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THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 38 NO. 1

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2025



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Mission, college walls among campus upgrades

By Amir Dadashazar and Lleyton Drennon

Three major improvements were made to Brentwood Christian School over the summer before students returned for the 2025-26 school year. They include an updated stage in the Center for Sciences and Arts, an improved, modern hallway in the high school C building, and a repaved parking lot and campus road.

One of the biggest changes was the replacement of the stage in the CSA. Alongside it, improvements to the lighting and microphones for the theater have



Legacy of excellence One new addition to the high school C building hallway is an updated homage to BCS' academic championships.

see **NEW**, page 4

Verse of the Year reinforces faith

By Ella Kennedy



The 2025-2026 verse of the year for Brentwood Christian School is James 4:8a: "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." In this verse, we see the power and goodness of

God when we choose to search for Him.

This verse is very impactful to all those within BCS and around it. Many believe that this verse will be displayed naturally throughout school and extracurriculars, maybe more so than theme verses of year's past.

"I think it will definitely impact how the school year goes," said junior Skyla Jimenez. "It changes our whole life knowing Jesus is better."

"It is something we have to do," added school president Jay Burcham. "It's not something, though, that can be forced upon anyone, and, honestly, you will get out of this verse what you choose to put into it."

Although there are only 11 words within this chosen verse, it is not an easy task for students and teachers to respond to. This command given by God, through James, while it can be difficult, is attainable.

Even though it may be hard to concentrate

see **JAMES**, page 8

Football on the grind

By Ava Cavada

The Bears' football team hit the ground running for the 2025-26 season. Led by head coach Kyle Maxfield and defensive coordinator Max Maxfield, the team currently holds a 3-3 overall record (entering its Oct. 17 matchup with Regents) and is looking for its first win in district play.

"Our ultimate goal is to make it to the playoffs and win more district games than we did last year," said Kyle Maxfield.

The Bears lost a close matchup, 42-35, to Central Texas Christian School in their first game of the season back on Aug. 29, but stormed back with three straight victories over St. Dominic Savio, Legacy Prep Academy and Manor



Tackle for Loss Freshman Chigozie Okorafor (0) and senior Luke Weed (11) work to take down a ball-carrier during the team's win over Legacy Prep Academy on Sept. 12. The team started the year 3-3 after a loss to district opponent Grace Prep on Saturday, Oct. 11.

see **FOOTBALL**, page 11

Diving into the Deep End with Ally Robertson

Reality of healthy mental health habits explained

What are the truths of mental health?

The American Psychological Association (APA) characterizes mental health as “a state of mind characterized by emotional well-being, good behavioral adjustment, relative freedom from anxiety

and disabling symptoms, and a capacity to establish constructive relationships and cope with the ordinary demands and stresses of life.” When mental health is faltering, simple tasks become complicated, and every choice is a chore.

Whether the struggle to overcome body image disorders represent poor mental health, or anxiety rules over the thoughts in one’s mind; whether depression suffocates, isolation kills, unhealthy relationships strangle, or family issues dominate, mental health needs to be faced head on. There are external methods that can aid the recovery of mental health, but there are also scriptures that encourage each individual to fight against the mental health battle.

Facts about mental disorders:
-“Anxiety disorders involve repeated episodes of sudden feelings of intense anxiety and fear or terror that reach a peak within minutes. These feelings of anxiety and panic interfere with daily activities, are difficult to control, are out of proportion to the actual danger and can last a long time” (Mayo Clinic).
-“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplica-

tion with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

-“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing?” (Matthew 6:25).

-“[Depression] creeps in quietly, often unnoticed, until the weight becomes unbearable. Depression, often a master of disguise, hides behind smiles and routine, casting its shadow on countless lives. Despite its prevalence, stigma and misunderstanding frequently overshadow discussions about depression’s reality, leaving many to struggle in isolation” (AMA).

-“Why, my soul, are you downcast? Who so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God” (Psalms 42:11).

-“Guilt and shame [from eating disorders] often prevent people from getting help” (Mayo Clinic).

-“For you created my inner being;

you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made: your works are wonderful, I know that full well” (Psalms 139: 13-18).

-“Suicidal thoughts are the result of feeling like you can’t cope when you’re faced with what seems to be an overwhelming life situation, if you don’t have hope for the future” (Mayo Clinic).
-“For I am

James 5:15-16a
“And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Being honest in a Christian community means confessing the hardships and struggles that are in our lives. Pushing problems away will only create a bottleneck effect that will build up pressure until it bursts.

By speaking to others, you are giving up fear and shame. Instead, combat these struggles with habits and mechanisms. Get out of your mind, root yourself in what you can see physically. Find five things you can see, five things you are thankful for, five things you know are true, five slow breaths. Take a nap, go outside, go to someone that will help you. Don’t isolate yourself.

Clinical help for mental disorders is often needed, and if you need to seek help, seek it.

In addition to clinical aid, the Lord has the power to help us with our mental health, through the resources he has created through man and provides through those created in His image.

THE BEAR FACTS

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The Bear Facts is published quarterly by the journalism classes of BCHS. 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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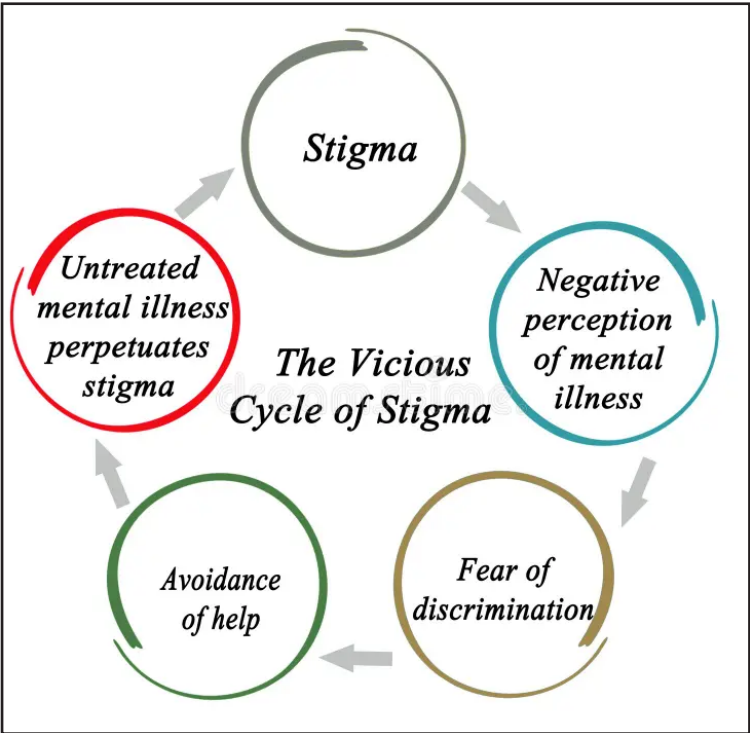
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Digital prints of The Bear Facts are available online at www.brentwoodchristian.org.



Spiraling Cycle The dangerous cycle represented above demonstrates how approaching stress and anxiety with unhealthy habits only increases the stress and overwhelming emotions felt.

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New staff strengthen BCS teaching and coaching

Brentwood Christian School welcomed nearly 20 new employees this year with a variety of teachers, coaches, faculty staff, and administrative staff. Many have at least 10 years of experience in education, with one having up to 30 years of experience in the educational field.

Krista Albertson
In the spring of 2025, BCS hired Krista Albertson as a new fourth grade teacher. She is originally from Hurst, TX, and earned her master’s degree in Secondary Education from Oklahoma Wesleyan University. Previously, she taught two years of second grade and a year of geography to secondary students in Oklahoma.
”I toured Brentwood, and it felt like home,” Albertson said. “I fell in love with the campus, and I’m so excited for the school year.”
Albertson likes to read and watch college football. She is excited to explore Austin and get to know her fourth grade students better.
-Isabella Segura

Kelly Billiot
Brentwood is excited to welcome Kelly Billiot as a new sixth and seventh grade teacher in English Language Arts.
Her decision to transition to Brentwood came during spring break, when she felt a calling from God that it was time for change.
Billiot was drawn to BCS because she wanted a Christian environment where her children could grow in faith and she could build lasting relationships with students and families. Guided by her favorite Bible verse, Jeremiah 29:11, she hopes to inspire her students with the same message of hope and purpose that has guided her own journey.
-Tobi Olasode

Dorothy Caffey
A former beloved BCS employee, Dorothy Caffey returned to the family as a nursery instructor. In addition to her prior experience at Brentwood, Caffey also worked at Austin ISD as a food service manager and is a longtime member of Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ. She retired in 2017 after 20 years and has thoughtfully come back to us to help launch the newly formed nursery for employee’s children on campus.
-Dylan Saenz

Mary Caruthers
Mary Caruthers came to BCS as a new EL3/4 teacher over the summer, but plans have changed due to recent staffing circumstances, and Caruthers will now be working in middle

school and elementary school PE.
Fortunately, it’s an assignment she relishes.
”I like to teach PE, and I think they like it too,” said Caruthers. “They just want to move and jump and run and learn how to move their bodies.”
With her previous experience combined with BCS’ wooded campus, Caruthers is excited for her new role.
-Dylan Saenz

Kara Chance
Kara Chance grew up in Schererville, Indiana, just outside of Chicago. She joined BCS to teach middle school ELA and sixth grade drama.
She attended Andrean High School in Merrillville, Indiana, before earning her degree in Journalism with a concentration in Public Relations from Indiana University.
”It’s such a blessing to be in a Christian setting and know that everyone is working toward not only academic excellence, but also character development and faith,” said Chance.
Her goals this year include building strong relationships, growing in her teaching practices, and creating a classroom where students feel valued. Outside of school, she has a passion for traveling and recently visited her 25th country.
-Lleyton Drennon, Levi Sneed

D’Aris Hall
BCS recently welcomed a new staff member who brings both experience and enthusiasm, plus years of real-world experience. Previously working in childcare licensing, she was drawn to Brentwood for its strong Christian foundation and mission.
”I love the core values,” she said.
Her journey began about two months ago after hearing about the school from a cousin.
Now excited to be part of the team, she quoted Isaiah 43:18–19 as her favorite Bible verse, reflecting her belief in new beginnings and God’s guidance in this new position.
-Levi Sneed

Carly James
Carly James decided to move to Austin from Montana just to work with the Bears. She decided to teach at Brentwood to infuse her faith with her passion for science. She is teaching middle school science this year.
”I like teaching science through a Biblical perspective and teaching how life works through a Christian view,” James said.
Not only does she love teaching science for God but she also loves having fun while teaching and seeing how the kids understand science.

-Amir Dadashazar
Cheyenne Lovelady
Cheyanne Lovelady joined the athletic and high school departments over the summer as the new head volleyball coach, following the departure of prior volleyball coach and art teacher Paula Trejos.
Before coaching, Lovelady played volleyball at the college and high school levels. She attended (and coached) at Bangs High School, before playing at Howard Payne College. Her last coaching position prior to Brentwood was the head coach of Brownwood High School’s volleyball program.
”My faith is really important to me and I wanted to be able to develop students spiritually as well as physically and educationally,” said Lovelady.
-Ella Kennedy

Pam Martin
Pam Martin became a new member of the Brentwood Christian School community as the Algebra 1 and 2 teacher for high school..
Martin graduated from Texas State University



Kara Chance
ty and had been teaching in public school education for 30 years. She was on the drill team in college, dancing as a Texas State Strutter. She chose Brentwood because of the Christian community and administrative support.
”It was time for my church life and my pro-

see **EMPLOYEES**, page 4

BCS phone policy implemented

By Anu Oguntade
The tides are changing for phone use in government-funded schools throughout Texas, and even Brentwood Christian School is cracking down on device use.
This past August, Governor Greg Abbott signed the Texas House Bill 1481 into law. The object of this law is to mitigate the use of devices in the classroom by requiring public and charter schools to draft a stern policy that prohibits all students’ from possessing digital communication devices on campus during school hours.
Due to the fact that Brentwood is a private school, it is not required to enforce this law, but the school will continue to implement the pre-existing phone policy.
Unlike most schools, BCS students are permitted to use their devices during allotted times which include passing period and lunch.
”Students come to school to learn and for high school there is no place for cell-phones in the classroom,” said high school principal Carol Johnson. “But at the same time, [today’s students] were born in a technology age, so I want to give [them]

the opportunity to have phones during the school day when appropriate.”
All classrooms contain a phone caddy that every student is required to place their phone on before the class begins. This ensures a phone-free learning environment.
If this policy is violated teachers are instructed to confiscate the device and send it to the high school office. First-time offenders will be required to have a parent or guardian retrieve it after school hours, second-time offenders the same, plus an additional \$25 fine, and if the pattern continues, students will lose all phone privileges.
Though the purpose of HB 1481 and BCS’ phone policy have many similarities, the overarching goal of Brentwood’s phone policy is to equip students with the self-control to use their phones properly and at suitable times.



Employees bring new skills

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professional life to match up,” said Martin.
-Ava Cavada

Max Maxfield
The new athletics Operations Manager and football defensive coordinator for Brentwood Christian School, Max Maxfield, came to BCS in the spring. He also assists with middle school football.

Maxfield has big plans for his teams this year which can be observed through his leadership on the sideline and during practice.

Maxfield has a bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology and a master’s in Athletic Administration from Tarleton State University, where spent five years on the football team.

“I’m a third generation coach,” Maxfield said. “It runs deep in my family.”
-Troy Kennedy

Molly Murphy
Molly Murphy recently graduated from Berry College in Georgia with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education. She is replacing long-time first grade teacher Sanitra Forte.

With experience including student teaching first grade and internationally, Molly is passionate about her role in guiding students to understand who God is and how to apply His teachings at a young age. Molly is not a former Bear, but she was born and raised in Austin, TX.

-Staff report

Lydia Ritchie
Lydia Ritchie was hired by high school principal Carol Johnson as the new high school art teacher over the summer. She came to Brentwood Christian school by a chance sighting on a job application website. After coming to the United States at 18 years old, she completed her degree in Studio Art at Wheaton College.

Ritchie grew up in Thailand and is a fluent Thai speaker. She likes listening to Chicago artist Djo and loves reading sci-fi novels.

“I think the discoveries that you make along the way as well as the process (of making art) is what’s really exciting,” Ritchie said.
-Margaret Banks

Naomi Sylvester
Naomi Sylvester was hired as an executive assistant for Johnson last May. Her job is to help keep high school afloat, create the biweekly emails, hand out VOE forms, keep track of attendance, and to handle general information.

In her hometown, Marble Falls, she worked in education and most recently was at McBee Elementary, just off Braker Lane and of Academy 4 notoriety, as a parent liaison.

Sylvester has three children attending BCS and also attends Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ.

In seeing the change in her children and their growth in the Lord, Sylvester was thrilled with the opportunity for her family to combine its faith and schooling at BCS.

-Alex Schehl

Ellie Ward
Ellie Ward was hired to take on the role of assistant coach in volleyball, girls basketball and softball. Ward grew up in Waco, Texas, where was a decorated athlete at Bishop Reicher High School who lettered in a variety of sports.

She later attended Southwestern University, where she continued to play basketball at a collegiate level. Sports and faith have played a major role in Ward’s life, so her transition from college to coaching in a Christian school, such as Brentwood, was a natural one.

“I want to be an example for everyone at Christian schools that your education experience is different, special, and fulfilling,” said Ward.

Ward is also teaching high school economics and government.
-Anu Oguntade

Lauren Warner
Another former employee returning to BCS, Lauren Warner resumed her tenure in the finance office as an accounts payable clerk this summer.

Warner attended Harding University in Arkansas where her experience shaped her path to Brentwood. When at Harding, she majored in business management, which lines up with her current role and responsibilities.

Warner is originally from Sweeney, Texas, and upon discovering that a position was open, she was eager to rejoin the school community.

-Aydrikk Esquivel

Laurie Weston
Laurie Weston was hired over the summer to teach Applied Arts and Mechanics, which is a new class on campus. The class is all about learning how to use power tools and creativity to overcome challenges.

Before teaching at Brentwood, Weston had previously been one of the most involved parents on campus after she enrolled her three kids, who as of last year, have all graduated.

“[Weston] has already touched the lives of so many and now she gets to touch even more while teaching,” Burcham said. “Asking her to stay and teach was not only easy, it was a per-



Laurie Weston

sonal mandate.”
-Levi Olewin

Rubi Zeledon
This year, Brentwood welcomed Rubi Zeledon as its new high school counselor. Though born in the United States, Zeledon grew up in Nicaragua. She attended high school there before pursuing a Psychology degree at Ave Maria University.

Before joining BCS, Zeledon worked as a counselor at the college level. She has been connected to the community ever since her eldest son began attending Brentwood. Zeledon’s goals include helping students select courses, meet graduation requirements, and navigate the college application process.

“I just want to be available for students [and] have an open-door policy for them,” she said.
-Ava Johnson

Recent Additions
Many Brentwood administrators have expressed their gratitude to long-term substitute **Terri Wiginton**, who stepped in to teach middle school math for the first two months of the school year.

A teacher at BCS for a decade from 1991 to 2001, Wiginton has long been a valuable substitute teacher and continues to devote her time and efforts to our school mission and purpose.

“I love to teach, and I truly love being part of this school community,” said Wiginton.

As Wiginton departs, **Justice Addae** has returned to his post in middle school math. Addae’s first year at Brentwood was last year, but a personal issue cut his time short. He is back in action, as of Oct. 1, and is excited to return to his students.

Elsewhere, **Martha Zeledon** is stepping into the vacant Spanish teaching position in the high school left by Tania Sneed, and **Stephanie Hamilton** is replacing Caruthers in the EL 3/4 classroom.

New campus renovations

continued from page 1

students looking forward to future performances and plays in the building this year.

Fine Arts Director Jason Montier was in charge of the updates and improvements to the theater over the summer, which also include two large televisions to the right and left of the stage itself, a prominent addition to high school chapel thus far.

Fine Arts’ improved facilities have made it possible to expand to hosting this year. In addition to once again hosting the TAPPS district One Act Play competition on Oct. 24 and 25, BCS plans to host a middle school One Act Play competition with local Austin-area schools.

Director of Development Jennifer Smeltzer was busy, too, updating the hallway which runs from the high school office down to the administrative offices with a fresh coat and color of paint, a new “Mission Statement” wall, updates to the college wall and championship wall and a large television for students to view important dates, sports highlights and birthdays.

“The [goal was] to modernize the way we showcase our achievements and mission statement,” said Smeltzer.

BCS has gone from the long-time college wall wraps, including Lubbock Christian University and Harding University, among others, to a sleek look featuring acrylic signs. The mission statement area next to Lisa Kennedy’s C205 classroom was especially important to Smeltzer, as it is the foundation for everything BCS aspires to promote.

One of the other big renovations made to the school is the repavement of the road.

“To keep up with maintenance and make sure the roads don’t get worse, we fixed the potholes and cracks in the roads,” said Chief Technology and Security Officer Wayne Marks.

It had been some time since the last repavement, and the school decided to act in order to keep cracks and holes from getting worse. Some of the pros that came from the update include safer roads due to clearer parking lines and crosswalk areas for students.

All of the renovations around campus were made in an effort to keep the campus a place where students are free to spend their days focused on their studies and their faith with a sense of pride toward the resources God has given them to thrive in.

Texas rebuilding after detrimental summer floods

By Margaret Banks

The night before, many were excited about the holiday to come. No knowledge of what was about to happen as they slept, the Lone Star state and U.S. at large was shocked to be awoken in the middle of the night by rushing water and pouring rain. In the early hours of July 4, 2025, the Guadalupe River flooded and overran the Hill Country, taking countless lives and devastating the area. This left Texans distraught, with many losing family, friends, or homes. Camp Mystic, an all girls camp, was

one of the places hit the hardest. Situated near Kerrville, the cabins sat only a few hundred feet away from the banks of the river, making it an ideal target for nature’s wrath. In Comfort, Texas, the river rose 26 feet in 30 minutes. Men, women and children were swept away in the blink of an eye. One hundred miles away in Austin, most we know at Brentwood Christian School slept. It’s been over three months since these events rocked our area, but questions remain. What was our response as a school? How can we help now? And maybe most importantly, why did God allow this?

“We really need to look at this from three sides: our community, connection, and through a Christian point of view,” said BCS president Jay Burcham. God calls us to do unto others as we would like done to us. So members of the Brentwood com-

munity knew that we must help those hit by the storm in any way possible. Athletic director Kyle Maxfield offered to help those in need by bringing nine football players out to a relief area. Once they got to the relief area they broke into groups and started clearing debris. “We help others because we want to know that they can help us when we are in need,” said Maxfield. Brentwood collected supplies in the immediate aftermath of the flooding, including high-need items such as food, water, shovels and the like. The school arranged for several drop-offs near Marble Falls to assist with relief efforts located close to the center of the disaster. Now, towns are rebuilding and helping each other get back on their feet. But despite all of this, some are still unable to come home. There are many whose houses were washed away in the floods and now are unable to rebuild. They have nowhere to call home anymore because their insurance will not pay for the rebuilding or they cannot get the permits to rebuild. Even though the storm may be over, it still looms large in the hearts of those who lost everything. As Christians, we must continue to ask God to provide for those in need and look for opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus. As humans, it is hard to not just think of ourselves and how we want things to happen. But we must also consider that God has plans that surpass all understanding. We need to trust in him. And in the same breath, that act is in-

credibly hard, especially in the face of loss, even loss of life. Consider the terror of Camp Mystic. Young girls were met with rushing water under their beds. Their cabin, their home for the week, was being swept away before they could act or get to high ground. In many cases, they would also soon be swept away. In total, 27 of the girls and counselors lost their lives. And yet, despite their safety and comfort being ripped away, girls who made it to safety praised God and sang songs on the bus while getting to higher ground and away from the destruction, a breathtaking example of faith in the face of indescribable adversity. “God says he loves us so much that he will allow us to live in a world where good and bad things happen,” Burcham said. “What is so hard sometimes is not only that good things can happen to bad people, but that bad things can happen to good people.” Overall, the floods were a devastating event in Texas history. Camp Mystic, which opened in 1926 and will celebrate its 100th year of existence in 2026, will never be the same. Emergency preparedness will be a hotly debated topic as we approach flood season next year. As believers, we know this world is not our home. It doesn’t make it any easier to digest the loss of innocent lives, but it does remind us of our ultimate hope and the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf.



Damage done Texas firemen and rescue workers from all around Texas banded together and worked for months to find lost civilians, help clean the wreckage from the floods, and provide medical aide to those who were injured during the flooding.

D.C. trip brings perspective

By Ava Johnson and Isabella Segura

In June of 2025, Brentwood Christian School administrators selected 40 students to experience a trip to Washington, D.C., the nation’s capital. Students learned about the Jewish religion, their customs, and the ongoing conflict happening in Gaza. Students visited the Museum of The Bible, where they walked through an interactive experience of The Old Testament, an exhibit on all of the versions/translations of The Bible, and had a Shabbat dinner, a traditional dinner on the Friday before the Sabbath. The typical things you would find at a Shabbat dinner include challah bread, chicken, and roasted vegetables.

“My favorite part of the trip was the Shabbat dinner because it was exciting to learn about Jewish traditions and faith through a Christian perspective,” said sophomore Julia Alexander. Students also explored many historical buildings in D.C., such as the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. They ended their time with a trip to the Holocaust Museum. “This trip exposed my Biblical worldview to a whole different level, and it changed my perspective on humanity when we visited the Holocaust Museum,” said sophomore Kat Morgan. High school principal Carol Johnson shared a similar reflection, saying that her favorite parts of the trip were visiting the Bible and Holocaust Museums. “I like spending time with our students,”

Johnson said. “I got to learn who our students were, who our spiritual leaders are, and how much they love and believe in God, and how they believe He is their source.” On the final day of their trip, students went through stations and wrote letters to the families of hostages, got cards with information on some of the many of the hostages, and they had the opportunity to write an email to Texas State Senators about the ongoing war in Gaza. “This trip afforded students the chance to engage with new perspectives, which is such a valuable opportunity,” said high school English teacher Emma Rektenwald. “At home, it can be easy to get sort of tunnel-visioned about what the world looks like, but this trip allowed students (and chaperones) to get a better sense of how others think of faith, life, and God.”

Bearista Hours

Every school day:

7:15 a.m. - 7:55 a.m.

Every week day:

during 7th period(lunch)

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Pasha Petty

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2025.

Christ-centered senior leads with faith, music

By Ally Robertson

Brentwood Christian School senior Pasha Petty is a positive and relationship-centered friend to everyone he encounters, and his welcoming attitude to all shows in his daily interactions. Whether he is walking in the hallways, playing in the Jazz Band, or sprinting down the soccer field, Petty's compassionate attitude draws people towards the interesting and Christ-driven senior that Petty is.

Petty has been attending BCS since his sophomore year, where he immediately dove into spreading Jesus' love by reaching out to others and quickly making friends. From the get-go, Petty has made it clear that his faith is the leading force in his life, and is confident in his identity in Jesus.

"I have a purpose to live for," Petty said. "My everyday life consists of routine things, and having faith means I can do all of those things for God, even if I'm doing dishes, laundry or just studying for school."

"My faith brings joy to my relationships with people around me as I try to reflect God's love for others."

One of Petty's close friends, senior Ian Wiggins, has seen that joy first-hand.

"Pasha has impacted Brentwood by being bold in his faith, and not being afraid to share with people the things he's struggling with or things he's dealing with," Wiggins said.

Ask anyone that's had a conversation with Petty: they can testify how his faith seeps into the way he talks, and the way that he connects with others.

Words people have used to describe Petty are humble, kind, and obedient to Christ.

"I would say Pasha's humble, but he also has confidence in what he believes faith-wise, and how he lives his life," senior Luke Weed said.

"I see Jesus working through Pasha by the way he loves and deeply cares for people," junior AJ Kent added. "One example I can remember is when Pasha reached out to me and asked what I

needed prayer for.

"That was such a simple and kind act that impacted me a lot, and I admire Pasha's diligence in pursuing the Lord."

Petty, who attends Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ, is an active member of his youth group, and contributes to his peers by giving lessons and having in-depth conversations with them.

"All the little lessons he gives at church are always so beneficial to me," said junior Tucker Smith. "Pasha's always the first one to volunteer to have a lesson or to lead something, and he's always really funny when he does it."

Petty grew up in Russia, working with his family as mission-

aries, and his goal is to continue this mission in his future.

Not only has Petty become a vital part of the senior class, but he has also thrived in his transition from Russia to the States. Now, Petty is bilingual, a sought-after skill for colleges and job recruiters, and he is able to connect with others who have gone through similar experiences in their faith journey.

Since before he knew his ABC's, Petty has been actively involved in music. His favorite genre of music is Classical, he plays the piano on average an hour per day, and

he strives to pursue music in the future. Petty even graduated from a 7 year music school in St. Petersburg. It's evident that Petty's love for music will go far.

"I want to major in piano performance and double major in Bible and Missions at Harding [University]," Petty said. "My plans are to spread God's word around the world and hopefully go back to Russia as a missionary."

Beyond his musical and spiritual influence, Petty is important on the soccer team. His dedication and teamwork makes him a valuable member of the program. Even during practice, he approaches tough days with a smile, and pushes his teammates to keep working hard.

"Pasha is an excellent player on and off the field," senior Kale Anderson said. "He's always bringing work ethic when we need him."

Academically, Petty has blazed through some extremely challenging classes at BCS, including AP Biology, AP English Language, AP Computer Science, AP Physics, AP Literature, and AP Government. Teachers have described Petty as dependable, respectful, and willing to help his peers, even when he has his own work to do.

Despite being a relatively new addition, Petty is a key component of this year's senior class, and Brentwood as a whole.

His commitment to his values and his faith always comes over the pressures that the world puts on him. Wherever life takes Petty, his mission to bring others to Christ and lead others with his kind heart is more than just lip service.

"The way he keeps pursuing Jesus even when he's not having the best day is really admirable to look at," Kent said.

"Pasha's a great musician, he's a kind guy, he's very spiritually in touch, he knows what he's doing, he's confident, and he's not willing to change just to please someone," senior Dylan Sloan said.



Stuco's leadership, spirit a HS bright spot

By Troy Kennedy

This year, the Brentwood Christian School high school Student Council is here to accomplish more than ever before, with multiple new individuals as well as a new sponsor, Lisa Kennedy.



Dressed with Spirit Stuco represents the student body with their encouraging words, energy, and fun at all pep rallies. Any time Stuco is involved in an activity, it becomes much more fun, more interactive, and filled with laughter.

They have big plans and goals for a fun year ahead.

Stuco's members include Troy Kennedy, freshman class representative, who wants to bring his hype and creativity to the group.

Other members, like sophomore Nathan

Moore, have different priorities in mind.

"I want to work with the new students and create a good environment for them," said Moore. "I'm good at staying calm in big situations...I think that will help a lot."

Sophomore Andrew Berger has his sights set on the longest and maybe most impactful event of the year, Homecoming.

"I think I'm very good at designs and I will be super helpful when we decorate the hallways for Homecoming this year," Berger said.

Sophomore Hollis Leeward, the tenth grade representative, has big-picture items in the front of her mind..

"My goal for this year is to boost school spirit so that students feel more connected and excited to be part of our community," said Leeward. "I'm creative, hardworking, and a strong communicator, which helps me bring new ideas to the table and work well with others to make them happen."

One of the most spirit-filled weeks on campus is Homecoming, scheduled for Oct. 27-31. Homecoming is Stuco's marquee event, and the group is excited for the months of planning and preparation that have gone into creating a memorable

week for the school.

Their impact won't stop there, as Stuco plans to bring back Brentwood City Limits, a spin off of Austin City Limits, in the spring, with a concert and fun for all ages. Another event Stuco is bringing back is the Talent Show; students from elementary to high school will be able to sign up and perform in front of the school community.

Additional underclassmen in Stuco are sophomore Adeline McGaughy, the treasurer, and sophomore Njenga Kinuthia.

There is only one eleventh grade member, Skyla Jimenez, the junior class representative.

"I want to help lead the student body to grow closer together and have so much fun," she said. "I want to use the platform I have been given to help and see the community grow together through Christ."

The most important part of the organization is the group's seniors. Four core members Parker Saxon, Jacob Valladares, Dylan Sloan, and Amir Dadashazar have previously been part of Stuco and are using their experience and desire to end high school on a high note to bring joy to the rest of the student body.

"I just love helping and serving the school and I love getting to talk to people I don't usually talk to, just because they're not in my classes," said Saxon.

The seniors all have different strengths, such as Dadashazar's sharp eye and influence, Valladares' calm, patient demeanor and Sloan's ability to hold others accountable, but they are quickly becoming a team in preparation for Homecoming Week and other school-wide events where organizational efficiency is needed for success.

"I want to build more community within the Student Council, because in the past, Stuco has just been a bunch of people but never really friends," Sloan said. "I think that I can really bring people together on a personal level so that we can really get something accomplished as a team."

High school science and math teacher Kennedy decided to become a sponsor for the same reason she became a teacher: to serve others and lead students to Christ.

"I want to help students grow into Godly leaders, and I saw this as a great opportunity," she said.

Buddy relationships boost spiritual morale

By Tobi Olasode and Dylan Saenz

At Brentwood Christian School, chapel buddies is a program which pairs older students with younger ones, fostering a space where they can grow together in faith and love for the gospel. Through songs, prayers, and shared moments of joy, the chapel buddy program creates unique opportunities for students to connect across grade levels while deepening their spiritual understanding.

"It really is one of the ways that it matches our mission," elementary principal Jeremy Thornton, one of the program's key advocates, said. "It's one of the ways we lead students to love God.

It's not only the teachers and administrators who are doing that, it's our students doing it with one another, which is so much more powerful."

Chapel buddies is not just about connecting older students with younger ones; it's about creating an environment where students can model Christ-like behaviors, become leaders, and make lasting impacts on each other's lives.

The program has a rich history, with versions of partnerships being part of Brentwood's culture for nearly two decades. Originally a way to pair high school students with younger ones, the program has evolved over time to accommodate varying needs and age groups, and recently, even chapel "families," where buddy groups would expand.

The goal remains consistent: to build relationships across campus and create a sense of unity within the Brentwood community. Whether a student in elementary school or a senior about to graduate, the buddy program helps form bonds that last long beyond graduation.

One of the key aspects of Chapel Buddies is leadership development. Older students are expected to guide and mentor younger students. This not only gives the younger students a role model to look up to, but also instills a sense of responsibility in the older students, teaching them the value of leadership through service.

"It gives our older students opportunities to lead, to be great examples," said Thornton. "It helps them develop their faith and leadership skills, and it's a powerful part of our school culture."

For the younger students, having a buddy is a chance to see faith in action. They get to experience the joy and trust that older students have in their walk with God.

"When younger kids see the big kids singing, praying, and worshiping, they start to believe in those same values, and that's a powerful thing," Thornton shared.

Over the years, some of the strongest buddy connections have also included younger Bears working on their parents to support their older Bear buddy in academics, arts and athletics. It's those type of extensions outside of just chapel time that point to a healthy relationship being developed.

Ultimately, chapel buddies aren't just about pairing older and younger students together for the sake of it. It's a chance to spread love, joy, and faith throughout the school community. As older students serve as examples of Christ-like love and leadership, the younger students are given the tools to carry those values with them as they continue on their journey of faith.

Off Campus Lunch Column

By Levi Olewin

Are you looking for a place to go off campus for lunch? Here Campus Life Editor Levi Olewin’s top three burger options based on their taste, customer service, and convenience of transportation without being late to eighth period. In third place, very likely controversially, is P-Terry’s. P-Terry’s is the farthest from campus at about a 10 minute drive whether you go to Mopac or IH-35. On top of being farther away than the other options; their burgers are mediocre and their fries are sort of g-gy, all the time! Some things they have going for them is that they are quick, have good customer service, and are well priced. Overall, they get a 6/10 because they are just slightly better than average.

I have no quote for P-Terry’s because of its mediocrity. Sorry not sorry.

In second place is Wendy’s. While I do not find Wendy’s to be much tastier than P-Terry’s, their ease of access and speedy service placed them higher. Wendy’s is exceedingly, extremely, extraordinarily hit or miss, but the day I went for “research” they were really, very, quite good. The service was fast, taking maybe three minutes, and the waiter at the counter still apologized for the wait. On top of that, the burger was hot, the fries were crispy, and my drink was refreshing. Finally, it is very easy to get to from school, being only about five minutes away, on Braker Lane. They get a score of 7.5-8.4/10 because of their good service and decent food.

In first place, with admittedly heavy bias, is In-N-Out. In-N-Out on IH-35 is about eight minutes away from school making it barely closer than P-Terry’s. On top of the eight-minute drive, it always takes a short while to get your food. Despite this, the risk is well worth it. In-N-Out has the best tasting burger, great pink lemonade, decent fries, and good shakes. Overall, despite the time risk, they get an 11/10 because I said so.

Please remember these are my opinions and while informative, this is mostly just for laughs. Tune in next quarter for my top chicken places, third quarter for the best burrito/taco places, and



“Some days Wendy’s is great, others it’s not.” - Junior Ella Kennedy



“I LOVE IN-N-OUT!” - Sophomore Margaret Banks



★ 2025 ★

RUNNING OF THE BEARS

ELEMENTARY PRIZES

1 Donor = Button
\$75 = Sticker Sheet
\$150 = Shoelaces
\$250 = Croc Charm
Most Laps Boy/Girl (EL3/4 - 2nd)
\$10 Chick Fil A
Fastest Boy/Girl (3rd - 5th)
\$10 Chick Fil A Gift Card
100% Participation per GRADE
Bounce House on Friday, Nov. 14th

MIDDLE SCHOOL PRIZES

1 Donor = Sticker Sheet
\$175 = Croc Charm
\$250 = Magnet & Bear Free Day
Meet Grade Goal
Extended Lunch
Fastest Boy/Girl on Race Day
\$10 Chick-fil-A Gift Card

HIGH SCHOOL PRIZES

\$250 = Bear Free Day & Croc Charm
Every \$25 raised gets entry into weekly drawings
Meet Grade Goal
Extended Lunch
Fastest Boy/Girl on Race Day
\$15 Chick-fil-A Gift Card

RAISING BY RUNNING

Raising by Running This year’s Running of the Bears fundraiser is set to take place on Wednesday, Nov. 12, and will be the second year of the new name, following the rebranding from the long-time “Jog-A-Fun” moniker previously.

The goal for the school this year is \$175,000, and students from EL 3/4 to twelfth grade will have the opportunity to earn prizes right up to the day of the event, including Croc charms and shoelaces in the elementary and “Bear Free” day, an off day from school in the spring, for the middle and high schools.

Students and parents can text ROTB25 to 71777 to access the main page with live updates on top students, staff and faculty members and classes overall.

In addition to students competing on the cross country course and running laps, day-of fun includes a ninja course and Jeremiah’s shaved ice.

James 4:8 empowers all

continued from page 1

on this as human beings who are constantly focused on things that we can see, hear, and feel, we have to be reminded that the comparison of “drawing near to God” is, in fact, not a physical act but a spiritual one instead.

“I think that this generation has a hard time with things we can’t see,” said teacher, assistant basketball coach, and Sports Chaplin, Connor White. “We may not be able to see with our own eyes God being near to us, but it’s a reminder that it’s not a physical thing but a spiritual thing to come near to Him.”

“I know I’ve seen [this verse] in my life,” added senior class spiritual life director, Luke Weed. “The closer I draw to God the farther away I get from evil and from temptation as well.”

One of the other main focuses that others find within these few short words is love. To draw near to God we must love Him and love others as well. This includes teachers, faculty, and students, elementary, middle school, and high school alike.

“I expect students to display this verse in how they treat each other,” said high school princi-

pal Carol Johnson. “When [students] choose to draw near to God, they’ll get closer to God and we’ll see students love each other so much more than before.

“We already do a great job here at Brentwood showing our love for God by loving each other in our everyday lives, but I think this verse will push for it even more.”

The words used to describe this verse, when people around campus were asked, were: love, yearning, near, faithfulness, searching, closeness, and relationship.

“We are never going to force you to do anything as students, but we are going to push you to become better versions of yourself, and I, along with the rest of administration, believe that this verse can truly help students grow,” Burcham said.

The verse and its meaning must be applied in the lives of as many as possible to achieve its maximum impact, not unlike any verse.

Overall, the simplicity of James 4:8a might just be in its beauty. Each day of our lives we get to choose whether or not we draw near to God.

“To live is Christ and to die is gain,” Jimenez said.

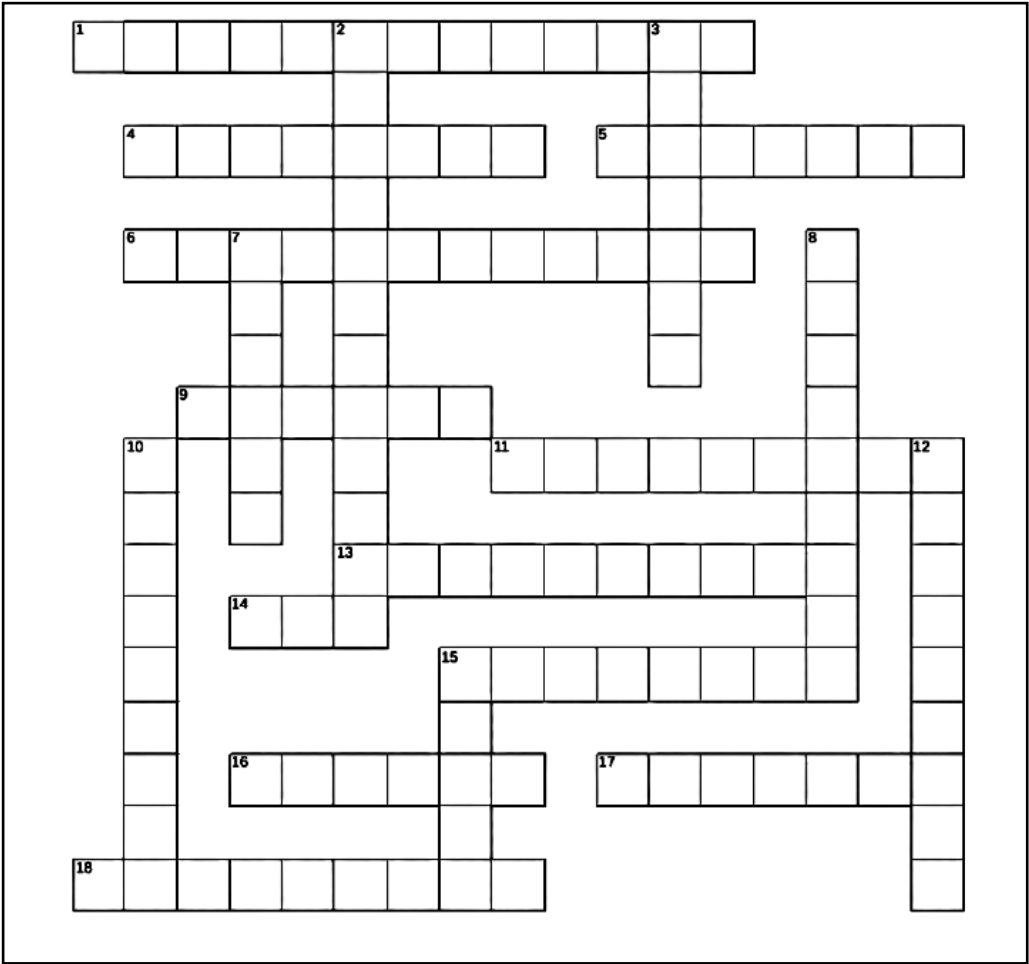
Quarterly Crossword

By Alex Schehl and Levi Olewin

THEME: Fall

- Across:
- 1. Another name for yams.
 - 4. Fall times use of a tall crop, don't get lost.
 - 5. Jack-O-Lanterns before they are carved.
 - 6. Holiday with Natives and Pilgrims.
 - 9. The color of fall leaves.
 - 11. Trees that change colors in the fall.
 - 13. Sweet treat on a stick.
 - 14. Pumpkin, apple, blueberry, peach.
 - 15. The spice of fall (not pumpkin spice).
 - 16. Pumpkins, zucchini, and squash.
 - 17. Original food served during Thanksgiving (red sea food).
 - 18. The most controversial candy.

- Down:
- 2. Notorious latte.
 - 3. Opposite of a solstice.
 - 7. The proper name for fall,
 - 8. A day to dress up for candy.
 - 10. Basket with fruit.
 - 12. Protector of the crops.
 - 15. Warm, delicious goodness (apple ____).



Cub Club launch changes athletic department

By Levi Olewin and Isabella Segura

For the first time in recent memory, Brentwood Christian School took fifth graders out of the middle school sports program and combined them with fourth graders to create their own intramural program called Cub Club.

Due to scheduling, coaching availability, facility space and long-term growth, fifth graders were removed from competing with Capitol Area Private and Parochial Schools, or CAPPS for short. Middle school (sixth through eighth grades) is still competing against other CAPPS schools in volleyball, flag football, cross country, basketball, soccer and track and field.

Don't let the fun name fool you - the program is designed to increase BCS' ability to compete at a high level.

"By removing fifth grade, we needed to add numbers to a program that would be an intramural program for fifth graders, so fourth grade made sense," said Cash Miller, varsity soccer coach and

middle school athletic coordinator. "What we're able to do with this program is keep everything on campus and utilize the varsity sports coaches and players to help coach as well."

Cub Club students practice during their combined fourth and fifth grade PE time every day throughout the week. The games are being played with smaller teams, such as three-on-three soccer, to enhance the ability for more repetition. Not having set teams each week, as students are paired with various classmates throughout the season, is meant to help build long-term chemistry and promote relationships with all.

"We are running small-sided games to get them the practice and touches they need," said Miller. "Everything will just be on a smaller scale, with different teams constantly."

Soccer will be in the fall, volleyball and flag football in the winter, and basketball in the spring.

"When our fifth graders were in CAPPS, they didn't get to see varsity coaches, be-

cause they are in the same season," said Miller. "Now, we are allowing fourth and fifth graders to get varsity coaching and still have fun."



Teamwork The younger generation of soccer lovers spend their Saturday mornings working on their soccer skills as part of Cub Club. Facing off in an entertaining 3 v. 3 match up, fourth and fifth graders are getting many opportunities to hone their skills this fall.

Cross Country geared up for final meets

By Margaret Banks

The Brentwood Christian School cross country team has just days left before the 2025-26 season comes to a halt. Medals have been won and personal records have been broken this season, and head coach Katie Smith has implored the squad to push through and rely on the foundation during these last couple of weeks.

Their team motto this year is just that: Build up.

“I run with my friends and we let one person carry the energy of the group and help us along,” said sophomore Scarlet Harlan. “When they get tired we switch and someone else carries the group. It helps us build a bond and makes the run easier.”

The cross country team’s focus on building up is a way to showcase how strong and tight-knit Brentwood is as a whole.

“I run cross country because I love running and the encouraging spirits of my teammates,” said senior Harper Counts.

The Bears have been working hard to be in top shape for the state meet, set for Monday, Oct. 27. They started early with summer morning practices, ran in grueling 100 degree heat, battled

through injuries and juggled multiple in-season sports.

The seniors and captains: Hailyn Counts, previous state champ Harper Counts, and medal winner Nico Napper have stepped back into leadership roles, building up the younger runners and leading the teams with confidence.

The trio leads on the course, too.

Hailyn Counts got 15th at the Cedar Park meet, a challenging public school meet. The Lady Bears finished fifth as a team at the Savio Early Bird invitational, with Hailyn Counts leading the girls team with a 12:45 finish. At Savio, the boys were led by Nico Napper who finished with a time of 18:35 minutes in the 5K.

Harper Counts describes the way she leads the team as leading by example. She was the runner-up at TAPPS State competitions in her freshmen and sophomore years of high school before taking home gold last season as a junior. Her sophomore season, the girls won state.

Looking back, the seniors have many fond memories.

“My favorite memories were long runs with the 2023-2024 team,” Napper said.

“I loved getting to go to state with my friends having fun with them the night before,” added Harper Counts.

The Bears have been to multiple meets

this year, including the annual BCS Invitational, which took place on campus on Oct. 4. Junior Lynden Worley paced the girls with a ninth-place finish, while Napper was eighth for the boys.

The focus the rest of the season is on getting stronger, better, and to continue pushing themselves hard to get ready for their state meet.

Between the Counts sisters and three-year runner Worley, the girls are looking to crack the top five at state. Harlan, freshman Lowary Smith, junior Madi Clark and freshman Reese Smith are all in the mix to run a sub-15-minute two-mile race and help the group reach their goals.

The boys are looking to crack the top 10 after finishing 11th as a team at state last year, and with Napper pacing fellow members Evan Berger, Xavier Parra and Huxley Harlan (all juniors), the group



Ready to Run Head cross country coach Katie Smith, who has been coaching at the school for over 25 years, is once again leading the program toward its culminating meet, the TAPPS State Championships on Oct. 27.

will have a chance to make a run at the leaderboard.

Cross country has its final tune up meet on Saturday, Oct. 18 at Founders Classical Leander (results not available at time of print). No matter the meet, the group continues to find passion and endurance in the race and in each other.

“For me, I run because it gives me a way to be free of my problems and clear my mind,” said Harlan.

Varsity Bears

2025



2026

BOYS:

- Owen Chang (Fr.)
- Henry Belcik (Soph.)
- Evan Berger (Jr.)
- Huxley Harlan (Jr.)
- Nathan Johanson (Fr.)
- Jacob Klein-Bradham (Jr.)
- Nico Napper (Sr.)
- Pablo Novelo (Jr.)
- Xavier Parra (Jr.)
- Sergio Sephar (Jr.)
- Levi Villianueva (Fr.)

GIRLS:

- Brenlee Brewer (Fr.)
- Madi Clark (Jr.)
- Hailyn Counts (Sr.)
- Harper Counts (Sr.)
- Darla Harlan (Fr.)
- Scarlett Harlan (Soph.)
- Juliet Montier (Fr.)
- Isabella Novelo (Soph.)
- Lowary Smith (Fr.)
- Reese Smith (Fr.)
- Alivia Villianueva (Jr.)
- Lynden Worley (Jr.)

BCS partners with media company

Staff Report

Brentwood Christian School is partnering with Astro Sports Agency this year for media content for the school’s athletic programs.

The company, which has a massive local presence in social media content following, first started working with the boys basketball team last season. Highlights of former players such as former student Marcus Zelee and alum Blake Petty reached massive audiences.

Back in Jan. 2025, a post featuring the granny basketball team, a local group of women who are 50 years of age and older and travel around the city, state and region playing a specialized version of hoops, went mega viral, up to nearly 10 million views on Instagram at time of publication.

This year, the BCS athletic program is expanding its partnership with Astro Sports Agency, and already had the company handle fall media day for football, volleyball and cross country.

Additionally, photographers and videographers from Astro will be at different sporting events where Bears are in action this season, gathering photo and video content to highlight the accomplishments of student-athletes at BCS, with the school’s goal to help promote the excellence of its athletes in coordination with spreading the message of Christ through athletics and the way in which those athletes compete for Him.

To learn more about Astro Sports Agency, visit their website, and to see posts from the company, follow Brentwood’s official athletic Instagram and Facebook pages, or visit astrosportsagency.com/home.



Football battling

continued from page 1

New Tech.

Unfortunately, the Bears have experienced hardships this season in the health department. Even with season-ending injuries to two key players, seniors Zach Czerlinsky and Thomas Calder, the team has persevered and rested in knowing that their teammates will be supporting them even still.

“I want to see them keep competing, keep fighting, and win district,” said Czerlinsky.

As the season progresses, there is immense excitement for the Bears and Bear fans to see what the future holds for this team.

The core includes three-year starter and senior Brayden Jennings, a talented dual-threat quarterback, and seniors Luke Weed (H-back/linebacker), Esteban Gutierrez (running back/linebacker), Jack Hansen (receiver/cornerback) and Gabe Washington (receiver/cornerback).

Weed has had a breakout season in a new position (linebacker), leading the team in tackles, while Washington has picked up the slack left by Czerlinsky to the tune of five interceptions and five touchdowns.

Other important players include senior Tanner Hunka, a first-time football player, junior AJ Koncaba, senior Jay Marwill (also recently lost to a season-ending injury), junior Samuel Moore, junior Levi Baron, and junior Noah Cabiya.

The peaks and valleys have had a strong effect on the players’ takeaways thus far.

“We learn to have a strong work ethic and when things may not be easy [and] continue to push through them,” said Weed.

Overall, the team is ready to pursue its road to success for the remainder of the season. With a long journey ahead, there is plenty more football to be played and even more opportunities for the Bears to prove themselves on the field.

“We have a hard schedule coming up, but as a team, we are talented enough to make anything happen,” said Jennings.

The Bears’ season so far has been defined by resilience, teamwork, and determination. Despite injuries and tough opponents, they continue to persevere with kind hearts and Christ-like attitudes.

Final regular-season games this season include Regents (Oct. 17), Bishop Dunne (Oct. 24), Hyde Park (Oct. 31, homecoming) and Brook Hill (Nov. 7).

Lady Bears Volleyball

2025



2026

VARSITY:

- #1 Chloe Krudwig (Soph.)
- #4 Alyssa Pennies (Jr.)
- #5 Claire Morris (Sr.)
- #6 Addison Everline (Sr.)
- #7 Jolie Shepard (Sr.)
- #8 Noelle Shepard (Jr.)
- #9 Kali Whitmire (Jr.)
- #10 Addie McGaughy (Soph.)
- #11 Reese Smith (Fr.)
- #12 Natalie Weed (Soph.)
- #13 Ruthie Koch (Fr.)
- #14 Renee Groomes (Jr.)
- #15 Blythe Assunto (Fr.)

JUNIOR VARSITY:

- Lilah Flores (Fr.)
- Lilliana Garza (Fr.)
- Melody Hargreaves (Fr.)
- Ruthie Koch (Fr.)
- Abbey Maglaya (Fr.)
- Ella Merrell (Fr.)
- Joy Morrison (Fr.)
- Sophia Velazco (Soph.)
- Kali Whitmire (Jr.)
- Dandarah Xolani (Soph.)

Volleyball rises up

By Anu Oguntade and Ella Kennedy

This year, Brentwood Christian School hired a new head coach, Cheyenne Lovelady, as well as Ellie Ward, who acts as the assistant coach.

“I’ve always loved the sport, but more than that, I love working with athletes,” said Lovelady. “Coaching gives me the chance to mentor, challenge, and support student-athletes, not just to become better players, but to grow in their faith and life outside of volleyball and even after high school.”

Throughout the year, the Lady Bears have demonstrated hard work and tenacity that has carried them through a demanding season.

The varsity team kicked off the year with a challenging slate, including a dual match followed by three public school tournaments. They ended the month of August on a high note, a second-place showing at the Killeen High School tournament, where senior Addison Everline was named MVP.

“The turning point for our team was definitely the tournament in Killeen,” said junior Alyssa Pennies. “We finally started learning how to work with each other, for each other, and, overall, just together.

“It made me happy because we were finally able to get some wins and come home with a smile on our faces.”

The volleyball program graduated six seniors last year and the head coach, Paula Trejos, departed from her job at Brentwood.

This left the varsity with only one varsity

returning player, Everline, who leads this season in kills. The team was also buoyed by the return of fellow senior Jolie Shepard, who returned to volleyball after taking a break after her freshman season. The duo have been vital leaders on and off the court, serving as team captains.

“I knew that we weren’t going to win every game with a new team, but I think being able to be a leader even if the outcome of the game isn’t exactly what I want it to be, is extremely vital to this team,” Everline said.

The junior varsity team confronted similar challenges as varsity with a young roster of emerging talent, but through the support from the coaches and each other, the girls have seen lots of improvement.

“I love volleyball because of how encouraging the team is,” said freshman Ruthie Koch. “I also love Coach Lovelady, she is always pushing us to become the best we can be and it has definitely made our team better and stronger this year.”

The Lady Bears came just shy of qualifying for the district tournament after thrilling, close back-to-back games with Brighter Horizons Academy and Bishop Dunne didn’t go their way. The program will wrap up district play on Friday, Oct. 17 (results not available at time of print) against local rival Regents with JV and varsity both in action.

Varsity Bears Football

2025



2026

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| #0 Chigozie Okorafor (Fr.) | #17 Esteban Gutierrez (Sr.) |
| #2 Brayden Jennings (Sr.) | #18 Everett Merrell (Sr.) |
| #3 Tanner Hunka (Sr.) | #20 Jack Hansen (Sr.) |
| #4 Lukas Fenske (Sr.) | #32 Huxley Harlan (Jr.) |
| #5 Troy Kennedy (Fr.) | #50 Aiden Clapp (Fr.) |
| #6 Zach Czerlinsky (Sr.) | #51 Josh Howe (Jr.) |
| #7 Levi Baron (Jr.) | #54 AJ Koncaba (Jr.) |
| #9 Fischer Shelton-Lamb (Fr.) | #60 Thomas Calder (Sr.) |
| #10 Caleb Catron (Sr.) | #63 Mason Foster (Jr.) |
| #11 Luke Weed (Sr.) | #66 Jay Marwill (Sr.) |
| #12 Liam McGaughy (Sr.) | #70 Samuel Moore (Jr.) |
| #14 Gabe Washington (Sr.) | #71 Nathan Moore (Soph.) |
| #15/23 Trey Campbell (Sr.) | #75 Noah Cabiya (Jr.) |
| | #77 Cody Shockey (Soph.) |



Officially Inducted A new group of students were inducted into the Brentwood Christian School chapter of the National Honor Society on Tuesday, Oct. 7. NHS sponsor Mrs. Graessle spoke of the leadership, service, character, and citizenship which the organization demands during the ceremony.

Reading, by Lily-Anne Laird



Service around campus

By Levi Sneed and Ife Oguntade

At Brentwood Christian School, service isn't just a requirement - it's an identity piece. Rooted in Christian values, students from elementary to high school are encouraged to serve with purpose, kindness, and joy.

For high school and middle school students this year, opportunities include National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society service, Academy 4 and the Bearista coffee shop.

"Small acts of kindness can create a big impact," said middle school math teacher Cynthia Davis. "It's important to remember that service comes in many different forms. It doesn't have to be a big mission trip to be impactful. Little things can have a positive effect daily.

Service at Brentwood comes in all shapes and sizes. One standout opportunity is Academy 4, where high school students spend time with fourth graders at McBee Elementary.

"It's not just about helping kids, it's about building relationships," said senior and Academy 4 volunteer Amir Dadashazar. "Instead of just watching from the sidelines, [BCS students] should jump in and be part of it. There's so much more to gain when you actively take part."

For NJHS students, service happens closer to home. They help in extended care, or extended day, supporting elementary students with homework and encouragement. It's a simple but powerful way to build up younger peers.

NJHS also coordinates Money for Medicine, along with long-time sponsor Davis, where they raise money for Zambians who can't afford medicine.

"We strive to be the hands and feet of Jesus in many ways," said Davis. "For ex-

ample, with Money for Medicines, we are the hands and feet of Jesus to people we will never meet.

"We have been so blessed in our community and to be able to give to people who are truly in need is something special. When we serve on campus, we strive to do it joyfully and humbly."

Students in the National Honor Society (NHS) get to make an impact outside of school by volunteering at places like Community First Village, where they assist formerly homeless residents with everything from gardening to furniture building.

Then there's the junior class coffee shop, the Bearista, where students serve coffee and club sodas to raise money for the Junior-Senior Formal, which will take place in April.

"This service opportunity is open to any student in the junior class; they just need to sign up," said junior Anu Oguntade.

Whether it's a cup of coffee or a kind word, Brentwood students are finding that even small acts of service can leave a lasting impact.

"Our campus is a community, and even the small things can positively affect that community," Davis said. "It's not a burden to serve...it's a blessing."



Mission first BCS keeps the mission of Brentwood Christian at the front of everyone's mind with the seven core beliefs that are upheld at school. Right as students walk into the high school C building, they are reminded of what the school stands for, and how they can help fulfil that calling.