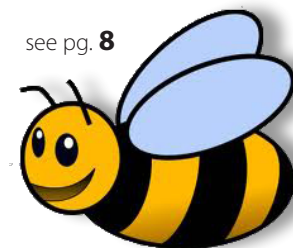




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THE BEAR FACTS

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VOL. XXIV NO. 4

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 2012

IN SHORT

Open House

Brentwood Christian will host its second-annual Admissions Open House for non-BCS families on Sunday, Feb. 12, from 2-4 p.m. Visitors will arrive in the courtyard and be given a tour of the campus and classrooms by current students. They will also be able to enjoy performances by members of BCS drama, choir, and band departments. Brentwood families were asked to give invitations for the event to people they know who might be interested in their school.

Beautification day

In preparation for the open house, BCS parents and families are encouraged to take part in a campus beautification day on Saturday, Feb. 11, from 8 a.m. till noon. Activities will include weeding, pruning, and trash pick-up. Coordinator Lynn Petrik says trash bags and water will be included, and VIP hours will be offered.

One-act plays

Middle school drama students will present this year's one-act plays on Feb. 17 and 18 at 7 p.m. in the new theater. The plays are "Happily Never After" and "Wanted: One Groom," and tickets can be bought at the box office on Feb. 6-17 or online at www.brentwoodchristian.org/tickets.

TMSCA champs

A group of nine middle school students won the first-place sweepstakes trophy by a margin of nearly 1,000 points at the Jan. 14 TMSCA academic meet in Azle. Eighth-grader Andrew Armstrong placed in four events, including first in both Number Sense and Calculator. Classmate Joshua Sass also placed in four events, as did seventh-grader Gabie Nguyen, who was first in Mathematics. Parents Mark Sass and David Armstrong have been coaching the students.

Geeks invade; school spirit rises

Halls decked for Homecoming 2012; movies replace talent

madalyn **GARELICK**
reporter

Geeks wearing suspenders and nerd glasses stormed Brentwood Christian on the week of Jan. 9. This was a sign to all teachers it was officially Homecoming Week.

Student Council made the announcement the week before that the theme would be Geek Week, and then the excitement started as students began to plan costumes, cheerleaders continued to work on their pep rally routine, StuCo made plans for decorations, and the voting began for Homecoming Court.

While the gym was full of parents, alumni, and students on the night of Friday, Jan. 13, the coronation began between the varsity girls' and varsity boys' basketball games. These were voted on earlier in the week by the secondary grades. First came freshman lord and lady Tyler Clark and Rachel Dixon, then duke and duchess Bryce Morin and Erin Atchley, and junior prince and princess Jackson Graessle and Masha Heins.

Then the wait was finally over and the queen and king were announced: Marcus McCormick and Shannon Lesko. They walked through a fairytale archway down the center of the court while having their bios read by BCS dad Pete Howell.

But before the long-awaited coronation, the days leading up were filled with themed dress-up days. First was Epic Movie Monday, then Time Travel Tuesday, Wimpy Wednesday, and Millionaire Thursday. Students came dressed

up creatively each day from Harry Potter to Grease; from Moses to a future human; from Sponge Bob to the classic nerd; and from a lazy millionaire to Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg.

"It was fun to hang out during the week with all my friends and soak up the memories of our last Brentwood Christian homecoming," senior Katie Clement said.

The whole week led up to Spirit Day on Friday. StuCo and cheerleaders arrived at the gym at 7:50 a.m. and began to spice up the walls and court for when students and alumni arrived at the pep rally and the games that night. There were bow ties hanging from streamers, chains of paper outlining the gym, and balloons for the seniors floating through the air.

After high school lunch, the students arrived and found that the gym was transformed from having a handful of people to being completely packed. The lights were off, music was playing, and the cheerleaders performed their routine. Teams were introduced and given cookie cakes by the cheerleaders to wish them luck. Then the Homecoming Court was announced, which included the three nominees for the queen.

At the end of the pep rally, the tradition of the "Cha-Cha Slide" was continued, joined by dozens of secondary students.

"I thought the pep rally was great," middle school teacher and cheer sponsor Cindy Nestor said.

For the second year in a row, the talent show

see **STUDENTS**, page 5



photos: Mary Monacelli



photos: McCormick family; Melanie Howell

Awww Fulfilling an adorable foreshadowing 14 years in the making, Marcus McCormick and Shannon Lesko, married in preschool, were voted king and queen.

Lady Bears, 26-4, zero in on state title

matthew **ARCHER**
reporter

The varsity girls have been playing red hot all year, winning 18 straight until Tuesday's non-district loss. They now boast a 26-4 record, including an 8-0 record in district, which has given them another district championship.

After their last regular season game Feb. 7, Brentwood will open the playoffs at home on the following Tuesday, Feb. 14.

This is the Lady Bears' second straight district championship, and they have won it six out of the last seven years under head coach Devan Loftis. Their success has also been recognized by the Austin-American Statesman with the team being ranked among the

see **GIRLS**, page 6

Megan's Musings: Megan Monacelli

Former grade-obsessor says don't stress, enjoy learning

Don't work hard for good grades. That's right. Abandon the instruction and lecturing from your parents and teachers about getting good grades, and come with me into the world of learning.

Most of you know me as a grade-obsessed student and you would be partially accurate in labeling me as such. However, I've learned some difficult lessons this past semester that have changed my perspective about the grading system. I only wish I had made this perspective change in middle school. It would have saved me a considerable amount of unnecessary stress regarding grades in high school.

First, I think it's important to note that grades – the assigning of Arabic numerals to performances on assessment mediums that supposedly demonstrate the student's level of understanding – fall in the realm of 19th-century inventions. Standardizing assessment tools such as tests has led to a certain teaching-learning method mostly consisting of rote memorization for the student and grading rubrics for teachers. This makes sense because grading an essay or discussion without a rubric (and perhaps even with a rubric) is relative and subjective. Teachers and students must have a common ground and pre-established understanding of how the

assessment of knowledge acquisition works. However, and at least here at Brentwood, this difficult and often headache-inducing procedure for both teachers and students has led the classroom setting to more rote memorization teaching-learning tactics.

This is sad, because it waters learning down from a holistic understanding of concepts to nitty-gritty details such as names and dates that, let's be honest, don't stick with us past the Friday night after a test.

The grading system in general, with its formulaic assessment techniques, has created two main frustrations for me over the years. When I study and learn and complete work, I know how I did. No one knows more than I do how well I actually knew the information, how much effort I put into the task, and the level of work I completed. I know my full potential and I know how I study. I know this more than teachers know this because, well, I know me. So, when I receive a grade that I feel is not an accurate portrayal of the work I've done, whether it be higher or lower, it doesn't seem fair. I know if I've done "A" work versus "B" work, but I don't know if I've done 97 work or 96 work. Some students, in reaction to what they see as an unfair grade (including a past

version of me), will then become an aggressive player in what I call the grade game. There in lies my second frustration with the grading system.

This game consists of lobbying with the teacher for extra points, extra credit, or anything that will raise the grade to an acceptable and fair level in the eyes of the student or their parents. Yes, you read that correctly. Students' parents even get involved in this game, and I know this from experience.

The grade game pits students and teachers against each other because the student has to arm for battle and make a case to argue against the teacher. This completely undermines the process and purpose of learning and can put you, the student, at a disadvantage.

Psst! Here's a secret: It's good to have teachers on your side, because guess what: They know more than you do, and they want to share their knowledge with you.

As I mentioned before, I shamefully admit that I am an experienced player at this game. So, to the teachers reading this and thinking how absurd this commentary sounds coming from me, I am sorry. I apologize for reducing learning to frivolous points and viewing your class through the narrow lens of grades rather

than knowledge.

Another truth I discovered this past semester is that grading is relative. What is a normal grade for you is probably different from what I would consider normal. And what is a "good grade"? Perfection? Nobody is perfect, and we can't be afraid to mess up, because sometimes we learn the most when we don't completely understand, struggle to grasp concepts, and when we just bomb a test. In short, don't sweat the little points here and there.

It's important to realize that learning is messy. It's trial and error of grasping concepts and adapting to different teaching styles.

I encourage you not to work hard for good grades. Rather, indulge in learning. Take pride in the fact that you are getting an excellent education, take advantage of the learning opportunities you have at your fingertips, and grow in wisdom and fascination of the world around you. Look at a class in the past or future and don't worry about the grade. Don't pre-label a class as "easy" or "blow-off," and partner with teachers to learn. Stop stalking RenWeb and bow out of the grade game. I promise it will relieve stress and it will open your eyes to a world of knowledge that may actually make learning fun. Yes, fun.

Look Outside: E.J. Sung and Hannah Kwon

Jong-Il Kim lived for self; who do you live for?

When asked about politics these days, American students will probably talk about Newt Gingrich, who has an amphibian name; Mitt Romney, who looks like a Ken doll; or Ron Paul, the perpetual presidential candidate. But politics might be a sensitive subject to South Korean students these days. The recent death of Jong-Il Kim, supreme leader of North Korea, has created a tension within Korea resulting in anxiety for Korean students regarding their home country.

Korea is still at war. Since 1953, South Korea is at a status of a truce, which means the actual war hasn't ended yet. Huge wires at the 38th parallel that separate the two "different but same" countries remain to remind us. Political decisions made by the South Korean government always have to consider North Korea to be careful not to irritate or stimulate them. South Korea still has to eat North Korea's salt, and has to send provisions such as humanitarian, medical, and food aids from time to time.

When you hear the mention of "North Korea," it is easy to simply think of a prison where the normal people have no rights at all. Jong-Il Kim, the former leader of North Korea, inherited power after his father's death on July 8, 1994. Starting from his father, Ill-Sung Kim, the brainwashing of North Koreans began its way into the people. Both of the leaders manipulated the citizens with the media, pictures, constant reminders of Jong-Il Kim's goodness, and holidays on which their leader was to be treated as a god. Not only did they isolate the citizens completely from the outside world, but the North Korean leader and the high-ranking government officers have taken what is right-

fully the citizens' for their own benefits.

The gap between the rich and poor is enormous. The dictators let the citizens starve to death and be helpless, which leave some of them with no solution but to escape secretly to South Korea. Jong-Il Kim starved his people, forced them to work aimlessly in labor camps, and killed millions of the public for his power. The citizens do not know what is going on outside of North Korea because of the restriction of Internet and television usage and any other source that will connect them to the outside world. He built a gigantic army and nuclear bombs to threaten the world and to ultimately keep himself safe. Last year, he sank a South Korean ship and shelled an island, killing civilians. But North Koreans were forbidden to speak negatively about him because he was to be treated as a god. Basically, he made his peo-

ple into his slaves.

Jong-Il Kim became a follower of his father's footsteps 17 years ago. Like many dictators in the past, such as Hitler and Stalin, Kim was a brutal leader who held onto his absolute power, preventing North Korean citizens from enjoying basic rights. However, it is reported that acute myocardial infarction, or heart attack, led to his

see **KOREA**, page 4

THE BEAR FACTS

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The Bear Facts is published monthly by the journalism classes of Brentwood Christian High School. The paper is a learning tool which informs the student body while teaching students to become critical observers of their environment and to validate Truth within the context of the Christian world view.

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The Bear Facts is available online at
www.brentwoodchristian.org.



photo: Michelle Mohrmann

To the moon! Sixth-grader Kyle Gonsalvez builds a probe at the Challenger Center at George Observatory on a field trip Jan. 31. Using his headset, he communicated with mission control.

Science fair features two divisions, 64 awards, 261 projects

Joseph KANG
reporter

Nine renowned guests from science-related fields recognized this year's science fair winners – including 28 from elementary and 36 from secondary – on Jan. 30 in the auditorium.

The science fair had two divisions: on Jan. 18 for elementary and on Jan. 19 for secondary.

In the awards ceremony that was held in front of all BCS students and many parents, local meteorologists Troy Kimmel and Mark Murray spoke a few encouraging words to the students who participated in the fairs. After each winner received his or her prize – which was a trophy for first place, and ribbons for second and third place – the nine scientists shook their hands as the students crossed in front of the stage.

Students from grades 3-5 who placed were eligible to go on to the Austin Energy Regional Science Festival on Feb. 23-25. There is a limit to sending 11 projects from elementary and 100 projects from secondary.

There were 261 projects all together. Some students worked with a partner or two other people. There were about 130 elementary participants and about 225 in secondary.

On Jan. 19, before first period started, students in grades 6 to 12 had to drop off their projects at the Family Life Center with a project ID card that their science teachers assigned. Then, students stood by their boards at appointed times and waited for a trio of judges including parents, teachers, UT students, and other friends of the school. The judges graded according to the scientific method, projection, and display. The elementary students in grades 1 to 5 also experienced a similar process the day before the secondary fair. The results were

posted in all buildings on Jan. 23.

First-place winners in the secondary fair were: Avery Miller in sixth-grade science; Thomas Yates in seventh-grade science; Andrew Armstrong and Joshua Sass in eighth-grade science; Anna Ewing tied with Haley Hutson and Nicole Glenn in Honors Biology; Amanda Conway, Michelle Dembosky, and Tipp Umrod in AP Biology; Erika DuPond tied with Seokhyun Koh, Hanna Kwon, and Kyle Back in Honors Chemistry; Ginger Huh and Min Shin in Honors Physics.

The elementary first-place winners were: Kayla Kane in first-grade experiment and

Brecken Lee in first-grade exhibition; Makana Sloan in second-grade experiment and Lilly Ruiz in second-grade exhibition; Grant Martinez in third-grade experiment; Coby Best, Isaac Copleand and Luke Jackson in fourth-grade experiment and Kelli Tindel in fourth-grade exhibition; and Jane Hughes in fifth-grade experiment.

"I am hoping that all the winners will want to go on," said sixth-grade teacher Michelle Mohrmann, who is in charge of the fair.

However, the winners are not going to the regional fair automatically; they had to register their projects with required forms by Feb. 1.

In the secondary fair, registration was open to anyone, since BCS may send 100 projects.

The projects were assigned in the beginning of October, and all the students who participated were required to turn in research plans and approval forms to their science teachers. According to Mohrmann, more students participated this year compared to last year, and to accommodate the increased number, the fair was more organized by using number cards, a checking table, and a designated area for each participant.

The reason for more participation this year is that BCS students who are taking AP classes or honors science classes are required to do science fair. However, some honors students reluctantly did it; many complained that science fair took their study time. On the other hand, some non-honors students also participated because science fair provides opportunity for extra credit in their science classes.

"Since the science fair is not judged by professors, we cannot really get feedback that pertains to the project," sophomore Patti White said. "We can only get feedback about things to improve our board."

The science fair committee includes two coordinators – Mohrmann and fourth-grade teacher Glenda Morrow – as well as secondary science teachers Juliana Ewing, Kristen Berry, and Cissy Johnson.

Science fair is an event in which students come up with a question to try to answer through experimentation. According to Mohrmann, BCS does science fair to encourage students to explore the world they live in with a scientific eye. However, since late the 1990s, BCS did not hold a science fair until Mohrmann and Morrow coordinated one last year.



photo: Dominic Ramos

Facing the judges Eighth-graders Hannah Smith (far left) and Lucia Arguello discuss their project with the judges at the secondary science fair on Jan. 19. A total of 28 projects in elementary and 36 in secondary were recognized in an assembly Jan. 30.

Harding University inducts Rotich into school's Hall of Fame

m.j. SUNG
reporter

Because of all his outstanding records as a cross country and track runner, Brentwood Christian's director of information technology Jacob Rotich was inducted into the Harding University Bison Boosters Hall of Fame on Jan. 27. This induction happens once every five years, and the hall has 84 members, including 14 inductees.

Rotich said he felt the Hall of Fame was a great honor for his past athletic accomplishments.

"I didn't expect it, and it really surprised me," said Rotich, who was informed of his selection on Sep. 18.

While a student at Harding from 2001-2004, Rotich was an NCAA outdoor 10,000 meters national champion, and he earned numerous all-America honors. He was also a four-time Gulf South Conference Champion and four-time South Regional Athlete of the Year.

A team of five members, including Harding University chancellor Dr. Cliff Ganus Jr., formed the group charged with selecting former student-athletes for the honor.



Jacob Rotich

"I think this award will not only honor and inspire me, but it will inspire others as well," said Rotich, who coaches track and cross country at BCS. "It is a permanent record that enriches my athletic accomplishments at Harding University."

Rotich said he was not initially talented at running and barely made the team in his junior year in high school in Rift Valley, Kenya. After he graduated, a former Olympic medalist talked him into joining his training, which made Rotich hesitant since he was "not a very talented runner." He then started to improve his running times and earned a scholarship to Harding.

"It was at Harding University where I realized my potential," Rotich said. "I totally exceeded my expectations."

Rotich traveled to Arkansas with his wife and his son the day before the celebration. In Arkansas, he ran his old route with a former teammate in remembrance of his days there.

From times when he faced difficulties, he first trusted in God to give him strength, and secondly, he worked hard for it.

"Nobody was born a runner, but everyone can make himself a runner if he has feet," Rotich said.

Third grade leads in service

anna EWING
reporter

In response to the Rachel's Challenge presentation in early December, BCS classes are starting to do more service projects, especially the third grade. That class is blazing a trail that all grades will be following, according to elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed. The principals and teachers are planning to establish service projects for every grade next school year, Dr. Weed said.

The entire third grade is going to Gracy Woods Nursing Facility on Monday, Feb. 13, to sing special songs about love and put decorations on the doors as they visit with the elderly. Teacher Carolyn B'Smith said they decided to replace a field trip planned for February with singing to the residents.

Third graders have also spent time pray-

ing for Gary McKeel, a member at Westside Church of Christ before he died of cancer on Thursday, Jan. 19. They also decided to make a basketful of candy for McKeel, who was known as the "Candy Man" since he brought a bag of candy to church for many years, letting children have what they want.

"He was a faithful Christian man who has served all his life," B'Smith said.

Second-grader Parker Combs, who was assistant principal for the day on Dec. 13, also wanted to help adults and children in need. He came up with the idea to make Valentine hearts for the entire elementary to send out. He cut out more than 300 hearts so the elementary students could write a short message. Dr. Weed plans on giving these hearts to Dell Children's Hospital, residents at Village Christian Apartments, and the men and women of the armed forces.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Bryan Williams

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2012.

Farm boy: big guy with little ego 'gets the stuff done'

jonathon REICH
reporter

If you were asked which senior has ostriches, llamas, and ring-tailed lemurs running around in his backyard; has dedicated his minivan to fellow senior Min Shin; and aspires to run a hand-made drum company, what would be your answer? Well, it's the same guy who carries around giant African tortoises every afternoon.

Since seventh grade, Bryan Williams has graced Brentwood Christian with his presence, and is appreciated by classmates and teachers alike for his ever kindhearted and hardworking spirit.

"He's kind of an unspoken leader on campus," fellow senior Marcus McCormick says. "He gets the stuff done. That's just what he does."

Whether you've known it or not, you've probably seen Bryan roaming around campus. He's that very tall, broad-shouldered guy who "gets the stuff done" and looks like he should be in all kinds of sports. In reality, however, he's not involved in any; he mostly just works out at a gym after school. However, he used to play many, including baseball, football, track, and basketball, until he was injured. He says he never felt very competitive about them anyway, so when he got injured it wasn't worth it to try and keep playing.

"He's a big teddy bear," says Bryan's sister, eighth-grader Natalie Williams. "He's very compassionate and caring, and can connect with others easily."

Bryan's family and Crowe's Nest Farm are other major parts of his life. Bryan has a close-knit family,

which also includes his brother, Chris, who graduated from Brentwood with the Class of '10. During the school year, the family farm offers field trips to about 3,500 students, and during the summer there are day camps where kids can interact with the animals. Bryan says he loves to be able to talk to the kids, and when he gets to speak to the them, he slips in "creationist ideas" that public schools don't teach, and tries hard to emphasize how blessed they are.

"I have a passion for teaching kids,"

Bryan says.

During a normal



photo: Mary Monacelli

Korea: God's love cures selfishness

continued from page 2

death on Dec. 17, at the age of 69.

The death of Jong-II Kim could be just like any other loss that just happens, shocks us, and then slips away from our mind. But Kim's death is a serious issue concerning the future of South Korea, the United States, and eventually the whole world.

Jong-Un Kim, the youngest son of Jong-II Kim and the most likely successor, inherited all the power from Jong-II Kim before his death. Jong-Un Kim is considered inexperienced as a ready dictator, but he was chosen by his father because he has the same communist philosophy with even more determination. No one can be relieved by the death of one of the worst dictators, because worse things could happen.

Why do these dictators behave so maliciously? One of the common factors among the evil dictators is selfishness. Mr. Kim and his family did not care about the disadvantages or incon-

venience that others would have to face as a result of their egotism. They ruthlessly got rid of people who stood in their paths.

We might not be as selfish as these dictators were, but we are very self-centered people. We usually pursue popularity, money, or honor. However, what should we be sincerely hungry for? The answer is God's love. As sons and daughters of God, we should do our best to repay the love He gave us and be acknowledged by God. The easiest way is to do things that please God such as loving others, sacrificing for others, and doing the best we can to follow Jesus' steps.

Many of you might have expected such a predictable answer. However, as we live our daily lives, we sometimes lose our center and forget why we are here in this world. Not just Koreans particularly, but all of us as students get too busy dealing with our own problems. North Korea's new situation leads us back to that one question: Who do you live for?

school day, Bryan finishes his classes before lunch, goes to the gym, and spends the rest of the day attending ACC, where he is working on finishing his freshman and some of his sophomore years of college. After he graduates from college, Bryan says he plans to take over the farm and make it more self-sufficient and profitable, while also hoping to get opportunities to perform wildlife shows or speak to kids. He says he plans to go to Concordia University to major in business administration with a specialty in marketing, and double minor in non-profit managing, to help him learn how to advertise his family's farm better.

"I love to be outside," Bryan says. "I don't think I could have a job that would require me to sit in a desk all day."

Currently, Bryan is active in Jazz Band, where he plays bass guitar, and he is head of both NHS and the Spiritual Life Committee.

"He's a great leader by example," NHS sponsor Kaleen Graessle says. "He'll be very missed on the campus as a whole."

Before coming to Brentwood, Bryan frequently changed from being home schooled to attending different schools, including NYOS and Manor Elementary.

He felt that he didn't receive as good of an education at the other schools, saying that he hadn't learned his multiplication tables until seventh grade, when he came to Brentwood. At Manor, he was also picked on for being bigger. He could even recall a time when a student pushed him up against a locker and broke his nose.

"It made me appreciate Brentwood a lot more," Bryan said. "Brentwood has been a really big blessing to me."

Outside of school and his farm, Bryan also attends Great Hills Baptist Church and spends time with his girlfriend of two years, who is currently attending Texas State University. Bryan says he's known her since she was five, when she used to come to the farm often.

Other interests of Bryan's include laughing and making people laugh, storytelling, and hunting. Bryan considers himself a "slightly workaholic guy with a big stage fright," but peers have described him differently, using terms such as: genuinely nice, incredibly humble, warm, caring, super chill, trustworthy, and a big brother figure.

"I'm pretty sure he's what all guys wish they could be," fellow senior Kaleb Chambers says.

Graessle earns master's degree

jin ha JEONG
reporter

BCS math teacher Kaleen Graessle earned a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Abilene Christian University last semester. On Dec. 16, her whole family went to the graduation ceremony, which Graessle said she enjoyed.

"Except that it was a very rushed trip, it was nice," Graessle said.

Graessle has taught BCS students from 1989 to 1999, and again since 2004, and she is now teaching Geometry and AP Calculus. Although she has a bachelor's degree in physics and has been teaching students for a long time, she said it is helpful to learn new strategies, "particularly because we live in a rapidly changing society."

So in 2009 she started to take classes again at ACU, which is where she earned her first degree.

Graessle took her classes online. To take the courses with her busy schedule, she had to work on her lessons late at night and on weekends. Each of her classes involved a lot of a group discussion, which was done through a discussion board, readings, analysis, and reflection, and some classes required a group project. While she was taking the classes, she said was interested to see how distance learning can be done in an effective way. Graessle said the courses afforded opportunities for interesting discussion between herself and her classmates, most of whom teach in public schools. Overall, she said the classes were

beneficial.

"It was an excellent program, and particularly helpful to me in that the courses were taught from a Christian perspective," Graessle said. "I am glad that I did it. The two years went by very quickly."

Graessle said she plans to use what she learned for improvement, both in her specific classes and for BCS in general. She hopes to implement new instructional strategies that will help students with various levels of understanding and skills.



photo: submitted

New present Kaleen Graessle got a master's degree from ACU for Christmas.

TEACHER FEATURE: *Sylvia Burcham*

Family oriented first-grade teacher loves BCS community

via KHADEM
reporter

During the day, first-grade teacher Sylvia Burcham maintains order within the chaos and calamity that, at times, resides in her class. At home, she takes the position of loving spouse, generous mother, an advocate of Dr. Pepper, and a Mexican food fanatic.

It is because of Burcham's passion with children and her devotion to her family that she sought to teach at Brentwood Christian, a community that she strives to serve with great pleasure.

Adopted into a large extended family with two older brothers, Burcham grew up in the sleepy little town of Early, just outside of Brownwood, with a population of 2,400 and a graduating class of 78.

Burcham had formed tightly knit relationships within her school and church communities in Early, but she left to major in elementary education at Abilene Christian University. While there, she met her husband Jay, who would eventually serve on the BCS board.

Soon Burcham moved down to Austin from Abilene with her husband and began to look for jobs. Burcham remembered that she had heard of Brentwood at an ACU job fair and applied for an opening, interviewing for a position with school president Marquita Moss and elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed. In the summer of 1994, Burcham was hired and began teaching elementary to wild success.

After three years of teaching, Burcham took a break so she could raise her children with the attention that she felt that they deserved. In 2006, she resumed her role as a teacher when her son, sixth-grader Hunter, was in first

grade.

In her current position on the battlefield, Burcham has become a veteran, combating threats such as soiled pants and nap time with masterful skill and relative ease that would dumbfound onlookers.

"Teaching at Brentwood's been great. It's busy, and there's never a dull moment," Burcham says. "With 26 first graders, there's always something happening."

Secondary librarian Tere Hager has been friends with Burcham for more than 10 years since they met at church. She says that while Burcham is quiet and reserved, she is really funny with her students. She also made a huge impact on the Hager family.

"She's the reason why we're here," Hager says.

Burcham told Hager how much she loved Brentwood Christian, and eventually Hager had all three of her children enrolled in the school.

"She's probably one of the best teachers on the planet," Hager continues. "She's a natural born, gifted teacher."

Hager is quick to point out that Burcham is also "incredibly giving" of her time. When Hager's husband was hit by a truck while jogging four years ago, Burcham became a mother to the three Hager children. For the six weeks Hager spent at the hospital with her husband, Burcham basically had six children.

In addition to teaching, Burcham is also a family oriented mother in her free time, caring for her three children: freshman Megan, Hunter, and first-grader Abby.

"Before she taught, she'd pick me and my brother up and bring us snacks," Megan says. "She'd also spend time with us before our dad



photo: Mary Monacelli

Apples of her eye Sylvia Burcham the mom enjoys scrapbooking cherished memories of her children Hunter (6th), Abby (1st), and Megan (9th).

got home."

In her free time, Burcham enjoys scrapbooking pictures of her children together, as well as traveling if she has time. She has enjoyed many sites such as Amish country in Pennsylvania

and the country of Mexico while in college.

Sometime in the future, Burcham would love to visit the beautiful island of Hawaii, perhaps sipping an ice cold Dr. Pepper on the beach.

Students enjoy festive week

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scheduled for Thursday was cancelled due to the lack of quality acts, according to StuCo sponsor Linda Riedesel. It was replaced by a middle school and high school movie night. Middle school watched "How to Train Your Dragon," and high school watched "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." Students were able to lounge around the FLC while hanging with fellow classmates and enjoying some classic movies and concessions provided by StuCo.

"It was really hard to make that decision," Riedesel said. "There were five really good acts, but we wanted it to be full of an array of talent."

On Saturday, Jan.7, the cheerleaders hosted their annual Little Bear Cheer Camp. Girls from all grades in elementary filed into the gym to learn cheers, jumps, stunts, and just have fun with the varsity cheerleaders while jamming out to Hannah Montana. The girls who

attended the camp performed their cheers at the halftime of the JV girls' homecoming game on Friday, Jan. 13.

Later that day the cheerleaders joined StuCo in the high school building to put dragons, castles, comics, Narnia, and Harry Potter on the walls for students to admire during the week.

The planning was not all smooth sailing. Late in November a theme for the week, "seasons," began to leak out into the student body. So with some late meetings by StuCo they came to a decision to change it to Geek Week.

"It was so stressful, but it was worth the outcome," sophomore StuCo member Patti White said.

Tons of pictures were taken, old friends got to catch up with each other, and some great basketball games were played.

"It was crazy busy, but after it was over we were all like, yes, that was perfect," senior Karlie Mattison said.



photos: Jessica Love

Wimpy Wednesday Students who dressed a bit nerdy included sixth-graders Holly Flores and Joley Chisholm, junior Matthew Onabajo, and senior Dorey Chiu.

Girls take sixth district title in seven years; eye final four

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top 10 teams in the area, including both public and private schools.

"It's been one of those special seasons," Loftis said. "We keep finding ways to win, and it feels good to have won district. But we have to keep going if we want to reach our goal of getting back to the final four."

The team has not lost to any TAPPS 3A opponents so far and is currently ranked third among small private schools in Texas by TABC. Loftis said that, unlike in previous years, there are no teams that they can't compete with and win against in 3A.

According to Loftis, this team is probably one of the closest he has had. He also praised their good work ethic and effort.

"We play really well together, and we have a lot of chemistry," junior Rachel Orick said. "We don't always play our best, but we are determined and love the game so much, it gets us our wins."

Senior Brittany Brunson is scheduled to be featured in the "Faces Off the Field" section for the Statesman. She went to their offices for a photo shoot and to answer some questions on Jan. 25, and she said the feature will run sometime in February.

Brunson leads the team with 15.3 points per game. She is followed by Orick with 8.5 and Morgan Vandygriff with 8.0. Brunson also leads the team with 4.1 assists per game, and senior Megan Gum leads with 6.1 rebounds.

Following are the team's recent results:

12/8-9 Cypress Creek Tourn. (Champs)

The team traveled to Houston and started off the tournament with a 55-27 win over Lutheran South before beating Faith West Academy 52-21. This was a satisfying win for the team because a year ago it was Faith West who knocked them out in the second round of playoffs. The girls then came out and won the champion-

ship game against Northland Christian 46-39. Brunson was awarded the tournament MVP, and Vandygriff was named all-tournament.

12/29-30: SA Lutheran Tourn. (Champs)

After coming off Christmas break, the Lady Bears picked up right where they left off, beating River City Believers 61-24 led by

Brunson's 25 points, coming mostly from behind the arc as she scored seven three-pointers. They then beat former district opponent San Antonio Christian 51-33. After this they won against district opponent St. Dominic 42-41. Junior Brooklyn Merkord hit a shot with about 15 seconds left that put the team up and helped get the narrow victory. They defeated host team San Antonio Lutheran 52-48 in the championship game. Once again Brunson was named tournament MVP, and Vandygriff was all-tournament.

1/3: St. Joseph 58-15 W

The team jumped out early in their first district game and never looked back. Merkord led with 11 points, and every member of the team scored in this blowout.

1/6: @ St. Dom. 54-39 W

According to Loftis, this was one of the best performances they have had all year. The girls said the game was really fun as they played with a great crowd on both sides of the court. The team gained a good lead in the first quarter and was in charge for the rest of the game. Brunson had 16 points in the game, and Orick scored 14.

1/10: RR Christ. 63-29 W

After starting slow in the first quarter, the girls picked it up and got a big win against the third-place team in district. Last year

Orick tore her ACL while playing against Round Rock, but she came out this year and led the team with 22 points.

1/13: Central Texas Christian 49-34 W

The girls started well with a 19-4 lead at the end of the first quarter, in front of a loud and excited homecoming crowd. Loftis called it a rough and physical game. Brunson led the scoring with 19 points, including four three-pointers.

1/16: @ Waco Texas Christian 66-30 W

Despite being a little out of sync during the first half, according to team members, the girls got an impressive win. Brunson, Vandygriff, and Gum led with 14 points each, and everyone on the team scored.

1/20: Waco Texas Christian 64-33 W

After just playing them four days earlier at home, the team took care of business once again and handily defeated the less talented Waco team. Brunson scored 21 points in the game, while Orick and Vandygriff each put in 11 of their own.

1/24: St. Dominic 53-42 W

According to Loftis, the team did not play as well as they could have, but they stayed positive and played hard which gave them the win. Brunson had 16 points, and Vandygriff scored 14 while going eight for eight from the free throw line.

1/27: @ St. Joseph 62-23 W

The Lady Bears started the game off strong scoring the first 21 points while holding the other team scoreless. Brunson was the high scorer with 18, and Orick had 14.

1/31: St. Stephens 50-45 L

The girls started off slowly, missing many open shots, and were fighting an uphill battle the whole way after that. Despite the bad start, they brought the score within one point in the final minute. Brunson scored 20 points, and Gum had 9.



photo: Mark Merkord

Unstoppable Junior Rachel Orick speeds past a San Antonio Lutheran defender in the championship game of a tournament in the Christmas holidays. The girls are undefeated in district and will host a playoff game on Feb. 14.

Second verse not like the first for last-place girls' soccer team

megan **MONACELLI**
editor-in-chief

The Lady Bears' soccer season stands in stark contrast to last year's dream season as it came to an end last week with a 5-0 loss to St. Dominic Savio. Brentwood finished last in district with a 0-6 record.

This was the second year for the program, and despite not making playoffs and winning only two games, coach Brian Thrift applauds the girls' effort.

"The best part of the season was watching all of the girls improve from day one until the end," Thrift said.

Last year, Brentwood's inaugural season for girls soccer, the team placed second in district and advanced to the second round of the playoffs. But this season the team had only two seniors, and much of the team had little soccer experience.

Despite the barriers, the girls committed to the team and played hard, often times with just

enough players to field a team.

"We really bonded as a team and worked hard even though our efforts didn't pull out wins," sophomore Erica DuPond said.

Sophomore Marisol Lawson led the team in scoring, followed by junior Mary Monacelli.

The team should have 11 girls returning, losing only seniors Schuyler Hagen and Megan Monacelli.

Lawson is hopeful about next season and said she wants the team to work on ball skills, passing intentionally, and getting into better shape during the off-season.

"Our season was disappointing, but if we start in the off-season, we could improve on a lot," she said.

The team was also coached by Sierra Pierce. Following are the most recent results:

1/7: @ Our Lady of the Hills 4-3 W

After a tie-breaker win against Our Lady of the Hills earlier in the season, BCS set out to win in regulation. Mary Monacelli and Lawson each scored two goals.

"It was a fun game, and it boosted the morale of the team," DuPond said.

1/12: Regents 6-1 L

Mary Monacelli scored for BCS off a corner kick, but Regents had too much experience for the Bears.

1/16: Veritas 6-0 L

The Lady Bears played a defense-heavy first half and held the score to 2-0 at the half. But Veritas scored four goals in the first 10 minutes of the second half.

1/19: St. Dominic Savio 4-2 L

The Lady Bears allowed two penalty kicks on which Savio scored, and Lawson scored two goals within the last 20 minutes of the game. She dribbled down the side of the field and kicked curve balls from the corner. The two seniors were also honored that evening as it was the last home game of the season.

1/21: @ Regents 8-0 L

In a physical game, the Lady Bears lost to the district champs for the second time. At half-time, with Regents ahead 5-0, Thrift encour-

aged the team to play more aggressively.

"We, at first, were rattled by how physical the other team was playing, but once we got used to it, we held them," he said.

1/23: @ St. Stephens 3-0 L

This non-district game was pressure-free and a chance for the girls to practice passing intentionally and moving the ball into the midfield.

"I had fun because it was non-district and we got to really work on our skills as a team overall without having to worry about the score," junior Niky McCafferty said.

1/24: @ St. Dominic Savio 5-0 L

Playing their fourth game in six days, and in muddy conditions, the Lady Bears gave all their effort for the last game of the season. Megan Monacelli broke her toe in the first 10 minutes of the game, and freshman Yara Qussad strained her knee.

"I'm proud of the way you give everything you have and come limping off the field," Thrift told his team after the game. "It paves the way and sets the standard for future teams."

Very young Bears headed for playoffs again

Ianae **HOLLINGSWORTH**
reporter

The Bears have made the playoffs for the second straight year. Currently they are 5-5 in district, pending last night's game against Round Rock Christian.

If they can finish at 7-5, the Bears will be third in district and improve their playoff draw. Their final game is Tuesday, Feb. 7.

Making the playoffs is an accomplishment for the Bears. After losing seven seniors from last year's squad, the Bears are a young team, often starting a freshman, three sophomores, and a junior.

Coach Brandon Tatum said the team has improved the most this season on the offensive side — scoring more points, shooting the ball with confidence, and executing the offense.

"I feel like right now we are on the verge of peaking; we are going up to full potential," Tatum said. "We have played a lot of really good teams and learned a lot and gained good experience."

After playing a tough non-district schedule in the first half of the season, the Bears had a team meeting at Tatum's house on Jan. 2, the day before the first district game, to discuss realistic goals. Some of the team goals mentioned included going to playoffs, executing, limiting turnovers, playing harder than any team, and giving 100 percent effort all the time.

According to Tatum, they used the meeting to focus on the fact that district is a new season and a new start, where they can learn from mistakes and grow as a team. The next day they grabbed a clutch win against Bryan St. Joseph.

"The St. Joseph game was the turning point in the season, because we realized that if we execute what we work on, we are a good team," Tatum said.

Leading scorers are senior Diego Cole with an average of 10.6 points a game and junior Matthew Archer with 10.2. Sophomore Mike Taylor leads the team in rebounding with an average of 3.5 rebounds a game, and he and sophomore Wesley Mory lead the team taking charges with nine and eight, respectively.

"Early in the season, we didn't win the games we should have," Archer said. "After maturing and growing throughout the season, everyone is learning their role on the team."

Following are the team's recent results:

12/16: @ Waldorf 79-30 L

The Bears shot 31 percent from the field, and the taller Roadrunners took advantage of the Bears' 35 turnovers. Cole took two charges, and Taylor led the team with five rebounds.

12/27-29: Rosebud Tournament L L L

The boys lost all three games in the public school tournament over the holiday: Somerville 42-21, Rosebud-Lott High School 40-27, and Moody 39-22. Although they were often out of sync, the Bears garnered some good experience before the district season started.

1/3: Bryan St. Joseph 58-48 W

The first district game was very physical, but the Bears pulled out the win after being tied 19-19 at halftime. The boys rebounded extremely well, giving themselves extra scoring opportunities and limiting the number that the Eagles

got. Taylor said that it was the "best game we have ever played," citing the fact that they executed well as a team and hit the drive lanes. Archer led the team with 25 points, and freshman Cody Hunt, sophomore David Powers, and Taylor all had seven points.



photo: Mark Merkord

To the hoop Sophomore Mike Taylor drives past a bruiser from St. Joseph in Brentwood's win on Jan. 27.

1/5: Giddings State School 34-18 W

The Bears worked on their patience in this game as they ran long periods of time off the clock passing and running through their set plays. It's not the first time this has happened to the Bears; last year Giddings did the same thing.

"Coach Tatum told us that we were not to do anything until they came out and guarded us. We wanted to make them play our game," Archer said about dribbling two minutes off the clock during the second quarter while the Panthers sat back in their zone.

1/6: @ St. Dominic Savio 63-17 L

The Bears were successful at passing for long periods of time but then often turned the ball over. They also took few shots, with the ones they did take often missing the mark. This caused a scoring struggle as they only scored four points in the first half. In addition, the Eagles shot very well, making six three-pointers. They were taller and excellent passers, moving the ball until they got the shot they wanted.

1/10: Round Rock Christian 51-28 W

Without Tatum, the Bears were still full of energy as they dominated the Crusaders to run

their district record to 3-1. They were up 22-6 at halftime and extended their lead. Hunt and Taylor energized the team by making plays and congratulating teammates. Archer found his shooting groove, hitting four threes and finishing with 18. The Bears pulled ahead on

the strength of their rebounding and ball movement. Archer said beating them felt good because the Crusaders had beaten them so badly last year.

1/13: C. TX Christ. 48-46 L

In front of the largest crowd of the season on homecoming, the boys held nothing back, but came away with a two-point loss. After being down 20-16 at the half, Brentwood bounced back and battled CTCS back and forth. With two seconds remaining Archer hit a three-pointer to pull them within two, but the Bears could not come up with a steal on the ensuing inbounds play. Archer led the team in scoring with 19.

1/16: @ TX Christ. 49-25 L

The Stars, who are second in district, were quicker and bigger, taking a 15-point lead into halftime. The Bears struggled to move the ball against their aggressive zone. Taylor had two three-pointers and led the scoring with eight points.

1/20: TX Christian 52-42 L

The Bears lost to the same district opponent twice in one week, dropping their record to 3-4. At halftime the score was 30-17, and going into the final minutes of the fourth quarter, the Bears were down 20 points.

In the final stretch of the game Archer and Hunt both scored six points, and the team played stifling defense to cut the deficit to 10. Archer, Cole, and Hunt combined for 33 of the team's 42 points.

1/24: St. Dominic 61-44 L

Between the first game against Savio and this one, the Bears improved drastically. They scored 27 more points, pulled down 19 more rebounds, and cut their turnovers by seven. In addition, they took almost twice as many shots and doubled the number of free throws they made to stay within 10 points of the Eagles for most of the game. Hunt led with 12 points.

1/27: @ Bryan St. Joseph 46-32 W

After a four-game losing streak the Bears picked up their fourth district win. They did not play well in the first half and were a little out of sync. Going into the third quarter down by three, Brentwood stepped up their defense and shot better to gain the lead. Archer and Cole led the scoring with 14 and 10, respectively.

1/31: Giddings State School W

On senior night, the Bears sealed their playoff berth with a 15-point win. After a slow start the Bears began burning the Panthers' tight zone with outside shooting. Archer scored 13, and Cole had 11.

Last place leaves boys disappointed

David **LEE**
reporter

The Bears did not qualify for playoffs in soccer this season, and head coach Cash Miller and the players are somewhat disappointed but also optimistic about next year's team.

The team had difficulties in communication, and they did not work the ball around well during games. Their leading goal scorer, senior David Lee, also missed several games due to injuries on both ankles.

"We are a much better team now than when we began the season," Miller said.

The Bears finished 1-7 and last in district, and the eight seniors have expressed their disappointment. Their leading scorers were all seniors: Lee with seven goals, Simon Na with four, and Tony Dang with two.

"We could have been a better team if we had connected midfield to defense and offense," midfielder Na said.

Four Korean students could not play because TAPPS makes foreign students sit out their first year. However, these players showed optimism about next year's team.

"We will place first in district and become more popular than the basketball team," freshman Andrew Lee said.

Following are the results of recent games:

12/10: Kerrville 2-1 W

In this game, seniors Na and Dang scored one goal each. Na celebrated his first goal of the season with a back flip.

1/2: San Juan Diego 3-1 W*

The Bears dominated the opponent for the entire game. After an opening goal by senior Marcus McCormick, the Bears blasted two more goals by Lee and Dang, making their district record 1-1.

1/5: Regents 3-1 L*

BCS dominated the first half in terms of possession and number of shots, but questionable calls from the referee hindered the Bears. Lee scored on a penalty kick.

1/7: Savio 3-2 L*

Conceding an early goal, the Bears persisted, and Lee scored an equalizer with an assist by Na. Miscommunication between defense and keeper allowed opponents to grab easy goals.

1/14: @ San Juan Diego 4-2 L*

Brentwood had an early goal by Lee, assisted by Na. But their opponent then scored three goals in the first half. Lee scored his second goal of the match from Na's assist.

1/16: @ Regents 11-2 L*

Lee missed the game due to his ankle injury. Na scored two goals, but they could not help the Bears avoid a big loss.

1/19: @ Savio 8-1 L*

With a strong start, the Bears had many chances in the first half. Na scored one goal in the second half. Lee missed the game.

1/27: San Marcos 5-0 L*

The Bears took many shots, but the opponent's goalkeeper did not let them score.

Bees invade Brentwood Christian, sting all but two

Geography bee won by Nguyen

charlie **SINCLAIR**
reporter

Gabie Nguyen won over runner-up Camille Sunshine in the National Geographic Bee in the church auditorium on Jan. 9. With third through eighth grades in the audience, this year's bee was the first to have fourth through sixth grades included in the same bee with the seventh and eighth grades.

Nguyen, a seventh grader, won by responding to "Name the Asian country at the eastern edge of the South China Sea that includes about 7,100 islands" correctly with the answer "The Philippines" in the championship round. Sunshine, also a seventh grader, missed that question after she and Nguyen each got one of the first two questions correct. The championship round includes three questions and then a tiebreaker, if necessary.

According to sixth-grade teacher and bee organizer Becky Stewart, the bees were combined due to two things. First, the sixth grade moved up to middle school this year. Also, the National Geographic Society has been pushing for BCS to hold one bee, and in the past the school has had to petition to keep the double bee.

The bee started during the first week back from Christmas break with the classroom-level competitions. In the middle school these were officiated by Becky Stewart, Jonathan

Weed, and Cindy Nestor. For the upper elementary, the classroom rounds were officiated by each classroom teacher. There were 23 students who answered either six or seven out of their seven questions correctly, and they were given a written tiebreaker. Finalists included eighth-graders Lucia Arguello, Andrew Armstrong (who got all 10 questions correct on the tiebreaker), John Hollingsworth, Mason McCormick, and Bella Spills; seventh-graders Nguyen and Sunshine; and sixth-graders Hunter Burcham and Mason McCully. One of the qualifiers chose not to participate.

After winning, Nguyen took a written qualification test for the state-level competition which will be on

March 30. If her score is one of the top 100 in Texas, she will move on to the state bee. The last Brentwood student to do this was Charlie Sinclair in 2010. If Nguyen wins at state, she will represent Texas in the National Geographic Bee in Washington, D.C., on May 22-24.

Armstrong tames spelling bee

dennis **CLIFFORD**
reporter

Eighth-grader Andrew Armstrong won Brentwood Christian's third-annual spelling bee on Jan. 5, after 19 rounds.

The competition went from 9 to 11 a.m. and was held in the auditorium. The audience consisted of students from all grades, some of whom came and went as schedules allowed.

Students who competed in the bee were given a list of words to study, but there was also a hidden list of words that the competitors didn't know about for later in the competition. Once

words were being used from the hidden list, fewer competitors were successful at spelling correctly. According to parent Sharonda Cooper, who coordinated the event, vocabulary became a factor when longer and more difficult words were being used.

In the 17th round of the bee, Armstrong was the last competitor standing when he misspelled the word "convalesce," meaning he and two other students proceeded to the 18th round. In the 19th round, Armstrong spelled "acolyte" correctly, making him the last competitor standing again. This time he successfully spelled the winning word "battalion."

"I was fairly nervous," Armstrong said, "but it was an enjoyable experience."

Because of conflicting schedules, Armstrong will not be able to compete in the regional bee on Feb. 25. Seventh-grader Camille Sunshine, who was the runner up, will take his place for a chance to compete at district, state, and nationals for a grand prize of \$30,000.

Before the Christmas break, kindergarten through eighth grade had in-class bees to determine which students qualified for the school-wide spelling bee. Twenty-two students qualified, but one student wished not to participate.

Officials for the bee included Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth, Cindy Nestor, and Teri Hager.

"I think it's beneficial for the kids to understand vocabulary and spelling," Cooper said. "These days people have lost touch with spelling, and I think it's valuable for children to understand that spelling is important."

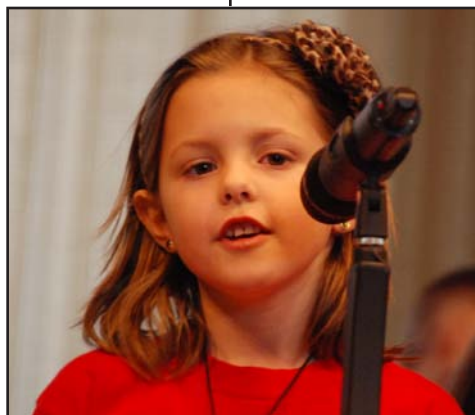


photo: Michelle Mohrmann

C-U-T-E Second-grader Claire Pittner spells a word in Brentwood's Jan. 5 spelling bee.

Off-campus lunch still bringing 45 minutes of freedom

jackson **HAGER**
reporter

When the sound of the bell reaches the waiting ears of students at 1:05 p.m., it is off to the races for many secondary students as they head to their cars for off-campus lunch. Many students enjoy the time off from school as a way to hang out and grow close to their friends and enjoy food differing from what is served in the lunchroom.

The options for where to go off campus are varied, but many students usually stick to restaurants close to school, as they only have 45 minutes. The general conclusion among students is that Culver's and Freebirds are favorites, while Chipotle is close behind.

But before students leave the school, they must be accounted for by the watchful eyes of teacher Mel Witcher, who monitors the list of who is allowed to go off campus. For six years he has stood in the parking lot with his clipboard as students leave, and he says he loves to do it because he wants to make sure students are safe on the road. It also allows him to get some fresh air after a morning in

the classroom.

For students to receive off-campus privileges, they are required to have a signed permission slip acknowledging the fact that they will be riding or driving with other students. The office does not allow restrictions or regulations to be set by the parents, since the office does not have the manpower to regulate whom the students ride with or where they go.

The privilege itself is given out in the form of "days," which only go to those with good conduct grades. One "S+" in a grading period gives a student one day off-campus, while having any "S-" in a grading period will revoke all days earned. Freshmen through juniors can earn Tuesday through Thursday, while seniors get Monday to themselves. Seniors received this privilege years back after StuCo convinced the administration. Sophomores through seniors can get Friday off if they have been accepted in National Honor Society. Though off-campus is a time for enjoying

good food, it is also a time for friendships to be strengthened and born. Seniors have restarted the tradition of freshman-senior buddies. They said they wanted to become involved with the freshmen, taking them off-campus and making sure they feel welcome. The cheerleaders also said they hope to establish such a tradition, with the senior cheerleaders taking off the younger cheerleaders for one-on-one time with them.

"We hope to pass down senior wisdom," senior Karlie Mattison said.

Witcher has established a new tradition among seniors by taking groups of them off-campus. He began this year believing that he should not have to wait for people to graduate before he can just sit down and enjoy having conversations with them outside of class. He said he also hopes it reminds the seniors that his door is always open, even after they leave for college. Many memories have been made off-campus, such as being really late to class because lines were too long or having one's ice-cream spill all over a car. Senior Carter Boyd described

the time when he was locked inside the Marble Slab Creamery. He had gone there so often that he knew the manager, who asked him to watch the shop for five minutes until he returned from picking up lunch. But the manager did not return for 20 minutes, leaving Boyd stranded inside the shop and making him 10 minutes late to class.

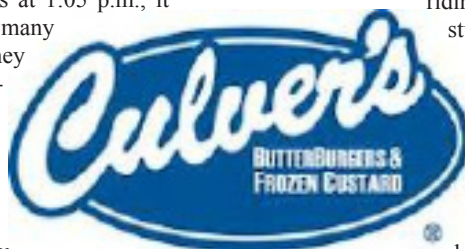
While other students go to restaurants for lunch, some who live in the neighborhood nearby use it to go home and relax.

But these students must also get permission from the office.

Two of the choices for off-campus that have been forgotten by many are the close-by Ruff's and Ross', located just south of the BCS entrance on Lamar. Some students say they have been maybe once or twice this year, but most say they have never gone during lunch.

"It was an older class thing," senior Tyler Davis says.

Whether it's senior Kayle Morin sipping Bubble Tea in a café or junior Rachael Wells munching on a burger in a booth at Wendy's, off-campus lunch at BCS is a time for food, laughter, and memories.



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