highly intensive sport. The team has been receptive to this rigorous regimen. Grab believes they have responded well to his coaching, noting that his players “are able to contextualize and take the things that we’re learning and apply them in games.”

The juniors have stepped up to the challenge of filling the senior hole. Players like Ian Chadwick, Matt Arredondo and Sean Zheng have become key players for the team to look to and revolve their play around. Chadwick was described as “our rock,” Matt Arredondo as “humble and hard-working,” and Zheng as “naturally gifted.”

Zheng competes outside of school on a club team and in the Junior Olympics. He was named team MVP his freshman and sophomore years and has been invaluable to the water polo team.

Senior co-captain Sean Liu commented that, “although this team is young, we have a really strong work ethic.”

Sophomore Oscar Bortz is a perfect embodiment of this mentality. The coaches were debating whether to put Oscar on varsity and then decided to do so due to his constant energy and great attitude in practice.

Grab, Liu and Zheng all reported that they have welcomed him to his coaching, noting that his players “are able to contextualize and take the things that we’re learning and apply them in games.”

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Girls volleyball carries over last season’s success

By JUSTIN ODIBO
Staff writer

With a team composed primarily of returners, the Poly girls volleyball team hopes to build on their success from last season and win the CIF championship this season. Last year, the volleyball team made it all the way to the Division IV CIF championship game, in which they were defeated by the powerhouse Quartz Hill High School.

Even though the Panthers are now in Division III and among better competition, the Panthers have confidence. They have an explosive offense and the mentality of filling the senior hole.

Sophomore Oscar Bortz is a perfect embodiment of this mentality. The coaches were debating whether to put Oscar on varsity and then decided to do so due to his constant energy and great attitude in practice.

Bortz, over the course of summer and regular season practices, improved his skills so much that he is now a contributing member of varsity’s starting lineup.

Grab, Liu and Zheng all reported that they have welcomed him to his coaching, noting that his players “are able to contextualize and take the things that we’re learning and apply them in games.”

This year we upped discipline and respect to our team. We are a solid team.

The Panthers have a strong core of returning players, and the freshmen are ready to step up and contribute.

Next, they battled South Pasadena in an exciting match. The Tigers took the first two games by small margins, outscoring Poly 25-21 and then 25-22. In the third game, the Panthers were able to shift their momentum, winning the game 26-24, and then proceeded to take the last two games, finishing up an impressive comeback victory. The Panthers’ next challenge came in the form of the CIF Division IV championship.

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Athlete of the Issue

Emily Wén

Despite being new to Poly, freshman Emily Wén has been an instrumental piece of the girls varsity volleyball team, earning a starring spot on the squad. Wén has contributed significantly to the team’s currently undefeated record of 8-0 in both league and non-league play. Wén has extensive experience playing volleyball as she is also a member of the San Gabriel Elite Volleyball Club’s 15-1 team, the best team at her club for her age.

Standing at around 5’8”, Wén’s primary position for the team is at right-side hitter. However, her immense breadth of skills is what makes her so effective.

Head coach Katrina Damasco said, “Emily is such a special player. At first, you think she’s just a big jumper and a hard hitter, but what really sets her apart is her versatility. I can confidently play her as an outside hitter, a right-side hitter or even as a setter.”

Playing in mostly hitting positions, Wén has already recorded numerous kills in each game this year.

Besides being an offensive menace, Wén also plays “good defense and has solid serve-receive,” according to Coach Damasco.

In addition to her skills as a player, Emily is described as a “caring, thoughtful and undoubtedly hilarious” teammate and friend. Senior Ella Kenny said, “Not only does she care about the game, she cares about each and every one of her teammates. If there were to be a model teammate, it would be Emily.”

Wén is an all-around stud both on and off the court, and she aims to continue dominating Poly volleyball this season and to ultimately achieve a CIF championship victory.

- Ryan Lee

Athlete of the Issue

Sophie Phinney

Sophie Phinney has been an embodiment of hard work and dedication on the Panthers’ cross country team since her freshman year.

With cross country being an already physically grueling sport, the mental side of the game is equally as, if not more, important. Phinney has proven time and time again that she has the mental as well as the physical capability to excel at each course she runs.

Phinney has steadily risen to the top of Poly’s girls cross country team. During her freshman year, she managed to place in the top 10 of every race, an impressive feat for a freshman who had never run such distances before.

From then on, Phinney continued in an upward trajectory, shaving around four minutes off of her three-mile time by CIF finals of her sophomore year.

Thanks to Ian Chadwick’s leadership and consistent performance as a goalie, the boys water polo team is off to a solid start, opening the season 4-2.

The team has lost considerable veteran leadership in new Poly Alums Diego Jaime, Alec Walsh, Chandler Washington, Victor Swezey, Austin Lee and Brennan Shin. However, Chadwick has quickly filled their shoes and assumed a leadership role on the team.

Chadwick has received plenty of praise from his teammates, especially fellow junior Matt Arredondo who described Chadwick’s leadership as stemming from his contagious work ethic.

Arredondo said, “He is always in the pool and working hard.”

While Chadwick tends to lead by example, he has proven that he isn’t afraid to motivate his team if he needs to.

“He definitely holds us accountable when we need to be, and that is something that is very valuable in a leader. He is also probably the most consistent and reliable player in the pool. He always has great vision when we’re in transition and always finds the open man,” explained Arredondo.

Chadwick’s most significant contribution to the team is arguably the effect he has on his teammates.

Arredondo said, “He helps us be aware on defense, and he communicates with us.”

Looking ahead, boys water polo will face San Dimas High School in their next matchup before heading off to compete in their first tournament of the season.

As they keep their sights set on reclaiming the Prep League crown, the young team will continue to grow under the leadership and talent of its goal- ie Ian Chadwick.

- Beckett Newton