



THE BEAR FACTS

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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

APRIL 2018



Brentwood crushes TCSIT competition

Bears take first in high school, middle school for second time in history

By Kaitlyn Baird

Brentwood Christian's high school and middle school TCSIT teams dominated the competition when both took home first-place

trophies at the annual academic tournament in Abilene on April 5-7. High school had 596 points, which beat second-place Northland Christian by 277 points – easily Brentwood's largest margin of victory ever.

Since both middle school and high school were grand champions in 2013, it was the second time they both brought home the gold at TCSIT. Seventy-seven BCS students competed in the tournament, and 70 of them placed in events.

"I could not be more pleased with how things went," TCSIT coordinator Kaleen Graessle said.

Graessle described how Brentwood worked as a team throughout the entire tournament. She said everyone was encouraging each other, whether it was the people doing oral events cheering for those doing written events, or the other way around.

Brentwood students took home gold medals in many events, including all but one of the 11 math events. Freshman Minh Yoon, senior Linh Bui, and sophomore Emma Nguyen swept the top three places in number sense, respectively. Yoon, sophomore Daniel Kim, and Bui earned first, second, and third in calculator applications. Yoon also won chemistry and placed third in Algebra II. Kim was the champion in Algebra II and fifth in chemistry.

Bui finished first in comprehensive math, fourth in comprehensive science, and fifth in

physics. Classmate Benjamin Helyer placed fourth in comprehensive math; he was also the champion in physics and third in comprehensive science, ready writing, and Lincoln-Douglas debate.

Freshmen Lupin Cai and Duc Tran won a gold and silver medal in geometry. Brentwood placed second in team math, which was made up of Bui, Cai, Yoon, and Doeun Kim.

Freshmen Zoe Hamiyeh and Nathan Morgan took third and fifth in biology. Hamiyeh was fifth in spelling, while senior Sarah Schmidt earned a bronze medal in Spanish comprehension. Schmidt and classmate Kaitlyn Baird tied for first in Bible knowledge. Baird also received gold medals in news writing and feature writing, and she placed third and fourth in social studies and ready writing.

Senior Khang Phan took home a silver medal in both news writing and social studies; Nguyen also placed in social studies. Senior Courtney Min finished first in on-site drawing, while sophomore Renee Xiong finished

see TCSIT, page 3



photo: Jamie Peterson

TCSIT heroes Seniors pose with high school's first-place trophy, in the hands of Ben Helyer, who medaled in five events. Middle school also won first at TCSIT.

Trip journal: seniors tour Austria, Germany

By Vi Nguyen

Our trip began with long and exhausting flights, but the beauty of Vienna, Austria, and its architecture made up for all the tiring hours. Our lovely tour guide Maria took us to the monument of Maria Theresa and the Hofburg. She walked us through the most expensive shopping street where we were given an hour and a half to hang around. Most of us visited the Catholic Church and then stopped by the bakery for some apple strudels and other tasty cakes. As the rain got heavier, some of us took a warm spot in Starbucks while the others kept wandering around the stores. After that, we had dinner at an underground restaurant with delicious local dishes.

On the third day, we headed off to the colorful Hundertwasser House for some great photos. We then took a bus tour around the city's major

sights with a new tour guide. We stopped by the gorgeous palace Schönbrunn that Maria Theresa and her family lived in. We had lunch at the Naschmarkt, where there were all kinds of food. We got ourselves different things like bratwurst, cheese, macaroons, or baklava. After lunch, we were split up. The adults visited a museum, while some of the students hung around the city center and climbed 343 steps up the Catholic Church. The rest went to the amusement park, where we rode the oldest Ferris wheel in the world and enjoyed the view of Vienna. We ended up with some tasty local scoops of ice cream. After dinner, some of us went to see the ballet at the Opera House. Some went for little desserts at a fancy restaurant before heading back to the hotel.

Our fourth day started out with a three-hour

see Europe, page 8



photo: Vi Nguyen

Fahrrad Seniors Carollanne Perimon, Luke Tilley, and Kiryang Kwon enjoy a bike tour around Munich, Germany.

BCS is TAPPS academic champ

Four days after running away with the TCSIT championship, Brentwood Christian high school students won first place among TAPPS 4A schools at the Waco Convention Center.

Competing on April 10-11, Brentwood's efforts were led by freshman Minh Yoon, who won three events: calculator, number sense, and mathematics. Senior Lin Bui won advanced math and was second in calculator and number sense. Seniors Khang Phan and Kaitlyn Baird took first and second in social studies, and senior Vi Nguyen was second in advanced math.

BCS finished with 122.5 points; second-place Midland Trinity had 88.5.

Ben Helyer and Alex Pittner present...

Voter's Guide: 2020 Presidential Primaries

The candidates for the 2020 presidential primaries are out, and we've compiled a voter's guide with responses from candidates on some of today's most important issues. Each was asked the same set of questions, which are described immediately before their responses below. We hope that this effort will be well worth it in helping you cast an educated vote at the polls.

Background: What makes you qualified for this position?

Legal Emigration: What do you say to the millions of Americans who will leave the United States to enter Canada should you be elected?

Conspiracies: In what ways will you attempt to oust the winning candidate should you lose the upcoming election due to conspiracy?

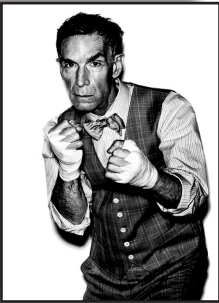


photo: popsci.com

Bill Nye (D)

Slogan: "We can, dare I say it, change the deficit."

Background: I'm not a scientist, because even though people think I am, my background is in engineering. This makes me qualified to run for an office which has never held a scientist, as I share this lack of qualification with some of the greatest men in the history of the United States.

Legal Emigration: In the name of allopatric speciation, we must let those who are unprepared for our more evolved society leave our country and be separated by the geographic boundary between the United States and Canada. After this, natural selection will cause the formation of two separate species: Homo Democraticus and Homo Cowardacitus.

Conspiracies: I will air a new show "Bill Nye the People's Guy" to reinforce the point that I won the majority vote.

Kanye West (D)

*The Bear Facts attempted to talk to Mr. West, but unfortunately, none of his responses had anything to do with the questions.

Slogan: "We the new rock stars and I'm the biggest of all of them."

Background: "Brought the leather jogging pants six years ago to Fendi and they said no. How many people you done seen in a leather jogging pant?!"

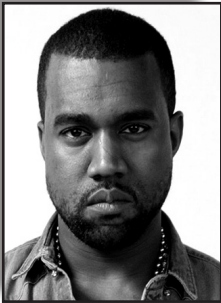


photo: hufmagazine.co.uk

Legal Emigration: "Okay, for me, first of all, dopeness is what I like the most."

Conspiracies: "I actually don't like thinking. I think people think I like to think a lot. And I don't. I do not like to think at all."

Sylvester Stallone (R)

Slogan: "Let me tell you something you already know. The world ain't all sunshine and rainbows."

Background: I was the first man to go the distance against Apollo Creed, and now this Italian Stallion now looking to overcome some of the toughest candidates in the history of the nation. Getting my hands bloody in the ring prepares me well for defending this nation against the foreigners.

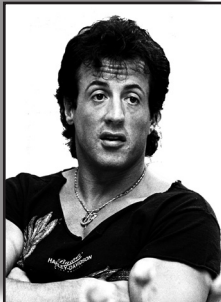


photo: commons.wikimedia.org

Legal Emigration: With my immigrant background, I know the struggles of a people as they find a home in a new land. Yet when these people leave, they take off with our cities, our roads, our cars, and our films. To prevent this, I will stand at the border of Canada myself to fight a match with anyone who tries to leave.

Conspiracies: If I lose, it's because I'm a Southpaw (left-handed), and people don't know how to fight Southpaws.

Donald Duck (R)

This candidate was approached by the Bear Facts team but refused to comment and did not provide any further contact information. The

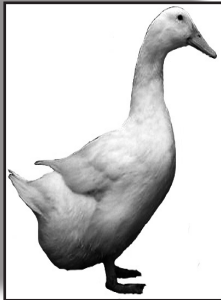


photo: allwhitebackground.com

address at which this candidate was found is: Quack Quack Pond, \$\$\$\$ Uncle Scrooge Avenue, Albuquerque, NM.

Elijah Cunningham (I)

Slogan: "Might makes right."

Background: It's not right for anyone to run if I can't do it, because I have the largest mental might out of everyone I know.

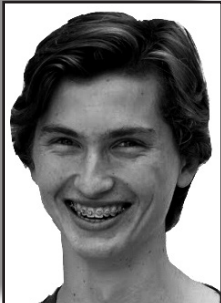


photo: Jenna Timmerman

Legal Emigration: Let them go. We don't need people without common sense. Common sense would clearly tell them that I am more mighty. They don't know what's good for them; I know what's good for them.

Conspiracies: Moral degeneracy. The people of the United States no longer uphold even the smallest bit of morality. Might makes right. I am the mightiest. It's that simple.



Knowing the chef, Carl probably shouldn't have ordered the Fancy Feast.

Dad Armstrong a hero to BCS ‘Mathletes’

By Benjamin Helyer

Every Wednesday, students fill math teacher Michele Broadway’s room during afternoon study hall. But at this time, it isn’t Mrs. Broadway who’s teaching. Instead, David Armstrong, parent of BCS alum Andrew Armstrong (’16), is at the front of the room, discussing divisibility tricks, geometric strategies, and calculator hints to prepare for math competitions. In the process, he amazes students with his sheer knowledge about the subjects.

“He’s brilliant. He knows his stuff,” sophomore Emma Nguyen says. “I can see where Andrew came from.”

The coach for the BCS competitive math team, Armstrong prepares students not only for TCSIT and TAPPS in April, but also for UIL and TMSA competitions year-round. To do so, he provides practice materials and even snacks on Wednesdays to any students interested in learning more about competition math.

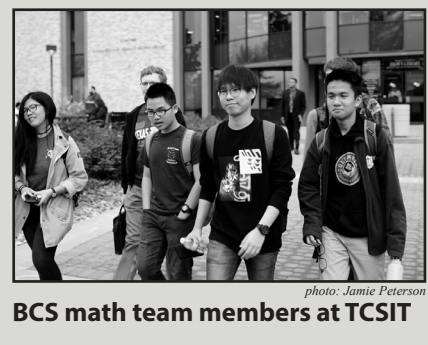
“I’m grateful for Mr. Armstrong because he gives all the attention, care, and teaching that the math team needs,” senior Vi Nguyen says.

To this day, Armstrong also continues to drive students to meets, grade UIL “virtual meet” tests, share math articles over email, and help in every aspect of math competitions. On the way to meets, he plays the “license plate game” with students, where everyone rushes to figure out the greatest prime divisor of the numbers on a license plate.

“He’s open to any math-related things you want to talk about,” senior Linh Bui says.

Math department chair Kaleen Graessle, who coordinates Brentwood’s efforts in

see **Armstrong**, page 8



BCS math team members at TCSIT

TCSIT: high school, middle school sweep

continued from page 1

ished fourth. Min also placed sixth in art portfolio and fourth in Spanish girls’ Bible reading. Junior Christine Jo was the champion in computer-aided design, and senior Katie Griffith was third. Sophomore Keri Ogle and senior Alex Sass were fourth and sixth in photography, respectively.

Senior Lauren Weilemann was second in editorial writing, headline writing, and dramatic interpretation. She was also fifth in feature writing. Classmate Merideth Mallett received a bronze medal in dramatic interpretation. Sophomore Genevieve Graessle finished third in headline writing, fourth in original oratory, and fifth in editorial writing. Classmate Cade Young won editorial writing and placed fifth in headline writing.

Sophomore Addie McDaniel won humorous interpretation, and classmates Isaac Copeland and Lorenzo Rivera placed fifth and sixth. Copeland received a silver medal in English boys’ Bible reading, and Rivera placed fifth in Spanish boys’ Bible reading. Sophomore Noah Joseph placed in English and Spanish boys’ Bible reading, and also in a math event.

Freshman Julia Glenn was fifth in poetry interpretation, and junior Corrie Hager won a bronze medal in her humorous duet with classmate Whit Allee. Allee was fourth in Spanish boys’ Bible reading and his dramatic duet with sophomore Emma Owens. Sophomore Adrie Gruis earned a bronze medal in English girls’ Bible reading, and freshman Charlie Walters was sixth in extemporaneous speaking. The Bible improv team finished third, and Brentwood’s yearbook and newspaper won a gold and silver medal.

In middle school, seventh-grader Nathan Esche and sixth-grader Renne Cooper took first and second place in number sense, respectively, and eighth-grader Parker Combs placed

fourth. Cooper also took home gold medals in calculator and comprehensive math seven. Esche took second in algebra one and third in comprehensive math seven. Combs won comprehensive math eight and algebra one, and he placed second in calculator.

Eighth-grader Will Hughes earned a silver medal in comprehensive math eight, and classmate Nathan Joseph took third. Brentwood won team math, which consisted of Combs, Cooper, Hughes, and Joseph.

Eighth-graders James Oberwortmann (social studies), Makana Sloan (Bible knowledge), and Sydney Cooper (original oratory) each earned a gold medal in an event. Sloan also took sixth in extemporaneous speaking, and classmates Janae Thompson and Kimberly Jolly placed third and fifth. Jolly was also fifth in original oratory.

Seventh-grader Zoe Cooper earned a bronze

medal in science, and eighth-grader Emma Ayers placed sixth in music memory; classmate Caleb Riley was sixth in social studies. Eighth-grader Zoe Roetter placed third in picture memory and sixth in spelling, and classmate Sophie Grooms earned a silver medal in ready writing.

Seventh-grader Leah Ankutse earned a silver medal in girls’ Bible reading and placed fifth in music memory; classmate Kennedy Drennon was third in girls’ Bible reading. Brentwood’s Bible improv team placed third.

The BCS TCSIT teams left for Abilene on Thursday morning, April 5, in six vans. After competing on Thursday and Friday, the students ended their hard work with a trip to Gatiland Friday night. Those who advanced to finals also competed on Saturday, and the award ceremony began that afternoon.



Champs Sixth-grader Renne Cooper, who won three golds and a silver, is surrounded by eighth-graders Caleb Riley, Keller Jackson, Drew Phipps, and James Oberwortmann.

Band, choir off to strong start at TAPPS

By Molly Stewart

The BCS high school band and choir competed at the TAPPS 4A vocal and band solo and small ensemble state championships on March 26 at Regents.

This was only half of the TAPPS band and choir competition; on April 26 the TAPPS full band, jazz band, and full choir competition will be held in Temple.

“I am looking forward to playing my final ensemble piece with my peers,” senior Kira Juranek said.

The band is in fourth place overall, and director Travis Pollard said that it is hard to know

what the final ranking is going to be because this is only half of the contest.

“If I had to predict a final ranking, I would say third. I am happy with the way everything went,” Pollard said.

Pollard said he was very grateful for principal Carol Johnson driving a van full of students, and for dad Charles Morgan, who pulled a trailer full of band instruments.

Solos and ensembles that scored a one or superior were freshman Emma Nguyen, freshman Julia Glenn, freshman Min Yoon, clarinet trio, clarinet quartet, woodwind octet, three saxophone trios, flute quartet, and trumpet trio.

On the same day, choir brought three ensem-

bles and 27 solos to the competition. With 126 points, they are in first place overall and took 20 medals home.

According to director Whitney Wick, some guys forgot to wear black dress shoes and had to wear their tennis shoes with their tuxes. Fortunately, that had no bearing on the scores.

Solos who scored a one or superior were senior Rebekah Connor, sophomore Isaac Copeland, junior Emma Dowell, sophomore Gavin George, sophomore Adrie Gruis, freshman Mason Hejl, senior MaeAnn Herring, senior Derek Lilya, senior Merideth Mallett, sophomore Addie McDaniel, senior Elena Milan, sophomore Mariana Murillo, and freshman Laura Wilson.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Elijah Cunningham

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

‘All-around great human’ known for smile, quirks

By Benjamin Helyer and Alex Pittner

In fifteen years, many members of the Class of 2018 hope to be living the American dream with their own home, a white picket fence, and 2.4 kids. But there’s one who hopes to cast this dream away, at least for a few years, by living in a van.

“I’m a very minimalist person. I know I could do it,” Elijah Cunningham muses. “I like things that are interesting, and (living in a van) would be interesting.”

And the word “interesting” aptly describes Elijah. Combined with his gregarious nature, however, senior David Tiner notes his peculiarity isn’t necessarily a bad thing.

“He’s kinda weird, honestly, but it’s a good weird,” David says. “He’s friendly with everyone. I’d say he doesn’t really know a stranger.”

Elijah has made an impression with many more at Brentwood since arriving three and a half years ago. Coming from a homeschooling background in Kauai, Hawaii, in the August of his freshman year, he enrolled at BCS a few weeks into the school year. Like many new students, he was nervous at the start, but he soon found a circle of friends and became comfortable.

“I don’t think there’s ever been a place before Brentwood where there’s been so many people that I’ve fit in with,” he says. “In Hawaii, it’s hard to break down barriers and get heart to heart with people.”

Elijah is beloved for his open attitude and friendly nature, always having a smile for those who encounter him. He has been called by his classmates “the perfect person to have as your friend,” “one of the most enjoyable people to be around,” and “able to brighten anyone’s day.”

“Elijah always has a smile on his face. Always,” says science teacher Michelle Mallett. “Everyone feels very comfortable around him.”

“He is just an all-around great human being with a huge heart,” senior Lulu Clark says.

Born in Kauai, Elijah then moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, for about one year before moving back to Kauai, the northernmost Hawaiian island.

Growing up in Hawaii was very beneficial to Elijah, who feels that the experience, culture, and upbringing he received there were “priceless.” He loves the natural beauty found in Hawaii and has a special place in his heart for the serenity of Hanakapiai Falls.

“When I go back, it seems surreal to think that I lived there for 14 years. It is insanely beautiful everywhere you look,” he says.

Although we live in a modernized society,

Elijah says Hawaii stays very attuned to its roots. In middle school, his school year would conclude with the students performing a hula dance while chanting in native Hawaiian.

“Growing up in Hawaii made me able to recognize how many different opinions are out there. It makes me more open minded,” Elijah says.

He lived there until he was 14, at which point he moved to Austin. In addition to transi-

tioning schools, he notes that the transition from liberal Hawaii to conservative Texas would have been worse had he not been so adaptable.

“It was getting re-immersed into a culture again. I’ve never been one to get too immersed in the culture around me, but the change was never a really big deal to me,” he says.

Yet Elijah notes that these changes have broken his ties to the typical way of living, hence his desire to live in a van. Behind all of this transition also stands his family, made up of his two parents, two younger

siblings, and one older sister. Kaleb is homeschooled in kindergarten, Kyla attends Brentwood in the third grade, and his older sister, Ana, will be starting beauty school in the fall.

Next fall, Elijah will be going to Texas A&M University to study electrical engineering. He chose A&M based on the reputation of the school and the feel of the environment. He came to realize he could fit it with the “friendly and open” environment. With regards to choosing electrical engineering, he says that he looks forward to understanding the seemingly impossible inventions of the modern age.

“Something about electronics and technology seems impossible to me,” he says. “And impossibility sparks my curiosity.”

While he’s not hitting the books, Elijah plans to continue what he calls his “number one extracurricular”: general fitness. He loves anything that involves working out, from rock climbing to soccer. He attributes this passion for fitness to his mom and older sister, who worked out frequently when he was young.

“There’s something I love about being able to work to improve myself that’s hard to get apart from fitness,” Elijah says.

Alongside his friendly attitude and fitness, Elijah, like many Brentwood students, has been clearly successful in his high school career, competing in activities such as TCSIT and being a part of NHS. But unlike many of his peers, Elijah did not come to Brentwood with a great deal of knowledge about the opportunities in high school.

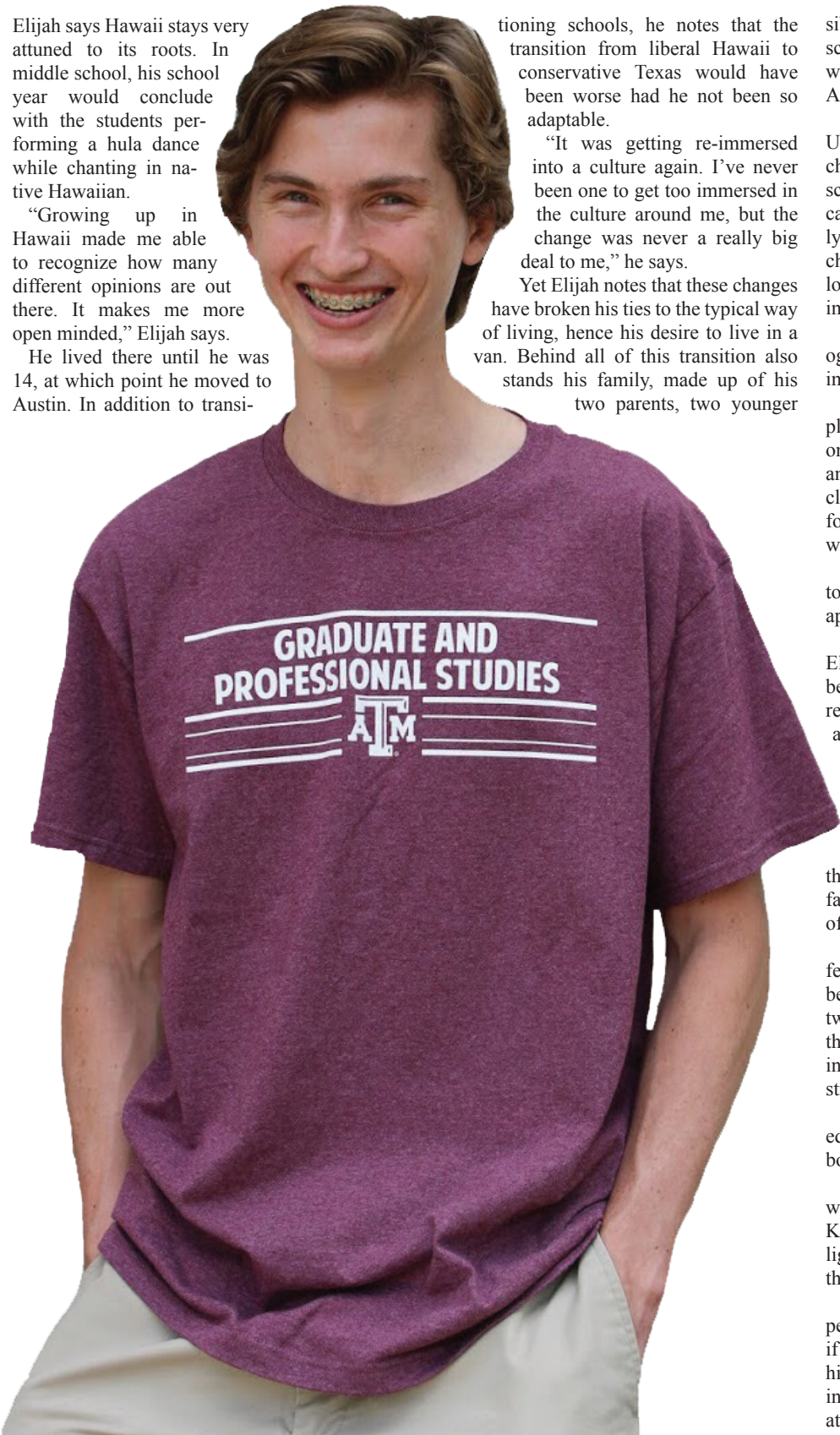
“When I came to Brentwood, it was a completely clean slate,” he says, noting that he did not know about the importance of factors such as NHS or the SAT due to his lack of experience with formal schooling.

Despite this lack of knowledge, Elijah still felt he was well prepared by his experiences before high school. He attributes his success to two factors: his parents’ emphasis on education through homeschooling, and babysitting, noting that both of these provided him with the strong work ethic he carries with him today.

His hard work and strong drive has been noted by other students, who see him push himself both in and out of the classroom.

“He works so hard to accomplish his goals, whether it be in school or personal,” senior Katie Griffith says. “He’s a super funny, intelligent, adventurous, motivated, and caring guy that I’m lucky to call my friend.”

Wherever Elijah goes, he takes his amazing personality and open heart with him. No matter if he is living in a van or enjoying the beauty of his home state, Elijah will always bless those in his company with his quirky and charming attitude.



Warm, welcoming B'Smith shapes lives Biblically

By Austin Biegert

Of the hundreds of students who have poured through the doors of Brentwood's third-grade classrooms over the last 21 years, many have grown to treasure the warm and welcoming voice of Carolyn B'Smith. She has guided them through lessons, crafts, and activities with a patient heart and genuine care for each and every one of them that is reflected in her teaching every day.

The teacher who is described by her peers as thoughtful and patient first came to Brentwood alongside her husband Kit, who served as the secondary principal in the late 1990s. Together they relished in the opportunity to work so close to their own two children Leah and Andy – who graduated in 2003 and 2007, respectively – as they grew up.

"I enjoyed seeing them across campus throughout the day and being at all their sports and extracurricular events," B'Smith says.

Alongside her own children, she has created strong connections with many of her students, and has emphasized how much it means to her that she can impact them through a Christian-centered environment.

"Since I was young I've found the Bible fascinating and life-changing," B'Smith reflected. "I enjoy getting my students to see that it can be a life-changing book for them, and creating a desire to have relationship with God as a result of what they learn from our lessons."

While the Christ-centered lessons have remained a constant throughout her teaching career, many other aspects have evolved over the years.

"We typed out Friday letters on a typewriter when we first started," B'Smith says with a laugh.

She has learned a lot from the students in return, as new technology has been introduced to the classroom, which she says helps her to empathize with her students as they struggle



photo: Jenna Timmerman

Gather 'round For 21 years, Carolyn B'Smith has forged a reputation for being kind and patient with her third graders, and for teaching Christ-centered lessons.

to learn material that she doesn't find difficult herself.

Along with the integration of new classroom technologies, B'Smith has focused her teaching style on collaborative learning among the students.

"I have them do a lot of peer tutoring because they're so happy to share what they know," B'Smith says.

Outside of the classroom, B'Smith enjoys spending plenty of time outdoors with her family. She stays very active, often going on hikes and bike rides with her husband in her free time. When she's not exploring the outdoors, she always finds time to spend with her two grandchildren, ages one and two, when they come to town.

Since her own children live far away, their family tradition is taking vacations together over summer and Christmas break. One of their favorite destinations, Rockport, gives the whole family a chance to enjoy the beach together.

B'Smith's love for her family is apparent to everyone who knows her, and that care has extended to the BCS community as well.

"I have enjoyed working with such a talented and caring group of fellow teachers throughout the years," B'Smith says.

Longtime friend Evelyn Ellis, who taught third grade alongside B'Smith for many years before moving to fifth grade this year, spoke

Generosity abounds for Zambians in need

By Michael Milicia

Brentwood Christian's 14th annual Money for Medicine fundraiser, which ran from March 22 to April 3, brought in \$6,307.03. That's enough donations to help 1,261 Zambians receive the medicine they need.

"God calls us to be cheerful and generous givers, and that's what BCS does with this," project director Michele Broadway said.

In the competition among classes, this year's winners are Cynthia Hutson's K4 class, Paul Morrow's fifth grade, Jonathan Weed's seventh

grade, and Jeri Birdwell's sophomore class.

Hutson's class raised \$202.62, averaging \$22.51 per student. Morrow's class brought in \$404.20, averaging \$15.55. Weed's class total was \$509.26, averaging \$20.37, and Birdwell's class raised \$618.74, averaging \$25.78 per student.

The prize for lower and upper elementary classes is an ice cream sundae party with "lots of toppings." The middle school winners earned an extended lunch at Gattiland. In high school, the reward is an extended off-campus lunch day at a place of their choice.

Broadway announced the beginning of Money for Medicine all-community chapel on March 21. That day, every student received the traditional bag of M&Ms.

"Students tell me often that they save all year for this," Broadway said. "Parents tell me often that their children are learning to be generous and think of others."

During sixth period each day of the fundraiser, NJHS members counted money during their lunch. They ate and then started counting bags from different classes, filling the room with chatter and the sounds of clinking coins.

admirably of her.

"Mrs. B'Smith is probably one of the most patient teachers I've ever worked with," she says with a smile. "She loves her students so much and always looks for ways to help them to learn to the best of their ability. I learned so much from her. She was a blessing."

THE BEAR FACTS

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

Dominating baseball team remains unchallenged

By Blake Benton

With a 7-0 overall record and currently undefeated in district play, the Brentwood Bears are eyeing a baseball district championship as they

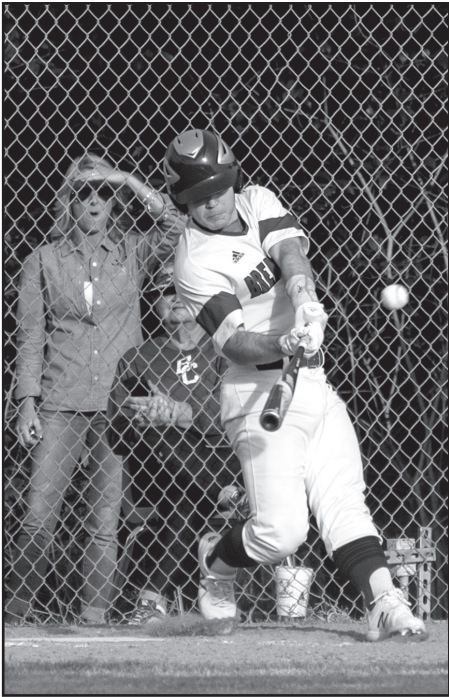


photo: Jeff Smith

Smack Senior captain Dillon Smith connects during a recent Bears' victory.

roll over opponent after opponent. The Bears beat their closest challenger, Shertz John Paul II, in an 11-1 win at home in early March.

"We keep our game the same and play hard no matter what team we're facing, and it shows on the scoreboard," senior Diego Escobedo said.

Several games remain before Brentwood's senior night game on April 24. Playoffs will begin the following week.

Escobedo and fellow senior captain Dillon Smith lead the team in batting, averaging a respective .487 and .423 through their game on April 6. Junior Blake Benton leads the team with 16 RBIs, and he is tied with sophomore Travis Whitaker for the lead with two home runs. Junior Jack Oberwortmann leads with 24 hits, followed by Smith with 21.

Even with impressive offensive stats in the books, Coach Mike Bando keeps the team humble and reminds them to stay focused.

"You're only as good as your last at bat," Bando said.

On the mound, the Bears are led by Escobedo, freshman Riley Keesey, and Whitaker.

"The team has been playing very hard and very good," Escobedo said, before pointing out a few minor aspects of the game that could be improved upon. "We've struggled with base running, but our offense is very effective and we hit the ball everywhere on the field."

Bando, in his second year as head coach at Brentwood, has high hopes for the Bears' post-

season run.

"We have a strong starting lineup and plenty of depth on the team to be able to compete with anyone in the playoffs," Bando said.

According to Smith, the Bears also benefit from positive team chemistry.

"I've really been surprised by how hard the underclassmen have worked and really fell right into place on the team," Smith said. "It allows us to bond and focus on next level play when everyone is buying into the system, and that's why I know we can go far into playoffs this year and are currently fourth in state."

Following are the team's most recent results:

3/8: @TSD 18-0 W

The Bears run-ruled the Rangers in four innings. The Bears hit two home runs – one from Whitaker to left field, followed by Benton to center field. The Rangers had no reply to the Bears offensively or defensively. Escobedo went 3-for-3 at the plate, as did Whitaker.

3/23: @San Juan Diego 18-0 W

BCS shut out their opponent in this three-inning game. Keesey pitched a perfect game with eight strikeouts. Benton hit a two-run homer to left, and Smith hit an inside-the-park home run. Oberwortmann went 3-for-4 against the Saints, hitting two singles and one double.

4/3: @Concordia 18-5 W

The Bears had a slow start, scoring only two of their 18 runs in the first inning. The second inning produced 11 more runs for the Bears. Smith and Whitaker led the Bears at the plate.

Smith went 3-for-4 with two doubles, one triple, and two stolen bases, while Whitaker went 4-for-4 with three singles and one double. Keesey pitched the first four innings with eight strikeouts, and Whitaker closed the game in the fifth inning with two strikeouts.

4/5: St. Stephen's 5-2 W

Escobedo, the Bears' ace, pitched a seven-inning complete game as Brentwood defeated the Spartans in a hard-fought non-district contest. The Bears scored first in the second inning with freshman Preston Dame's RBI to give BCS a 1-0 lead heading into the third. They didn't score again till the fourth inning when Whitaker knocked in Smith and Oberwortmann with a double. Benton had an RBI later that inning to give the Bears a 4-0 lead heading into the fifth inning. The Spartans scored twice in the top of the fifth, but Brentwood came back in the seventh with a RBI by Escobedo, ending the game in a 5-2 victory. Benton went 3-for-3 with two singles, one double, and three stolen bases.

"It felt great to actually be able to play tougher competition and still come out with the win," said Oberwortmann, the starting catcher.

4/6: Marble Falls 17-0 W

The Bears took another easy win at home, as Whitaker pitched a four-inning shutout. Consistent doubles and singles from Oberwortmann and Escobedo, who each had three hits, propelled the Bears' offense through the game. Sophomore Luke Jackson ended the game with a walk-off RBI in the fourth inning.

Softball girls pick up big win as difficult season nears end

By Bear Facts staff

When junior Kori Howell ended last Thursday's game by striking out the Waco Vanguard batter, a celebration began. Although it was only Brentwood's third win of the season, it was their first district win in two years. They had withstood a furious Vanguard comeback and hung on to win 11-10.

"The girls have really come a long way this season," head coach Paul Sladek said, crediting the team for a win they "fought hard for."

The season has not been easy for the girls. With three games remaining this season and only one district win, Brentwood has very little chance of making playoffs. Their senior night will be Friday, April 20.

Junior Lauryn Williams and freshman Caroline Griffith are the team's leaders in most offensive categories. Williams is batting .500 through last week's games, and Griffith is next at .478. Williams leads with 15 RBIs, while Griffith leads the team with 14 runs scored.

"Softball this year has been so much fun,"

Griffith said. "I've really enjoyed spending time with the girls on the team."

Following are the team's most recent results:

3/19: @ Marble Falls Faith Acad. 12-1 L

Playing an opponent that Sladek called the best team they have faced this year, Brentwood gave up 11 runs in the third inning. The Bears were held hitless.

3/22: Concordia 21-6 L

Concordia got three runs in the first inning off of a home run. Brentwood scored three runs in the fourth inning, with the big hit being a double by Williams. BCS was behind 10-4 before Concordia scored 11 runs in the seventh inning. The Bears actually out-hit their opponent 9-7, but they walked 12 Concordia batters.

3/27: @ Waco Reicher 10-0 L

Brentwood struggled to make contact with the ball, and the only Bears to reach base were hit by a pitch. Reicher Catholic scored only once in the first inning, but hit hard with five runs in the second, as well as two runs in the third and fourth inning. They had 12 hits in the four-inning game. Still, Sladek was impressed

with his team's defense, pointing out that no runs were the result of BCS errors.

4/3: Marble Falls Faith Acad. 8-0 L

Sladek praised the effort of freshman pitcher Molly Stewart, who gave up only four hits and struck out six batters in five innings. Unfortunately for the Bears, they were unable to get a hit in either game against Faith.

"Overall we're playing better, and I believe we will win one soon," Sladek said.

4/5: @ Waco Vanguard 11-10 W

BCS jumped out to a 5-0 lead before giving up three runs in the bottom of the first. After that, Stewart held Vanguard scoreless for four consecutive innings while Brentwood extended its lead to 11-3. Stewart, who struck out 10 batters, ran out of gas in the seventh as the score grew closer, and junior Kori Howell came in to finish the game, shutting down Vanguard to preserve victory for the Bears.

Williams and junior Nyna Vazquez each had two hits, and Williams also scored three runs to go with three RBIs.

"As a team, we worked very well together,

and through our hard work, we were able to take the win," Stewart said.



photo: Katie Griffith

Close Junior Kori Howell tags a Concordia runner during the game on March 22.

Track ready for district

By Jackson Baird

As a warm-up for their district tournament coming up on April 19, the varsity track teams competed in the Round Rock Christian meet on April 7. The boys’ team placed fifth out of 12 schools, and the girls were third out of nine. The boys won the 4x200 relay (1:44.46) and took third in the 4x400 (3:59.22). Junior Zack Mack placed third in shot put (36-11.5); junior Gavin Damra won the discus (112-05), followed by senior Hunter Burcham in second (112-04).



photo: Jane Hughes

I’m flying! Junior Jaclyn Wishard soars in the long jump at the March 29 meet.

The girls placed second in the 4x100 (55.38) and were third in the 4x200 (2:02.05). Junior Kayla Mayo took second in shot put (31-01), and senior Trinity Ragsdill was first in discus (86-05). Junior Jaclyn Wishard won the high jump (4-08) and third in long jump (14-01). Junior Jane Hughes won the pole vault (8-06). On March 29 the Bears competed in their fourth track meet of the year in Elgin, which was a small meet that only had two other schools competing – Elgin and Round Rock Christian. No official scores were taken.

The varsity track teams competed in Lexington on March 22. This meet consisted of 16 public and private schools. The boys’ team did not place, but many of the athletes placed in individual events. Sophomore Noah Islas placed fifth in the 800 (2:12.24), and freshman Ethan Rutt was second in the JV 800 (2:21.99). Sophomore Kevin Lu placed third in JV 110 hurdles (19.22). Junior Curtis Mack earned second in discus (99-5.5), and junior Blake Benton took sixth in the same event (92-4.5).

For the girls, freshman Grace Drew placed fifth in the JV 3200 (16:12), and Mayo was sixth in shot put (32-9). In discus, Ragsdill and Mallory Lesko placed third (90-9) and fifth (76-7), respectively. Wishard placed third in high jump (4-10) and fifth in long jump (16-5). Three school records have broken so far this season. Mayo has set the school record in the 100 meters (13.01) and in shot put (32-9). Wishard set the school record in high jump (5-3).

“It has been tough competing in public school meets, but it is helping prepare for our private school meets,” sophomore Cade Young said. Girls’ coach Katie Smith said she is pleased with how the season has gone so far, but there is still room to improve and get better. “Our young athletes have gotten better every meet,” Smith said. “But we need to get in better shape and get better at our relays.”

Golf teams wrap busy season

By Jackson Baird

The girls’ and boys’ varsity golf teams competed in their district golf tournament on April 12 at River Crossing in Spring Branch. Each school picked five golfers for their team plus additional golfers to compete as individuals in the tournament.

Golf season kicked off earlier this year and has featured more tournaments than in previous seasons. “Coach (Brant) Troutman and I have seen excellent progress from all our players throughout the heavier than usual tournament schedule this year,” coach John Vandygriff said.

Both teams competed in the Hyde Park Invitational on April 5 at River Place. The boys and girls both finished in the middle of the pack. Senior Avery Miller finished fifth individually in the girls’ division, and freshman Kirsten Morgan finished just outside the top five. Senior David Tiner, junior Adam Murphree, and junior Connor Troutman all finished just outside the top five in the boys’ division.

“In addition to driving, chipping, and putting well, the team is starting to better understand the importance of the mental aspects to the game,” Vandygriff said. “Short memories, laser focus, and confidence are critical to every shot in a tournament. Not only that, but using one’s creativity and determination to figure out how to grind out a good score even when you’re not at your best is a key to being successful in golf.”

On March 26 the golf teams competed in the third of three tournaments hosted by Regents this year at the Grey Rock golf course. The boys finished in the middle of the pack, while the girls lacked enough members to make a team entry. Murphree was awarded the Regent’s Cup for having the lowest cumulative score for the three Regents tournaments. “It’s great to see the players’ hard work and commitment to the golf team,” Vandygriff said, pointing out the extra work that many players are putting in outside of team events. “The future looks really bright for BCS golf with our freshman class.”



photo: John Vandygriff

Camaraderie BCS lady golfers pose after their tournament at River Place on April 5. Coach John Vandygriff said he sees a bright future for the BCS golf teams.

Drill, cheer teams finish tryouts, announce new squads

By Natalie Barry

The air was still and quiet as the nervousness of the situation set in. The auditionees waited for their turn to showcase their abilities before a group of qualified judges with years of dance training. Drill team clinic and tryouts occurred the week of March 19-23 at the Athletic Center. The following week, students tried out to make the varsity cheerleading squad. “I am very proud of all of the hard work exhibited during the tryout week, and I’m so

excited for this next year with our largest team (ever),” drill team coach Lisa Warner said. Twenty-one girls earned a spot on the team, known as the Lady Bellas. All 25 participants had to perform the same routine, in groups of four. Tryouts occurred over the course of four days, the first three of which were set for learning technique and the particular dance. The fourth day was the actual tryout, which involved performing the routine and techniques like basic leaps, kicks, and turns in front of a panel of judges. It was also a way to show any special skills. Scores were calculated based

on projection, technique, and memory. Reviews on the tryout process were mixed. Some found tryouts beneficial, yet others found it stressful. “It’s really overwhelming and physically and emotionally painful, but it’s something we have to do,” sophomore Cierra Tolman said. Cheer tryouts began the week of March 26-30. Four new girls were accepted to the high school team, and 10 girls made the new middle school team. Cheer coach Kim Conner said she is very excited to be bringing back middle school cheer.

“Every good team needs cheerleaders cheering them on to victory, and I believe the girls stepping up to be middle school cheerleaders will do just that,” she said. The participants had to learn the fight song, a cheer, and a routine. They learned the routines over the course of four days, and each day was spent practicing for the tryout. Sophomore Genevieve Graessle said she enjoyed tryouts and seeing new faces. “I am excited to see what kind of new dynamics we will have as a squad next year,” she said.

Students experience history, play in snow, dine well

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drive to Salzburg, where Mozart was born. Some of us visited the elegant Hohensalzburg Fortress, where we could see the whole city below. The rest of us divided up and took tours around the city. We went to the garden where the famous scene “Do Re Mi” of the movie “The Sound of Music” was shot. We also tried some renowned Mozartkugel – the chocolate treat that is named after Mozart. Then we all gathered at St. Peter’s Abbey to start our way to Munich.

The next day, we went to the Dachau concentration camp. The place successfully captured some of the depressing history of the Holocaust. Afterward, we rushed back to the city center for a bike tour. It was enjoyable since we stopped at many important sites. Later, we had a guided tour around Munich, stopping at the Nymphenburg Palace for some photos before heading to the BMW World. On the way, we passed by the Olympic Stadium. After dinner, we were given time to hang out and looked for gelato. We went to the Hofbrauhaus, where Hitler gave speeches, and now Mr. Harper also gave us a speech about Hitler! Finally, we took the subway back to the hotel and ended our day.

Our main destination of the sixth day was the Neuschwanstein Castle, but before that, we stopped at the Wieskirche Village to visit their famous church. It was beautiful

with the peaceful surroundings. After that, we excitedly got to Neuschwanstein, where Disney got the idea for their iconic castle and we got to learn about King Ludwig II. There is no capable word to describe the breathtaking beauty of this place. As we said goodbye to Neuschwanstein, we headed for our hotel. There was a lot of snow, so people had a snow fight and even built a snowman!



Is this real? Seniors have a snowball fight outside of their hotel in Austria during their spring break trip. Students also spent time in Germany, Switzerland, and France. *photo: Vi Nguyen*

The next day, we went to the sparkling Swarovski Crystal Worlds. We had a great shopping time and took a look at the crystal garden. Then we visited the city of Innsbruck, which was very beautiful and was surrounded by the Alps. Some of us went inside the Goldenes Dachl and climbed up the big clock tower there. The day ended with a long drive to Switzerland through long tunnels.

It was the eighth day, and our destination was Mt. Pilatus. We took the gondolas and went straight to the top of the mountain. There, we had a brief Sunday worship before having fun with the snow! It was foggy but not freezing cold until we got back down. We had a walking tour around Lucerne and picked up our pocket knives. We visited main sites like the Lion Monument or the Jesuit Church. Then we had a lot of free time for lunch and wandering around. Most of us settled for chocolate and some souvenirs. Some visited the Hofkirche Church and the Town Walls. We had a good dinner and returned to the hotel because it was super cold outside.

On the last day, we woke up in the beautiful falling snow in Switzerland. We were given an opportunity for an extra excursion to Strasbourg, France, so we settled for crepes, gelato, and souvenirs. Some visited the museum and the palace where king Louis V lived. Then we went to Heidelberg, Germany, and visited the damaged castle where they stored the biggest wooden barrel that contained 85,000 gallons of wine. After that, we had the best dinner of the trip and stayed in a great hotel with bunk beds!

The next morning, we got up early for a 10-hour flight, but we were all excited to be home and taste real American food. Our trip ended with everlasting memories of exotic views of Europe, the great bonding time with each other, and valuable history lessons!

Armstrong leads math efforts

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academic competition, said she is thankful that Brentwood’s top-level math students have Armstrong around to continue to help them grow.

“It’s just very generous for him to continue to work with our math team,” she said. “He’s a blessing to our program.”

Armstrong has coached Brentwood competitive math for nearly 10 years, starting in 2008 during Andrew’s fourth-grade year. Before this, he participated in the math club throughout his high school career, and qualified for the first ever American Invitational Mathematics Examination (AIME), a continuation of the American Mathematics Competitions (AMC) which students across the nation, including at Brentwood, continue to take annually.

After high school, Armstrong graduated from Texas A&M with an electrical engineering degree, which he now uses to work on IBM chips. He said he chose engineering because he liked the application of math alongside the problem solving aspects.

“(Electrical engineering) is applying math and science,” Armstrong says. “It was challenging.”

When asked what has kept him coaching for nearly a decade, Armstrong says it’s getting to watch students grow in their skills.

“When students work hard, improve scores, and attain their goals, I find that satisfying,” he says. “I like to see when students ‘see the light’ when they solve a problem.”

To anyone interested in getting better at math, he notes the key is hard work.

“A lot of students give up too easily,” Armstrong says. “If they stick with it, it’s those students who do the best. Effort is a lot more important than talent.”

His students confirm this, noting that Armstrong stresses continual practice for success at math competitions.

“His philosophy about math is ‘you do it until it sticks,’” Emma Nguyen says.

However, Emma emphasizes that Armstrong is there to help at every step along the way.

“He’s dedicated to us,” she concludes.



Gardening Senior Diego Escobedo works the soil at Head Start! as part of BCS students’ community service on March 7, the first of two Spiritual Emphasis Days. Juniors went to Central Texas Food Bank, and seniors went to Head Start!, Community First, and St. Vincent de Paul thrift store. The next day, freshmen and sophomores worked with Head Start!, while sophomores also served other places. *photo: Katie Griffith*