

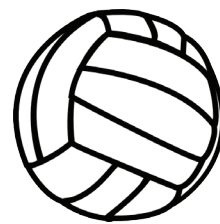


THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 33 NO. 1

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

NOVEMBER 2020



Thornton new boss of elementary

By Lucy Belcik

Jeremy Thornton, a graduate of Lubbock Christian Academy, has replaced Mara Ashley as elementary principal. Raised in Lubbock, he attended high school there, then it was “all the way across the street to LCU.”

Thornton’s wife, Rita, is the new athletics business manager, and their son, Clay, is in the third grade.

A lover of sports – specifically basketball, football, and baseball – Thornton enjoys watching the Bears compete.

“I enjoyed playing until I got old, and now I just like to watch,” Thornton said. His favorite teams include the Michigan Wolverines and the Texas Tech Raiders.

see **PRINCIPAL**, page 4

Family fun New elementary principal Jeremy Thornton, wife Rita, and son Clay vacation at Walt Disney World.

BCS welcomes new teachers, staff

By Bear Facts staff

Although it’s already November, there are many new BCS teachers and staff with whom the school community might not be familiar. Here is an introduction to these special people.

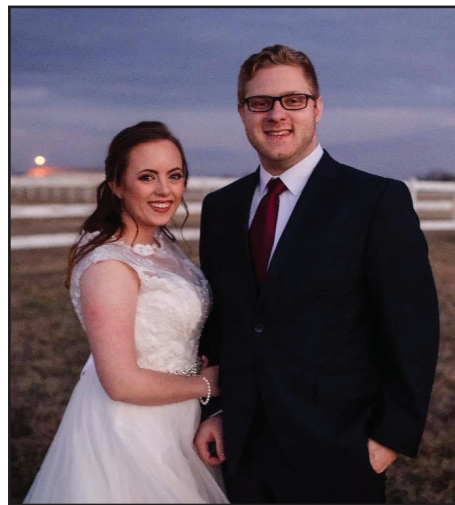
Adam Stow teaches middle school history and Bible, and freshman speech. He graduated from Harding University with a degree in general studies, with a focus on Bible and communication.

Stow grew up in Oakdale, Calif., before moving to Edmond, Okla., at age 11. He has two sisters – one younger and one older – and all-female cousins on his dad’s side. His parents named him Adam because he was the “first man” of that generation of Stows.

Before coming to Brentwood, Stow worked at a therapy and rehabilitation center near Searcy, Ark. His wife, Lindsey, is also a new BCS middle school teacher.

Stow said his wife heard of Brentwood during a career fair at Harding and fell in love with the school.

“I wanted to work here as an opportunity to



Lindsey and Adam Stow

work with, and minister to, young adults,” Stow said. “I love the fun and energy that teenagers bring to the table, and I love sharing and growing together.”

Stow has many hobbies. He loves to read,

play basketball, play video games and board games, and go to the park with his dog. He also enjoys cooking, grilling, and woodworking.

–Macie Griswold

Lindsey Stow, who is a member of Harding University’s Class of 2020, is the new middle school English and reading teacher. Hailing from Jackson, N.J., Stow traveled southwest to Arkansas for college, where she earned a degree in English, with a minor in Spanish language. She has been married for one year to Adam Stow, another new BCS teacher.

Stow enjoys watching *Grey’s Anatomy*, playing Animal Crossing, and “nerding out about cool poetry.”

A McNair Scholar throughout her time at Harding, Stow has completed a research internship over book censorship and the positive effects of bibliotherapy. She presented her research in both Atlanta, Ga., and Niagara Falls, N.Y., as well as at Harding.

Though a brand-new teacher, she has interned for the last year in several public schools

see **NEW TEACHERS**, page 5

School unusual, but going ‘extremely well’

By Sarah Esman

Six months after the last day of on-campus classes last year, most students returned to campus on Sep. 9. The classrooms are filled with students and teachers again, but some students are still missing.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are two options for Brentwood students when it comes to where they want to learn: in-school and online. Many students chose the online route, for different reasons. For example, some students have at-risk family members they are trying to protect, while others may thrive in the more flexible atmosphere Bears Online provides.

During the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year, 25 elementary students were online, while 194 students were on campus. In secondary, there were 75 online students and 308 on-campus students.

School in the classrooms is much like it always is, with a few exceptions. Teachers wear face shields as they speak to a classroom of students wearing masks. Secondary

students might feel like they have gone back to their elementary school days, as they are now staying in one classroom – called their “cohort” – for most of their classes. Occasionally, cohorts will visit another classroom for classes such as science, but they do not mix with other cohorts. Because of this, teachers are the ones going to other classrooms each period.

“I am so thankful for my cart!” middle school teacher Carrie Hunter said.

School officials spent all summer preparing for this school year, and faculty arrived a month before school started to make sure everything was ready. BCS president Jay Burcham has been in contact with health officials to gauge when different aspects of school can go back to normal. He also took part in these meetings over summer break when attempting to determine when the first day of school would be.

“Throughout the spring and summer, there was a daily call with TEA, the CDC, and the heads of schools and superintendents across the state,” said Burcham, who also had a weekly call with heads of Christian schools from across the country.

Three different plans were put in place for the reopening of Brentwood Christian. The multiple plans were made just in case the first one failed, forcing the next one to be adopted.

“A great example is the pick-up procedure we had in place, but scrapped after the first day of school because it worked on paper but did not in practice,” Burcham said. “We went with our secondary plan the next day and have stuck with it because it was effective.”

“This year is requiring some redefining of acceptability, but I can honestly say that this year has started extremely well,” Burcham said.

Contingency plans for an event like a pandemic did not exist prior to COVID. The pick-up and drop-off plans, as well as other plans, have been made from scratch, starting in March.

Organizing Google Classroom for grades K4-12, setting up hundreds of email accounts, and adding these email addresses into RenWeb was also a challenge, according to

see **COVID**, page 3

From the Editor: Aurora Tyson

THE BEAR FACTS NOVEMBER 2020

Editor advises mindset change during difficult year

The unprecedented times that our world is currently experiencing are both unpredictable and uncertain. Nations around the globe are facing trials like none before, leading to adversity, disappointment, and calamity. Over one million people worldwide have died from COVID-19, and more than 40 million people have tested positive for the disease. There is no telling how many lives have been and will be affected by the coronavirus. Countless people have been laid off from their jobs. Countless small businesses have been forced to shut down while others have lost customers and thousands

of dollars in revenue. Countless first responders have struggled with the issue of being exposed to the disease daily and possibly infecting their family members. Countless hospitalized patients have had to endure treatment, surgeries, and even death without being allowed family members or friends to visit.

As a result of the pandemic, numerous significant events have been altered, rescheduled, and even cancelled. Students have missed out on their graduations, athletes have missed out on their games and tournaments, children have missed out on playing with their friends, and families have missed out on vacations and trips. So much has been lost because of the changes that the global pandemic has brought about, and there is no doubt more to come. Although it can be easier to be pessimistic and complain about the misfortune and negativity that this year has brought upon our world, it is extremely important to realize that we are indeed a blessed nation, and we should all attempt to make a conscious effort to take things with gratitude instead of take things for granted.

If this pandemic has taught me anything, it's the importance of never taking anything for granted. Nothing in this life is guaranteed except for the Lord's perpetual love for His people. That being said, it is necessary that we understand that our world needs a mindset shift, and that it starts with individuals like you and me. We should change our habits to become more appreciative and grateful for the things we are given and the opportunities we are presented with in this life. We must realize and recognize our blessings before we no longer have them. We should be eager to take advantage of the opportunities that we are given and

give our maximum effort in everything that we do, because we never know when something may prevent us from doing them again. It is important to note that while so many blessings can be taken away, our greatest blessings are secured within Christ Jesus. Our lives are revealed in Christ and we can know for sure that he has promised us salvation. As the apostle Paul wrote, "Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above,

While so many blessings can be taken away, our greatest blessings are secured within Christ Jesus.

where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

This year has been difficult with more than just COVID, however, and we can all agree that the political and social turmoil our nation is experiencing has done nothing but add to the negativity surrounding 2020. With all of the protests and riots around the country, it was challenging for me to view America as a blessed nation and be thankful for the life that it offers. Along with the political turmoil, we



may experience a major intersection in our nation's history after this election. Personally, I have witnessed and experienced much hate between the supporters of Trump-Pence and the supporters of Biden-Harris. With every passing day, our nation divides further and further against itself as Republicans and Democrats continue to argue and detest one another. Instead of focusing on the policies of the candidates, many citizens are only concerned with the individuals themselves, and they refuse to listen to what each potential president wishes to enact during his presidency because they have preset opinions of the candidates' personalities and parties. Regardless of who is elected as the next president and who is given the keys for the next four years of our nation's life, Christians must realize that God is sovereign and that He will bring about His plans for our world. No matter who is in charge of America, our Lord will ensure that those who are devoted to hearing His call and doing His will carry out His plans.

As Christians, we have been called to love one another no matter what. It is not our job to judge, discriminate, or hate others. We must build others up, and in turn build up our nation and our world. A better future for this generation and for all future generations starts with a change in our mindset. Focus on the positives and appreciate every opportunity God gives you. Everything in this life happens for a reason, and God has a purpose and a plan behind everything that He does. Let us not be quick to complain and gripe about our unfortunate circumstances. Instead, let us express gratitude and thankfulness for what we are blessed with and what we can do with our lives ... no matter who is president, and no matter how long the pandemic lasts.



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
Aurora Tyson

Reporters

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Chase Allen | Aden Mann |
| Lucy Belcik | Liam Panter |
| Keira Black | Lillian Peterson |
| Juliet Booker | Katie Pittner |
| Carina Combs | Anjie Popoola |
| Renne Cooper | Fisayo Popoola |
| Zoe Cooper | Laynie Ruiz |
| Andrew Davis | Ryder Shelton-Lamb |
| Sarah Esman | Hailey Stromberg |
| Elizabeth Everton | Zachary Tran |
| Macie Griswold | Emily Walker |
| Natalie Hargrove | Kaitlyn Weilemann |
| Nathan Joseph | Clive Whaley |
| Andrew Kent | Daniel Womack |
| Evelyn Lee | John Youngdale |
| Samuel Linscombe | |

Adviser
Jonathan Weed

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

Changes greet students

By Zoe Cooper

The new school year brought many changes with it, and over the long break, many additions and renovations have been made to improve life at school.

“Significant effort was put into summer renovations this year,” Brentwood Christian’s CFO Jeff Morris said.

Many of the changes had to do with the precautions being taken during the pandemic. One of the biggest changes made was the installation of cameras and wiring to all classrooms. These allowed teachers to simultaneously teach students in the classroom and those online.

Extra devices for hosting the online classes were also added to each classroom, wireless access points were added both inside and outside to improve connectivity for online schooling, and new livestream equipment was purchased to assist with streaming events such as chapel and sports games. Plexiglass was installed in communal areas like the libraries and computer and science labs, along with more desks and new tables for some of the classes.

While there were many additions to the

classrooms, some things had to be taken out and placed in storage. Objects made of fabric such as rugs and couches were removed from the classrooms to help cut down on the spread of germs. Extra furniture like bookcases and extra tables were also removed to leave more space for social distancing.

A lot of the renovations, however, didn’t involve the current health crisis. The flooring in the second level of the C building was updated, as were the bathroom walls and floor in the Athletic Center. The secondary office was remodeled to give office space to both principal Carol Johnson and assistant principal Leah Smith, and Smith’s former office was changed into an isolation room for students with COVID-19 symptoms.

There were also new additions outside of the classrooms. The Class of 2020’s gift partially paid for the landscaping and addition of picnic tables in the area between the B and C buildings. New lighting installed in the batting cages and bullpen area on the baseball field was provided by donors, and a 14-passenger minibus was purchased with funds from the Partnership Dinner. The road in front of the CSA up to Lamar was repaved as well, and the cost was split by the church and school.

Summer sorrows

Popular teachers, staff bid farewell

By Evelyn Lee, Macie Griswold, and John Youngdale

Four people dear to the BCS community made the decision over the summer to conclude their careers at Brentwood Christian. With a combined history of more than 70 years at the school, their impact on children’s lives runs deep. *(For story on other departing teachers, see May issue of The Bear Facts online.)*

After 36 years at BCS, Mary Kay Clark retired at the end of last school year. Clark began working in the elementary office in 1984, when the school was only in the current A building, and it only went through eighth grade. She has seen the school grow and transform into what it is today.

“It’s amazing how the school has grown and now ranks among one of the best,” Clark said.

Over the course of her career at BCS, Clark has made lasting friendships among the faculty, staff, and the parents of students. One such friend is former elementary principal Dr. Libby Weed. The two worked together in the elementary office for nearly three decades.

“The best elementary principal you would find anywhere,” Clark said. “And such a fine

Christian lady.”

Apparently, the feeling goes both ways.

“She is smart as a whip, and she was never assigned a task that she didn’t complete with accuracy and style,” Dr. Weed said.

Clark is currently enjoying her retirement, and still upholds the friendships she made during her time working at BCS.

Nancy Meyer, Brentwood’s first school nurse, retired after working at BCS for almost 16 years. Meyer had worked part time at BCS as a nurse and a health teacher, and she had also worked as an ER nurse for 25 years. She joined the Brentwood team when former president Marquita Moss offered her a full-time position.

“I felt this was the direction God wanted me to go, and 16 years later, I feel the same,” she said.

see **SCHOOL**, page 9



Clark

COVID-era school

continued from page 1

chief technology officer Wayne Marks. Each “cohort classroom” got its own Zoom account, which meant students at home would only have to log in once, and teachers would not have to log into a new meeting every time they change classrooms, he explained.

Still, many aspects of this school year have been difficult for Brentwood’s teachers, who have had to make numerous adjustments.

“The most difficult part of having students online is keeping them engaged in what we are doing in the classroom,” fourth-grade teacher Summer Best said. “So many of the things I do in my classroom involve moving around the room or working in groups or partners to keep students active and engaged.”

Finding a way to keep her fourth graders socially distanced at centers has been challenging, so Best’s class is using pool noodles to remind them of how far they have to distance from each other.

It is also hard for her to develop strong relationships with her students. She can’t interact with students as much due to COVID, and it is especially difficult to interact with online students.

Even though there have been many trials throughout 2020, there are positives about this year. Teachers have expressed how glad they are to be back with their students, even though everyone has to be socially distanced. Hunter said her seventh-grade cohort is “bright, fun-loving, patient, hardworking, and funny.”

Her students have also gotten comfortable in their cohort classroom.

“My cohort brought in a ‘class pet’ to our classroom – a roly poly – and created a habitat for it,” Hunter said.

While the Brentwood community has handled the restrictions well, there is always room for improvement. Burcham said balancing the excitement of coming back to school and maintaining safety precautions has been the most difficult part of reopening.

Burcham also said he is thankful that the entire school is still able to worship together.

“When we had our all-community chapel on the field on Sep. 25, I was looking at how different it was from last year’s chapels, but it was just as blessed, just as special, and even more necessary than in years past,” Burcham said.

He is also grateful for the amount of effort the Brentwood community has put into this school year.

“After opening, the ongoing process of having online and in-class students has increased

the overall workload across the campus a great deal,” Burcham said.

He says that the teachers’ workload has doubled, but it is all “worth it” because students and teachers are able to gather together in-per-

son and worship the Lord.

“Even though things are different, and even though things are harder, we are absolutely blessed to be together again. It is a great day to be a Brentwood Bear!”



photo: Brandy Gauthier

Shielded and masked First-grade teacher Suzy Benton prepares her students for an art activity last month. Teachers have had to make many adjustments this year.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: *Grant Martinez*

Seniors featured in The Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2021.

Genuine, kind friend shares Christ’s love to all

By **Natalie Hargrove**

It was a rainy summer day, and friend Caroline Griffith was feeling down. Suddenly she thought of calling her friend Grant, and after a few seconds of talking with him, her outlook had drastically changed.

Most people know Grant Martinez as the BCS president of National Honor Society, or the varsity volleyball team manager. But to his classmates he is the first person to turn to if anyone needs help, and is always the first person to volunteer to lead a prayer.

Twelve years ago Grant enrolled at Brentwood Christian, and he is one of the 20 seniors who have been attending since kindergarten.

“I have been blessed with life-long relationships here at Brentwood,” Grant said. “Whether we met in kindergarten or freshman year, I truly love everyone in my class and I am extremely grateful for their impact on me.”

Grant has filled a wide variety of roles around Brentwood, including sophomore class president, NHS president and vice president, volleyball manager, and basketball player. Grant’s gifts are not only recognized by students, but by teachers as well. He won awards for honors Algebra II, Honors Precalculus, and Computer Science, and was named the sophomore citizen of the year.

“Grant is the nuttiest genius that I have ever met,” science teacher Michelle Mallett said. “He is so smart, and having him in class is truly an experience.”

Friend Mason Hejl says in class Grant is always cracking jokes, laughing, and has a smile on his face. He spends hours trying to get that A, and all his hard work pays off.

Grant’s impact goes way beyond his leadership with the student body and both his athletic and academic achievements. Friend Andrew Geevarghese says Grant is one of the most selfless people that he has ever met, and he always offers to help people whenever he can. For example, Andrew recalled how Grant stayed after at the senior retreat and helped the administration clean up the facility even though he did not need to.

Senior class sponsor Penny Hagen says that one of the most impressive things about Grant is that even before she asks for help he is willing to pitch in and do his part.

“Grant is kind, and he is always will-

ing to reach out and help,” she says. “And he does it with a smile on his face,” Hagen says.

Grant has been described by his friends as an outgoing leader and a selfless and compassionate friend.

“I truly believe that Grant is a textbook example of someone who shines God’s love through every action,” Caroline says. “He is devoted to God and wants to spread His love to as many people as he can through service, friendship and leadership.”

Grant has been active at his church and youth group at Westover Hills Church of Christ for the past six years, and has spent multiple weeks at Kadesh, a summer camp held at Abilene Christian University, where he has been impacted and has grown in his faith immensely.

Caroline, who called Grant on that rainy day,

says she is so grateful that she can be herself around him and she can always count on him to make her laugh.

“Because of our conversations, he has changed my outlook on my faith, and I have become closer to God because of the encouraging words he has given me,” she says.

When Grant is not participating in school activities, he enjoys being “super nerdy” and watching a multitude of shows. Favorites include *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, *Avatar: The Last Air Bender*, and *The Office*. He also enjoys rooting for his favorite teams – the Dallas Cowboys and San Antonio Spurs.

“It is so exciting to come back to school the next day after a huge night in sports and hear what everyone has to say about the big exciting moments,” Grant says.



That smile Grant Martinez, devoted to God and to serving others, plans to attend Texas A&M and major in either biochemistry or biology. He plans to become a physician.

Friend Alyssa McLain says if you ever want to experience the real Grant, ask him about NBA stats and whether Michael Jordan or LeBron James is an overall better basketball player.

Grant plans to attend Texas A&M University and wants to major in either biochemistry or biology on a pre-med track. He then plans on attending medical school and hopes to pursue a career as a physician. Even though he is unsure of what he wants to specialize in, it is certain that wherever Grant goes he is going to impact people. So whenever you are feeling down or sad, pick up the phone and call Grant. You’ll know that no matter what, he is going to be there ready to help you and share Christ’s love with you.

Principal Thornton

continued from page 1

Thornton came to Brentwood from Fort Worth Christian, where he served as director of foundation development, athletic director of compliance, and director of missions. He holds a master’s degree in educational leadership and a bachelor of science in secondary education, both from LCU.

Those who work with him have commented on his already positive impact on the elementary program.

“Mr. Thornton has brought new life to our elementary program,” fourth-grade teacher Summer Best said. “He has been intentional in showing each of his teachers that we are loved and valued – not just with his words, but also with his actions.”

Cynthia Hutson, who teaches K4, said she appreciates the way Thornton treats the children.

“He wants each student to know that they are loved and valued by God, and he wants them to see that love through him,” she said.

Although he joined Brentwood during an unprecedented time, Thornton shared that he already loves the people he gets to work with. He said the staff and students make him “love coming to work every day.” Thornton believes in servant leadership, and he hopes that the talents and opportunities God has given him will help guide him as he takes on this position in such an abnormal time.

“I see this as a legacy job for my mentors and for Brentwood. I follow in the footsteps of excellent leaders, and I pray that I serve the position well,” Thornton said.

New teachers bring new energy, perspective

continued from page 1

in Arkansas, and she served for two years as a counselor for Uplift summer camp at Harding. Stow hopes that her job as an English teacher will eventually help her become a librarian, which requires three years of teaching experience. She already feels blessed by the loving atmosphere of Brentwood, and by her students. “My sixth graders show me Jesus every day in how kind and encouraging they are to each other,” Stow said. “They are always ready to give someone a smile, even under a mask.”

—Lucy Belcik

Coaching high school boys’ basketball and teaching high school computer science is **Donte Mathis**. Mathis grew up in San Antonio and graduated from Texas State in 1999. He was awarded the Southland Conference MVP award for basketball, and he is still the only player from Texas State to receive this award.

More significantly, Mathis played professionally in Europe after college. He played for a team in Slovenia during the 2002-03 season and then played for a number of clubs in Italy until 2013. While in Italy, he picked up the Italian language and also met his wife, becoming a citizen of Italy by marriage.

More recently, however, Mathis has been working for well-known brands such as Adidas and Under Armour as a consultant recruiter. When asked why he came to BCS, Mathis said he wanted to be in an environment where he was able to pursue his passions while making a lasting impact on students.

“I vividly remember all of my interactions with adults and mentors who helped me along my path and value how important it is to invest in youth,” Mathis said.

Other than playing basketball, Mathis enjoys fishing, traveling, and spending time with his family. His two sons attend BCS: eighth-grader Adrian and fifth-grader Aaron.

—Nathan Joseph



Mathis

Football coach and athletics operations manager **Matthew Newby** was born in Port Arthur and grew up Kirbyville and Beaumont. He began his college career at Stephen F. Austin, where he was recruited to play football. Two years later he transferred to McMurry University in Abilene, where he continued his football career and earned a bachelor’s degree in exercise science and human performance.

Newby met his wife Ashlea while at McMurry, and they were married in 2017. They now have a one-year-old son named Grant.

Newby has coached at schools in Texas and Louisiana, but he recently decided he wanted to make a change. He wanted to be at a school where he felt like he could grow – not only as a coach, but as a person.

“I wanted to be somewhere that also had great family values and would help my family grow in our faith,” he said.

After the first time talking with previous head coach Stan Caffey and current head coach Correy Washington, he knew that Brentwood was something special and that it was the place for him and his family.

Newby is the varsity football team’s run game coordinator and offensive/defensive line coach. In addition, he is the middle school head football coach, middle school basketball coach, and assistant high school track coach.

—Juliet Booker

Teaching sixth-grade history and eighth-grade Bible is **Ryan Bounds**. Bounds was born in Jonesboro, Ark., and he grew up in Pocahontas, Ark. He has degrees from Temple College in Texas and Ashford University in San Diego.

After high school, Bounds served in the United States Army on a combat tour in Afghanistan from 2010 to 2011. His team’s job was to locate improvised explosive devices (IEDs), otherwise known as roadside bombs. Bounds said that one of the biggest lessons he learned during his time in Afghanistan was how blessed we are to live in America. In the region he was in, the children could only go to school if they had a pencil.

“We are blessed to live in a free country,” Bounds said.

While interviewing at BCS, Bounds noticed how the employees uniformly placed God first. He said that this, along with the hardworking nature of the football program, led him to choose BCS as an employer.

Bounds is the varsity football defensive coordinator, along with the assistant coach for varsity baseball and varsity basketball.

When not coaching or teaching, Bounds, who lives in Temple, loves spending time outdoors camping, hunting, and fishing. He and his wife Kelsey have two children: Greyson, who is four, and Everett, who is one.

—Nathan Joseph



Newby

Karla Roberson, better known as “Profesora” to her students, has taken over the Spanish II post after the departure of last year’s teacher Hannah “Señorita” Stewart.

Before school started, Roberson spent time making her classroom festive, with flags and all kinds of colorful decorations.

“I’m excited to teach Spanish and see the interest and attention students give me when they’re learning this beautiful language along with its abundant culture,” she said.

Being a native speaker and born in Puerto Rico, Roberson has much to offer to the students and the school. She may be a familiar face to many, as to she was the fine arts assistant last year and also spent time as the secondary office assistant. She came to know Brentwood when she was researching private schools a few years ago for her son Michael, who just graduated in May.

“After reviewing and touring several of them, Brentwood was the best choice for our family,” she said.

Roberson can speak comfortably in four languages, and her favorite type of music is reggaeton.

—Liam Panter

New Spanish teacher **Deyra Vivanco** grew up in Monterrey, Mexico, where she also earned her bachelor’s degree in education at Universidad Regiomontana.

Vivanco taught in various places before coming to Brentwood, such as her alma mater, as well as Universidad Mexico Valle and Instituto Montessori Anahuac. After Vivanco moved to Austin, she taught in Young Peoples Workshop Spanish Immersion School for three years.

Vivanco has three grown children, two of whom live in Mexico, and one who lives in Austin to study at UT. Vivanco has only been at Brentwood since Oct. 13, but she is enjoying her time so far.

“I love to teach at Brentwood Christian School because students and teachers are very

kind,” Vivanco said.

—Katie Pittner

Alicia Tillotson, the new Brentwood kindergarten teacher, is a familiar face to many. She was introduced to the school when her daughter Clara, now a sophomore, enrolled in fifth grade.

Tillotson grew up in Victoria and graduated from Texas State University with a degree in dance. She also went to Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ and now she attends again.

Tillotson has been teaching for more than 30 years. She has taught kindergarten and first grade in Austin ISD.

“I treasure sharing God’s love,” she said.

Tillotson said she was drawn to teach kindergarten because of the students’ energy and wonder. She said she loves seeing them grow and become more self-confident.

Her favorite activities include scrapbooking, reading, watching the Hallmark Channel, traveling, and spending time with family.

—Hailey Stromberg

Veronica Eke is the new fourth-grade teacher at BCS, joining Summer Best at that grade level. She grew up in Round Rock and lived there until she graduated high school.



Eke

Eke graduated from Southwestern Christian College in Dallas, where she ran track and field. She then moved back to Austin to complete her degree in elementary education at Huston-Tillotson University.

Eke grew up with four siblings – two sisters and two younger brothers. She and her husband Henry have two children, one of whom started

first grade at Brentwood this fall. Eke loves to do many activities, which include gardening, track and field, Olympic weight lifting, football, and being with her cherished students. But there’s just one problem.

“I’m good at calling people the wrong name while I’m teaching,” she said. “My students think it’s hilarious.”

Prior to teaching at Brentwood, Eke was an elementary teachers’ assistant and a preschool teacher for seven years at various schools.

—Juliet Booker

Janaye Barker will be working in building A as the new second-grade teacher. She grew up near Ft. Worth and went to Colleyville High School. She attended Abilene Christian Uni-

Volleyball girls second in district; playoffs Saturday

By Aurora Tyson

The Lady Bears volleyball team is 7-1 in district (22-4 overall) after winning against Regents on Thursday, Oct. 29, in three straight sets. The girls are extremely optimistic about making it deep into the playoffs, and as this year's motto states, they have "Something to Prove."

"We weren't able to reach our full potential last year," senior captain Caroline Griffith said. "I think that the thought of how last season ended pushes us to try even harder to make a statement this year."

The team will play a warm-up match against last year's 4A state finalists Schertz St. Paul II on Nov. 3 at 6 p.m. at BCS. The bi-district playoff match will be this Saturday, Nov. 7, at Brentwood's home gym, with the time and opponent yet to be announced.

"This is a special team because the girls all play so well together," head coach Rory Tyson said. "They play with heart and focus, and they leave it all on the court. I started this summer telling them to play with no regrets, and that's what they have been doing. Now let's 'take care o' bi-ness.'"

District play began during the first week of October, and the Bears started off playing against Boerne Geneva and St. Michael's, arguably two of their toughest district opponents.

After losing to Geneva in three straight sets at the beginning of the season, the girls were determined to "destroy them" the second time around on Oct. 6. Brentwood came out strong in the first set, winning 25-17. In the second set, they began to coast and Geneva took advantage, winning 25-16. But the girls came back and won the next two sets 25-16 and 25-22, respectively.

Highlights from the stats that night were Griffith with 49 hitting attempts and 15 kills, senior Laura Wilson with five solo blocks, and Griffith with 24 digs.

The volleyball team had not won a game against St. Michael's in the past two years. This year's squad was determined to change that. Despite the home-court disadvantage, the Bears swept the Crusaders in three straight sets. The first game was point-for-point up until the last few points, the final score totaling 29-27. In the second set BCS crushed it, only allowing the Crusaders to score 10 points. The Bears then finished it off 25-17.

Highlights that night include Griffith with 18 kills and four aces, sophomore Ashlynn Alvarado with four solo blocks, junior Ava Alvarado with 30 assists, and senior Aurora Tyson with 18 digs and 21 serve receive passes.

Ava Alvarado, the team's setter, says she loves her teammates and is proud of the way they work together to overcome their obstacles



photo: Kevin McKinnerney

Winners Brooklyn Allen gets a dig, while teammates Caroline Griffith and Laura Wilson team up for a block in a win over Austin Royals.

and win games together.

"We might not be the tallest, strongest, or most talented players," Alvarado said, "but we give more effort and we have more heart than anybody that we play."

With the COVID-19 restrictions, the Lady Bears were forced to push back their season, rescheduling more than 10 games and cancelling two tournaments, causing them to wind up with

see **VOLLEYBALL**, page 9



photo: Kevin McKinnerney



photo: yearbook

Endurance Freshman Renne Cooper and sophomore Rodrigo Real run on Oct. 24 at the TAPPS district meet held on Brentwood's "Course of Doom." BCS also hosted their first BCS Invitational for high school two weeks earlier.

Girls finish eighth at state cross country

By Renne Cooper

The Lady Bears cross country team finished eighth out of 21 teams in the TAPPS state championships on Monday, Nov. 2 in Hewitt, led by freshman Katie Pittner, who finished 13th overall.

The boys' team finished 15th, led by junior Jack Leidlein (28th place), sophomore Rodrigo Real (35th), and freshman Renne Cooper (38th).

Each race had a total of about 160 runners. "This season has truly been incredible, growing closer with my teammates and watching them push themselves to grow as both athletes and true friends," senior Julia Glenn said.

The final and most important meet of the season before state was the TAPPS district meet. This meet was extra special for Brentwood as it was hosted on the Bears' campus, only two weeks after BCS hosted their first-ever high school meet. On Oct. 24, nine schools came to participate. The weather was much better than the previous Brentwood meet as it was about 60 degrees and cloudy. Everyone's time was faster than their previous BCS Invitational time.

The Lady Bears placed second, losing only to their rivals, St. Michaels. Pittner led the team

in third place, earning her district honors and a time of 13:09 in the two-mile race. Freshman Lucy Belcik (14:39) placed next for the girls, followed by junior Emarylis Diaz (14:49).

The Bears placed sixth with Cooper leading the team in fifth place and a time of 18:34 on the 5K route, receiving district honors as well. Leidlein (19:06) was 11th, with Real (19:11) right behind.

Even in the midst of the pandemic, the Bears' cross country season started strong. Before the school year had begun, head coach Katie Smith and assistant Kaylin Mannon had their runners working hard to get into shape. Normally, the high school team will have one or two races before the school year begins, but this year was different. Sports were restricted and the start of the season was pushed back, but that didn't stop this group of runners from excelling.

The season began for the Bears on Friday, Sep. 11, at the Brenham Hillacious Invitational. This course could be described as an obstacle course with two sets of hay bales runners had to hurdle. There were also many hills along the course, causing slower times.

The Lady Bears took home first place by a large margin, with all seven of the girls placing in the top 13. Leading the team with a time

of 14:41 was Pittner, who took third place individually. Belcik (15:38) and freshman Abby Munoz (15:49) took fourth and fifth place, respectively.

The boys did not have enough runners to have a full team, but each runner did well individually. Leidlein led with a time of 19:58 and a fifth-place finish, with Cooper two positions behind with a time of 20:31.

The following Saturday the girls finished second in the San Antonio Christian Cross Country Classic on Sep. 19. Pittner finished third with a time of 13:25, followed by Belcik in 12th (14:53).

The boys were led by Leidlein (19:54), with Real (20:15) one spot behind. The team took home fifth place, beating Regents by one point.

"When you beat a team by one point, it shows the importance of every runner and every position," Smith said to the team after the race.

One week later was the McNeil Cross Country Invitational, with the Bears running in the scorching heat around noon. Without a full team, the runners still ran a good race with Leidlein (18:43), Real (19:16), and Cooper (19:50) all placing in the top eight.

see **CROSS COUNTRY**, page 7

Homecoming win puts football on path for playoffs

By Natalie Hargrove

The Bears are off to a 4-2 as they continue with their unusual season in a larger district and a somewhat new coaching staff. With Friday’s 27-26 homecoming win over Boerne Geneva, Brentwood has a good chance at making the playoffs.

Their season has not lacked excitement, and the battle against Geneva in the season’s final home game gave the big but socially-distanced crowd some tense moments. The Bears’ defense made a clutch stop on a two-point conversion to preserve the lead, and with about a minute to play, the offense made a big fourth-down conversion to seal the win.

Brentwood’s first-ever head coach Stan Caffey retired after last season, and a familiar face took his place: former defensive coordinator Correy Washington. BCS is playing in their third season in 5A, but are playing four new schools including Corpus Christi John Paul II, San Antonio St. Anthony, Boerne Geneva, and Brownsville St. Joseph.

Washington said the team is using the same tools and terminology that they have been building off of for the past couple of years.

“We are facing different obstacles every week,” Washington said. “And they are always giving a good effort. We are just working towards that perfect game where everything clicks.”

Not only did the Bears get a new head coach, but they also got three new assistant coaches. Matt Newby recently worked as an offensive line coach for Bolton High in Louisiana and is now Brentwood’s offensive line coach and run game coordinator. Ryan Bounds worked at Waco Reicher as a defensive coordinator, and now has the same role for Brentwood. Lastly, Ronny Copeland, who has been coaching for 40 years, is now Brentwood’s running back specialist.

The Bears finished last season with a record

of 8-3 and lost in the first round of playoffs to Houston Second Baptist, 43-29.

The team not only lost their head coach but also lost important seniors, including quarterback Sam Orick, kicker Jonah Conner, and key contributors Coby Best, Isaac Copeland, and Phillip Mach.

Three all-district players returned this year for the Bears: senior Zack Billante and junior Conner Rohlack made first-team all district, and junior Cason Best made the second team.

Billante said this season has been a huge blessing for him and his teammates.

“As for playoffs, it is simply a matter of doing our jobs,” Billante said. “When we don’t make mistakes, we can compete with anyone.”

The Bears have struggled with multiple injuries so far this season. Billante has had hamstring pain, a broken finger, and a dislocated shoulder. Junior quarterback Keller Jackson suffered a concussion against St. Anthony’s, and senior Bailey Cordes has had an ongoing struggle with his shoulders, dislocating both of them in numerous games. Junior running back Conner Rohlack missed time with a knee injury.

Brentwood is led on offense by Jackson, who had 261 rushing yards and six touchdowns through Oct. 16. He was followed by Cordes, who had 115 rushing yards.

Billante was the leader with eight receptions for 248 yards and three TDs.

Defensively, senior Aaron Lilya leads the team in tackles.

Following are the team’s game results:

9/25: @ Waco Reicher 27-21 W (OT)

Playing Coach Bounds’ previous school created tension in the days leading up to the game. Reicher scored first, but the Bears had the game tied at halftime. Brentwood started the second half by scoring two touchdowns, but Reicher responded with two more touchdowns, and the game was tied at the end of regulation. In overtime, the Bears’ defense held before Jackson ran in the game winner.

and his attitude and effort.”

The next meet was the Founders Classic Invitational on Oct. 3, which is always a promising meet for fast times. The Lady Bears took first place overall, led as always by Pittner (13:08), who won first place by 12 seconds. Belcik came in next for the team at 13th place (14:14).

The boys also did pretty well with Leidlein (18:03) placing eighth and Cooper (18:47) placing 21st with Real (19:00) not far behind.

A week later, the wait was finally over: Brentwood’s very first high school BCS Invitational had finally arrived. Months of hard work on the course was about to pay off. The runners had named the trail “The Course of Doom” due to its excruciating hills and turns. Every single



photo: Lisa Lee

Quarterback keeper Junior Keller Jackson cuts through St. Joseph’s defense to gain some yardage during a home game on Saturday, Oct. 3. Jackson rushed for a total of 202 yds in his 11 carries, scoring all three of the team’s touchdowns that afternoon.

10/3: Brownsville St. Joseph 21-18 W

Before honoring the seniors, the Bears took the field for a Saturday afternoon game. Brentwood pulled out the win with the help of Jackson’s TD runs of 48 and 73 yards, junior Seth Taylor’s interception, and Keesey’s fumble recovery.

10/9: @ St. Michael’s 42-0 L

The Bears struggled to stay on their feet as the Crusaders’ offense found the end zone many times throughout the game. Brentwood was unable to move the ball on the ground, and St. Michael’s tall wide receiver was dominant.

10/16: San Antonio St. Anthony’s 24-0 W

Starting off to a slow start due to high snaps and fumbles, the Bears were not able to score until the second quarter. They led 8-0 at halftime, but they lost Jackson to injury. Rohlack

took over QB, and the Bears put up 16 more points, including a safety by Lilya.

10/23: @ CC John Paul II 34-14 L

After traveling for most of the day, and without a few key players, the Bears were not able to execute on offense in the first half and fell behind. Once they found the end zone, it was not enough, as their opponent’s huge linemen paved the way for an unstoppable running game.

10/30: Boerne Geneva 27-26 W

With Jackson back at quarterback, Brentwood took a 19-0 halftime lead, including a long TD pass to Billante in the final seconds. But Geneva came out strong and took a 20-19 lead in the fourth quarter. Cordes ran for a score to give the Bears the lead again, but Geneva stormed back with a score of their own. However, they were stuffed on their two-point try.

runner’s time was much slower than normal, but the team did very well.

The Lady Bears were led once again by Pittner, who finished fourth with an astounding time under the conditions of 13:24. Belcik (14:45) finished in 11th place.

The boys finished 16th, 17th, and 18th, with Leidlein (19:38), Real (19:56), and Cooper (19:57) all running decent times under the course and weather conditions. Thanks to McGaughy, the boys had enough runners to place as a team, finishing fifth.

“I thought our meet went really well,” Smith said. “We had a lot of teams come, and it ran off very smoothly.”

The last meet of the season before the dis-

trict and state meets was, without doubt, the fastest course this season. The weather was perfect, and the course was flat and fast at the Marble Falls Faith Academy Invitational. Every runner on the team set their season PR on this course.

Pittner came in second place in the open division with a time of 12:48, while Belcik (13:41) was eighth and junior Emarylis Diaz (13:55) was 12th. The Lady Bears took home first place as a team once again.

The boys also did an impressive job with Leidlein (18:00) in third place, Cooper (18:05) in sixth, and Real (18:06) in seventh. The boys did not have the required five runners for a full team.

Cross country

continued from page 6

On the other hand, the girls did very well as a team, placing third. Pittner (13:33) and Belcik (14:52) led the Lady Bears.

At this point in the season, runners were doing well individually, but the fact that the boys’ team was lacking runners came to the team’s attention. To be able to place as a team, a school must have five reliable runners. This caused the boys to look for a volunteer to step up. The young man to fill this position was sophomore Jaeden McGaughy.

“I am very thankful Jaeden joined our team,” Smith said. “I truly appreciate him

Fine arts classes get creative finding new ways to operate

By Kaitlyn Weilemann

This year looks a little different for the teachers and students who make up the BCS fine arts department. But with some creativity and persistence, they’ve all found ways to keep up normal activities and keep shining their light across campus in what has been a difficult year throughout the world.

The BCS Bears band played at the final home football game on Oct. 30, and the pep band will play at two more road games on Nov. 6 and 13.

The winter fine arts events like the Christmas concerts for both band and choir are currently expected to be replaced with a fine arts video so that students can showcase their abilities without breaking any safety precautions, including several holiday pieces performed by the 2020-21 Encore.

“You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown” will be performed in the spring by two socially-

distanced casts and a small ensemble on Feb. 4, 5, and 6.

Band competitions such as the ATSSB region jazz auditions and the ATSSB band auditions have been moved online, using recorded audios to determine who moves forward.

Singers in the high school choir will compete in the solo and ensemble competition in the spring. Choir director Daniel Watkins says he is still hopeful the choir students will get to compete at TAPPS.

Travis Pollard, the fine arts chair, says the drama, band, and choir classes have had to adapt each of their routines to accommodate current restrictions for both student and teacher safety, and they function much differently than they have in the past.

High school band students have been split into four completely separate classes according to their cohorts and schedules, meaning the band does not have the opportunity to practice as a whole until right before a football game.

“It’s encouraging people who don’t normally play loud to play loud, and therefore they’re getting better,” sophomore Kennedy Drennon explained. “So when we get together again we all sound better.”

Along with this major change, students only have a band class once every other day, so the pace of learning has been slowed compared to the everyday advantage of last year’s class.

Though so much has changed about the band this year, Pollard, the director, has kept to his antics by “tormenting” his students with an arrangement of “Friday” by Rebecca Black, adapted for the Bears’ pep band.

“Although it’s not best for music making, I have enjoyed getting to know students better due to the smaller class sizes,” Pollard said.

In high school choir, theater, and band, students are socially distanced in their classrooms. Band students sit with other students in their cohort, and the chairs are all six feet apart. Students in choir are separated by six feet from

students who are in their cohort, and they’re separated by 10 feet from those who are not.

Kids in theater switch to wearing a shield when they perform a piece. In every subject, chairs are wiped down after each class.

Watkins said he greatly enjoyed getting to see his students again on the first day of school as well as practicing with the newly selected members of Encore.

“I missed being able to be with them so much, and having the opportunity to see them in person and share my love for them was blessed indeed!” Watkins said.

Theater teacher Vanessa Malaere allowed each of her classes to make their own classroom procedures, leading to some creative student-made rules such as, “The last person to class has to do an awkward dance for at least 30 seconds.”

“It’s easily the funniest part of my day,” Malaere said. “James Oberwortman and Micah Riley have the *best* moves.”

New teachers

continued from page 5



Barker

versity, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education. After college, Barker moved to Austin and taught fourth grade at Timmerman Elementary in Pflugerville.

Barker was a counselor at Camp Blue Haven, where she enjoyed spending time with BCS students and staff. One of her friends told her about a job opening at Brentwood, and she sent her resume that same day because she had always wanted to teach second grade.

Barker loves being around people, especially children.

“Kids are funny people, and I love spending

my days with them,” she said.

Her hobbies include traveling, going to the pool, and watching movies with friends.

“My biggest goal is to build a family community,” Barker said. “When we care about each other and have a safe, happy learning environment, the learning goes so much deeper!”

—Carina Combs

Mandy Mayfield is the new nurse for BCS. Mayfield grew up in Ft. Worth and attended Harding University in Arkansas, for both her undergraduate degree and nursing school. Mayfield has always wanted to be a nurse, and she loves what she does.

“I wanted to become a nurse because I have always loved caring for others,” Mayfield said. “Being a nurse allows me to be the hands and feet of Jesus to others in a very tangible way.”

Mayfield enjoys spending time with her family and friends, and she also loves going camping with her husband, Brentwood teacher Taylor Mayfield. She was previously employed at St. David’s North Austin Medical Center, where she worked in the postpartum unit.

Mayfield said she has always wanted to work in a school environment, as it will allow her to create new relationships and care for students.

“I love being able to share all of the amazing ways God has designed our bodies to function!”

—Katie Pittner

Jackson Hager, a former Bear (BCS Class of 2014), is back and is now the new secondary library assistant. He graduated from ACU with an undergraduate degree in history, and he graduated from Baylor University with a master’s degree in museum studies.

“Bringing history to life to help people embrace the joy of learning,” he said, when asked

why he wanted to become a librarian.

At the moment, Hager supervises the library and media center, expands the library’s collection of books, and promotes reading among BCS students. He said his main goal is to make sure that as many students as possible have access to the library.

During his time at Baylor, Hager worked at the Texas Collection as an archival assistant. As a former student of BCS and the son of Brentwood’s elementary librarian Tere Hager, he decided to take the position in the secondary library after graduating.

Hager attended BCS along with his younger brother Joshua (BCS 2015), and younger sister Corrie (BCS 2018).

“It’s good to be back,” he said.

—Anjie Popoola

New administrative assistant **Angela Wood** grew up in Pflugerville and is a Texas A&M alumna. She graduated with a degree in applied mathematics and has worked in many different career environments before coming to Brentwood. Some of these include statistics, finance, hospital administration, and also teaching.

Wood has taught freshman Algebra and also math for ESL students at Connally High School before staying home with her children.

Wood’s two children, third-grader Allison and kindergartner Corbin, had already been attending Brentwood, and with Wood herself having often volunteered at the school with activities like teaching PSIA mathematics, she decided that she would like to work on the administration side of the school.

“I like the school environment, and love the students,” Wood said.

—Katie Pittner

Rita Thornton, the new athletics business manager, works on ticketing, communications, game set-up, concessions, gate entry, and more.

Thornton was born in Big Spring and grew up in Seminole. She graduated from LCU with a degree in business administration.

Before her role at Brentwood, Thornton worked in multiple school districts as a teacher and also in the administration office.

Thornton is the wife of the new BCS elementary principal, Jeremy Thornton. When she’s not working, Thornton spends time with her family and watches college sports. She also enjoys watching the Brentwood sports teams.

“My favorite thing about BCS is the students,” Thornton said. “I love how respectful and willing to help everyone is.”

—Carina Combs

Corrie Rucker is one of two new faces in the elementary office this year, and she is helping in the lunchroom and assisting teachers.

Rucker grew up around horses and cattle on a farm in Sturgis, South Dakota. She received her associates degree in sociology from York College in Nebraska, and went on to ACU to get her degree in agriculture business.

Rucker married her husband, Tom, and they had two children, and moved to Lubbock in 2000. They moved to Austin this June to be close to their four young grandchildren.

“Everyone is so kind and helpful, and I felt at home right away,” Rucker said.

Nancy Sutton, who last year worked as the substitute coordinator and helped in the cafeteria, is the elementary executive assistant.

“I absolutely love my job; the community here is fantastic and welcoming,” she said.

—Emily Walker

School says goodbye to four more

continued from page 3

Meyer, known to most as “Nurse Nancy,” has many fond memories from all her years at BCS. She said getting to hug and give high-fives to students are at the top of the list. She will also miss students stopping into her office for “tea parties.”

“I really missed the hugs the past two months with physical distancing, but I hugged every one of you in my heart,” she said.

Meyer said she will also miss being around the Brentwood community. She will miss being there to help and comfort those who come to her.

Nurse Meyer’s plans for the future include taking care of and, perhaps in the near future, visiting family. She also plans to take up gardening, catch up on reading, and get into quilting. Meyer also hopes to do a bit of traveling once things are safe.

Diane Troutman, who was hired in 1993, has taught kindergarten for the past 13 years. She left to assist a family with children doing virtual learning in their home.

Troutman came to BCS as a first-grade teacher for two years, then as a kindergarten teacher for two and a half years before her first child was born. After that she worked in the Mother’s Day Out program and then as a classroom aide when her children were young. She came back to teach kindergarten after her son started first grade.

What she will miss most, Troutman said, are the many hugs from students, her friends at BCS, and all the kindergarten traditions. These include the campout, the gingerbread man hunt, and the queen of hearts party.

Troutman will also miss dancing to silly songs in class with her students, and she will miss teaching them about Jesus. In addition, she is sad to say goodbye to her friends and colleagues.

“I have made some life-long friends through

my years at BCS – co-workers and also parents who had kiddos in my class,” Troutman said. “BCS has been my extended family for more than 20 years.”

Secondary Bible, history, and speech teacher Russell Larson has left Brentwood Christian this year to work at Round Rock Christian. He is teaching secondary history and a Bible class.

Known for his infectious laugh and friendly nature, Larson was a part of the Brentwood community for four years. During this time, he helped begin Brentwood’s speech and debate programs. Additionally, he assisted the eighth-grade classes in their efforts to raise funds for their trip to Washington, D.C.

“Mr. Larson was the kind of person you could come to about anything, whether personal or school,” freshman Joy Wilson recalled. “He cared for his students and taught us with vigor.”

Larson said he left Brentwood because he had the opportunity to go to a new school and start a different chapter in his life, but he will miss his students and colleagues. He believes God has great plans for him.

“God calls us in different ways at different times,” Larson said. “Always be willing to listen and obey.”

Larson mentioned that one of his favorite memories at BCS was during a trip to Washington, D.C. four years ago. Nathan Morgan almost got him arrested with the secret service over a “found” wallet. He had a few other good memories as well.

“Being called Doctor Larson by Cason Best, and all the Super Larson cartoons,” Larson recalled. “(Also), Olivia Osborn’s banana nut bread! Mmmm!”

Colleague Cynthia Davis described Larson’s enthusiasm and love of God as infectious.

“He worked diligently and purposefully each year,” Davis said, “so that each eighth grader would draw closer to our Heavenly Father.”



Away for a day The annual seventh-grade retreat took place at Reunion Ranch on Oct. 29, where students enjoyed boating, kickball, and a scavenger hunt on a very windy day. Led by sponsor Travis Pollard and eight members of the senior class, the students spent several hours strengthening the bonds of friendship.

Volleyball

continued from page 6

around 14 fewer games than usual.

Instead of beginning the season on Aug. 3, the start of the season was postponed until Sep. 3. During this month, unofficial practices were held five days a week, and Coach Tyson worked hard to prepare her JV and varsity teams for a shorter season packed full of games. This year’s district play has also been revised so that each team played against each other only once instead of twice.

Despite new COVID-19 rules and procedures, the team as a whole says that they are extremely thankful for the opportunity to play

and are beyond blessed to be able to have a season during these unprecedented times. For the seniors Brooklyn Allen, Griffith, Tyson, and Wilson especially, the ability to play means everything.

The girls’ starting lineup is as follows: sophomore defensive specialist Ashlynn Anthony, middle blocker Ashlynn Alvarado, captain and libero Tyson, outside hitter Griffith, setter Ava Alvarado, middle blocker Wilson, and outside hitter Allen. Freshman Aubrey Acheson also plays right side hitter.

Sophomore Tynneson Allen tore her ACL during a match against Taylor High School in the beginning of the season.

After playing in a four-team district for the

past two years, Brentwood is now in District 3-5A with nine teams. The Bears played against five new district opponents, including Boerne Geneva, Texas Military Institute, St. Anthony, St. Mary’s Hall, and Providence. With the addition of these new teams, the top four in the district made it to the playoffs.

The Lady Bears started strong with wins over St. Anthony and Taylor. However, they hit a rough spot and lost three games in a row to Geneva, Hyde Park, and Round Rock Christian.

“After the three losses, I made some adjustments to the lineup,” Coach Tyson said. “The girls were more comfortable and started playing cohesively as a team.”

The team then went on a 16-game winning

streak, beating Florence, Providence, Austin Royals, Regents, St. Mary’s Hall, Hill Country Christian, and Concordia in the weeks before district started. The Bears also took first place in the Hill Country Christian Tournament on Sep. 26.

Over the past three weeks, the Lady Bears won against district opponents St. Anthony’s and TMI Episcopal, and non-district opponent Austin Royals. They then took a tough loss to district opponent Hyde Park, putting Brentwood in second place in the nine-team district. The team won against district opponents Providence and Regents, and non-district opponents John Paul II, Savio, and last year’s 3A state finalists RRCA.



Pep rally pride Students get loud and excited at Friday's pep rally.



Queen and King Caroline Griffith and Grant Martinez are crowned homecoming queen and king.

**HOME
SWEET
HOMECOMING**

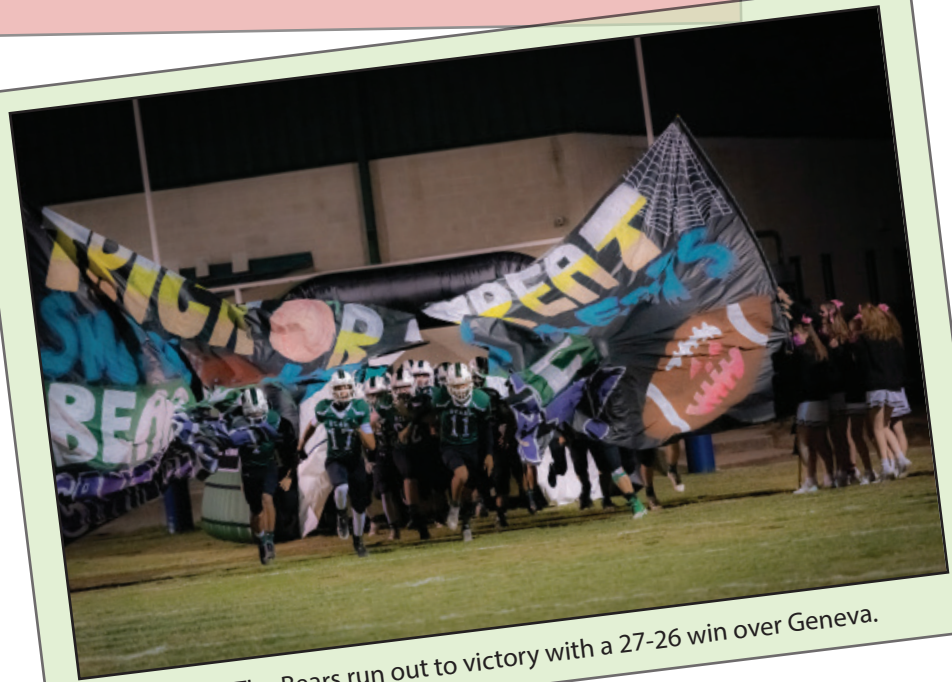


Offense Quarterback Keller Jackson passes.

Daytime photos: Lisa Lee
Nighttime photos: Kevin McKinnerney



HOCO Spirit The cheerleaders lead homecoming spirit.



Hit the field The Bears run out to victory with a 27-26 win over Geneva.



Toe-touch Taylor Mayfield jumps high in the faculty's dance routine at the pep rally.