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THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 30 NO. 1

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2017

Football team racking up wins

By Jackson Baird and Riley Keesey

Brentwood Christian's varsity football team has won five of its first six games, with its only loss coming in a close encounter with the number-one team in the state. With last week's victory over Hallettsville Sacred Heart, the Bears are 1-1 in district.

Four district games remain, beginning at Boerne Geneva on Oct. 20.

Senior captain Hunter Burcham, who was featured in the Austin American-Statesman's "Faces off the Field" on Sep. 12, stated that the Bears have the talent to shock everyone this year and come out with the district title.

As weeks go by and the wins pile up, fewer people are shocked by Burcham's comments.

Head coach Stan Caffey agreed with Burcham's statement and is not surprised by the Bears' success.

"How could I not agree with him? Every team's goal is to win district," Caffey said.

Caffey also pointed out that this is Brentwood's third year of tackle football, and none of these players have been on a district championship team, so it is still a learning process, and

this season should reveal a lot about the Bears' maturity.

"I expect us to do well," Caffey said. "We worked hard and got stronger over the off-season. In the previous years we were a young team, but this year we are one year older and more mature."

A significant addition to the team is senior Ben Ogbodiegwu, who is a transfer student from Stony Point High School. His parents wanted him in a different environment, so they contacted Caffey in the summer and asked if he had a spot for their son. Caffey said yes, and the family came over to meet him and introduce themselves. Now Ogbodiegwu is the leader in multiple stat categories for the Bears this season.

Through six games, junior

see **FOOTBALL**, page 6



photo: Keri Ogle

Breaking away Senior Ben Ogbodiegwu scored both BCS touchdowns in a 14-12 win over TMI on Sep. 22.

'Little Mermaid' opens tonight in CSA theater

By Austin Biegert

Families and students alike are invited to join the BCS theater department for a time of music and excitement under the sea in one of five performances of *The Little Mermaid* over the next two weekends.

The story has been everywhere, from Broadway to the screen in Disney's famous adaptation, to the pages in the old Hans Christian Andersen story upon which the Disney story was based. It centers on a young mermaid princess who longs to live a life on the land with humankind, against the wishes of her father and society.

The production stars sophomore Adrie Gruis as Ariel, junior Paul Stanglin as Prince Eric, and senior Merideth Mallett as the sea witch, Ursula. Each part has provided a score of challenges and rewards to each cast member, but the leads have all expressed their joy within their roles.

"I love being evil," Mallett said.

Planning has been in progress since last spring, when secondary theater director Michelle Alexander chose this musical to emulate the fun and family friendly vibe of *Seussical*, which was performed by the BCS theater department two years prior.

Alexander also wanted a change from last year (*Cinderella*), breaking away from the

see **MUSICAL**, page 6

New teachers bring talent, love to classes

By Bear Facts staff

Since the end of last school year, Brentwood has welcomed several new faces to the classrooms. They come from a variety of backgrounds to teach elementary, middle school, and high school. Some of them are not exactly new, but have moved over from other roles on campus or returned after a break.

A familiar face joins the middle school hallway this year in the person of Cynthia Davis, who spent the last 17 years teaching fifth grade. She now teaches sixth-grade math and pre-algebra.

"It is different teaching middle school, because not only am I just teaching math, but the pace is really fast," Davis said.

She decided she wanted to teach sixth grade many years ago after she subbed for Becky Stewart. So she got her teaching certificate and taught fifth grade all these years. This year, the opportunity arose to move to sixth grade.

"I am having a great time," she said.

Italy, Hungary, Austria, and Costa Rica are some of the many places that new second-grade teacher Britney Gittinger has visited.

Gittinger, who was a classroom aide last year, attended Abilene Christian University and earned her degree in broadcast journalism. She then taught seven years at Shoreline preschool before taking a break from teaching to stay home with her own children: Miles, who is a second grader, and Evan, who is a kindergartner.

Gittinger is married to Ben, a baseball coach and math teacher at Georgetown High School.

"I felt like God was leading me to teach elementary, and opportunities kept guiding me in that direction," she said.

Gittinger attends Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ. She grew up in Sherman and enjoys spending time with friends and family.

Teaching high school computer science and coaching varsity boys basketball is Brandon Greene. He was born and raised in Houston and graduated from UT-Dallas, where he graduated with a bachelor's in business finance and a master's in economics.

Greene played basketball for the Comets

and was a career leader with 1,169 points, 416 rebounds, 250 assists, and 132 steals over his college career. He was the team's second-leading scorer for two seasons.

Greene was introduced to the position by athletic director Stan Caffey, who taught him in high school at Westbury Christian Academy. Classmates there included

football coaches Correy Washington and Brian Fagbemi. Greene said he likes working out,

see **TEACHERS**, page 3



Greene

The Little Mermaid

Where: CSA Theater

When: Oct. 13 (7 p.m.), Oct. 14 (2&7 p.m.), Oct. 21 (2&7 p.m.)

Tickets: Available on school website or at box office an hour before showtimes

Director: Michelle Alexander

Starring: sophomore Adrie Gruis, junior Paul Stanglin, and senior Merideth Mallett

Thus Spoke Ben Helyer

Statues best judged on case-by-case basis

As I walked toward the UT Tower several weeks ago, I couldn't help but think of the event which took place at the end of August. Several statues of confederate leaders, including one of Robert E. Lee, were removed from the main mall after the events in Charlottesville and the University of Virginia. These statues were not entirely removed from campus, but are now housed at the Briscoe Center for American History to be viewed as elements of history.

I think that the University of Texas made a rational and viable decision in their actions, and I am not concerned with this single incident. However, there are troubling pushes toward extremism on both sides of this issue regarding statues. Charlottesville, where alt-right protests escalated into violence this past summer, is an example of extremism on the political right. While the political left has not clearly engaged in any violent protests relating to this issue, radical leftist ideas are being put into action: a statue of Thomas Jefferson – a figure beloved by many on both sides – was shrouded at the University of Virginia in September.

In the midst of this polarization, we must balance honoring individuals of the past and condemning the evils committed by these figures. The best way to find this balance for statues is on a case-by-case basis through weighing factors such as historical importance, relevance, and viewpoints of those who will be impacted by the presence of these monuments.

The historical importance of statues is a key factor to keep in mind when making these de-

cisions. Somehow, we need a way to differentiate Thomas Jefferson from an insignificant plantation owner who abused his slaves. The fact that a statue was at one time erected typically indicates that the person did something worthy of note in history, but I'm sure some statues have been made of people who have little importance in the grand scheme. Because of this possibility, statues should be reassessed, and research should be done on the represented individuals to be sure they are notable enough

There are troubling pushes toward extremism on both sides of this issue regarding statues.

to infringe on the elbow room of those in the present.

Even if a person is significant to history, a statue should in general be relevant to the location that surrounds it. A statue of Isaac Newton should probably not be erected in the Amazon rainforest; in the same way, a figure whose major impact was in Los Angeles shouldn't be placed at New York University unless there is an obvious reason to do so. On the other hand, founders of colleges or someone who is relevant to the local area may have a right to be honored even if they were not of historical importance. As an example, suppose Thomas Jefferson didn't write the Declaration of Inde-

pendence, but still founded the University of Virginia. In that case, the founding of the institution by itself gives his statue enough relevance to remain on the grounds. The relevance of statues should in this way be examined, and if needed, the reason why they were first erected should be considered.

The last factor to consider is the viewpoint of those who are most impacted by the statue's presence. For a college, this includes the opinions of students, faculty, and those who live or work on or near campus. Depending on the situation, the viewpoints of specific groups should be examined closely, such as those of minorities or professors with an expertise in the specific historical figure. One way to ascertain these viewpoints is to conduct polls and interviews throughout campus. While this method isn't foolproof, it's better than not getting any information from those impacted by a given statue.

Despite the the clarity which careful considerations of factors such as these could give on case-by-case bases, one drawback is that it could be arduous to weigh these three factors for every statue. Historical importance can be difficult to research, relevance is not always easy to determine, and surveys can take weeks or even months to complete and analyze. Since protests of a particular statue typically require prompt action on the part of the institution, the methods outlined here may not always be feasible.

However, there are two

ways to avoid this particular drawback. First, statues could be re-assessed on a periodic basis, allowing for removal of memorials which do not belong on a campus and a body of evidence to be presented in defense of those which do. This would in some cases alleviate the issue before it is brought up in public demonstrations. Second, institutions could put these factors into policy and request that protestors against particular markers first investigate these various issues themselves.

It's worth noting that a method based on weighing the factors of historical importance, relevance, and viewpoints will not cure all the woes associated with this issue. People will disagree over which factors should be emphasized: conservatives will likely put great importance on historical factors, while liberals may favor the viewpoints of those impacted by the statues. Together, the three factors may provide a way forward, but we can only make progress through conversations with those on the other side. Perhaps if these factors are rationally weighed in bipartisan discussions, then we can see progress, rather than protest, on the controversy which currently surrounds statues.

THE DEAR EDNA COLUMN

by the lovely Ms. Edna

READER: Why are you named Edna?

EDNA: Well, my father, named Alfredna, and my mother, named Winnifredna, found the name Edna in a baby name book and just felt like it fit. I don't know why.

READER: Why is the world round?

EDNA: The world learned a lot of things so it could be well-rounded!

READER: Why are there twelve inches in a ruler?

EDNA: Because thirteen seemed like a scary number...

READER: Why is our school mascot the bears?

EDNA: I can't bear the thought that someone would ask this. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but the idea you could be so grizzly about this is absurd. Let me get my bearings as I explain this to you.

You sound like a new cub at the school. Ugh, never-mind. These puns are unbearable.

READER: Why can't you trash recycling?

EDNA: Why can't you recycle trash? Huh?

READER: How do people make pickles?

EDNA: A cucumber sits in a hot tub to relax from the stress of college, and it contemplates the injustices of the world, becomes incredibly bitter, and turns into a pickle.

READER: Why are there sixty minutes in an hour?

EDNA: Why are there sixty seconds in a minute? Why are there twelve months in a year? Why do I answer these random questions? Nobody knows.

READER: Why do teeth turn yellow?

EDNA: Your teeth turn yellow? Mine turn blue. You should really get your teeth checked out.

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Teacher assists flood victims with national guard

By Isaac Olewin and Wes Tindel

It's Sunday evening, Aug. 27, and Hurricane Harvey is still dumping historic amounts of rain on the Texas coast. BCS teacher Travis Pollard sends a message to his sergeant, simply asking if he thinks they would be called in to serve. The captain says he doesn't think so.

The next morning, Pollard receives a call from the national guard instructing him to report to Camp Mabry by Tuesday morning. Pollard is surprised, but is resolved to do his duty.

"I made a commitment to the army," said Pollard, who is in the 36th Infantry Division Band in the national guard. "There was no question I was going to follow through on that commitment."

For the 16 days he was away, Pollard said he did about five days of work, mostly in Lake Jackson, south of Houston. After waiting for officials to organize a plan, Pollard said they soon began transporting lots of people in what came to be known as "Operation Uber." Other work included filling sandbags, building temporary levees with sandbags, setting up pumps

to move water out of a neighborhood, and transporting soldiers around the Houston area.

Pollard said the trip was very interesting and that it was satisfying to do good work with good people. He said it would have been more difficult if he were stationed with a different group of people he didn't know.

Everyone was instructed to have a backpack filled with bare necessities that would enable them to spend two nights at a specific job site. After starting at the barracks in Camp Mabry and Fort Swift, they were pleasantly surprised to be staying at a Hilton in Houston. Later they moved out to an old abandoned mall that the army had made a temporary base.

When the work was finished, Pollard headed back to Camp Mabry with his group. After waiting about two days for all the paperwork to be finalized, they went home to their own beds.

Pollard's first official day back at BCS was Sep. 13. While he was gone, his band and Bible classes were covered by Sonya Martin, a former BCS parent.

Pollard's wife Amanda said she missed her husband, but she was supportive. Technology



Giving aid Teacher Travis Pollard spent two weeks helping victims of Hurricane Harvey.

now enabled Pollard to facetime his kids and tell them goodnight every night.

Pollard said the administration of BCS was also very supportive.

"They told me they were there for me and to go and do what needed to be done," he said.

Teachers

continued from page 1

playing basketball, and shoes. He owns 70 pairs of shoes.

"I could be wearing a shirt from Target and have \$300 shoes on," Greene said.

Julie Ann Harper, the new kindergarten teacher, graduated from Harding University with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and a master's in reading. She has been in Austin for only four months. Her brother, Jimmie, is a high school teacher at BCS and leads singing in secondary chapel.

"I used to crack the bathroom door when he was in there and listen to him singing," Harper said. She admired her brother from a young age, and is happy to work with him.

Harper, who enjoys reading, baking, and traveling, said she chose to teach kindergarten because she believes that kindergarteners are innocent and pure. She believes God called her to teaching.



Jones

The new fourth-grade teacher is April Jones, from Leonard in northeast Texas.

Jones is a graduate from Harding University with a bachelor's in early childhood development and a master's in reading -- "a literacy specialist degree." Jones was introduced to the position by kindergarten

teacher Julie Ann Harper, with whom she was good friends in college. Jones and Harper both decided to interview for different positions.

"I love my job, who I work with, and my kids," Jones said. "I love getting to talk about faith with them and pray for them."

Jones said she enjoys singing, reading, and rock climbing. In high school, she was a state champion power lifter and placed first overall for three years. She won nationals twice and held a bench press record at that level, too.

Amber Kidd is not exactly new to BCS; she is returning to the school as the elementary computer teacher after teaching math in recent years.

"I was invited to come back to fill a need the school had," she explained. "I love BCS and felt I could fill that need."



Miller

son (sophomore).

"Lily is two doors down from me, and she thinks that's great!"

Joining BCS as the freshman English teacher is Elisa Miller. She earned her bachelor's degree at Western Washington University and then attended Walden University, where she obtained her master's in reading and literacy.

Miller has been teaching for 13 years and previously taught first grade, second grade, and kindergarten in Wyoming.

"I felt like God was calling my daughter and me to Texas," Miller said.

Arriving last year, she started to look around at Christian schools near the area. Soon Miller was a frequent substitute at BCS, and her daughter, Janae Thompson, enrolled as a seventh grader.

"As soon as I stepped into Brentwood, I knew

this was exactly where God wanted us to be," she said. "I love the people, the students, and the fact that I get to teach freely about God. I just think Brentwood is amazing."

After science teacher Evan Johnson left for his "dream job" as a youth minister in Ft. Worth during the summer, Brentwood hired Michael Sweet.



Sweet

Sweet, who grew up in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area, attended the University of South Florida, where he got his bachelor's in psychology. Next he went to the University of South Florida College of Medicine, where he obtained his Master's in Medical Sciences with a concentration in pathology, cell biology, and molecular medicine. Then he worked on his Ph.D. in molecular genomics and genetics.

Asked what brought him to Brentwood, he instantly responded: "God's providence, no doubt about it."

Sweet previously spent four years in secondary education, and before that he spent six years teaching university classes, including medical school, while working on his graduate degrees.

This is Sweet's first year teaching in a private school, but he said he thrives with challenges and gets bored without them.

"I love teaching science, period. I love science, period," Sweet said, expressing the fact that no matter what age level he's teaching, science is all the same.

Sweet and his wife Amanda attend Westover Hills Church of Christ.

The following reporters contributed to this article: Natalie Barry, Andrew Geevarghese, Conner Shaver, Hayden Shellenberger, Molly Stewart, and Emily Walker. All photos by Jenna Timmerman.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Benjamin Helyer

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2018.

Friendly genius makes complex concepts accessible

By Alex Pittner

Whenever students finds themselves in the midst of academic peril or trapped in the cruel grip of an unfathomable concept, they run to Ben Helyer. His exceptional mind is made available to help anyone who comes to him. Ben makes the complex simple and the seemingly unlearnable easily understandable. He is the perfect cross between Dr. Doom and Paul the apostle. Benjamin has a been a beacon of academic prowess, intellectual excellence, and unfailing kindness since he first arrived at Brentwood Christian in the fall of 2005. Throughout the school Ben has the reputation of being, quite frankly, a genius, and his

accomplishments occurring in the last four years do nothing to disprove this idea. Of the 1.7 million students who took the PSAT in 2016, Ben scored in the top one percent, making him a National Merit Semifinalist.

“Having Ben in class is both a joy and a challenge,” Humanities teacher Mel Witcher says. “When he raises his hand, you better be ready to bring your ‘A game.’”

Ben has been a gigantic asset to Brentwood during academic competitions. Last spring, Ben earned the most points out of all the students competing in TAPPS 4A. As a freshman in his first year at TCSIT, he took home the first-place trophy in debate.

“An amazingly proud moment I had as a teacher happened when Ben told me that he used some of the skills he learned in Geometry in the debate tournament,” math teacher Kaleen Graessle recalls.

Ben is also currently enrolled in his third college-level course at the University of Texas. He co-authored an article with Dr. Michael Courtney entitled “An Improved Power Law for Nonlinear Least-Square Fitting?” which has gone on to be published in an open-access peer reviewed journal.

“Ben is absolutely the best academic I have ever met in my life,” senior David Reich says. “It’s baffling how much effort and passion he puts into his work.”

Ben’s academic pursuits are not confined to the classroom. At home he finds himself contentedly reading complex classical literature, studying regression analysis with regard to power laws, or teaching himself calculus and linear algebra, all for fun. He especially excels in an area of mathematics known as pure math, which studies entirely abstract concepts.

“Math is very interesting and amazingly satisfying, especially proofs,” Ben says. “It’s one of the most beautiful subjects I know of in the sense of logical beauty. I would say it’s comparable to a work of literature or art.”

Ben works closely and constantly with his mentor Dr. Courtney, the principal investigator at BTG Research and a professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy, on various research projects and scientific studies. Their relationship began when Dr. Courtney approached Ben online through PhysicsForums.com and asked if he wanted to partake in a research project. Ben accepted and has worked with him closely ever since. Ben described his relationship with Courtney as, “Something God did. I couldn’t see it happening any other way.”

Ben worships at First Baptist Pflugerville, where he has been a member since he was born. There, he volunteers as one of several people

on the church’s media team. He is also heavily involved in his youth group and attends with his friend and classmate Shane Jowers.

“Ben is easily one of my best and closest friends,” Shane says. “He’s helped me out at church countless times.”

Ben has recently become more intentional in his faith life and is always finding revelations of God in the topics that he pursues. He says he sees God in all the enormously complex, yet impossibly brilliant, intricacies of science and math. The more Ben looks for God, the more God-oriented he finds himself becoming.

Ben’s classmates hold him in very high regard and often find themselves learning things they never thought they would understand in his company. Ben’s peers have described him in many ways: hard working, fun, a teacher, reliable, intelligent, funny, respectful, polite, and many others descriptions.

“Ben is always willing help in any way he can, especially homework,” states Kira Juranek.

The future is

exceptionally bright for Ben Helyer. His unfailing passion for math and science will undoubtedly carry him very far throughout his life. He wants to go into the field of physics or math, if not both, and believes that he will end up as a researcher.

“I remember in fifth grade that everybody wanted to be a firefighter or police officer when they grew

up,” Ben recalls. “However, I wanted to be a professor. I have no clue why.”

Ben’s peers share the belief that he will accomplish great things in the future.

“I can’t wait till Ben becomes a really popular, well known scientist,” Avery Miller says. “I totally want to tell my kids, ‘Hey, I went to high school with that guy.’”

Whether changing the world with his discoveries, solving the Earth’s seemingly unfixable problems, or becoming the next Steve Jobs, one thing is certain: Benjamin Helyer will always use his God-given talents to help not only those around him, but the whole of humanity itself.

THE BEAR FACTS

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



Students set for transformational ‘Journey’ in chapel

By Blake Benton

“Though Christians have been called to a destination, the real story happens on the journey,” teacher Jimmie Harper said.

The stories of Moses freeing the Israelites, Abraham and his descendants becoming a great nation, and Jesus and his miraculous life are all well known by Christians. Harper points out that what often is overlooked is the journey these characters endured, both physically and spiritually, to reach those famous destinations.

After two years of chapel centered on the topic of “community,” this year’s chapels will be focused on the journey a modern-day Christian experiences in today’s world along the walk of faith. As the leaders of the chapel committee, Harper and Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth got together over the summer to brainstorm what this year’s chapel would be about and decided it was time for a change. “Journey” came from the idea of “The Hero’s Journey” talked about in the book Harper had recently read – *Resonate*, by Nancy Duarte. Harper and Hollingsworth decided they could use Duarte’s idea as their base and build from there.

“I like the idea that even when we are headed for a destination, lots of good stuff happens on the journey,” Dr. Hollingsworth said.

Both said they want to emphasize that Christians are constantly being transformed on a journey by God. They want to expand not only on the main characters, but also the friends, traveling companions, and mentors who help



photo: Jenna Timmerman

Vocal leader Jimmie Harper, who leads singing in secondary chapel, and Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth decided in the summer to select “Journey” as the new chapel theme this year.

along the way. Harper said many people look at salvation as a destination, when in reality it’s a journey itself.

“We all experience our own journey of salva-

tion throughout life,” Harper said.

Harper, who has been on the chapel committee since 2015, noticed when he began teaching at Brentwood three years ago that chapel was no more than something students had to attend.

“I thought to myself, surely this could be more worthwhile to everyone,” Harper said.

Harper said he feels that chapel has undergone a positive transformation these past few years as far as being organized and more of a worship time than a lecture.

This year, a change has come to the approach for high school’s grade-level chapel, which is scheduled for once a month. At the end of

last school year, students elected a spiritual life director from each class to take the lead role of planning and organizing grade-level chapel this year. Those four students are fresh-

man Garrett Reagan, sophomore Noah Joseph, junior Brayden George, and senior JD Bailey.

“To me, being a spiritual life director is to show Christ’s love for others and to listen to my classmates and give them the experience they want while also glorifying God,” Bailey said.

The Spiritual Life Committee, led by Hollingsworth and Harper, along with the spiritual life directors from each grade, plan chapel. Senior Connor White, a member of the SLC, said he feels the main purpose of the committee is to meet the wants of students in their grade-level chapel.

“We are there to make sure the students have a say in the planning and that chapel can be as beneficial to everyone as possible,” White said.

Merit Scholar watch

Senior Benjamin Helyer was announced in late September as a National Merit Semifinalist in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program after taking the PSAT last fall. Semifinalists will be informed in February if they have advanced to finalist standing.

Seniors Lauren Weilemann and Tara Whitaker were announced as Commended Scholars.

In its history, BCS has had 10 students recognized as National Merit Scholars and 39 as Commended Scholars.

New schedule features Wednesday all-school study halls

By Noah Islas and Ethan Rutt

BCS has adopted a different bell schedule for secondary students this year, including a nine-period day, a 3:40 end time, and the addition of an all-school study hall to end the day on Wednesdays.

The nine-period schedule converts the bridge period from last year into a real period. Executive assistant Cindy Nestor said she thinks this allows more flexibility for students and teachers in their planning periods and schedules.

Secondary principal Carol Johnson worked on the idea over the spring and summer with the schedule planning committee that consists of guidance counselor Leah Smith and teachers Michele Broadway and Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth.

“Every year we try and make Brentwood a

little bit better,” Johnson said.

The main problem with last year’s schedule was that the bridge period wasn’t working, Johnson said. Some teachers said that electives that met during bridge period, such as SAT Prep, weren’t getting enough time to really engage the classes, as well as losing Thursdays to chapel.

Back in the spring, Smith said she thought she could rework the schedule to make all classes the same length, which they are now. Johnson said she had the idea of also adding 15 minutes to the school day so that every period would still be 50 minutes long, but in the end it didn’t make it into the final schedule. Most classes last 48 minutes.

On Wednesdays, even with chapel added into the schedule, the regular nine-period day ends at 2:40 p.m. This was accomplished by shortening every period to 35 minutes. John-

son said the purpose of the early end time is to help students be more productive. All students from third grade through seniors complete the day with hour-long study halls so that they can study and get homework done.

While students are in their homework time, teachers meet by departments to improve their lessons, determine when students learn what, and become overall better teachers. They call these groups Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs.

Johnson said students and parents have complained in past years that there has been too much homework on Wednesdays. They said they didn’t have enough time for their family or for Wednesday worship.

“The students were the main drive for the study hall,” Johnson said.

Middle school meets in the FLC, and high school meets in the CSA. Students in grades

3-5 are also in study halls. Rules include no phones, and no working together.

Students have varying opinions on the change. Freshman Grant Martinez said he likes it at the beginning of the period when he has homework to get done, but sometimes he has to stop early because his work requires electronics.

Monitors in charge of the high school homework time are Penny Hagen, Devan Loftis, Mark Nestor, and Nancy Tindel.

For in-season athletes, the study hall begins an hour earlier. Then they can still have practice through the end of school.

Science teacher Michelle Mallett said she likes the change and she thinks students will grow to like it as time goes on and they get more freedom. Mallett also likes the teacher meeting times and thinks it will help the faculty become better teachers.

Football team's one loss comes to top-ranked team

continued from page 1

quarterback Blake Benton has thrown for 413 yards and five touchdowns.

The Bears have three running backs with over 250 yards rushing on the season: Ogbodiegwu, with 486 yards and seven touchdowns on 39 attempts; Burcham, with 396 yards and four touchdowns on 77 rushes; and sophomore Sam Orick, who has 259 yards rushing and two touchdowns on 22 attempts.

Junior Curtis Mack leads the team in tackles with 66, followed by Ogbodiegwu with 41. Sophomore Phillip Mach leads the team with two sacks. Hughes, junior Chase Blackman, and Ogbodiegwu share the team lead with two interceptions each.

Sophomore Jonah Connor has made 20 of 23 extra points and has a long field goal of 43 yards.

Even with the success the Bears are having, senior Tyler Hughes still feels they can be even better.

"We still have room to improve on our attitude coming into the week leading up to the game," he said. "Sometimes we focus too much on the rankings and stats of the other team. We need to focus and play our game."

The coaching staff has some new faces this year, which Hughes said has helped give the Bears their recent success. Coach Correy Washington is the returning assistant coach and defensive coordinator, while Caffey is head coach and offensive coordinator. Tyrelle Higgins, who played defensive end for the Texas Longhorns a decade ago, coaches the offensive and defensive lines.

Ryan Rivera and Brian Fagbemi coach the scout team, and Rivera wears the headset during games, relaying information to Caffey.

Following are recaps of each game:

9/1: Killeen Shoemaker 36-0 W

The Bears pounded this public school's JV team with 255 yards rushing, including a 99-yard touchdown run by Orick. The Bears sacked the Shoemaker quarterback for a safety

on Shoemaker's first drive, giving Brentwood a 5-0 lead. In the second quarter, Mach added to the lead with a touchdown reception from Benton. Another field goal from Connor put Brentwood up 15-0 at the half. In the second half, Ogbodiegwu scored on a five-yard touchdown run. Later, on third and long, Benton found Burcham for a 42-yard touchdown pass.

9/8: @ Central Texas Christian 41-21 W

Ogbodiegwu led the Bears with 91 yards on three carries, while Blackman led with 94 receiving yards and one touchdown. Burcham had 94 yards of total offense, and Orick had a 50-yard touchdown run on the second play of the game. The Bears totaled 203 yards rushing on 23 carries. Benton completed five passes out of 13 attempts for 144 yards and one touchdown, and he also had an interception for a touchdown. Conner was also good on two field goal attempts.

9/15: St. Dominic Savio 39-28 W

The Bears grabbed the momentum by scoring two quick touchdowns from Ogbodiegwu and Burcham. Brentwood's offense was stifled the next few drives, and Savio recaptured the momentum with three touchdowns. Orick went down in the second quarter with an ankle injury after gaining 30 yards on three carries. On the following play Ogbodiegwu scored a 50-yard touchdown run, and the Bears went into the half down 21-20. Burcham gave the Bears the lead with a two-yard touchdown run followed by a 45-yard touchdown pass from Benton to Ogbodiegwu. Burcham later broke free for a 48-yard touchdown run.

9/22: S.A. TMI-Episcopal 14-12 W

This game was a defensive battle, and the Bears went into the half with a 7-3 lead in their homecoming game. The only touchdown came on a five-yard run from Ogbodiegwu. In the second half TMI added a field goal making it a one-point game, before Ogbodiegwu ran back a kickoff to give Brentwood the 14-6 lead. With two minutes left in the game, TMI drove down the field and scored a touchdown with a few



photo: Keri Ogle

Onward! Brentwood Christian's varsity football team takes the field on Sep. 22 for their homecoming game against San Antonio TMI. The Bears won 14-12.

seconds remaining but failed to convert on the two-point conversion. The Bears completed three passes for 36 yards and totaled 154 yards on the ground.

9/29: Shiner St. Paul 20-14 L

Playing the top-ranked team in the state, Benton started the scoring with a 70-yard touchdown run on a quarterback keeper. After a 20-yard touchdown pass from Benton to Mach, BCS went into the half with a surprising 14-0 lead. In the second half the Cardinals scored on their first drive thanks to some costly penalties. The Bears couldn't get anything going on offense, which allowed the Cardinals to tie the game at 14. Brentwood gave up a touch-

down in the last minute, taking their first loss of the year. Benton passed for 53 yards on 13 attempts, and the Bears rushed for a total of 163 yards.

10/6: Hallettsville Sacred Heart 28-0 W

The Bears got their first district win with a statement. They started the scoring in the second quarter with a touchdown strike from Benton to Mach. Next came touchdown runs by Burcham and Ogbodiegwu. After a fumble recovery, BCS marched down the field and scored on another pass from Benton to Mach. Benton passed for 102 yards on 16 attempts, and the Bears rushed for 219 yards and three touchdowns.

Musical

continued from page 1

traditional Disney princess story, and instead choosing a tale of rebellion and conformity in its underlying social dialogue. She said she hopes to continue this trend of choosing scripts that push the boundaries in the future, wanting more thought provoking tones and layered stories.

"Theater should make you feel uncomfortable and think about life," Alexander said.

Alexander has also ramped up student involvement this year, both on and off the stage. She cites the controversial casting of much younger students than usual and attributes this

to a stronger desire to put newer students in lead roles so as to cultivate a high school career in the arts.

This desire to involve more students extends to the crew as well as cast. Alexander has made an effort to bring more non-theater students into positions such as costume design and set building, with many crew members working long hours with the professional set designer in an effort to build an all-new set.

In addition to creating the whimsical undersea world of *The Little Mermaid*, crew has worked tirelessly to replace many of the old and broken set pieces from years past. This has been greatly helped by Alexander's connections in the Austin theater scene, primarily through

Zach Theater, where she works in productions in her offtime. Through Zach, Alexander met both the play's set designer, Chris Conard, and costume designer, Brandy Lee, who have been an immense help in the production so far.

"This play is a difficult one, but Ms. Alexander pulled together a really awesome team to help with set, costumes, and choreography," Gruis said. "There's talent all across board in this show, and a lot of new ideas. I think it will really blow BCS out of the water!"

The late night rehearsals have been burdensome on the cast and crew alike, especially in the weeks right before the play.

"There is so much practice. *So ... much ... practice*," Mallett emphasized before making

a bold prediction. "I think *The Little Mermaid* will surpass *Cinderella* in every way possible. We've put in a lot of work, and I think it will show."

The weeks of laboriously late rehearsals and preparations will unfurl its curtains to the public with a run of five separate showtimes. The premiere showing will be tonight, Oct. 13, at 7 p.m., with two additional shows following on the 14th at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. The final two shows will be presented on Saturday, Oct. 21, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. as well.

Tickets can be purchased at the box office in the BCS theater, or online through the school's website. Prices range from \$12 to \$15 in advance but increase the day of the performance.

Volleyball team on fire with 11-0 district record

By Jenna Timmerman

With their three-set win against Boerne Geneva on Oct. 10, the Lady Bears pushed their district record to 11-0, leaving three more games until playoffs begin on Oct. 24.

But senior captain Trinity Ragsdill said the team is careful not to think too far down the road in the season, instead focusing on putting everything into their next game.

“Taking one game at a time helps us work harder and come together as a team so we can go farther in the season,” she said.

The trek through the district schedule began on Sep. 5 and has included big victories over Boerne and defending champs John Paul, whom the Lady Bears swept in three sets.

Brentwood’s most difficult game came on Sep. 19 at home against TSD. After winning the first two sets, BCS lost the next two. They jumped out early in the fifth set and pulled out the victory.

“Hopefully next time we see them we’ll finish in three sets,” said Emma Leidlein, the team’s other senior and other captain as well.

Being first in district has brought much praise to a team that consists primarily of a wave of younger players than in previous years. Start-

ers include two seniors, two juniors, two sophomores, and a freshman, with two freshmen filling the other varsity spots. Four of the team’s nine players are new to varsity this year.

Head coach Russell Larson has used this influx of underclassmen to his advantage, capitalizing on their youth and openness to learning. This chance for learning will extend into the team’s future over the next few years, and Larson is pulling no punches when planning for the future of the players.

He said he hopes to instill a strong sense of goal setting and taking charge in the minds of the players, young and old alike, seeing that as the best path to long-term success.

“We set a goal: ‘seven eleven.’ I can’t share that goal; only the team knows it,” he said. “If I told you, I’d have to kill you.”

For Larson, team strengths include passing, defense, and very aggressive hitters.

The team’s first real challenge occurred back in August, with games starting before the rest of their classmates had returned for the fall semester, and practices beginning Aug. 1. The pre-district schedule included a big TAPPS tournament in Tyler and another tournament in Ft. Worth, where Brentwood faced stiff competition. At the BCS Invitational, the girls finished

in fourth place with three wins.

The Lady Bears have an overall record of 21-16.

The two seniors praise the flexibility of their younger teammates, and said that they hope to impart their own knowledge and advice to them.

“Give it your all, play for God, and have fun,” Ragsdill said. “Having fun while you play helps you play better.”

Leidlein said this year has been a lot more fun.

“There is a lot more team and a lot less negative energy,” she explained. “I’m really excited because we’ve been playing well and it makes my senior year so much more fun.”

Junior Jaclyn Wishard leads the district with a whopping 375 kills and 80 blocks. Junior Nyna Vasquez ranks first in digs and second in serving aces, with 526 and 86, respectively. Ragsdill leads the district with 888 assists.



Not today Freshman Caroline Griffith denies an opponent as sophomore Jillian Hamilton looks on.

Led by seniors, cross country has more runners, more focus

By Michael Milicia

Led by seniors Diego Escobedo and Mae-Anne Herring, the BCS varsity cross country teams have participated in five meets and have three meets left, including district on Oct. 14 and state on Oct. 30.

Coach Katie Smith said the team’s goals this year include improving individual times each week and placing higher as a team in district and state than last year.

“Overall those who ran last year and are running again this year are more focused, and we have worked harder and put in more miles than last year,” Smith said.

The Bears picked up a new coach, BCS alum Morgan Vandygriff (2013), who ran track and cross country.

After last year’s girls’ team struggled with lack of participation, the Bears were excited to start off their season with the addition of several new runners. These included the school’s 100-meter record holder, junior Mackenzie Gatlin. They also added junior Jade Klafhen, who is new to the school, and freshmen Alyssa McLain and Hannah Womack.

The boys’ team includes seven boys, which including four new members: freshmen Isaac Stanglin and David Crooks; sophomore Bru Hague; and Escobedo, an all-state baseball



Leader Senior Diego Escobedo joined the team this year and is the top runner.

player who joined after the second meet.

Escobedo said he enjoys running and wants to run a marathon eventually.

“It’s always fun to have teammates running and pushing you beyond your limits to do better every day,” he said.

Brentwood competes at the small school varsity level, with public and private schools. The team’s top boys are usually in the middle the pack, and the girls are in the top third of their races, according to Smith.

The team’s first meet was in Leander on Aug. 18. This meet is unique because boys run the same distance as the girls – two miles – rather than the usual 5K.

Stanglin ran the course in 13:40, and junior Mitchell Johnson was next (14:00). For the girls, Klafhen finished in 15:18.

On Aug. 25 at Vista Ridge, sophomore Michael Milicia finished first among the Bears (21:43), and Stanglin was second (21:59).

Herring finished in 15:44, and Klafhen was next at 16:10.

On a sunny morning Sep. 1, the team ran in Temple for the first time. The very first half-mile stretch had four steep hills followed by a long downhill.

Escobedo was the top BCS runner (20:02), followed by Milicia (20:49), with Stanglin right behind him (20:51).

Herring completed her run in 15:03 and Womack in 15:51.

On a cloudy day on Sep. 9, the runners went to a meet at St. Andrews, where they saw former coach Jeffrey Bates. He talked to the team and did a little running with them before he had

to go to the team from his new school, Walsh. After the race he congratulated the Bears.

Milicia finished the meet in 20:33, and Stanglin came next (20:42).

Herring was first for the girls (14:13), Womack second (14:56), and Klafhen close behind (14:59).

After a weekend off, the Bears ran on a very flat course in Georgetown on Sep. 22. It was a cloudy day, but after the 6A girls and boys ran, it became very hot.

Escobedo finished in 14th place overall (19:29), and Stanglin was 16th (19:49). Escobedo, Stanglin, Milicia, and Hague all got medals.

Herring finished in eighth place (13:55), Womack 11th (14:34), and Klafhen 12th overall (14:36). Along with McLain, these girls earned medals.

The McNeil invitational was cancelled due to weather conditions, so the Bears took their Saturday morning off on Sep. 30.

Hosted by Founders Classical Academy, the Bears’ Oct. 7 meet was at the same place as their first meet. It was “pretty chilly” when the boys ran; Milicia came in 12th (20:32), Stanglin 14th (20:44).

For the girls, Herring was eighth (15:19), Klafhen 12th (15:44), and Womack 14th (16:02).

Homecoming week brings levity, school spirit

By Sky Barker

Chicken farmers roam the halls as Statues of Liberty pass by hippies and lifeguards. The week leading up to homecoming was seemingly filled with people from all over the country. The festivities all came to a close Friday, as

students wore green, screamed at an all-school pep rally, and geared up for the evening's football game. Parents played live music in the parking lot during pre-game tailgating, and an estimated 2,000 people attended the game. During halftime, balloon decorations were set in place for the coronation ceremony, and

all of the Homecoming Court and nominees walked onto the field in their finest attire. The crowd waited in suspense before secondary principal Carol Johnson announced the king and queen: Aedan Acheson and Katie Lynn Griffith.

Griffith experienced a mixture of positive emotions.

"It was definitely a surprise, and I felt really overwhelmed, happy, and grateful to be at Brentwood," she said.

After pictures were taken and everyone was congratulated, the football game resumed as Brentwood held on to close out the special week with a 14-12 victory.

Student Council's planning for the big week started way ahead of time. Announcing the dress-up days with a video in chapel, StuCo declared that Monday was Malibu Monday, and secondary students dressed up for a trip to the beach. Tuesday, everyone travelled to Portland, Oregon, allowing their inner-hippie to shine.

Wednesday, the school took a trip to the busiest city in America, New York. People walked in crowds, dressed up as the Statue of Liberty, and shoved people as they walked by in a hurry.

Thursday, students went to the country music capital of the world, Tennessee. Finally on Friday, everyone showed off their Bear spirit proudly, some even with paint on their faces and green in their hair.

During the pep rally Friday, StuCo announced the Homecoming Court, which was



photo: Jenna Beggs

Hippies Juniors Max Cooper and Christine Jo got into the dress-up days.

voted on by students earlier in the week: lord and lady Mason Hejl and Caroline Griffith; duke and duchess Sam Orick and Natalie Barry; prince and princess Chase Blackman and Christie Snow; king nominees Acheson, JD Bailey, and Elijah Cunningham; and queen nominees Griffith, GraceAnn McDaniel, and Alex Sass.

StuCo worked the entire weekend before Homecoming week preparing the hallways for all the different places students would travel. They spent more than 30 hours working on the hallways that weekend.

"All the build up to the Homecoming game was special seeing all that we had done," said McDaniel, the StuCo president. "Seeing StuCo work together and making sure everything got done on time was really special to me."



photo: Mackenzie Gatlin

Royalty Aedan Acheson and Katie Griffith were voted Homecoming King and Queen this year. The coronation took place at halftime of the football team's victory on Sep. 22.

Seniors reflect, plan, worship, and have lots of fun at class retreat

By Kaitlyn Baird

Senior Ben Ogbodiegwu stands at the edge of the deck with his life jacket on, looking at the blob below him.

"Get ready, Lauren!" he yells, before cannonballing onto the blob.

Once he lands, senior Lauren Weilemann flies into the air and crashes back into the lake, as her classmates erupt into cheers.

Seniors enjoyed a fun retreat filled with many exciting activities at Camp Buckner on Sep. 10-11.

Students swam, played gaga ball, ziplined, toasted marshmallows, went on a prayer hike, played hide-and-seek, and strengthened their relationships with each other during the trip.

"I think it was fantastic," Hunter Burcham said. "I haven't had that much fun in a long time."

The Class of 2018 talked through class business and voted on the class song, verse, and T-shirt. The seniors chose "Revelation Song"

for their class song and 1 Peter 4:8 for their class verse.

"One of our goals as a class is to have a better community, and this verse really tells us what we should do to achieve that goal: love others," class president Katie Griffith said.

The seniors were also expected to plan the first chapel following the retreat. Class sponsor Jimmie Harper split students into four different groups, and each group planned a different aspect of chapel.

"I was very impressed by the way the seniors stepped into the leadership roles they were given," Harper said.

Later that night the seniors circled up and sang praise songs for an hour. After singing, senior spiritual life director JD Bailey led communion.

The focus on Monday was "spiritual pathways." Math and Bible teacher Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth introduced students to the idea that different people feel close to God in different ways. After taking a survey, seniors chose



photo: submitted

High wires Friends Ivy Leone and Eva Lyon-Couto prepare to race each other on the zipline at Camp Buckner during the senior class retreat on Sep. 10.

among five spiritual pathways to explore, including enthusiast, sensate, naturalist, contemplative, and ascetic.

"From the feedback I got in class afterward, it seems that many students found the activities strengthened their relationships with God

in surprising ways," Hollingsworth said.

On Monday, the Class of 2018 had the opportunity to jump on the blob and slide down the water slide.

Students returned to BCS on Monday at 3:30 p.m.