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THE BEAR FACTS

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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MARCH 2019

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Seniors head to Ireland

By Quentin Fowler

Over spring break, while many are catching up on sleep, the seniors will be off touring Ireland.

The seniors departed early on March 7 on an overnight flight to Dublin, Ireland. While they are in the land of clovers, the tour company EF Tours has a busy schedule planned out for the 28 students, including touring such features as Bunratty Castle, Ireland's best-restored medieval castle, and a full-day bus excursion around the Ring of Kerry. The students will be spending seven days and seven nights on European soil.

"I am most looking forward to going out of the country!" senior Jaclyn Wishard said. "I want to see as much of the world as I can, and this is step one. Plus I get to do it with my class, which is awesome."

Accompanying the students will be 13 adults, including parents and BCS staff members. Teachers making the trip include class sponsors Mere Rowlett and Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth, as well as Michele Broadway, Tere Hager, and Correy Washington.

The tour company offered an option to the seniors that gave them the chance to email other people and invite them to donate money to their trip funds. Several students also participated in fundraisers to raise money to pay for their trips, while others found jobs.

"I worked two summers straight, and it all went into saving so I could pay for my trip myself," Joslyn Hoffmeyer-Gay said.

Upon arrival in Ireland, the seniors will travel into Dublin where they will go on a walking tour, followed by dinner at a local restaurant.

Day three will consist of a bus tour of central Dublin, a tour of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and lunch, followed by personal touring time.

Everyone will begin day four on a two-and-a-half-hour bus drive to Galway. Then they will take a walking tour from Main Square to the Barbour side, followed by lunch, free time, and some excursions to the surrounding regions to view the scenery.

On the fifth day the group will depart the hotel by bus and visit the Cliffs of Moher. Then the students will see Bunratty Castle before having time to eat lunch and visit Folk Park.

On day six, the seniors will go on a full-day bus trip around the Ring of Kerry. Along the 110-mile journey they will stop at the Bog Village and the town of Sneem. There will be numerous scenic photo opportunities along the journey around the Ring of Kerry and free time for lunch. If weather permits, they will also stop to watch the sheepdog demonstration at the Ring of Kerry. Most nights they will eat dinner at their hotel.

Dr. Hollingsworth, who has not been to Ireland, said she is eager for the trip.

"I've heard that Ireland is a beautiful country with friendly people, amazing food, and a fascinating history," she said. "I'm looking forward to experiencing all of that with a great group of students and adults."



photo: thekingofkerry.com

Emerald Isle The BCS seniors' adventures will include a tour of the Ring of Kerry, a 110-mile route featuring white-sand beaches and rugged mountain passes.

Students devote day to science

By Michael Milicia

Rockets flew into the skies above the football field, kids successfully landed on targets with their parachutes, and homemade cars and boats raced through their paths during the second annual Science and Engineering Fair at BCS on Feb. 27.

Instead of attending regular classes, elementary and high school students moved back and forth around campus to the football

field, CSA, church auditorium, and various other spots to explore the many science-related activities. The event was again masterminded by secondary science teachers Dr. Diann Sloan and Michelle Mallett, who spent a long time preparing for the day.

"I am thankful to God and to everyone else who played a role in making this day possible," Dr. Sloan said.

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photo: Brandy Gauthier

It flew! Seniors Riley Walker (left) and Harry Seo were paired with fourth-graders Charlie Osborn and Archie Whaley to build a parachute and test it out.

Students display singing talent

By Hannah Womack

More than 300 people packed into the CSA theater on Friday, Feb. 22, to watch students perform in this year's talent show. The night was filled with singing, dancing, kazoo playing, and exclusive performances from both Student Council and the graduating class of 2019. The show sold 264 tickets, raking in around \$700. Profits will go directly into StuCo's account to fund community events such as the Back to School Bash and BCL.

This year's winner for high school was senior Emma Dowell, who sang "Remedy" by Adele. Placing first for middle school, eighth-grader Ashlynn Anthony, who captivated the audience with her performance of the song "King" by Lauren Aquilina, was shocked to hear that she

had won.

"When they announced it, I felt this rush of emotions come on. It was surreal," Anthony said.

Other top placers for high school included juniors Taylor Warner and Addison Alberda, who danced an originally choreographed routine to the song "My Way" by One Bit and Noah Cyrus, placing second, and the sister-brother duo Adrie (junior) and Evan (eighth grade) Gruis who came in third, singing "Ring of Fire" by Johnny Cash.

Eighth-grader Ocean Peterson won second place for middle school with the song "Waterfall" by Jon Schmidt, and Mia Fluitt and Ben Gatlin, also eighth graders, took third with the

see **TALENT**, page 3

You Can Believe: Genevieve Graessle

Oscars leave bad taste for those seeking diversity

Disclaimer: Views expressed by the author may not reflect those of the BCS leadership, and references to movies should not be taken as recommendations to see any of these films.

Two Sundays ago, on Feb. 24, the 91st annual Academy Awards, or the Oscars, aired on ABC. Those who know anything about me probably know that movies are one of the things that interest me the most. This year I even hosted an Oscars Watch Party at my house. We all voted on who we thought would win, and, not to brag, but I got 17 out of 24 correct.

However, one of the categories that I got wrong was the winner for Best Picture of 2018. In case you missed the show, *Green Book* was this year's winner, also taking home Best Original Screenplay and Best Actor in a Supporting Role for Mahershala Ali.

The movie is about a black classical musician, Don Shirley, and his Italian-American chauffeur, Tony Vallelonga. It tells the true story of the unexpected relationship that develops between these two men as they drive through the Deep South in 1962, learning to overcome racism and anger in the process. It's a good story to tell, but I think we have to look first at the history in the stories we have been telling.

Many people were upset when this movie beat out Spike Lee's *BlacKkKlansman* for the honor. It was brought to light that his movies have been getting beat by the same stories for the last 30 years; in 1989, *Driving Miss Daisy*, another film concerning chauffeurs and race issues, won the Best Picture Oscar, and Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* was not even nominated.

It cannot be denied that there has been im-

mense progress in increasing the diversity in the film industry in the past years. A record 15 women took home Academy Awards this year. Three out of this year's top four acting categories were awarded to people of color: Regina King, Rami Malek, and Ali. However, the Academy continues to reward stories like *Green Book* with the highest honor.

There were so many other important accounts being told this year; other nominees include *Roma*, the beautiful telling of the life of a domestic worker in 1970s Mexico City, *Black Panther*, a ground-breaking narrative of the African king and hero T'Challa, and *Bohemian Rhapsody*, which walks us through Freddie Mercury's climb to stardom. Every one of these stories brought new ideas to the conversation and took so many more risks than *Green Book*.

If we only reward and acknowledge the same kinds of stories every year, we will never get to

fully appreciate all of the culture that is being presented in films. *Roma* and *Black Panther* were two of my favorite films of last year because of the new levels of culture I was getting

"The protagonist of this story has been the same for almost all 91 years."

to experience through watching them.

The director of *Roma* drew from experiences from his own childhood in Mexico City to present the powerful story in an intimate and realistic way. *Black Panther* is so much more than a superhero drama; it is the first movie in the Marvel Cinematic Universe to center on a black superhero, and we get to watch the beautiful African nation of Wakanda thrive.

Although both of these films took home three Oscars, they did not win the distinction of Best Picture. Hopefully, winning the Best Picture Oscar is not the only reason people make films. However, the world of film critics has splashed back these past two weeks at the Academy's choice for the award. *Green Book* was actually the only nominee that I did not go see in theaters; there was major controversy surrounding the story, and I decided not to support the film.

The family of Dr. Shirley claims that the movie does not portray the relationship between the two men correctly, and it over-dramatizes their friendship in order to make the white man look like a hero. In the film, Val-

lelonga conquers his racial prejudice towards Shirley, and he has to learn to be an ally to the black man in the Deep South of the '60s.

I think this is a fantastic and extremely encouraging story to be told, and I am glad that the world of film wants to celebrate it. Nonetheless, it is a story we have heard so many times before. Something to think about when watching these award shows is whose stories we are celebrating. It cannot be denied that *Green Book* is a good movie that tells a good and worthwhile story. But we also have to notice that the protagonist of this story has been the same for almost all 91 of the Best Picture winners in the Academy's history.

Many have been pointing out that this year's Oscars is correcting mistakes that were made 20 years ago – with the record number of women rightfully being recognized – but that the show was also making mistakes that will need to be corrected in 20 years. Movies like *Roma* or *Black Panther* – these are stories that we should be celebrating now!

Hopefully in 20 years these stories will be acknowledged just as much as stories like *Green Book* are now. Hopefully at awards shows 20 years in the future we will not be making mistakes that we will need to correct at awards shows 40 years in the future. It is hard to see why rewarding *Green Book* with Best Picture might not be the best choice; it is a remarkable story about race relations that makes people feel good and is really well made. That is worth rewarding! But, we also need to take a step back from our point of view and acknowledge the importance of other groups' voices. Let's tell and enjoy and celebrate everyone's stories.



Spike Lee

The Groomfs: an absurdist tale for eccentric readers

By Clive Whaley

Disclaimer: This story is not true. It is simply an absurdist story with no actual meaning or validity. Do not take it as fact.

There was once a family named the Groomfs. They lived in a horrible place where it was always Los Angeles and nothing else, just Los Angeles. They were extremely wealthy but decided to invest most of their money into paper straws rather than into a house.

The house they lived in was a sizable two-bedroom apartment, where Mr. and Mrs. Groomf lived with their five kids. Mr. Groomf was a paper straw enthusiast and an inexperienced artist who kept working for free in return for "exposure." Mrs. Groomf was a fellow paper straw enthusiast who angrily scowled all the time because she felt bad about the time she

threw a whole pack of D-Batteries off a cliff. The circumstances in which she was near a cliff and had a pack of D-Batteries would most likely never occur again, so she had said to herself, "Might as well," and chucked them off the cliff.

Johnson Groomf was the oldest of the Groomf children at 19 years old and was easily the most inept. He only had a seventh-grade education because he thought he could just look up everything online. Mr. Groomf thought this was fair enough reasoning and let him drop out of school.

Shmoop Groomf, age 10, was the only Groomf daughter. She had a college education and was a doctor of physics. She created a paper straw that was better for the environment than a plastic straw and that actually functioned as a usable straw, in an attempt to impress her parents. Her parents were not im-

pressed and said that it went against the spirit of a paper straw.

Gilford Groomf was an eight-year-old boy whose favorite activity in the world was yelling for no reason at all. Gorg Groomf was a six-year-old boy whose favorite activity was trying to ingest D-Batteries.

The final Groomf child was a hypothetical person created by Shmoop who was repeatedly mentioned by her all day, every day. The rest of the family just accepted that this theoretical person known as Timmy was actually real.

Now, you may have a few questions such as, How is this family even remotely wealthy at all? This is because of Grandpa Groomf. Grandpa Groomf was the CEO of a leading paper straw manufacturer. He grew very rich from his paper straw business. Then he died. In his will, all of his money was given to Mr. and

Mrs. Groomf; however, the will also stated that they cannot use any of the money for anything at any time. So, the Groomfs are technically very wealthy, while at the same time being middle-class.

One day at the Groomf household, Troomf Groomf appeared at their doorstep. Troomf has been Mr. Groomf's brother ever since they were thirteen. (There was a heated disagreement about shirt pockets, resolved at age twelve.) Troomf has always been trying to steal the Groomf fortune that they can't do anything with. Troomf wanted it because it would make him seem like a more reputable snake handler. As soon as Troomf entered the house, Shmoop got very irritated. "Timmy and I think you're going to try and steal the money again," said

see **GROOMFS**, page 8

Science Day features cars, rockets, boats

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Students from sixth to tenth grades either chose or were assigned one of three projects: a bottle rocket which must deploy a parachute, “catch air,” and “remain aloft for a max time”; a mouse trap car for which the only source of energy is the mouse trap; and a self-propelled boat “that can travel a forward distance of 0.5 meters in 10 seconds using carbon dioxide produced from the reaction of baking soda and vinegar.”

Pairs of teachers and volunteers judged these projects at three different locations, while students held their breath, hoping their creations would not fail.

Students in grades three to five were able to observe some work done by older students before they built parachutes with the help of the juniors and seniors. They tested their work in the CSA lobby, where their high school buddies dropped the parachutes from a stand using a clamp that started a timer the moment it opened, only stopping when the weight at the bottom hit a platform.

These students also attended the Chemistry Circus show in the theater, where a group from Abilene Christian University demonstrated various entertaining chemical reactions in three separate shows.

At the beginning of the day, seniors and juniors were moved into the chapel to be placed in groups that would later be used to move to the different activities for the day. Challenge activities included materials such as cups, strings, and rubber bands. Another activity required students from sixth through tenth grades to form groups and make short videos answering various scientific questions.

In the church auditorium, students were lectured by men who work for local law enforcement agencies. The two partners talked broadly about forensics, but went into detail on fingerprints.

Most students were given a test grade for this day. Juniors and seniors who missed the day were required to write an essay about a scientific experiment.

While most students seemed to enjoy getting out of classes, some complained about the stress of having to complete an important project. Others had suggestions for changes in the guidelines of building their cars, boats, and rockets. Still others said they had an overall good time.

“I think (the day) was engaging, yet rigorous, and overall a fun day of challenge,” eighth-grader Lily Trueper said.

Ryan to speak at Dinner

By Sophie Orlikoski

Brentwood Christian will host one of its two major fundraisers on March 30, with the 28th annual Partnership Dinner at the Renaissance Hotel at 6 p.m. Event coordinator Sarah Wilson said she expects about 500 to 600 people to show up to hear guest speaker Reid Ryan, the president of the Houston Astros, and to take part in the popular live and silent auctions.

Ryan, who helped lead the Astros to their first World Series title in 2017, will speak about his personal history with the game of baseball, growing up with a world-famous father, and the Astros’ path to the championship. Ryan is also a former BCS dad, as his children were Brentwood students until he took the Houston job six years ago.

This year there will be no puppies in the auction, but some items up for bidding will be a signed Astros jersey, Astros tickets, two Yeti coolers, parking places, and more. “Teacher time” will again be featured, giving students the opportunity to have a teacher take them somewhere they would like to go, such as the movies, bowling, or fishing. The silent auction will be online, with the list of items to be released soon.

This year’s emcee will be school board chairman Brian Jackson. Dress is business casual, although guests also have the option of wearing their favorite team jersey.

“This is a highlight of the school year for our community,” Wilson said. “Faculty, parents, and students are inspired and entertained, and this year’s dinner will be no exception.”



photo: Tere Hager

Show stopper Many members of the Class of 2019 performed a song from High School Musical during this year’s Talent Show, held in the theater on Feb. 22.

Talent show features 28 students

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song “Say Something,” by A Great Big World and Christina Aguilera.

Other highlights included the senior class’s performance to music from High School Musical and StuCo’s glow-in-the-dark dance mash-up.

“I was impressed by the courage of everyone who participated,” StuCo sponsor Jeff Morris said. “I enjoyed seeing some of the more reserved students take command of the stage and shine in the spotlight.”

Hosting the talent show, seniors DeanAlan Wiginton and Brayden George also took command of the stage, entertaining the audience between acts with their wacky jokes and playful banter. Many students and teachers expressed satisfaction regarding the way the duo transitioned seamlessly between acts, without lingering on any particular act for too long.

The show was mainly organized and execut-

ed by StuCo officers, who helped the night run smoothly by working backstage, crafting flyers, and observing auditions. President Nyna Vazquez, the backstage manager, was the main coordinator of the show. Others who were crucial to the production’s success included teacher Travis Pollard and the three judges whose identities will not be revealed.

Tryouts for the Talent show took place during lunch on Feb. 4, 6, and 7, and everyone who auditioned was allowed to perform. This included a total of 19 middle school students in a total of 13 different acts, and nine high school students performing in eight different acts. First-place winners for both middle school and high school were awarded trophies, and all who placed in the top three were given candy and a certificate.

If participation increases, Morris said there is the possibility that separate shows would be held for both middle school and high school.



photo: mlb.com

Family pride Houston Astros’ president of business operations Reid Ryan will speak at Brentwood’s Partnership Dinner on March 30 at the Renaissance Hotel.

THE BEAR FACTS

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SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: *Max Cooper*

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2019.

What’s not to love? Joyful Max friendly to all

By Natalie Barry

It’s 3:45 p.m. at Brentwood Christian, and as students stream out of the buildings, many begin to gather around a red Mini Cooper which belongs to Max Cooper. They laugh and joke as they discuss the events of the day.

Known for being boisterous, joyful, and kind, Max is described by peers as a fun-loving, passionate person who constantly has the backs of those she cares for.

“She is always doing things for her friends, even if it is not convenient for her,” classmate Tessa Banner says.

Close friends say that every day with Max is an adventure, and that imagining life without her is difficult.

“My favorite memories with Max are hard to remember, because every day with her is my favorite,” friend Anam Mohammed says. “She will quietly listen to me when I have a problem and will wait until I’ve cooled down to give me the exactly right advice I need to handle the situation.”

Friends describe Max as a people person who is very supportive, emotional, and quirky.

“She winks all the time, is always flinging her hair behind her, and cries (tears of happiness) every single time she sees a dog,” Tessa says.

Living so close to Brentwood allows Max to open her house to close friends who live farther away or who would otherwise have to wait for siblings with after-school activities.

“I am over at her house all the time, and I call her parents mom and dad,” Anam says.

Max volunteers through the Connect Program at Brentwood, which pairs a high school student to an elementary class and allows older students to spend time with younger students and build relationships with them. Max says she enjoys the time she spends with Summer Best’s fourth-grade class, and Best says she admires what a faithful friend Max is and how she accepts everyone for who they are.

“Who doesn’t love Max? She has a way of making each of them feel important and finding unique qualities in each of the kids that make them special,” Best says.

Max is also described by the lower classmen as kind and as someone who finds time to talk and get to know them. Many are grateful for her friendliness and her supportive spirit.

“I feel really lucky to have Max in my life, because she can always make me smile, no matter what situations we may be going

through,” freshman Josh Trevino says.

Max was born on Aug. 22, 2001, in San Diego, Calif., but moved to Texas when she was three years old. Behind her is her loving family, which consists of her parents, Cameron and Kelly Cooper, and 14-year-old sister Zoe, a BCS eighth grader. Max is inspired by her parents’ example of adapting to new situations, and is grateful that they have provided a good life for her.

Max’s family is from Canada, which has been said by peers to affect her speech.

She says words like mari-nara, decal, case, and

Siri with an accent.

“We make fun of her about how weird she pronounces things all the time,” close friend Corrie Hager says.

Max began attending Brentwood in the sixth grade and was drawn to the friendly spirit of the students and teachers.

“My first impressions of Brentwood were that everyone was either really shy or really outgoing, but everyone was also really kind,” she says.

Max has grown through her experiences at Brentwood and appreciates all that the environment has taught her. She says what she will miss most about her time at Brentwood is the community and sense of familiarity.

One of Max’s favorite memories at Brentwood was in middle school, when it had rained and flooded the C building walkway, and some teachers allowed students to leave class early so they could play in the water.

“We all got absolutely soaked, but it was a lot of fun,” Max says.

Max’s hobbies include coloring, reading, watching movies, and hanging out with friends. She

enjoys playing with her two dogs Willow and Luna and her cat Fiona. She also enjoys traveling, with her favorite place to visit so far

being Italy, because of the the “gorgeous” sites she saw and memories she experienced. Currently she is in Ireland on the senior trip.

“I love getting to visit new places and to see new cultures, as well as the history behind them,” she says.

Max has shown leadership through her roles as costume designer and light director in Brentwood theater productions and was especially helpful in guiding new theater teacher, Joseph Clingan, with the play *Our Town* by leading the tech crew.

“I really appreciated how Max just stepped into the production of *Our Town* and how she flawlessly and professionally ran lights,” Clingan says. “She took direction really well and caught on to the process quickly.”

Max, who plans to attend Austin Community College and major in nursing, attends Hill Country Bible Church and is thankful for her faith that has been a rock through difficult experiences. She credits her church leaders and friends for helping to provide a strong foundation for her spiritual journey.

While her time at BCS is nearing an end, there will likely be a small crowd around a red Mini Cooper, talking and laughing, for years to come.



After 70 years, guineas still roam streets near BCS

By Emma Ayers

If you drive through the Gracy Woods neighborhood on your daily route to school, you undoubtedly know that there are some unique, winged creatures who share the roads with residents. According to local lore and a neighborhood blog, the Gracy Woods guinea fowl have been quite the sight to see in the area since the 1940s, when they migrated over to the Gracy Farm one dark and stormy night, and they have been beloved by residents ever since.

The guineas have been especially well taken care of by Randy and Diana Yarbrough, who not only have a long connection with the neighborhood, but have also been involved with Brentwood Christian School since the 1970s, when Diana began teaching second grade at the school’s old location. The Yarbroughs have lived at the corner of Gorham Street and Swearingen since they moved to Gracy Woods in 1981. Their next door neighbor was Helen Gracy, who still had a few acres of land and some dairy cows, along with 20-30 of her guineas, at that time. The Yarbroughs would gather the chicks after they hatched and raise them until they were big enough to roost in the trees with the adults.

“They’ve always been part of the neighborhood,” said Randy Yarbrough, “and they bring good character to the area.”

Seventy years ago, what is now north Austin was a collection of dairy farms located on the westernmost extensions of the Blackland Prairie just east of the Balcones Fault. Gracy Woods is located on what used to be the old Gracy Farm. According to stories told throughout the years by the Gracy family and then preserved and posted online by neighborhood residents, a domesticated flock of the birds lived on the Kramer Farm to the south. One stormy night, heavy winds blew the guineas over and down the banks of the creek and onto the Gracy dairy farm. It is thought that Mrs. Gracy encouraged the birds to stay by feeding them and buying even more guineas because of how helpful they are as an alarm system and for pest control. The birds have roamed the neighborhood ever since. The feathered friends are protected from harm by friendly neighbors.

One of these neighbors is John Ruffalo, who nurtures the guineas and tries to keep their numbers up. Ruffalo has lived in Gracy Woods



photo: Diana Yarbrough

Moving with purpose Since showing up at the Gracy farm after a storm in the 1940s, guinea fowl have remained a quirky feature of the Gracy Woods neighborhood. With love and support from the Yarbrough family, these birds have endured hardship and continue to delight residents.

for 28 years, one block west of Swearingen on Barchetta, and he says his kids grew up with the guineas and loved them. He says that two years ago he brought in 26 babies, and last year he got 30. Now there are only 11 of the chicks left. Many of these newer guineas, especially from the past few years, are all white, unlike some of the older, speckled ones. Breeding season is coming up, and people who raise guinea fowl will sell the babies. Some people in the neighborhood are even raising money to get more guineas because of how fast they can disappear.

Ruffalo said last year was the first in a long time for the guineas to have babies, “but they didn’t last long with all the cats around,” he said. He also blamed the birds’ high mortality rate on the development of the nearby greenbelt.

“The coyotes are coming closer,” he said. “And there’s a pretty aggressive gray fox, too.”

With the dangerous predators and the continuous threat of cars on Swearingen that he blames for many guinea deaths, Ruffalo has

continued his efforts to strengthen the birds’ population. He has feeders and water set out to keep them off the main roads.

Guinea fowl actually stem from a breed of African turkeys, meaning they can fly quite well, contrary to popular belief. Although the timing of their domestication is unknown, there is evidence that the friendly guinea fowl were present in Greece by the 5th century BC. As domestics, guinea fowl are valuable pest controllers, eating a variety of annoying, and sometimes harmful, insects. According to *Modern Farmer*, they are especially beneficial in controlling the Lyme disease-carrying deer tick, as well as wasp nests. Guineaas also do a good job of scaring away snakes, which is much appreciated by those who keep them around.

While they are rarely deliberately kept in large numbers, a few are sometimes kept with other fowl to be used as a security system against birds of prey. They will call with their loud, high, shrieking voices if concerned about intruders. This valuable trait has long kept

them handy on farms and around other livestock, though it can sometimes get a bit loud in a neighborhood, where the screeches reverberate off of brick walls.

“Owls come and mess around with them. You can see the owls harassing them in the moonlight,” said Ruffalo. “They let you know when the owls are around.”

A group of guinea fowl is actually called a confusion, and there are an estimated 20-30 of the creatures in the neighborhood on any given day. According to Ruffalo, there are actually two confusions of guineas in the neighborhood, one on Swearingen and one on Barchetta. They tend to mix during the day and separate at night, when they roost in the large live oak trees in the area.

From time to time, some neighbors have complained about the guineas. It is true that they may dig a bit in a garden or a yard. They do eat some types of plants, and if they are bothered by cars or dogs they can easily be shrill enough to hurt your ears. If they roost in an oak that happens to be over a car, there is the inevitable bird mess that can be a nuisance. Sometimes it seems as though the guineas know exactly when you are in a rush, picking that time to decide that they want to stand in the middle of the road and not move.

When questioned about his opinion on the friendly neighborhood birds, BCS teacher Russell Larson, who lives near the guineas’ base, had one thing to say: “No comment.”

However, most people seem to enjoy the presence of the guineas, and they even have their own city-made “Guinea Bird Crossing” sign up on Swearingen, which does a good job of discouraging speeding. Not far from the city’s sign, Yarbrough has had his own “Guinea Crossing” sign for much longer, since the time when the fowl would go back and forth to a stream and watering hole near Swearingen.

“We watched them go back and forth and back and forth all day long,” Yarbrough said, “and I always thought it was a little funny.”

Many people say they believe the guineas bring character to the Gracy Woods area, even those living farther away from where the guineas frequent, and children often are delighted by the appearance of the friendly birds.

“I love the guineas,” BCS teacher Cynthia Davis said. “It’s so nice to have farm animals in our neighborhood.”

Baseball team cranks out hits, gains wins

By Jackson Baird

Under new head coach Jeffrey Doege, the Brentwood Christian varsity baseball team is 7-2 following their recent 14-0 win against San Marcos Academy. The Bears will have seven more non-district games before they open up district play in their inaugural 5A season on March 29 against St. Michael's.

Offense has been the strong suit for the Bears in the early part of the season, as they have scored 119 runs in just nine games.

"There has not been one true standout so far; it has been a number of guys contributing offensively," Doege said. "One game it is this person, and the next it is someone else."

Junior Travis Whitaker leads the team in batting, with a .630 average through their first nine games, followed by sophomore Zack Billante, who is hitting .522. Junior Isaac Copeland leads the team with 16 RBIs, followed by Whitaker and senior Jack Oberwortschmann at 14 RBIs each. Whitaker and Oberwortschmann also have two home runs apiece.

On the mound the Bears are led by Whitaker, who has an ERA of 1.56, followed by sophomore Riley Keesey, who has a 2.33 ERA.

"I am still trying to find the right pitching rotation, but so far our pitching has been good," Doege said. "And once the defense starts making the routine plays it should, we'll be fine. But that is definitely an area we need improvement in."

Following are game results thus far:

2/14: San Marcos 10-0 W

In their first game of the season, Brentwood played host to the San Marcos Bears. Keesey pitched four shutout innings. BCS started out slow offensively but found their rhythm in the third inning and exploded for 10 unanswered runs. Copeland put Brentwood into double digits with an RBI single in the fifth inning. Freshman Ryan Crowe led the Bears with two RBIs.

2/18: @ Moody 16-3 W

In a cold and wet game, the Bears put on another strong offensive performance. Whitaker pitched four innings and struck out seven before being replaced by freshman Seth Taylor. Whitaker went 3-for-5 with five RBIs and a home run, and Oberwortschmann went 2-for-3 with three RBIs and a home run.

2/19: @ Granger 19-0 W

An explosive offensive day saw Brentwood pile on seven runs in the fourth and nine in the

fifth. The game featured a great pitching performance from Keesey, who went four innings, striking out ten while giving up only one hit, as well as a towering home run from Whitaker that cleared the softball field beyond the left field fence. Whitaker was 4-for-4 with six RBIs, and Oberwortschmann finished the game on the mound for BCS.

2/22: San Juan Diego 23-1 W

A lack of control from the pitchers for San Juan Diego led to a 17-run first inning for the Bears and a quick mercy rule. Brentwood exploded for 19 hits in just two innings and were led by Oberwortschmann, who had three hits, and Copeland, who had four RBIs. Billante was on the mound for BCS and struck out six batters in two innings.

2/25: Concordia 13-2 W

Down 2-1 after three innings, the Bears' offense came alive in the fourth inning, scoring 12 runs to push past Concordia. Whitaker took the mound for Brentwood, striking out nine in four innings. Freshman Seth Taylor led the team with four RBIs, followed by Oberwortschmann with three.

2/26: @ Lexington 12-7 L

The Bears entered the fourth inning with a 2-1 lead, but the bats came alive for Lexington, who scored five runs in the fourth and four runs in the fifth. Keesey pitched four innings and gave up five earned runs and seven hits. Whitaker was 3-for-3 at the plate, and Oberwortschmann had four RBIs.

"This loss showed us where we are at and what we need to work on," Doege said.

2/28: New Braun. Chr. 17-0 L

Early errors and a lack of offense led to a quick defeat in this cold game. Brentwood used four pitchers, including freshman Will Hughes, and only managed two hits.

"Our downfall was our defense," Doege said.

2/28: TSD 17-1 W

Copeland hit a grand slam which contributed to a 10-run fourth inning, and Oberwortschmann also homered. Strong pitching from Taylor led the Bears to an easy win.

3/2: San Marcos Acad. 14-0 W

Numerous errors by San Marcos and good pitching along with three RBIs from Keesey won this game for the Bears. Freshman Sam Benton led with two hits.

BCS golf teams have experience, expect success

By Natalie Hargrove

Brentwood Christian's golf teams started off their season on a cold and windy day at Pebble Creek Country Club in College Station on Feb. 25, where the girls brought home a first-place team trophy and the boys took second place.

Senior Kori Howell placed second individually, while junior Kirsten Morgan was third, and senior Madison Moseley came in fifth. For the boys, sophomore John Murphree placed fifth.

Head coach John Vandygriff said both teams have had better rounds in the past, but this was a good start to the season.

"They all know what they need to do in order to be at their peak performance for district in early April," he said.

A week later, the teams were scheduled to play a tournament on March 4 at Teravista in Round Rock, but it was canceled due to poor weather.

Howell said she is looking forward to warmer weather, since "that's when the tournaments are actually fun."

Nine golfers are returning from last year's girls' and boys' teams that finished third and fifth at the state tournament, respectively. Howell was all-state last year, as was Adam Murphree, who is out this season due to a shoulder injury. Vandygriff described Adam, who still plans to play golf in college, as the team's "mascot and head cheerleader."

Vandygriff said his goals for the teams include playing well enough in district and regionals to advance to state.

"Every season is something new, and this year we have the deepest, most balanced, and experienced teams we've ever had," he said.

Practice is a bit irregular but usually happens two or three times per week at The Golf Driving Range in Round Rock.

"I am looking forward to helping and teaching the younger guys," senior Connor Troutman said. "I am also looking forward to bonding with the team when we have tournaments."

Golfers on the boys' team this year are seniors Micah Best and Troutman; sophomores David Hou, Murphree, Garrett Reagan, and Wes Tindel; and freshman Hunter Perkins. Girls competing this year are seniors Howell and Moseley, junior Morgan, and sophomore Laura Wilson.

Up next for the teams is the Hyde Park Tournament on March 26.



photo: Brandy Gauthier

Big swing Senior Jack Oberwortschmann swings the bat during a 13-2 win over Concordia on Feb. 25. The Bears scored 12 runs in the fourth inning, and Oberwortschmann finished with three RBIs.



photo: Lynette Baron

Perseverance Sophomore Isaac Stanglin keeps the pace during his distance run at the Rockdale Relays on March 1, where the Bears faced tough competition.

Track season underway

By Michael Milicia

Brentwood Christian’s high school track athletes faced stiff competition last Saturday, March 1, facing area public schools in the Rockdale Relays. Senior Kayla Mayo stood out with a second-place finish in the 100 meters and third in the long jump.

The girls’ 4x100 relay team finished sixth, setting a school record at 52.74. Senior Jaclyn Wishard was fourth in the high jump.

The boys finished fourth in the 4x100, 4x200, and 4x400. Junior Michael Milicia came in sixth in the 400.

The Bears had their first track meet on Saturday, Feb. 16, at Tom Glenn High School in Leander, with challenges ranging from trying to figure out who is running what races to how to stay warm and compete in the cold. The boys’ JV team and girls’ varsity team placed third, while the boys’ varsity placed fourth.

In the 100 meters, junior Bru Hague led the way in a tight finish for 5th overall, followed by sophomore Noah Shelby and juniors Sam Orick and Isaiah Davis.

Announcers called the varsity boys’ 4x400 team disqualified, mistaking them for Austin Royals, who dropped their baton. Head coach Correy Washington was able to fix the problem, and the team got their medals for third place. The JV boys’ 4x400 team also placed third.

Juniors Phillip Mach and Michael Milicia placed fourth and sixth, respectively, in the 400.

Senior Riley Walker placed fifth in the 3200. Sophomore Isaac Stanglin and senior Nathan Ging finished well in the 1600; Stanglin also placed fourth in the 800.

For the girls, Mayo placed second overall in the 100, and sophomore Julia Glenn was third in the 400.

Softball slowed by weather

By Natalie Hargrove

The Lady Bears have started their softball season with a 2-2 record, and are struggling to find a rhythm after having five games and several practices canceled due to bad weather.

Coach Paul Sladek said the cancellations present a huge setback, but with hard work, he said the girls will be ready for district.

“We need to be more consistent on showing up ready to do whatever it takes to win,” he said. “I think time will tell, and seeing us in more game action will help us see what we need to work and improve on.”

Sladek also said the team needs to become more familiar with game, something that both he and assistant coach Phil Koehler have stressed.

“We need to work on understanding situations and being more communicative in the dugout and on the field,” he said.

While the players are also frustrated about some of the same issues, most continue to stay positive.

“We have started off well and are improving as we play,” sophomore pitcher Molly Stewart said. “I have high hopes for this team and this season.”

Following are game results thus far:

2/21: New Braunfels Christian 6-2 W

BCS fired the offense up in the first inning, when junior Alyssa Mancias hit an inside-the-park homer. Stewart pitched a complete game, giving up six hits, walking only three, and striking out seven. The girls had nine hits, and stole 11 bases. Mancias led with three hits, and senior Nyna Vazquez followed with two hits.

2/28: @ Sacred Heart Tourn. L L W

Playing at Marion High School, the girls opened against Victoria East, losing 19-5. Victoria scored five runs in each of the first three innings.

The Lady Bears took on Marion High School in their second game, with senior Kori Howell on the mound and senior Samantha Fowler behind the plate. It was a back-and-forth game, but BCS was unable to keep the lead in the bottom of the last inning, losing 10-9.

In the third game, Brentwood took advantage of being walked an amazing 23 times in four innings to beat Hill Country 17-7. The Bears were actually out-hit 10-4, but the opposing pitchers’ lack of experience was a glaring weakness. Sophomore Caroline Griffith and senior Lauryn Williams led BCS with two hits each.

Soccer reaches area playoffs

By Jackson Baird

The varsity soccer season came to a close last month as the boys finished second in district and made it to the area round of playoffs.

After a hard fought playoff win on Feb. 7, the season ended for the boys on Feb. 12 with a 2-1 loss to Prince of Peace Christian in Dallas. The Bears finished the regular season with a 4-2 record in district, 6-7 overall.

The final game was a close battle that saw the Bears coming just up short of advancing in the playoffs. Early in the first half, Prince of Peace was awarded a controversial penalty kick that gave them the 1-0 lead.

In the second half, the Eagles gained a tighter grip on the game with a heading goal off of a cross. Senior Adrian Battle scored a goal from the Eagles’ goal line that arched over the keeper and went in, bringing BCS back within one goal. But the Bears could not get the goal they needed to tie up the game, despite desperate late attempts.

In an up-and-down season, Brentwood started off 1-5 before winning five of their last seven games.

“What a journey,” head coach Jesse Jordan said. “We had a great season, and it was an honor and a privilege to coach this team. We didn’t get the result that we wanted, but I am

proud of the team’s performance this season.”

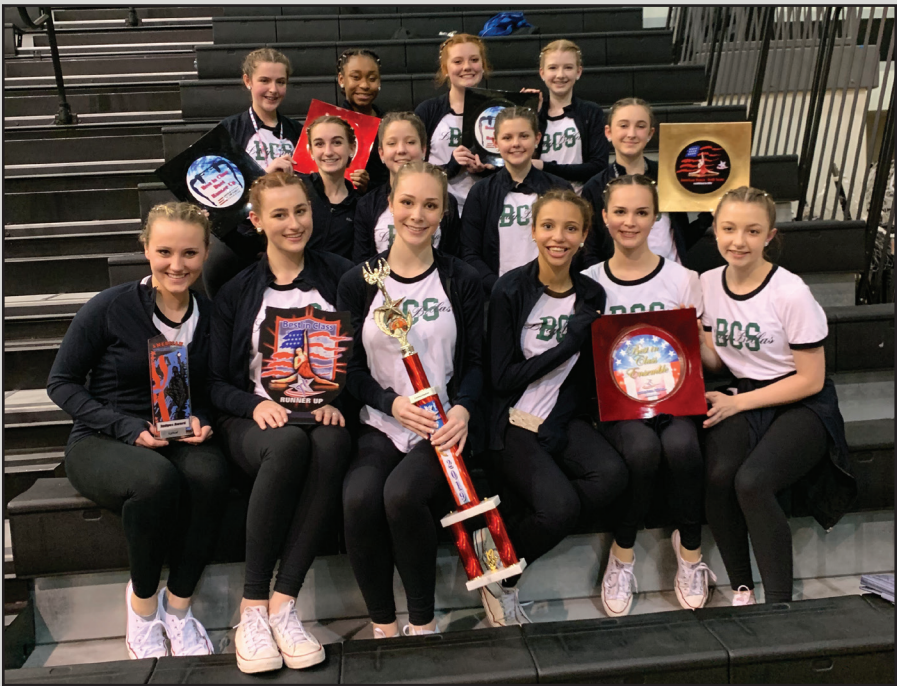
BCS had several players recognized for all-district honors. Senior Riley Walker and juniors Jose Real and Jonah Connor were named to the first team. Battle and juniors Jackson Baird and Elias Qussad were named to the second team.

On Feb. 7, Brentwood hosted Dallas Christian in the bi-district championship, and they gained an early 1-0 lead with a goal from sophomore Andrew Geevarghese. But the Chargers responded quickly, catching Brentwood off guard on the counter attack.

Baird regained the lead for BCS before the Chargers rattled off three unanswered goals, giving them the 4-2 lead on the road at half-time. The Bears came out of the half ready to fight. Battle drew Brentwood back within striking distance with an early goal. But in spite of their dominating possession game and several strong shots on goal, the Bears were still down by a goal with only a few minutes to play. With time running out, Battle found the back of the net once again, sending the game to extra time.

In the first half of overtime, BCS piled on the shots but failed to convert. So on went the game past the 100-minute mark, tied 4-4.

see **SOCCER**, page 8



Standouts The Lady Bellas competed against public and private schools on Feb. 23 at the American Dance/Drill Team Competition in Leander, winning several awards, including a Sweepstakes Award, Award of Excellence, and Best in Class.

Groomfs: an absurdist tale

continued from page 2

Shmoop. “Well why would you think that, Dr. Shmoop?” asked Mr. Groomf. “Because that’s what he does every time he comes here,” said Shmoop, feeding an imaginary Timmy. “Now hush, Dr. Shmoop,” said Troomf. “I’m not gonna steal the money. I’m going to *take* the money.” Shmoop seemed contented with this and went back to writing out the digits of Pi.

“So, brother, why are you here today?” asked Mr. Groomf. “I just wanted to have dinner with you and convince you to give me your family fortune,” said Troomf. “...What did you say?” asked Mr. Groomf, defensively. “I said, I just wanted to have dinner with you and convince you to give me your family fortune,” said Troomf. “Oh, OK,” said Mr. Groomf. The Groomfs all had dinner at the table, with something called a Groomf-Loaf as the main course. The Groomf-Loaf is a meal created by Grandpa Groomf, and it is so disgustingly vile and horrid, that it makes you emit a scream of pure terror with every bite.

“So, brother, how’s AAAAAHHH your art career progressing?” asked Troomf. “Oh, it’s going just AAAAAHHH fine, brother,” responded Mr. Groomf. “Why did you decide to become an artist again AAAAAHHH, brother?” asked Troomf. “Well, I followed our AAAAAHHH family motto, ‘Might as well.’ That’s how we

got in this AAAAAHHHH money situation to begin with,” said Mr. Groomf. “Could you AAAAAHHHH elaborate, brother?” asked Troomf. “Well, Grandpa Groomf figured that there had never been a AAAAAHHH family with over a trillion dollars in its bank account AAAAAHHH that can’t use it for anything. So he made one,” said Mr. Groomf. “I see. How about you give all of that money to me, brother AAAAAHHHH?” asked Troomf. “No can do, brother. The will clearly AAAAAHHH states that we can’t do anything with the money, including giving it to someone else,” said Mr. Groomf. “What if I take the money myself AAAAAHHHHH, brother?” asked Troomf. “I guess that’s fine,” said Mr. Groomf.

Shmoop piped up. “Timmy doesn’t want you to take the money,” said Shmoop. “Sorry, brother, if Timmy says something, we kind of have to do it,” said Mr. Groomf. “What? Why?” asked a confused Troomf. “He’s a ghost, and he’ll haunt us if we go against him,” said Mr. Groomf. “He is not a ghost, Dad!” said Shmoop. “Dr. Shmoop, if he’s invisible, then he’s a ghost. There’s no other logical explanation. Anyway, brother, we can’t let you take it,” said Mr. Groomf. “I see. This is quite a serious situation, then. I will be going now. I have some snakes to handle.”

And with that, Troomf left, leaving the Groomfs for at least a couple months.

Soccer

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Midway through the second 10-minute period of the “golden goal” extra time, Walker whipped in a cross to Batlle, who placed the ball in the bottom corner of the net, securing the Bears’ spot in the next round of playoffs.

Batlle led the Bears with 13 goals this season. Other team leaders included Walker (4 goals/10 assists), Baird (4 goals/5 assists), and Geevarghese (4 goals). Sophomore goalkeeper Asher Gentry had 100 saves.

The Bears will be without two seniors next season: Batlle and Walker.

“It’s been great to finish out my senior season with such a great team,” Walker said.

PSIA district results

Students from Brentwood Christian took first place in 15 events at the PSIA district meet on March 2 at Holy Family. Brentwood came in second overall to Holy Family.

BCS will send 18 students in 25 events to the state PSIA meet in Ft. Worth on April 27. Fifth-grader Michael Kolagani won all four of his events at district, and seventh-grader Renne Cooper won all three of his. Eighth-grader Nathan Esche took first in two events.

Other first-place winners were third-grader Natalie Weed, sixth-grader Noah Prundeanu, seventh-graders Lucy Belcik and Kora Simon, and eighth-graders Sarah Walker and Mollie Walters.

Eighth graders to visit D.C.

By Quentin Fowler

The eighth graders will leave early on March 10 for the annual Washington, D.C., trip and will return in the evening on March 13.

“We’re really excited to go and explore our nation’s capital and understand all the Biblical Christian influences that our government has,” trip sponsor Russell Larson said.

This year the trip is being led by a new company, School Tours of America, which Larson said will provide more options and a more affordable trip. Their activities will include being given the opportunity to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arlington National Cemetery.

After the 26 students arrive in the nation’s capital, they will go to the Mount Vernon Plantation for a tour of George Washington’s house. That night they will eat dinner at a place called

Texas Jack’s Barbecue.

On Monday the 11th they will tour Capitol Hill and visit the Library of Congress. After lunch they will visit the National Archives. Next is a visit to the Holocaust Memorial and a photo at the White House. The group will eat dinner and then visit the Martin Luther King Memorial.

The eighth graders will visit the Lincoln Memorial on Tuesday, as well as Constitution Gardens and the National Cathedral. After lunch will be the Arlington National Cemetery, with the World War II Memorial that night.

On their final day the students will take a tour of the Museum of the Bible as well as the African American History Museum at the Smithsonian.

Their plane will leave at 5 a.m. on the flight there, and their arrival time for returning is about 8:30 p.m.



Heroes’ graves Eighth graders will visit the Arlington National Cemetery next week, where they will be able to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.