



# THE BEAR FACTS

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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

FEBRUARY 2020



## New choir teacher knows music, trivia

By Mollie Walters

He won the Texas state Geography Bee. He earned a perfect score on his SAT. He starred in 2015 on Jeopardy. In December, he was hired as Brentwood Christian's new choir director.

Since former teacher Emily Borbon has moved to Abilene with her husband, some say Daniel Watkins has large shoes to fill. So far, the reaction of students has been quite positive.

"I love Mr. Watkins. He is super funny and really has faith in us as a choir," freshman Lily Trueper said.

Watkins was born in California but raised in Ft. Worth along with an older sister. In sixth grade, Watkins was the 1999 Texas Geography Bee champion. He went on to the National Geography Bee, but was one question short from entering the final round.

Watkins was, from an early age, very passionate about musical arts. His high school experience was filled with choir events, competitions, and practice.

"I sang everything I could," Watkins said.

Initially, Watkins thought his perfect SAT score must have been a mistake, but it proved to

be accurate.

"Taking multiple choice tests is a skill you acquire," Watkins said. "It doesn't mean I'm a genius."

Watkins attended the University of South Florida in Tampa, Fla. Originally, he planned only to spend his freshman year there, then transfer to another college. Instead, he "loved it" and finished his four-year music degree in three years due to a large amount of AP credit. He graduated with a bachelor of arts in music with a minor in biblical languages.

Right out of college, Watkins began to teach high school and middle school choir in the Rio Grande Valley. One year later, he moved back to Ft. Worth to teach

see **WATKINS**, page 5



photo: submitted

**Who is the new choir teacher?** Daniel Watkins, here with Jeopardy host Alex Trebek in 2015, was hired in December to replace the departing Emily Borbon.

## Doege named new BCS AD

By Jackson Baird

BCS school president Jay Burcham announced on Jan. 30 that head baseball coach Jeffrey Doege will be taking over as athletic director, following the retirement of Stan Caffey that was announced in the fall.

"Coach Doege is an extremely organized administrator who focuses on communication with parents, the support of all sports, and the participation and retention of our athletes," Burcham said.

Doege, who has been serving as the associate athletic director, will continue to coach the baseball team, but in his new role as athletic director he will focus more on the overall growth of the athletic department. Several athletes have expressed their support of Doege's promotion.

"I'm looking forward to seeing what Coach Doege does with the athletics program," senior baseball player Travis Whitaker said. "I think there is a lot of potential for great things to be done."

Doege said he not only sees this as a great opportunity, but as part of God's plan.

"I am so excited to be able to lead our athletic program into the future," he said.

It was also announced on Jan. 10 that assistant coach and defensive coordinator Correy Washington will be taking over as the new head coach of the football team. He has now been named the new associate athletic director over middle school athletics.

Washington's job as associate athletic director will be to make sure the teams in CAPPS are organized and supported, and that communication is where it should be.

Burcham stated his admiration of all the good things that Washington has done since becoming a part of the athletic staff in 2015.

"He is one of the most respected young coaches in TAPPS football and brings a love for our school, our students, and our God."

Caffey, who has known Washington since the days he taught Washington's senior Bible class at Westbury Christian in Houston, also only had good things to say about him.

"I have mentored many young coaches over the years, but none better than Correy Washington," Caffey said.



photo: Brandy Gauthier

**Reminiscing** Sam Orick blesses his best friend "since diapers," Nick Hunka, at the Super Senior celebration at University Avenue Church of Christ on Feb. 4. Every senior received a blessing from another student, and then a prayer from the class sponsors. After the blessings, the students ate lunch on South Congress.

## Break out the bats: seasons start this week

By Natalie Hargrove

Under new head coach Rory Tyson, the Lady Bears' softball team will open up their season at home today against Northeast (formerly Reagan High).

Meanwhile the Bears' baseball team scrimmaged Austin Royals on Monday and are ready to open their season Feb. 10 against St. Dominic Savio. They also play Feb. 14 at home against San Marcos Academy. Hopeful to improve on last year's 1-8 district finish, BCS will open its district schedule at home on March 29 against St. Michael's.

The baseball team began after-school practices on Jan. 13 under second-year head coach Jeff Doege, who is focused on

see **BASEBALL**, page 3

You Can Believe: Genevieve Graessle

# Are you really ‘starving’? Was it truly ‘awesome’?

Around noon each day I frequently hear the same complaints. We often say that we are “starving” when it gets close to lunchtime and maybe we didn’t eat breakfast. You would be surprised at how often people use sarcastic and insensitive language when they aren’t trying to. There are so many common phrases that we all use daily that could offend others when we have no intention of doing that. I know that Brentwood has families from a wide variety of backgrounds, but I am almost positive that none of us have ever been starving.

Personally, I am positive that I do not know the feeling of true starvation. I have never in my life been homeless without enough money for my next meal. There was one day during my week-long wilderness trek through the Colorado mountains with my youth group when I really thought my stomach would never

stop growling. But then we stopped for lunch 30 minutes later, and somebody got the Spam out of their pack. After a few bites of granola bars and apple sauce, I was fine.

Maybe the constant use of the word “starving” stems from a culture that has taught us to complain instinctively. Most of us have been accustomed to thinking that we should always have what we want right when we want it. We have never had to experience true starvation, so we can joke about it like our daily 11 a.m. hunger can even slightly compare. For whatever reason, people often use language that does not apply to their circumstances and, when taken literally, can seem pretty self-absorbed.

Starving is defined as “suffering or dying from hunger.” According to the No Kid Hungry campaign, there are over 11 million children struggling with hunger in the United States. Our overuse of the word consistently makes light of their daily struggles. Hungry is not the same as starving.

“Starving” is not the only word I hear frequently over-used. Other phrases I often hear high schoolers say that they don’t always mean are, “that’s depressing,” “you’re the worst,” or “this is the best (whatever) I’ve had in my entire life.”

Probably my least favorite of these recurring phrases is the use of “depressing.” Just like with “starving,” there are actually people – possibly nearby! – who are in the arduous situation that we are making light of as a means to complain. Depression affects about 5 percent of teens at any one time; it can be caused by over-stimulation, sleep-deprivation, or a lack of a community. So, stepping in a puddle does not really qualify for the phrase “that’s depressing.” Someone around you might be seriously depressed, and our complaint belittles their struggle.

Another common exaggeration is hateful language toward the people we love. I am definitely a consistent culprit of this one, but it still disappoints me. Telling one of your best friends “you’re the worst” or even “I hate you,” is not a great way to express love. Taken literally, it is really the opposite. I do not want to just shame us all for wanting to joke with our

close friends, but it can often be hard to tell the difference between a joke and the truth. What if someone starts believing those jokes you constantly jeer at them, and they think their friends hate them?

The opposite of this case is also true. When you always compliment people or celebrate things the same way or with the same words, it begins to seem impersonal and insincere. One example of this is the evolution of the word “awesome.” It used to be reserved for the almighty strength of God, but now we use it to describe our turkey sandwich or our math test getting moved back. Just like “starving” trivializes a terrible experience, “awesome” trivializes something truly awesome. You can only say a word so many times before it loses its significance.

My mom often teases my brother because he always claims that the last movie he has seen or the last sandwich he has eaten is his favorite. She also says that it is not really a bad way

to go through life – when you love everything that you receive – but not everything can be the “best” you’ve ever had.

I will absolutely be the first to admit that I exaggerate in my speaking every day. I love telling stories and emphasizing details that might not have really happened that way, just to make the story a little more interesting. I have always thought that it simply makes life more exciting to use more vivid words; or maybe I had just never thought about its significance at all.

Humans are naturally selfish people, so it is unnatural for us to think of others’ feelings before our own. However, the words you say every day always have an impact on the people around you; you never know what kind of damage you could do without any intention of causing harm. We all know that lying and gossiping are wrong, but what about exaggerating?

In Matthew 5, right after the Beatitudes, Jesus practically commands us not to exaggerate: “All you need to say is simply ‘yes’ and ‘no.’”

## THE BEAR FACTS

Brentwood Christian School  
11908 North Lamar Blvd.  
Austin, TX 78753

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.

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Genevieve Graessle

**Photo Editor**  
Natalie Barry

**Sports Editor**  
Jackson Baird

### Reporters

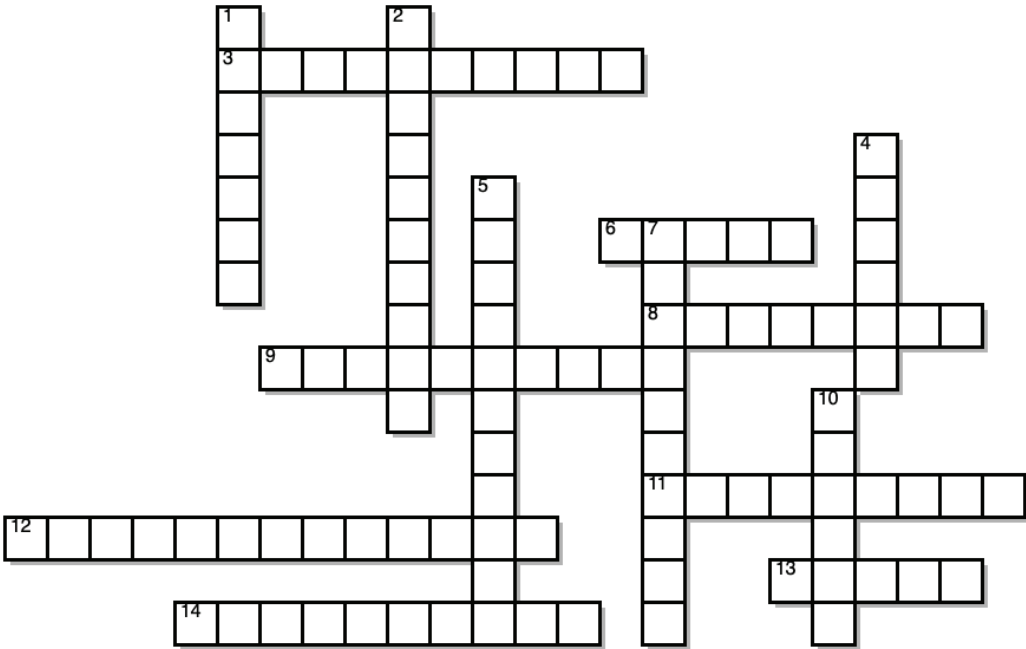
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Evelyn Lee	Hannah Womack
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Keira McCormick	Cole Zeigler
Hailey Stromberg	

**Adviser**  
Jonathan Weed

The Bear Facts is available online at  
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## February News Crossword

Answers on page 8



### ACROSS

- 3 Winner of the spelling and geography bees
- 6 New softball coach
- 8 Winning spelling bee word
- 9 Book fair brand
- 11 Middle name of featured senior
- 12 Song in Little Bear Cheer Camp routine
- 13 New athletic director
- 14 Where Mrs. Jones was born

### DOWN

- 1 Teacher who earned a perfect score on his SAT
- 2 Boys basketball leading scorer
- 4 Country Mr. Morrow lived in for 13 years
- 5 Featured as Cecily Cardew in HS one-act play
- 7 Tournament the soccer girls won on Jan. 11
- 10 Elias Qussad's role in *Beauty and the Beast*



Baseball, softball underway

‘Earnest’ takes third at TCSIT

continued from page 1

helping the guys become more athletic baseball players. He said he wants each player’s “individual talents (to) shine through ... for the betterment of our team.”

Doege said the boys have been working on offense, defense, and pitching during practice.

“Defense is the number-one key that we need to fix,” he said.

The Bears did not lose any seniors, which means each of their all-district players are back this year. On the first team were current seniors Luke Jackson and Travis Whitaker, and junior Riley Keeseey. Second-team all-district players were senior Isaac Copeland, junior Zachary Billante, and sophomores Seth Taylor and Ryan Crowe.

Keeseey said his goal is to do everything he can to help the team win, and he thinks the team has the talent to do really well.

“Our goal as a team this year is to win district and make a deep playoff run,” he said.

Doege said this should be an exciting year for the team.

“We are ready to take that next step and compete at a high level in every game we play,” he said.

The softball team finished last year with a district record of 2-8 and did not make play-offs. The team lost five seniors from last year: Samantha Fowler, Kori Howell, Christi Snow, Nyna Vazquez, and Lauryn Williams. Williams made first-team all-district; Fowler and Vazquez made second team; and Howell made honorable mention.

In addition to the seniors, the team also lost their head coach, Paul Sladek, who led the program for 13 years.

The team began after-school practices on Jan. 13. Coach Tyson said she is focusing on the fundamentals and developing the knowledge of the game.

“We have to start with the basics and build from there since we have so many young players,” Tyson said. “We are gonna work hard to make the daily improvements.”

The roster includes 16 players, six of whom have not played before. Still, junior pitcher Molly Stewart said she thinks that this team is going to do really well, and everyone has been willing to work hard.

“I think we have a lot of depth, and we have a really good chance this year to go far in district,” Stewart said.

By Kaitlyn Weilemann

BCS theater director Vanessa Maleare and several students traveled to Abilene to perform a cut version of *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde on Friday, Jan. 10, where they won third place at TCSIT.

The play will be performed at BCS on Tuesday, March 3, and will welcome several changes – like incorporating more color and decoration to the set.

Maleare took a rendition of the play missing “several unimportant conversations” to fit in the 40-minute time limit required of the high school one acts entered at TCSIT, which would come within 90 seconds every performance.

“Every time it would get close, I would sweat,” Maleare said.

Maleare said she chose the piece because “the language is difficult to perform” and would subsequently earn more credit from judges. She also favored the play due to its comedic nature that played to the strengths of her actors.

The play features junior Laura Wilson as Cecily Cardew, sophomore Emma Ayers as Gwendolen Fairfax, senior Isaac Copeland as Algernon Moncrieff, and senior Lorenzo Rivera as Jack Worthing. Also starring are freshman Lily Trueper as Miss Prism, junior Nathan Morgan as Dr. Chasuble, senior Emma Owens as Lady Bracknell, sophomore Elijah Baron as Merriman, and

sophomore Quentin Fowler as Lane.

In contrast to the intense competition that awaited them, students filled the van ride north with songs, took a trip to the movies, and visited the mall. On top of all that, a southern surprise awaited them when they woke up.

“It snowed, and Travis (Whitaker), Lorenzo, and I all got up and had a snowball fight early in the morning,” Copeland said.

Written in 1894 with its first performance in 1895, Oscar Wilde’s work has graced many stages, earning three Tony Award nominations.

The first of three cinema adaptations was released in 1952, followed by another in 1992 and the most recent in 2002.

The play is a comedy of mistaken identities that takes place in 1890s England.



**All-star cast** The cast and crew of *The Importance of Being Earnest* competed at TCSIT in Abilene on Jan. 10.

Little Bears learn, perform

By Hailey Stromberg

Bright-eyed and cheerful, many children from kindergarten all the way to sixth grade filled the Family Life Center to partake in the annual Little Bear Cheer Camp on Jan. 11. For many hours the girls played on mats, learned dances and chants, and played with the high school cheerleaders. Two weeks later, they got to perform during halftime of the varsity girls’ basketball game.

As students arrived at the cheer camp and hugged parents goodbye, they were met with friendly smiles and fun games. Eventually they began learning the dance they would be performing to the song “Party in the U.S.A.”

After that, the girls split up by grade and went to different stations, including stunts and chants. When rotations were complete, the children reviewed everything that they had learned that day, and their parents were invited to see the girls do their dance.

Originally scheduled to perform on Jan. 17, the little bears had to wait until Jan. 24 to execute what they had learned. After the first half of the varsity girls’ game against Re-



**Go Bears!** Freshman Kailey Willard holds second-grader Alliyanna Zamora.

gents, they met their high school cheer buddies in the hallway, stretched, and waited on the sideline. Soon after, they spirited out onto the court and performed their dance, even adding a few cheers. Even the other team had to smile at the little bears.

Book fair continues bringing smiles

By Zoe Cooper

Giggling students leave to head back to class, arms loaded with bags of books, posters, bookmarks, and chocolate calculators.

Elementary students enjoyed the Scholastic book fair that ran from Monday, Jan. 27, to Thursday, Jan. 30, in the FLC.

The fair has had several changes throughout its more-than 20-year run. A new feature this year is the addition of a “Scholastic wallet.” This allows parents to create and put money into an online account for their children to use instead of having them carry cash.

“It’s really helpful, especially for the little kids,” said book fair coordinator Nicole Willard.

Willard is in charge of organizing the parent volunteers, who unload and load the

books, run the cash registers, and help kids prioritize their money in order to stay within their budgets.

About 2,000-3,000 books line the shelves of the book fair each year, which brings in an average of \$8,000 in sales. Some of that money goes to the school to use on the elementary library.

“I think it’s neat that we get to buy fun things for the library,” Willard said.

A few of the book fair’s traditions have continued, such as the poster raffle, where for every \$5 students spend, their names are entered into a raffle for a chance to win a free poster. Another recurring feature is the teacher wish list, which gives parents and students the ability to purchase books for teachers based on wish lists made by the teachers.



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: *Elias Qussad*

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2020.

# Joking aside, Elias blesses others with compassion

By Cade Young

You settle into your seat in the CSA just as the lights begin to dim. Suddenly you see an easily recognizable student on the stage, belting out the lines to the iconic “Gaston” song as he celebrates his own rugged handsomeness in an effort to win over Belle. His flashing smile and comedic flexing leave you laughing and thoroughly entertained by the end of the number. You aren’t surprised that Elias delivered an amusing performance, as his ability to make others laugh is well known on campus.

Elias Sebastian Qussad was born on Aug. 23, 2001, here in Austin. Not long after, he enrolled in Brentwood Chrtistian as a preschool student, where he immediately began entertaining his classmates with his huge smiles, spontaneous dance moves, and his big heart, which he has continued to do ever since. Over the last 14 years as a BCS student, Elias has become a charismatic figure who is loved and respected by both his classmates and the school as a whole.

Elias’ time with Brentwood started even before preschool, as his older siblings Immad (2011) and Yara (2015) enrolled here well before him. His family also consists of father Bassam, mother Betty, and his two dogs.

Throughout his many years at Brentwood, Elias has become known as someone who continuously causes others to laugh and smile through his big personality and constant jokes. Teachers and students alike express a deep appreciation for the positive and uplifting impact that Elias seems to bring with him wherever he goes. He’s been described as a kind friend, a charismatic leader, and an energetic athlete who is guaranteed to make your life better in any way that he can.

“Elias is a very special dude,” senior Blake Juranek says. “He is always making the world around him brighter.”

Elias has been involved in a number of different activities through the years, and his larger-than-life personality shines through in all of them. He has been a defender on the varsity soccer team for the last four years, is a member of Claw Crew, has participated in BCS theater productions for the last three years, has been a part of choir since fourth grade, and was featured as a lead in last fall’s musical *Beauty and the Beast*.

“Elias helped bring life to the musical. Whenever it got hard, Elias was there to break the tension and make the whole cast laugh,” says senior Adrie Gruis, who played Belle. “I really saw an incredible side of Elias during that time; he worked so hard and brought forth

his amazing personality and talent, which definitely impressed us all.”

Asked about Elias, his friends have an abundance of funny stories and memorable moments. Most know him for his infectiously positive attitude. One obvious way this is demonstrated is through the impromptu concerts he stages in the hallways. According to science teacher Michelle Mallett, he “walks into every classroom with his own soundtrack.” If you’ve heard the sound of music blasting through the hallways during passing period, you’ve witnessed Elias and his beloved speaker in action as he travels to his next class.

Spreading positive energy is something that Elias does well, and it helps to bring some life to otherwise boring week days. Elias started playing fun music in the hallways on his birthday back in August.

“I just wanted to jam to some good music on my birthday,” he explains.

Even though administration has made a few announcements regarding their condemnation of these unapproved concerts, the speaker still makes a surprise appearance every once in a while.

While these well known aspects of Elias’ persona seem to portray a lot of silliness and laughter, those who are close to Elias know that there’s a strong sense of selflessness and love for others beneath all of the jokes.

“As much of a bravado as he puts on for everyone, Elias

is always extremely kind, respectful, and empathetic to his classmates,” Mallett says. “If you ever needed him, he would come in a heartbeat to help you without ever hesitating.”

Elias is praised by his friends for how committed and selfless he is. His friendships maintain a level of great importance in his life, as he dedicates himself to the well being of others. It’s obvious to those w h o



have seen Elias and his group of friends just how close-knit they are, and they all express a similar admiration for just how dedicated he is to his friendships.

“Elias is someone who is always there for me, even when it least benefits himself,” best friend Bru Hague says. “He always puts his friends before himself. I care so much about Elias and always try to be there for him like he is for me; I don’t know what my life would be like without him, honestly.”

Elias is also praised by his peers for how loving and genuine he is in all of his relationships, not just with those he is close with. He genuinely cares for people. Walking down the halls, he pauses to give an endless number of hugs and high fives as he progresses to his next class.

“I’m going to miss the people more than anything else when it comes time to graduate,” Elias says. “My friends have always been there for me, even when my family wasn’t. They mean everything to me, and I appreciate them more than they know.”

Although Elias is pretty serious about his friendships and soccer, it’s no secret that his big personality can often lead to him getting into trouble, especially in iconic and unforgettable ways that bring about chuckles from everyone involved. Bru remembers the time Elias received a detention for jumping onto the back of a moving UPS truck as it began to leave campus. His journey was short-lived as a concerned mother quickly called in to report the incident, resulting in one of Elias’ most memorable detentions.

Elias plans on attending Austin Community College in the fall, where he intends to get his degree in accounting. While Elias is saddened by the idea of having to leave so many of his close friends, he says he is excited to see what the future holds for all of them, and for himself.

So whether he is belting out tunes on stage, hugging his way to his next class, or cracking an endless number of jokes, you can be sure that Elias will continue to be a source of joy, laughter, and happiness to those around him for years to come. The genuine compassion and love that radiates from him in everything he does serves as a blessing to all those who are lucky enough to know him.



# From BCS to Brazil and back, Morrow's focus is mission

By Clive Whaley

A thirteen-year mission can change someone. It definitely changed BCS teacher Paul Morrow. He got married, he gained an interest in working with youth, and he cemented his faith in Christ.

Morrow, a fifth-grade teacher at BCS, replaced Carrie Hunter when she began teaching sixth-grade history and Bible in 2016. Just back from Brazil, he went from waiting in line at a bank to pay his bills because it was too dangerous to send a check in the mail, to cracking jokes with students, teaching the basics of math, and examining the books of Luke and Acts with 11-year-olds.

Morrow was already very familiar with the school when he applied. He graduated from Brentwood Christian in 1996 with only 14 other people in his class. He was mentored by three of his teachers: PJ Heimermann, Jerry Fowler, and Kevin Moore. His mother was also the long-time elementary librarian.

In the 20 years between his graduation and being hired as a teacher, Morrow noticed many things had changed about Brentwood. For one, students now have to wear uniforms. The high school's student population had also doubled in size since Morrow graduated.

Morrow was born in Austin in 1978. He attended Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn., where he received his bachelor's in youth and family ministry and his master's of education. After graduating, Morrow was recruited and trained by Great Cities Missions, who would later send him on his decade-spanning mission trip.

Morrow began his mission to Brazil in 2003, during which he married his wife, Anna, and participated in many church-planting activities.

Living in Brazil took some getting used to, Morrow says. Most buildings didn't have air conditioning, forcing him to adapt to Brazil's blazing summers. The cultural and linguistic barriers Morrow had to overcome were significant, and he stumbled at times.

For example, a taxi driver asked him why he had come to Brazil. Morrow wanted to say,



"I've come to live," but instead he said, "I've come to die." The driver was understandably confused. On another occasion, Morrow was on a date with his future wife. He wanted to order a certain type of coffee, but he ended up accidentally ordering an "underwear coffee."

Once while riding the bus to a soccer game, Morrow was nearly arrested. The bus was packed with people, and they started getting kind of rowdy. The bus driver called the police, who forced the bus to pull over. The police forced everyone on the bus to get out and put their hands behind their heads. Morrow was getting worried that he was about to get wrapped up in some sort of Brazilian crime conspiracy, when someone came to the rescue.

ers," and though he answered the question correctly, so did his competitor, and she won.

Most recently, Watkins worked as music director for Grapevine High School for five years. Last fall, Watkins produced two musicals with Grapevine.

Watkins found an opening in the Brentwood fine arts department online. He said the Church of Christ background was the aspect that appealed to him most about the job. The occupation lined up career-wise for Watkins, and spiritually seemed to be the correct path for him.

"God works on both the logical and mystical

One of the bus riders told the police that Morrow wasn't involved in the disruptions, and the police let him off scot-free.

After returning to America, Morrow applied for a teaching position at Brentwood, and he got the job. Under the mentorship of BCS teacher Cynthia Davis, Morrow's teaching abilities grew and evolved.

"Listening to his prayers, you can tell he has a deep relationship with the Lord, and he has concern and compassion for others," Davis says.

Morrow says he loves the mission of the school. He says the best things about his job are leading students to know Christ and watching them learn, as well as interacting with his colleagues.

However, no job is without its obstacles. The most difficult things about Morrow's job, he says, are

watching kids struggle and making hard decisions. He also says that reaching 23 or more kids at once can be a challenge, as well as instilling a sense of discipline in them. But even though it may be challenging at times, Morrow still loves his job.

"I can't imagine myself somewhere else," he says.

Morrow says his favorite subjects to teach are Bible and Social Studies. In the case of Bible, he specifically teaches the books of Acts and Luke, which he thoroughly enjoys.

When asked about their teacher, fifth graders describe him as "nice," "chill," and a very good teacher.

"He's like a friend, a brother," Okay Okora-

frames," Watkins said.

Watkins enjoyed talking with secondary principal Carol Johnson and band director Travis Pollard when he first visited campus.

"Mr. Pollard is the best coworker I could ask for," Watkins said.

He teaches fourth- and fifth-grade music, secondary choir, and Encore.

"He pushes us as musicians ... enough to challenge us and make us grow," senior Adrie Gruis said. "I have already learned an incredible amount from him. I really appreciate his expertise and energy. He's an amazing musician."

for says. "When things get tough, he understands."

Some of Morrow's favorite memories from Brentwood have been examples of the community taking care of its members. For example, in Morrow's second year of teaching, the B building was "flooded," when a pipe burst. Brentwood allowed the teachers affected by the flood to use the chapel as a classroom. With no desks or books, the students had to get creative.

"Whenever someone's in need, we step up and help them," he says.

Outside of school, Morrow enjoys spending time with his family and playing outside with his two-year-old girl Davi and his 10-year-old boy Jonathan. He also enjoys listening to country music, his favorite artist being Alan Jackson.

However, even with all his stories, jokes, and idiosyncrasies, Morrow still puts learning first.

"He's taught me a lot, and I'm really thankful for that," fifth-grader Graham Auberger says.

## Jones joins team in MS English

By Mollie Walters

Trestae Jones was hired in January to be the English teacher for the sixth and eighth grades. She replaces Kara Lee, who moved with her family to Florida last fall, and Becky Stewart, who filled in as an extended sub.

Jones was born in California and grew up with an older and younger sister. During high school, she had no clear idea of who she wanted to be or what she wanted to do. She played the handbells for her school band and was always in National Honor Society.

"I was the nerdy egghead," Jones said.

Jones earned her bachelor's degree from California State University and her master's in communication studies at Cal State-Long Beach. Jones married her husband, who was a minister for 20 years. She temporarily worked as a ballroom dance instructor while her husband finished college.

Since then, Jones has worked in education jobs ranging from elementary classes to university studies, and "everything in between."

Jones has a son who works in IT in Arizona, and a daughter who is a nurse in Cedar Park. Each has three sons, giving Jones six grandchildren.

"Being a mom is great, but being a grandma surpasses that," Jones said.

After a year and a half working in retail, she said she wanted to get back into teaching.

"I missed working with youth," Jones said.

## Watkins

continued from page 1

private voice lessons and do occasional substitute teaching. He continued private lessons for eight years while also doing accompaniment piano work for local theater, band, and choir groups.

Watkins applied for Jeopardy contest try-outs and made the cut in 2015. He competed against two women, one of whom was a five-day winner. The final category was "compos-



# Lacking experience, wins, Lady Bears set goals for next year

By Aurora Tyson

The Lady Bears took a 44-32 loss against Regents on Tuesday and are now 0-5 in district (6-23 overall). Their final game is tonight at St.



Michael's. Coach Ariana Marks said a majority of the losses have come from a lack of experience among the young team of players who are still developing their skills. She said she has been working with her team on patience, while recognizing when to speed things up and make quick decisions.

Marks said she is proud of how far the team has come and of how hard the girls work in practices and in games. As she looks toward next year, she said the team will be focusing on fundamentals like dribbling, shooting, and rebounding during the off-season.

"We will be losing some solid leadership and play in our seniors," Marks said. "We will need leadership and ball handlers for next season to be successful."

Marks says seniors Jenna Riley and Kelli Tindel have had a huge impact on the other girls, acting as role models both on and off the court.

"We have grown so much as a team since the beginning of the season," Tindel said. "Go-

ing to tournaments together really helped with our team chemistry and has helped us want to play hard for each other, not just for ourselves."

Tindel leads the team in scoring with 10 points per game, while sophomore Alicia Gardner leads with four rebounds per game.

Following are the most recent game results:

**12/10: @ TSD 40-8 L**

The Bears struggled offensively, including passing and driving to the basket. Their only points came from Gardner's six free throws and Riley's layup.

**1/3-4: Bestpack Tourn. L L L L**

In their first games of the new year, the girls started out with a 10-point lead after the first quarter against Savio, but foul trouble changed the game, and Savio won 45-38. In a rematch with TSD, Brentwood improved, losing 40-20. Tindel was the top scorer with 10 points.

**1/7: @ San Saba 61-30 L**

After a long bus ride, the Bears started out sloppy on offense with bad passing and many turnovers. Tindel led BCS with 15 points.

**1/14: @ Geneva 34-24 L**

The Bears played a back-and-forth game, maintaining good defense and staying with the other team. The girls played with full energy the whole game, but ultimately couldn't pull out the win. Gardner led with eight points.

**1/16: @ Waldorf 52-32 L**

Brentwood started out strong, but Waldorf began to score quickly because of their press,

causing 16 BCS turnovers in the first half. Gardner got into foul trouble, and things got worse. Junior Alyssa McLain led with nine points.

**1/21: @ Hyde Park 44-25 L**

Against their first district opponent, Brentwood kept up with Hyde Park, keeping it close the first half. There would be spurts of good basketball, and then the girls would become inconsistent on defense and on offense. Tindel led BCS with 14 points.

**1/24: Regents 43-34 L**

The Bears pushed themselves to gain the lead several times during the first quarter. Brentwood's starters remained in for the entire game, keeping the score close. McLain scored 18 points on six three-pointers.

**1/28: St. Michael's 57-42 L**

The girls struggled to work their plays going up against a strong defense of shot blockers. Foul trouble and missed free throws contributed to their third district loss. Tindel scored 25 points, including six three-pointers, and McLain scored 11.

**1/31: Hyde Park 35-15 L**

Beginning the second round of district with their senior night, Brentwood started off strong on defense, and by the end of the first quarter, the score was tied 4-4. But the Bears began to struggle to hit the outside shots and were not able to take it inside either.

**Looking to score** Junior Alyssa McLain makes a move during the Bestpack Tournament at BCS last month.

photo: Ocean Peterson

# Girls win tournament, close season with dramatic victory

By Natalie Hargrove

The Lady Bears concluded their soccer season by winning a shootout over St. Michael's on Monday, prompting a wild celebration on the field.

After going all season without winning a game last year, the Lady Bears' varsity soccer team set a goal of winning at least one game this year. In a span of only three days last month, they won a total of five games in the Yoe Classic tournament, taking home the first-place trophy.

But district season began, and the girls struggled to find a win until their dramatic end to the season on Feb. 3. Despite their 1-5 district record, their coach is extremely proud.

"Our biggest strengths are a gritty, intelligent, and fearless defense that is improving every minute of every game," first-year head coach Nick Marquez said.

Marquez called junior Caroline Griffith, who is new to the sport, "arguably the league's best goalie," and went on to praise his defense.

"(Our defense) plays into our other strength – a highly technical midfield trio of Genevieve

(Graessle), Hailey (Reich), and Zoe (Hamiyeh) that can orchestrate precision counterattacks via our lethal striker Julia (Glenn), who scores goals in bunches," Marquez said.

The girls traveled to Cameron to gain some tournament experience on Jan. 9-11 and ended up exceeding everyone's expectations. In their first game the Lady Bears faced Madisonville, and Glenn, a junior, scored the only goal in a 1-0 win. In their second game of the day, the girls faced Rockdale, and Glenn scored both of their goals, while Griffith had five saves in a 2-0 victory.

Playing Florence in the second day of the tournament, Brentwood took 22 shots. The one that scored came on an assist by Reich, a junior, to Glenn. The girls faced Jarrell on the final day, and Glenn had three goals, assisted by Graessle, sophomore Ava Alvarado, and Hamiyeh.

In the championship game against Academy, Griffith had 14 saves. Glenn and Reich each scored, giving them a 2-0 win and a sweep in the tournament.

Hamiyeh said her favorite part was ending the tournament with the school song.

"It was the first time in a really long time that we got to sing it," she said. "We fought hard, and it felt good to work as a team."

Through the district schedule, Marquez said the girls have been working on reducing the amount of space they give their opponents to work.

"The primary focus has been on developing technical proficiency among a group of girls that make up for any lack of soccer experience with high IQs and a great work ethic," he said.

Following are the team's district game results:

**1/14: Hyde Park 0-0 (4-1) L**

The Lady Bears fought hard and kept the score tied 0-0 the entire game, until it came down to penalty kicks. Hyde Park scored four goals in a row, and Glenn scored Brentwood's only goal.

**1/17: @ Regents 6-2 L**

Facing Regents without four of their start-



photo: Jeff Glenn

**Precision** Senior Genevieve Graessle takes a shot in a tournament game against Rockdale on Jan. 9.

ers, Glenn scored both goals for the Bears and Graessle had an assist. Griffith had 12 saves.



# Soccer boys make playoffs with big win

By Jackson Baird

The varsity boys wrapped up district with a 3-3 record (7-6 overall) after beating St. Michael's 4-1 on senior night on Feb. 3. The victory allowed the Bears to host a first-round playoff game against Dallas Christian on Thursday, which was too late for the Bear Facts print deadline.

"It wasn't quite the year we had hoped for, but the most important thing is that we made the playoffs and still have a chance at making a run at the state title," senior Jonah Connor said.

Despite a season of much adversity and up-and-down moments, head coach Jesse Jordan stated his gratitude for the fight the team showed the whole year.

"I am proud of all this year's 10 seniors and the entire team for their hard work, sacrifices, and contributions to our program," Jordan said. "I am proud of everyone for overcoming adversities this season and finding a way to finish the regular season strong."

Connor leads the team with 10 goals, followed by senior Jackson Baird with seven. Baird leads the team with nine assists followed by senior Jose Real with five.

Following are the team's district results:

**1/14: Hyde Park 1-0 W**

Playing host to the Panthers in their first district game, the Bears battled foggy and rainy weather throughout much of the contest. The game remained close throughout the first half,

with both teams struggling to string meaningful possessions together due to the wet weather. The game went into the half tied at zero. Brentwood came out of halftime focused and went ahead with a goal from Baird. The rest of the game was back-and-forth as BCS held off attacks from the Panthers to keep their 1-0 lead.

**1/17: @ Regents 1-0 L**

In this battle for first place in the district, the teams faced a slight drizzle. The first half was very sloppy, but neither team could capitalize on the mistakes. In the second half, the game remained close but the Knights got on the scoreboard first with a goal off a free kick. Down the stretch BCS fought to draw level but could not get the breakthrough goal.

**1/24: @ St. Michael's 2-1 L**

Brentwood struck first with Connor's 40-yard free kick that managed to sneak through the keeper's hands. The Crusaders tied the game up after an unlucky challenge inside the box resulted in a penalty kick that was converted. The Bears played extremely sloppy in the first half and struggled to maintain possession but managed to make it into half tied. In the second half BCS could not fix their possession problem and struggled to apply an effective press which eventually led to another goal for St. Michael's.

**1/28: @ Hyde Park 6-0 W**

The first half of this district game was very sloppy for the Bears due to high winds. With the wind in their face Brentwood only man-

aged three shots on target and were forced to fight off attack after attack from the Panthers. But BCS dominated the second half with three goals in the first five minutes, and they piled on three more goals later on to secure the win. Goal scorers were Connor (2), Baird, Real, and sophomores Josh Trevino and Jesse Brothers.

**1/31: Regents 4-1 L**

BCS had their chances early on but could not convert and quickly found themselves down 3-0 at half. It looked like the Bears had grabbed the momentum early in the second half with a goal by Connor, but several unlucky shots off the posts and a fourth goal from the Knights sealed the victory for Regents.

**2/3: St. Michael's 4-1 W**

This time it was BCS who took a 3-0 lead to halftime with two goals from Connor and a third from Real off a corner from Baird. In the second half Baird secured the victory with a fourth goal off of a throw in from senior Blake Juranek. Senior night festivities followed.



photo: Quentin Fowler

**Maneuvering** Sophomore Jack Leidlein looks to pass during the boys' 1-0 win over Hyde Park on Jan. 14. Two weeks later, Brentwood beat the Panthers 6-0.

# Boys crush Hyde Park on senior night; miss playoffs

By Aurora Tyson

After a 62-41 loss to Regents on Tuesday, the varsity boys are 1-4 in district (10-18 overall) with one game remaining tonight at St. Michael's.

Still fighting for a playoff spot four days earlier, the Bears thrilled the home crowd with a 72-56 victory over rival Hyde Park that was never very close.

Coach Brandon Greene says this team is quicker and more athletic than previous teams, but due to turnovers and shooting errors, the Bears struggle to score as many points as they want to.

"I feel that, as young as some of our players are, we are playing pretty well," Greene said. "I don't schedule a lot of easy games, so all things considered, we are doing well."

As one of the younger players, sophomore Cason Best says he does his best to step up and help the team play together.

"I think that we play our best whenever we're focused and working as a team," Best said.

Cason's brother, senior Coby Best, agrees

that teamwork is a very important aspect of the game of basketball, and says that the team has formed some great bonds with each other.

"I've really enjoyed this season because our team has drawn so close together," he said. "We've made friendships that will last a long time."

Coach Greene said senior Daniel Hickl has the most experience, and has done a great job stepping into his role as the team captain.

"The tournaments let me bond with lots of kids," Hickl said. "We just need to trust each other while we're playing."

The Bears are averaging 51.3 points per game, with sophomore Seth Taylor leading the way with 16.5 points per game. Hickl is next with 10.5 points, and also leads the team with 5 rebounds per game. Sophomore Connor Rohlack leads with 2 steals per game.

Following are the most recent game results:

**12/12-14: @ Jarrell Tourn. L L W L**

Playing in Jarrell Thursday through Saturday, the boys faced Salado in their first game, losing 50-43. In game two, the boys lost 55-54. Later that day, the Bears regained their energy

and took a 51-47 win, led by Hickl's 17 points. On the final day, Brentwood played district opponent Hyde Park, losing 58-43.

**12/27-28: @ OLH Tourn. L L W W**

After a week-long break, the boys had a tournament in Kerrville. In their first game, they lost to Victoria St. Joseph, 65-36. Then they lost to San Antonio St. Anthony's, 75-50. On Saturday, Brentwood bounced back with two wins against Emery/Weiner (53-42) and Legacy Christian (63-44). Taylor led the Bears with 13 in the Emery game, while Cason Best led with 15 against Legacy.

**1/3-4: Bestpack Tourn. W L W L**

On the first weekend of the new year, Brentwood hosted the annual Bestpack Tournament. They started with a thrilling 52-50 overtime victory over TMI Episcopal. Taylor led the team with 20 points, including four three-pointers. In their next game, the Bears lost 54-49 to San Antonio Castle Hills. On Saturday, the boys beat Bay Area Christian 79-57. Taylor was the leading scorer with 23 points. They lost their final game to St. Dominic Savio, 71-52.

**1/7: St. Mary's Hall 87-38 L**

Facing a future district opponent, the Bears started off strong in the first quarter, forcing St. Mary's to call a timeout early. Shortly after that, however, the boys turned the ball over time after time against full-court pressure, and the game got out of hand, ending in a blowout. Cason Best led BCS with 10 points.

**1/14: @ Geneva 56-55 L**

Playing another future district opponent, Brentwood started slowly and trailed by nine points at halftime. The Bears came out strong in the third quarter, led by Rohlack, who went 5-for-5 from the floor in the quarter. Rohlack scored 24 points total, including five three-pointers. But Geneva hit clutch free throws to get the win.

**1/21: @ Hyde Park 59-45 L**

Playing their first district opponent, Brentwood started out slowly on both defense and offense. In the fourth quarter, the Bears made a run, scoring 23 points, but it was too late. Rohlack was the leading scorer with 25.



# Kent wins geography bee

By Hayden Hutson

The students nervously took their seats as they were called to the stage, thinking how much they wanted to win, but knowing only one could be called the champion.

Among the nine contestants in the BCS theater, eighth-grader Andrew Kent showed the most knowledge of geography and took the title of champion on Jan. 14 at the school’s National Geographic Bee.

Kent, who had already won the spelling bee the previous week, said he was confident that he would do well, as he had been studying the questions from a previous bee on the National Geographic website and got them all correct.

Kent took the state qualifying test on Jan. 31, but will not know if he is accepted until March 2. The state bee is on March 27 in Bedford.

“I’m not super terrified about (the state bee),” Kent said, “but it depends on what questions they give me.”

Students in grades three through eight filed into the theater in the CSA shortly after 8 a.m. to watch and cheer for their classmates. The contestants were eighth-graders Chase Allen, Juliet Booker, Landon Heil, and champion Kent; seventh-graders Jack Fluitt, Nathan Prundeanu, and Griffin Smith; sixth-grader Luke Weed; and fifth-grader Bryce O’Sullivan.

Bee coordinator Carrie Hunter started out the bee by saying a few words about the importance of geography to Christians. She then

introduced the students and had them take their place on the stage before moderator Jonathan Weed read through the rules.

In round one, each student was asked a different question about US geography. Next, they received a handout, and everyone had the same question related to US geography. In the third round, questions turned to oceans and continents, followed by another handout, this time on countries of Africa.

After a few more questions, the field had been narrowed down to the final two contestants – Kent and Luke Weed, who would compete in the championship round. This consisted of three questions that required written answers. Both answered the first question correctly, and then Kent correctly named “Stockholm” to take the lead on question two. Both students answered the third question incorrectly, making Kent the victor.

## Crossword answers

ACROSS	DOWN
3 Andrew Kent	1 Watkins
6 Tyson	2 Seth Taylor
8 Exorcist	4 Brazil
9 Scholastic	5 Laura Wilson
11 Sebastian	7 Yoe Classic
12 Party in the USA	10 Gaston
13 Doege	
14 California	

## Soccer

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### 1/24: @ St. Michaels 6-1 L

Reich scored the first goal and Glenn assisted, but BCS could not keep up with the high-scoring Crusaders.

**1/28: @ Hyde Park 4-2 L**

In windy conditions, Glenn gave BCS the early lead. Taking the lead again at 2-1, the Bears then couldn’t stop the Panthers. Griffith had another 15 saves.

**1/31: Regents 3-1 L**

Graessle scored the Bears’ only goal off of a corner kick, but the girls were not able to come back. Griffith had 17 saves, and the girls were without Glenn.

**2/3: St. Michael’s 0-0 (5-4) W**

In a storybook conclusion to their season, the girls held their opponent scoreless through regulation. Through five penalty kicks each, they remained tied. But when Griffith made another spectacular save on the seventh Crusader shooter, the celebration began.

## Hoops

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### 1/24: Regents 65-52 L

The Bears came out strong this time, maintaining the lead until Regents began to run some clever plays. Regents played an extremely strong offense, and the Bears couldn’t keep up with their quickness. In the last quarter, Brentwood scored 17 points, but Regents had already secured the win. Rohlack scored 17, and Taylor had 12.

**1/28: St. Michael’s 67-52 L**

The boys struggled to maintain composure. Two technical fouls resulted from the teams butting heads against each other. Brentwood played hard, but the Crusaders’ offense and defense overpowered them. Hickl led the Bears with 15 points.

**1/31: Hyde Park 72-56 W**

Playing in front of a noisy home crowd on senior night, the Bears jumped out to a quick 10-point lead and ran with it. Brentwood played exceptionally good offense and defense, scoring points while holding back Hyde Park from ever gaining the upper hand.

# Kent wins spelling bee

By Riley Banner

In the 28th round of what officials say was Brentwood Christian’s longest annual school-level spelling bee, eighth-grader Andrew Kent beat Renne Cooper, a classmate and this year’s runner-up, and won by spelling the word “exorcist” on Thursday, Jan. 9, in the auditorium.

This year’s bee began just after 9:30 a.m. and ended two hours later at 11:30 a.m. when Kent correctly spelled the championship word.

“Going into the bee, I was worried about getting a hard word near the start, but as the bee went on, I went on with it,” Kent said.

Kent faced fierce competition throughout the bee, with the fourth-place finisher, sixth-grader Joshua Gonzales, lasting to round 13 and Gonzales’ classmate, third-place Rylee Johnson, still going strong until round 18.

On his way to winning the bee, Kent experienced a few close calls, misspelling a total of five words throughout the competition. In fact “exorcist” wasn’t the only shot at the championship word that Kent had received. In round 16, Kent misspelled the word “stapes,” which would have won him first place then and there.

Cooper also had two shots at the championship word. His first shot was in round 22 with the word “tumorigenic,” and his second shot was in round 25 with the final word on the list, “ylang-ylang.” Unfortunately, Cooper was unable to spell either word successfully, so the judges had to circle back through the list to words that had been skipped in earlier rounds to continue the bee.

A total of 24 students participated in the bee. Grades one through five had two representatives each, while the sixth through eighth grades had four or five representatives each.

Kent also participated in last year’s bee, finishing seventh. This year, he came prepared with two weeks’ worth of studying under his belt, which has allowed him a shot at

the national bee. In order to progress, Kent will need to take part in the Austin Regional Spelling Bee, which starts with an online qualifying test that opened on Feb. 5 and closes on Feb. 19. Kent will take the test during school hours under the supervision of the bee coordinator, and on Feb. 25, Scripps will announce whether or not he did well enough to progress to the Austin Regional Spelling Bee on March 24 at the West Austin Chamber of Commerce.

“I have a book of 5,000 words to study,” Kent said. “It’s not like I’m gonna be able to memorize how to spell all of them, but it couldn’t hurt to try.”

The Scripps National Spelling Bee will occur from Sunday, May 24, to Friday, May 29, at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland.

Additional awards were also given at the end of the bee. These went to Cooper for spirit; seventh-grader Zino Etakibuebu for enunciation; second-grader Isabella Lengyel for poise; and first-grader Brody O’Sullivan for sportsmanship.

BCS parent Sharonda Cooper again coordinated the bee, while Jonathan Weed took over pronouncing duties from former teacher Dr. Brooke Hollingsworth. Judges included elementary principal Mara Ashley, middle school teacher Carrie Hunter, and elementary librarian Tere Hager.



photo: Dorothy Walters

**Unflappable** Eighth-grader Andrew Kent outlasted classmate Renne Cooper (background) in the school spelling bee on Jan. 9. His winning word was “exorcist.”