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THE BEAR FACTS

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BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MAY 2021

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Track boys win state title

By Renne Cooper and Juliet Booker

It all came down to the final race of the season, the race that would decide who went home with the hardware as the TAPPS 5A state champion. The sky was cloudy and the rain was approaching, but the Bears' 4x400 team did just enough to secure the victory for the school before the rain came down heavily. The athletes and their coaches yelled in triumph when they knew it was true: The BCS boys had taken their first-ever state championship in track, and the school's second championship in any sport, six years after the volleyball team won it all in 2015.

Competing at the state meet in Hewitt on May 1, the Bears won by six points over Fort Bend Christian, exceeding all of head coach Correy Washington's expectations. Junior Chris Mayo was the top scorer for the team, winning two of his events and placing second in the other.

"It feels amazing! Everyday I wake up and say to myself, 'We are really state champions,'" Washington said.

The girls' team ended up finishing seventh in state – impressive for a team that only qualified four girls to the meet.

The two-day meet began on Friday, April 30, with field events and the 3200 meter run. Junior Nathan Joseph jumped 41-4 to place fourth in the triple jump, and junior Brandon Tindel was eighth (38-4). Joseph also finished fifth in the long jump at 18-8. The only other boy who competed on Friday was freshman Renne Cooper, who placed seventh in the 3200 with a time of 11:16.

The next day began with the 4x100 relay in which the Bears took second place. The next race for Brentwood was the 4x200. The Bears were in fourth place when the baton was given to Mayo, the anchor, but he electrified the crowd as he accelerated past everyone else to win the gold for Brentwood. The team, consisting of Tindel, senior Noah Shelby, junior Parker Combs, and Mayo, re-broke the school record with a time of 1:30.95.

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photo: Crystal Combs

Elite group BCS athletes, along with coaches Matthew Newby (in hat) and Correy Washington (top right) celebrate their TAPPS 5A state championship on May 1.

BCS wins TAPPS state, again

Bears' string of academic victories continues

By Kaitlynn Weilemann

BCS won the state championship in the TAPPS 5A Academic and Speech Meet in which students competed through online competitions in late March and April. Brentwood has won the state title in either 4A or 5A four years in a row excluding 2020, when there was no competition.

Brentwood finished with a total of 104 points, 23 points higher than second-place Ft. Worth Christian. A total of 14 BCS students placed in their events, including three who earned first place: sophomore Nathan Esche (math, calculator, and number sense), senior Zoe Hamiyeh (literary criticism), and freshman Andrew Kent (spelling). Freshman Renne Cooper took second in math and number sense.

Esche took home the award for winning the

most points for a student.

"The experience was pretty rushed and I didn't have the most time to study, but I'm pretty psyched about how I did," Esche said.

Students primarily prepared for competition on their own this year due to Covid restrictions and coaches' busy schedules. Meet coordinator Michele Broadway created a Google Classroom so that students had access to preparation materials, and both Broadway and Kaleen Graessle put together several virtual challenge meets so students could see what taking the tests would be like. BCS parent David Armstrong continued his efforts coaching the students participating in math events via Zoom.

"Really, students did the bulk of the preparation on their own," Broadway said.

She added that next year, she hopes TCSIT and TAPPS will both take place in person.

School next fall: Normal?

By Lucy Belcik

As the current school year draws to a close, the Brentwood community as a whole will be excited to learn that when students and teachers return to school in the fall, things will be much more normal.

"The intent is for the school year 2021-22 to be a normal school year with normal classrooms, activities, athletics, arts, and offerings," president Jay Burcham said.

More than a year of masks, distancing, and online learning has passed at Brentwood Christian. Though for the younger grades, the memories will most likely fade into the background of more ordinary years, students in older grades will most certainly never forget the year of Covid. The pandemic has meant the loss of ceremonies and celebrations, games and tournaments, and many of the things that make school school. This, inevitably, has left many wondering when the shift back toward routine will begin.

BCS has already seen some changes. As students entered their last three weeks of school, the administration adjusted several guidelines regarding masks. Students are no longer required to wear masks outdoors or while they are distanced in their seats. Vaccinated faculty, staff, and administration alike are able to remove their face coverings both outside and inside, per choice. These updated procedures have without a doubt brought much of the sense of normalcy back to Brentwood as a whole.

Throughout the year, BCS has followed all recommended guidelines for Covid mitigation. From plexiglass barriers and social distancing, to online classes and livestreamed events, to sanitation stations and continuous cleaning, Brentwood's leaders have worked to keep the students and community safe.

"We were able to do what we did this year with the planning of the administration, the

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From the Editor: Aurora Tyson

Faith adds hope, strength to stressful life changes

The next chapter of your life: What is it going to be like? Seniors are graduating and moving away from their childhood homes; other families are moving to new schools or new cities; sports seasons have come to an end, and players have already completed their final competition; Covid-19 restrictions are loosening, and things are starting to return to normal. So much has changed over the past year, and it is guaranteed that even more change is bound to come in the future. Despite how frightening and uncertain change can be, we must look forward to change because of the new opportunities and new beginnings that it offers us.

THE BEAR FACTS

Brentwood Christian School
11908 North Lamar Blvd.
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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
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Samuel Linscombe	

Adviser
Jonathan Weed

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Think about how your life has changed since you were younger. Whether big or small, any change could have an impact on your life. The biggest change that I have experienced in the past few years has been my older sister, Avery, moving to Honolulu, Hawaii, for college. I had grown up with my sister for my entire life, and she was always by my side for many years. Even when we were busy and couldn't see each other very often, I was constantly reassured by the fact that she would be in the room next to mine by the end of the day. If I needed help on homework, advice on friendships or relationships, someone to rant to, or just someone to watch movies or listen to music with, Avery would be the person I went to first. Some of the best memories I have made are with my sister, and I will always love her for the funny, smart, genuine, hilarious, and fantastic sister that she is. She is undeniably herself, and she always knows how to make my family laugh and have fun, but remain calm and solve problems in stressful situations.

When she left, there was a lot of change that I had to experience and deal with. My sister wasn't there anymore when I opened the door to her room. She wasn't sitting on the couch doing homework while watching our favorite Netflix shows. She wasn't waiting in the car for me to go thrift shopping or to go to the pool to tan together. Instead, she was living her own, new, exciting life across the Pacific Ocean – without me.

Although it is sad and even scary when things change and people move away, we can ease the pain by spending more time with those who are here and by making the best of the situation. Reminisce about the good times that you had and honor the memories that you made. Whether that is thinking of the games you played in and the teammates that cheered you on, or the fun times you had in class, or the classmates, teachers, and friends that you had, keep those memories in your heart and treasure them, but don't let them hold you back from new experiences. There will always be new opportunities available to you, and change will always come with something new. Whether that change is good or bad is largely up to you. By making the best of each and every moment, change can be beautiful and fun.

It is never easy to make changes. There is no

denying that change is difficult to navigate, and it can be stressful to think about and confusing. It won't all make sense in the moment, but you must keep on holding tight and persevering. Over time answers will be revealed, decisions approached with wisdom will prove to be the right ones, the road will be clearer, and the

path will be easier to see. The most helpful advice that you can give to someone experiencing major change is this: Just do the best you can. Keep moving ahead, because there are some wonderful rewards waiting for you. Have hope and be optimistic. Those who have expectations for things to turn out for the best often set the stage to receive a beautiful result. Instead of focusing on

the frightening idea of everything that could go wrong, focus on the positive things that can come from the change. When you focus on the good, the good gets better.

Change is hard, but we don't have to do it alone. Isaiah 40:31 says, "But those who hope

in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Instead of worrying about the changes that are coming, we must put our hope in God, for He can give us the strength to carry on. Psalm 32:8 says, "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you." God tells us here that He will guide us through the changes we experience, and He will help us with our struggles.

Despite all of the change that is coming and the alterations that we are going through, we can find peace in the fact that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8) Jesus has a plan for you, and He is the author of your story. The Lord wants what is best for us, and we can hold tight to His promise of a bright future in heaven and the future that He has planned for us on this earth. God does everything for a purpose, and we must trust that He knows what He is doing up above.

Something my grandfather Ron Bartels once told me is, "God has your hands." God is holding onto you, leading you and guiding you every step you take along your journey of life. Believe in happy endings, and find strength within you by hoping in the Lord and trusting in His unchanging love and mercy. May the next chapter be a wonderful one for you.



Grandparents are back! Fourth grade sings in the amphitheater during Grandparents' Day festivities on May 7. Though many traditional activities could not happen due to the pandemic, BCS grandparents were still able to spend time with their grandchildren. All elementary and middle school students sang for the visitors; jazz band, Encore, and the Lady Bellas also performed.

photo: BCS Yearbook

Brentwood bids farewell to Benton, Birdwell, Marks

By Zoe Cooper and Carina Combs

Among the few teachers saying goodbye to BCS this month are an English teacher, a first-grade teacher, and a coach.

Jeri Birdwell has been a teacher at Brentwood Christian for five years, having taught both sophomore and senior English classes. She has also taught for 22 years at several schools in Pflugerville, Taylor, and Manor. She is leaving to enter into retirement.

“Although the last year has been difficult, I will miss teaching,” Birdwell said.

Birdwell had originally planned to retire several years ago when she left teaching at public schools, but she ended up at Brentwood instead. While she says she’s looking forward to enjoying her retirement and having more time for herself and her family, she regrets having to leave the school.

“Of course I will miss my students most, along with some of the best teachers I have ever known,” said Birdwell, who admitted that giving up teaching full-time will be a hard adjustment.

Students say they appreciate Birdwell’s openness and commitment to her work. She’s known for her deep knowledge of the subject and her love for her students.

“She never overlooks a single detail, whether it’s in the text or outside of it,” sophomore Clive Whaley said.

Birdwell also wrote a large part of the English curriculum used in all of high school, and teachers say they will miss her input and leadership. Fellow English and Bible teacher Paul Robison said she had a talent for “always getting the most out of a written piece.”

“She is always willing to hear us faculty members when we hit a snag, and then offers some good advice on how to handle the situation. All we English teachers will miss her wise guidance greatly,” Robison said.

First-grade teacher Suzy Benton is leaving BCS after eight years of teaching and a decades-long involvement with the BCS community. Benton started teaching at Brentwood in 1995 after graduating from the University of Texas and has taught first and second grades.

Benton is the mother of a BCS grad and a current student. In 2019, her son Blake graduated and was accepted into the US Naval Academy. Her youngest son, Sam, is a junior. Benton credits Brentwood teachers and coaches for creating a positive and caring environment for her sons.

One fond memory she has from her early days at BCS is when she entered a Christmas song contest with fellow Brentwood teachers and Libby Weed, who was the elementary principal at the time. The group performed for fun, but they ended up winning the contest.

“I am not a great singer, but it was just fun to do it together,” Benton said. “There was a

camaraderie that we shared as young teachers. We laughed a lot, prayed a lot, and had very positive experiences with each other.”

Those who have observed Benton’s gentle, loving approach to her students and her carefully planned lessons are sad to see her go.

“Mrs. Benton loves to lead students to learn, especially to learn to read and to develop a love

for reading. She introduces them to beautiful classic stories and helps them choose books that they can get excited about,” librarian Tere Hager said. “I will miss working closely with her in the elementary building next year.”

Benton said she will miss the positive environment that principal Jeremy Thornton has worked hard to integrate in the elementary school at BCS, as well as all of her friends.

After departing from Brentwood, Benton is looking forward to being a mom to Sam in his senior year of high school.

“Then, after that,” Benton said, “I will just pray and see what comes along.”

Ariana Marks has been teaching World History at Brentwood for two years. She was also the head coach for the high school girls’ basketball team. Her last day was Tuesday, May 4, after which her class is being taught by different substitute teachers.

Marks was known for her engaging class and her connection with her students, who say they will miss her dearly.

“I’ve never really liked history class, but she made me actually want to learn,” sophomore Lillian Ireland said.

Marks is a Brentwood alumna (2014) whose father, Wayne Marks, is Brentwood’s chief technology and security officer. She has left the school to pursue a job in IT.

“I couldn’t pass up the opportunity for something new,” Marks said.



photo: Brandy Gauthier
Happiness Suzy Benton, here with Jasmine Ruiz, began teaching at BCS in 1995.

Dinner features artist; live auction ‘great success’

By Lucy Belcik

Brentwood Christian hosted their annual Partnership Dinner fundraiser at Reunion Ranch in Georgetown on May 7. Even though the dinner, like many events this school year, looked a little different, BCS still worked hard to include all of the elements most would expect from the fundraiser.

Normally the Partnership Dinner is hosted in a ballroom at Renaissance Austin Hotel, but this year the organizers decided to host at a venue with more outdoor space in order to better accommodate Covid restrictions. Brentwood’s director of fundraising and events Sarah Wilson said that since BCS was not sure how many would feel comfortable attending an event this year, they decided to host at a smaller venue.

Reunion Ranch, which is located about a 40-minute drive away from BCS, had the advantage of much more room around the venue where guests were able to take part in other activities prior to the meal and main events. Guests to the dinner enjoyed games such as

cornhole or horseshoes, and the BCS jazz band and Encore were on site for additional entertainment.

The main attraction of the Partnership Dinner is most notably the auctions, both silent and live, to raise money for Brentwood. Wilson said prior to the event that she was hopeful that with both auctions having an online component, people who may not be comfortable coming out to a venue this year would still feel as though they could participate. People wishing to bid on an item from home set their maximum bid, and someone in the room was assigned to bid for the at-home participant.

“The live auction was a great success,” Wilson said. “We exceeded our revenue goals and raised over \$160,000.”

Artist Jared Emerson served as the special guest speaker and entertainment for the dinner. A Christian, Emerson uses his art, both performed and created, to bring peace to those who have suffered extreme trauma. At the event, Emerson painted two unique pieces for the diners and shared his testimony. Both pieces were auctioned off immediately after being painted

by Emerson. His first painting, entitled “The Face of God,” sold for an “incredible” \$15,000 according to Wilson.

“His performance made the event much

more unique and exciting,” said eighth-grader Ralph Castillo, who attended with his parents.

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photo: Brandy Gauthier
Howdy, partner! Guests enjoy musical entertainment while visiting and bidding on silent auction items at the Partnership Dinner, held at Reunion Ranch on May 7.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Aurora Tyson

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

Sports star, servant leader loves kids

By Natalie Hargrove

If you were to design the perfect student, you would want her to be determined, encouraging, and articulate. You might find yourself shocked to know that a BCS senior is able to possess all of these qualities while also being a two-sport star, the newspaper editor, and cheer captain.

Aurora Noelle Tyson was born on Dec. 18, 2002, two weeks early in Stephenville. She has been a part of the Brentwood Christian community for only two years, but with her time here she has made her mark all around campus.

“Brentwood has been a great place to finish out my high school career,” Aurora says. “In my short time here I have created a lot of friendships and have made some amazing memories with my friends.”

She has had a lot on her plate including volleyball team captain and libero, softball team captain, cheer-leading captain, Student Council senior class representative, and NHS member.

In her free time she enjoys playing select softball, hiking, making art, and lifeguarding at Rock’N River Water Park.

“I love being involved and active in the school community,” Aurora says. “It has been a great way to put myself out there, and learn important skills like time management, leadership, and dedication.”

With all of her success in the classroom, on the field, and on the court comes awards that are well deserved. Aurora won the Distinguished Scholar award for AP English III, as well as awards for Quantitative Reasoning, and Anatomy and Physiology. For volleyball, she was named second-team all-district, most valuable

defensive player, and academic all-state her junior year. This year, she earned the same recognitions, including an upgrade to first-team all-district and all-state honorable mention. For softball

she won first-team all-district and academic all-state her senior year. Aurora was awarded with the Lady Bear Spirit Award her junior year, and this year she was named the Lady Bear Athlete of the Year.

Senior teacher and livestream broadcaster Jimmie Harper says Aurora is the ideal servant leader.

“She is constantly living out her faith in ways that empower and encourage others,” Harper says. “She does this by the way she helps with Student Council, and the way she leads her teammates in volleyball and softball.”

Her teammates and friends describe her as an energetic leader, determined, and hardworking.

Teammate Ava Alvarado, a junior, says Aurora is consistently there to help others before herself.

“She is a teammate that is always encouraging, and will always push you to be the best athlete you can be,” Alvarado says.

Aurora and her family attend both Zion Lutheran Church and Round Rock Church of Christ. Aurora says that whenever she feels like she isn’t as close to God as she wants to be she chooses to worship.

“I choose one of my favorite modes of worship: nature walks, listening to worship music, or attending a Sunday morning service,” Aurora says.

Teaching runs in the Tyson family. With Aurora’s mom Rory Tyson teaching and coaching at Brentwood, and five other family members teaching, it is no surprise that she wants to pursue a career in education.

Coach Tyson says Aurora is a kid magnet with a servant heart.

“Instead of going to Sunday school,” Tyson says, “when she was younger, she would help me teach the 2-3-year-old class.”

She plans on studying elementary education with an endorsement in either special education or physical education at Dordt University in Iowa. She has received a scholarship and has committed to play softball at Dordt.

Aurora says it is going to be a big move but she is super excited to get involved and experience something new.

“I have always really loved children,” Aurora says. “I know that teaching and helping young ones to learn and grow is what God is calling me to do.”



Next year

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hard work of the faculty, and the compliance of the students. It took everyone’s effort and I am so grateful,” high school math teacher Kaleen Graessle said.

Burcham, too, is pleased with the way the year has gone overall.

“This year has been difficult and expensive, but it has also been successful. We have maintained the health and safety of our students while holding our community intact,” he said.

At the beginning of the school year, Brentwood administration released a detailed plan outlining new Covid procedures and practices, how BCS would respond to the virus on an ongoing basis, the online offerings for students, and the access process for those choosing online learning. Burcham said that this “Intentional Campus Reopening Plan” is set to expire at the end of the 2020-21 school year, so the 2021-22 school year, barring any unforeseen re-emergence of the virus, will see the return of lockers and switching classrooms, and the end of online school.

Already, the BCS students eagerly await this hopeful return of normalcy.

“I’m looking forward to being able to rotate classes during passing periods, having the opportunity to interact with more students inside and outside of my grade, and being able to attend more events without limits on the number of people,” junior Sydney Cooper said.

Teachers also will be happy to return to a normal classroom experience. Although online school has been a great option for students unable to attend in person, it has many drawbacks for both teachers and students.

“Maintaining dual learning platforms has been an incredible burden, and the simple fact of the matter is that online learning is not the same quality as in-person learning. Students need to be in the classroom,” Burcham said.

Despite challenges and barriers, strict restrictions and guidelines, and the loss of many things that make school seem natural, the Brentwood community has persevered. As the year draws to a close, students and teachers alike should focus on what is to come, according to Burcham.

“The bottom line is that the BCS faculty, staff, administration, and community rallied together and we have made it through this pandemic,” Burcham said. “Even though the school year has been difficult, there is no place I would rather have been. In the face of a pandemic, it has still been a great year to be a BCS Bear.”

Dancing scholar brings joyful music everywhere

By Aurora Tyson

Whether she is dancing with the drill team, singing in Encore, blocking the volleyball, leading the band as a drum major, serving the community for NHS, performing in musicals and plays, playing golf, or running from AP class to AP class, senior Laura Elizabeth Wilson is always trying to shine the light of Christ in everything she does.

Laura was born in Sugar Land on Dec. 21, 2002, and has lived in Austin since 2005. Like many in the senior class, she has attended Brentwood Christian since kindergarten and has grown up in the BCS community. Her favorite memories at BCS were made in theater and in volleyball.

Theater teacher Vanessa Maleare says that Laura is a fun person to work with. She has an energetic personality and puts great thought into her characters and performances.

“During our school performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Laura went to stand up, and the chair fell off the stairs and she went down with it in her huge cupcake dress,” Maleare says. “Other people might have lost their nerve and walked off crying. She did not. She took a second to laugh and played it off like it was the original plan.”

You have probably met or heard of Laura’s mother, Sarah Wilson, who works in the secondary office organizing and running Jog-a-fun, the Partnership Dinner, and other BCS traditions. Laura’s family also includes her father, Michael Wilson, and her younger sister Heather, who is a sophomore at BCS.

“Laura has grown into an amazing and beautiful woman. I cannot wait to see what she does through college and life,” Heather says. “I love Laura, and I am going to miss her so much, as she really is my best friend. But she is going to thrive in these coming years, and I am so excited for my favorite person!”

Laura has become an outstanding role model for upper and lowerclassmen alike. She participates in many extracurriculars and is involved in a variety of things around the



school, all while maintaining very high grades academically.

“It hasn’t been easy, but it is extremely rewarding to be able to enjoy all of the different activities,” Laura says. “It’s important to do everything one step at a time, in pieces.”

Laura’s favorite teacher and mentor, band director Travis Pollard, recalls the many hours he spent with Laura on the football field attempting to teach her the rules of the game. Pollard says Laura is a very intelligent and talented person in all areas besides football.

“Laura showed a lot of leadership as the band’s drum major, the top leadership position in the band,” Pollard says.

Classmate and volleyball teammate Aurora Tyson recalls the first time she met Laura at a summer workout two years ago, before she transferred to Brentwood.

“This super tall girl with long brown hair walks into the gym,” Aurora says, “and she was holding this really thick book, just reading as she walked in for a volleyball workout. After a while I learned, ‘That’s just Laura!’ and her spunky personality and fun habits grew on me. She isn’t afraid to be her true, unique self, and that’s what I love about her.”

Aurora says that she was always amazed by Laura’s passion and excitement on the court during volleyball practices and games.

“She made practices fun and kept the energy up by singing and dancing sometimes,” Aurora says, “but then during games she would be focused and competitive, and you knew she was serious when she did the ‘You’re handing it to them on a silver platter!’ speech.”

Caroline Griffith, another volleyball teammate and senior, has gone to school with Laura for 12 years.

“Laura is the easiest person to talk to about anything,” Caroline says. “She always made the volleyball season 10 times better with her dance moves, singing, and joyful spirit.”

Laura attends church at Westover Church of Christ and Highland Village, and she is active in the youth group at Westover.

“My relationship with Christ has grown so much over my time at Brentwood, and my teachers have acted as such good examples of what a faith walk should look like,” Laura says.

Next year, Laura will be going to college at Harding University in Searcy, Ark. She plans to major in biomedical engineering and pursue a career as a physical therapist.

“I want to go into PT because I love to help others and I feel that I would be extremely beneficial in this career,” Laura says.

Volleyball coach Rory Tyson, who coached Laura for two years, says that Laura played the

game because she loves it, and she is full of flare and sass both on and off the court.

“It was always fun to watch her play because you never knew what dance pose or spin she was going to throw in after we won a rally,” Tyson says. “She carries that passion and intensity with her in everything that she does, so I know that she is going to be successful in everything she will do.”

Donors fund gate system to increase safety

By Clive Whaley

Thanks to some generous donors, the Paddles Up initiative at the annual Partnership Dinner, which took place on May 7, collected a little over \$50,000 to pay for new gates to be placed at both entrances to the school in order to decrease through traffic during school hours. The plan is to have the gates installed and ready to go before school begins in the fall.

The gates run on a similar system to the doors around the BCS campus, as there are buttons that drivers can press to be connected to a staff member who grants access. Employees will also have keycard access. Gates will remain open during high traffic times such as drop-off and pick-up, and they will be closed during the school day. Visitors, vendors, or parents coming for drop offs or picking up students at irregular times will use the keypad.

These gates were intended to make the campus safer during school hours and reduce the risk of vandalism and theft, according to school officials. Donors at the Partnership Dinner paid for half of the cost of the gates, with the remaining funding being provided by the Brentwood Oaks Church Of Christ. The gates will be installed at North Lamar and Knollpark.

“This allows the school to be closed to through traffic, monitor who is on campus, and ultimately make the school safer,” school CFO Jeff Morris said.

The Paddles Up initiative has been in place for many years, having been used in recent years to raise money for the pergola and sign outside the C Building, library renovations, and a minibus.

Baseball falls to flamethrower in regional playoff

By Nathan Joseph

After falling to an extremely talented Houston-area team in the regional playoff game, the Brentwood varsity baseball team ended their season with a record of 9-1 in district (18-6 overall).

The Bears won nine consecutive district games after losing their opener, earning home-field advantage through the first two rounds of playoffs. Unfortunately, due to bad weather, they were forced to play both games at other local fields. Their first playoff game against Corpus Christi Incarnate Word was rescheduled at the St. Michael's turf field on April 29. Junior Jack Spring pitched for five innings, earning seven strikeouts and allowing only two hits. The remainder of the game was pitched by junior Seth Taylor.

The Bears led 2-0 until the third inning, when a triple by the Angels led to three runs. The game was stagnant until the sixth inning, when the Bears were able to rally back and score six runs. Freshman Tabor Tyson, Taylor, and junior Keller Jackson each had two RBIs, and Taylor also hit a double. The Bears won 9-3 and moved on to face the Woodlands Christian in the regional playoff game.

On May 5, the Bears made the short trek to Hyde Park to host their second-round playoff

game. They were met by numerous professional scouts, all there to see the pitcher from the opposing team. The Warrior pitcher had a phenomenal game, striking out every Brentwood batter at least once and only allowing two hits. Considering the fact that he threw upwards of 90 mph, it is easy to see why the Bears found some difficulty in hitting.

"We just weren't ready for how hard he threw," head coach Jeffrey Doege said. "Ninety to 96 miles per hour is college and professional level pitching. When you don't see that in our district or when you can't replicate it, it's hard to overcome."

Senior Riley Keesey and Taylor pitched, each striking out five batters, but the overwhelming speed and precision of the opposing pitcher made it difficult to score runs. The final score was 7-0.

"Obviously, we did not meet our goal and finish where we wanted to finish this year," Doege said. "However, we have come a long way in three years. I am so proud of our team and our seniors. Our pitching staff did a great job for us all year long. One thing is for sure: We will be back next year, and we will be ready."

Junior Jake Amoroso finished the season with the team's best batting average (.522) and the most RBIs (28). Taylor was close behind, batting .459 with 27 RBIs, while Keesey bat-

ted .487 with 22 RBIs. The overall team batting average was .331. Senior Zach Billante led the team in runs with 36, followed by Amoroso with 33.

On the pitching side, Spring led the Bears

with an ERA of 0.75. Taylor led the team in strikeouts with 65, and he had an ERA of 1.52. He is followed by Keesey, who tallied 62

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photo: Aurora Tyson

Let it rip Senior Riley Keesey pitched well in the Bears' playoff game on May 4, but The Woodlands prevailed 7-0 behind their ace pitcher, whose fastball was in the 90s.

Softball girls make playoffs, conclude breakout season

By Aurora Tyson

The Lady Bears softball team finished their season with 14 wins and 7 losses after a tough



photo: Lilly Peterson

Focus Sophomore Ashlynn Alvarado hit .453 for the hot-hitting Bears this season.

bi-district loss in the playoffs against the Woodlands Christian Academy on Thursday, April 29.

BCS faced a very competitive, experienced softball team with three recruited athletes, including a committed pitcher. Brentwood fought hard, but the Woodlands had a strong offense and a tight defense. Freshmen Keira Black and Macie Griswold each singled, while junior Christina Hoelscher and senior Aurora Tyson each doubled.

Coach Rory Tyson said she is proud of her team because they improved a lot throughout the season, but she feels that they had not yet reached their full potential.

"We stayed in a lot of the games that we didn't win," Tyson said. "It was good to see the girls be competitive and play up when we needed to."

According to the coaches, the team was always one or two hits or plays away from taking the lead in many of the games. They agree that the girls were so close to coming out on top and had a lot of potential to win a majority of the games that they lost.

"That comes from experience," Tyson said, "and with two starters who have never played

before and two who have only played about 10 games in their lives, we lacked the experience we needed."

Four-year starting pitcher Molly Stewart looks on the bright side of finishing her last season of softball at Brentwood.

"I had such a blast practicing and playing with all these girls," Stewart said. "I'll miss them a lot next year."

All the players can agree that the season was extremely fun, and the ones returning are sad to see the seniors leave.

"Softball was so amazing this year due to the outstanding senior leadership," freshman McKenna Counts said. "Even though there will be a huge void to fill without them, I am looking forward to another successful season in 2022."

Junior Bailey Harris said that she is really glad that she decided to play softball this year.

"Being a part of the team gave me so many experiences, learning opportunities, and the sisters that I have never had," Harris said. "Even though we did not get the outcome that we wanted, I am still so extremely proud of how hard we worked and how far we have come since our first practice."

According to stats compiled by MaxPreps, Brentwood's softball team as a whole had a higher-than-average batting average, on-base percentage, stolen base total, and fielding percentage. Tyson led the team offensively with a .737 batting average, .807 on-base percentage, 1.596 slugging percentage, 59 RBIs, 42 hits, 11 doubles, 10 triples, six home runs, and 28 stolen bases. Black had 31 hits, including 10 doubles, and Counts had 28 RBIs.

Other top hitters included Hoelscher (.509), sophomore Ashlynn Alvarado (.453), and junior Ava Alvarado (.440).

Tyson also led the team defensively with 79 putouts and 26 assists. Counts led pitchers with a 3.99 ERA, and Stewart had 55 strikeouts.

BCS earned six all-district awards and one academic all-state award. Tyson was awarded with first-team all-district and academic all-state. Black and Ashlynn Alvarado were named second-team all-district, and Hoelscher and Counts were given honorable mention.

Following are the team's final district results:

4/13: @ Hyde Park 4-3 W
Brentwood struggled to get their bats going

see **SOFTBALL**, page 11

Rutt takes wrestling silver

By John Youngdale

Senior Ethan Rutt placed second in the TAPPS 5A state wrestling championship for the second year in a row on April 10. Rutt faced the same opponent in the finals who took first place last year – Jaren Powell, from the host school Liberty Christian.

Powell, who is being recruited by top collegiate wrestling programs, hurt his shoulder in the semifinals but still managed to pin his op-



photo: Kimberly Rutt

Takedown BCS senior Ethan Rutt overwhelms his opponent at the TAPPS state championships, where he placed second.

Duff earns sixth in state at golf

By John Youngdale

Sophomore Eston Duff finished sixth among individuals at the TAPPS 5A golf tournament at Cottonwood Creek Golf Course, in Waco, on May 3-4. Duff shot a 74 on Monday, followed by a 73 on Tuesday for a two-round total of 147.

With wind gusts of 20 to 30 mph, the weather was a big problem, requiring him to precariously calculate his shots. Coach Randy Tillotson was proud of Duff's endurance.

"Eston made great shots off the tee boxes, placing them in the middle of the fairways and onto the greens," he said.

Duff shot a 70 to take second place in the TAPPS 5A regional golf tournament on April 26. He got started with a birdie on the first hole. The course was challenging, however, and the 18 to 20 mph wind made it even more difficult. On the back nine, Duff got two more birdies, moving him to four under par.

ponent in 30 seconds. As the final match began, Powell came out hard against Rutt, trying to repeat last year's victory when he pinned Rutt in less than a minute.

"I knew he was going to do that, so I held my ground and held off his attack, and then he screamed out in pain and grabbed his shoulder," Rutt said.

It turned out that Powell's shoulder was dislocated. Throughout the match, he had to take injury time for his hurting shoulder, but Rutt kept working on his moves, determined not to take advantage of his opponent's injury. Rutt ended up lasting the full six minutes, losing 12-6.

"When he screamed out in pain and left the mat, I knew his shoulder was hurting, but I didn't know it was dislocated," Rutt said. "I didn't try to go after it or anything, and I wrestled clean, because if I beat him by ragging on his shoulder, I wouldn't have really beat him, and wouldn't have been satisfied with it."

Entering the tournament, Rutt was ranked second, and he quickly made it through his quarterfinal and semifinal rounds with ease. Rutt got a technical fall in his quarterfinal round, which means he had a 15-point lead on his opponent and was declared the winner. In the semifinal round, he got a pin.

Ethan's mother, Kim Rutt, said she is very proud of her son.

"He wrestled with integrity," she said. "He said some things are more important than winning. We are so amazed by all he accomplished."

Trouble came when his drive went into a fairway bunker, causing him to bogie that hole, but he came back with yet another birdie on the next hole. The weather proved problematic on the 17th hole, as Duff came away with a double bogey before finishing two under par.

Before Duff headed to regionals, the BCS golf team had to get past district. This tournament was hosted by Regents at Lakecliff Golf Course. Duff was grouped with the top competitors from Regents and Hyde Park.

On the fifth hole, sophomore Clara Tillotson made the only eagle of the day, while Duff took first place with a score of one-under-par 70, taking his fifth consecutive TAPPS golf tournament victory.

Duff plans on continuing his golf career and attending a Division I college.

"I believe we'll be hearing great stories about Eston and watching him win major tournaments someday," Coach Tillotson said.

Track wins state championship

continued from page 1

"Chris has a bright future; he has a gift," Washington said. "The crazy thing is I think Chris has some levels he hasn't reached yet. He's the type of runner that needs to be pushed. He needs competition; he thrives in those situations. Chris can be a Division I athlete."

Next came the 110 hurdles, where Joseph took third and senior Aaron Lilya came in fifth. One event later, it was Shelby's turn to prove himself. He took second place in the 100 meters (11.15), only .03 behind the winner.

"It has been a pleasure watching Noah grow as an athlete," Washington said. "He invested so much into getting better, and it paid off."

The next event was the 300 hurdles, in which junior Jack Leidlein took sixth place with a time of 43.4, giving the Bears a four-point lead over Fort Bend. With only three events remaining, Mayo stepped up to the line for his 200 meter dash. There were no Fort Bend runners in this race, so all the points gained here would only widen the lead. Coming out of the curve, Mayo led the race by several meters, and he hung on to win by a tenth of a second, at 21.97.

"If he continues to get stronger and faster, he can run 20.8 in the 200. That will open up a lot of opportunities for him," Washington said.

With one event left, the Bears were ahead of Fort Bend by 14 points and could clinch the championship by placing sixth. When junior Will Hughes came across the finish line in fifth place, the Bears knew they had done it. Washington, assistant coach Matthew Newby, and the rest of the team were jumping up and down, hugging each other and rejoicing.

For the Lady Bears, a last-minute switch was made between freshman Lyla Kate Jackson and junior Alicia Gardner in the 4x100. Although the team was ranked last and in lane eight, the girls (freshman Emily Mulcahy, senior Julia Glenn, Jackson, and freshman Juliet Booker) finished third and also broke the school record (51.93). In the 4x200, the same girls placed second and re-broke the school record they had set for the third week in a row, this time at 1:49.15.

Two of the girls went to state in their individual events. Glenn placed fifth in the long jump (16-04) and third in the triple jump (33-00). Booker finished seventh in the 200.

"I was really blessed to be able to compete at state in an individual event as a freshman," Booker said. "I hope to only grow from here, and I can't wait to run next year!"

For the first time in six years, the Lady Bears brought home a district championship on April 15. The ladies earned first with 210 points, 30 points higher than second place.

"Coach Mannon and I cannot even express how proud we are of our girls; they were clutch!" head coach Katie Smith said.

Even though the team had fewer girls than both St. Michael's and Regents, they still won the meet. Not only that, but eight girls out of the 12-person team advanced to regionals.

Event winners at the meet, which took place at St. Michael's, were Glenn (long jump, triple jump, 300 hurdles), senior Ashlynn Wright (discus), Gardner (shot put), Booker (200), freshman Katie Pittner (800), and the 4x200 relay team.

Gardner came in second in the 100 hurdles, advancing on to regionals even though it was her first time competing in the event.

A week later, those who placed either first or second in the district meet competed at the

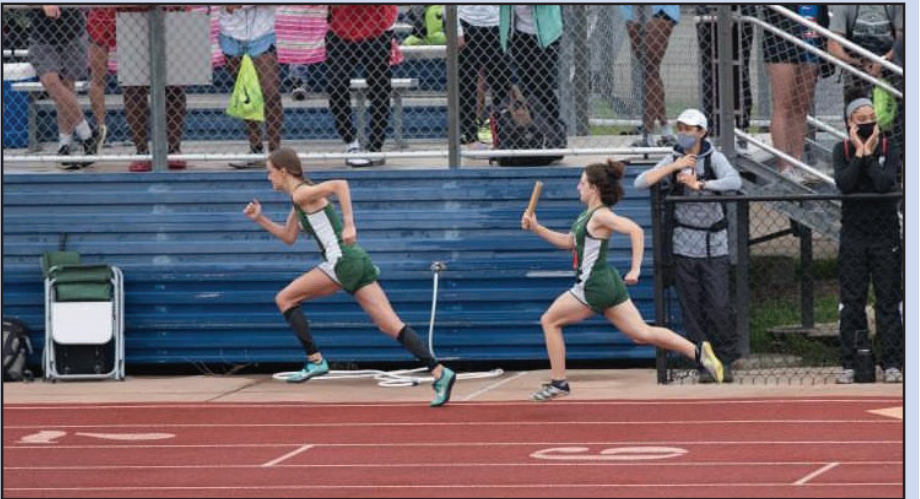


photo: Jeff Glenn

School record Freshman Emily Mulcahy prepares to hand off to senior Julia Glenn in the 4x100 relay at the TAPPS state meet on May 1. BCS took third in the race.

Three seniors earn athletic scholarships

By Nathan Joseph

To many students growing up, playing sports at a collegiate level can be a lifelong dream. However, the glory of committing to a school to compete in athletics comes with the cost of hard work, loss of sleep, and countless hours of training. In the Class of 2021, there are three senior athletes who have put in the work and now have been offered the opportunity to play their respective sports at the next level with financial scholarships.

Riley Keesey will be playing baseball at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn. Keesey was a pitcher and first baseman for the Bears.

“My favorite memory was walking it off to beat Bay Area Christian in the playoffs during freshman year,” Keesey said.

Keesey guided the BCS baseball team to a second-place finish in an extremely tough district this year.

Baley Cordes will be attending McMurry University to play football as a fullback. This year, Cordes was a key player in the Brentwood offense, rushing for countless yards despite recurring injuries.

“My favorite memory came from sophomore year,” Cordes said. “I caught an overthrown pass in the north end zone and slid down the hill. Once I climbed back up and got in sight of the crowd, they all cheered and laughed. Because of that, the school had the north end zone built up.”

Aurora Tyson will be attending Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa, to play softball.

This year, Tyson played a variety of positions, including catcher and shortstop. Tyson also led the BCS volleyball team to a district championship in the fall.

“Some of my favorite memories of athletics here at Brentwood are the bus rides home with the freshmen after softball games,” Tyson said. “I love playing the sports I love with the teammates I love, playing to give all the glory to God.”



photo: Rory Tyson

Committed Aurora Tyson signs her letter of intent to play softball at Dordt University next to head coach Jeff Zomer.

In addition to these, there are a few athletes who are hoping to earn a roster spot as a walk-on for their respective sports.

Zach Billante will be attending Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., as a center fielder. Billante was a key factor in the baseball team’s success this year, hitting and fielding consistently to aid the team.

“In the Brentwood Tournament last year, I hit a home run with a bunch of students in the student section,” Billante said. “This is definitely my best memory from sports here at Brentwood.”

Julia Glenn will be trying to walk on to the track team at UT-Arlington. Glenn, who placed top five in the state for both triple and long jump, was at the core of the successful girls’ track team at Brentwood this year.

“I really enjoyed my senior year,” Glenn said. “My favorite part was placing third at state for the 4x100 meter relay since we were only seeded eighth. We definitely beat any expectations set for us.”

Noah Shelby, another well-known track star at BCS, is pursuing joining the Texas Tech University track team as a walk-on. Shelby recently ran the fastest 100-meter dash in Brentwood history, at 10.77, and he earned three medals at the state championship this year. He will know in August whether or not he is on the team.

“My favorite memory came after the state track meet this year,” Shelby said. “Coach Washington took us to Texas Roadhouse and the whole team had a great time.”

BCS graduations

Seniors: Saturday, May 22, 8 p.m.
Kindergarten: May 26, 8:30 a.m.
5th/8th grade: May 27, 10:30 a.m.

StuCo election results

President: Sydney Cooper
Vice president: Sam Benton
Secretary: Isabella Parra
Treasurer: Renne Cooper
Historian: Israel Williams
Senior rep: Josh Trevino
Junior rep: Ashlynn Alvarado
Sophomore rep: Kora Simon
Freshman rep: Ariba Mohammed
Upper rep: Alisha Mohammed
Lower rep: Juliet Booker

Top students honored

Mason Hejl and Carlie Walters were named Mr. and Miss BCHS at the academic awards banquet in the CSA theater on May 10.

Citizenship award winners for each class were freshman Lucy Belcik, sophomore Kaitlyn Weilemann, junior Jack Esche, and senior Grant Martinez.

Partnership

continued from page 3

The guests were attended to by a team of volunteers and BCS administrators, as well as by the Brentwood Student Council, who helped manage the flow of guests waiting for their buffet-style meal and serving drinks. StuCo also checked guests in and out.

“StuCo was a huge part of the success of the event this year,” Wilson said.

Though the dinner looked different from previous years, it was still certainly productive and well attended.

“The event was a great success,” Wilson said. “Our community was excited to be able to get together, and the weather could not have been more perfect. Our guests enjoyed the ability to socialize both inside and outside the venue – playing games, listening to the jazz band and Encore – in a relaxed atmosphere.”

Jr/Sr Formal

continued from page 10

Taylor Mayfield and Harper.

While they were in line for pictures, a magician performed coin tricks to entertain people waiting, and board games were also available.

The night ended at 9 p.m., when sponsor Penny Hagen stood by candles to deliver a speech to seniors about the great years spent at Brentwood and the exciting years ahead. Students were provided with umbrellas as they walked to their cars after a magical night.

Despite Covid, the event still had high attendance, as in years past.

“The night was more successful than I had expected,” junior Josh Trevino said. “After spending so much time working on Junior/Senior with the other class officers, seeing everyone enjoying themselves made the work worth it.”



photo: Rita Thornton

Mama Bears Head football coach Correy Washington and his staff showed football moms some fundamentals of the game at the Mama Bears Clinic on Tuesday, April 27, in the Athletic Center. The 30 moms enjoyed a buffet-style dinner, a Q&A with other moms, and even got to enter the gym through a blow-up tunnel.

THE BEAR FACTS MAY 2021

Class of 2021 heading to 14 different states

By Natalie Hargrove

It is just a few days away from graduation, and the Class of 2021 is almost ready to walk the stage and head into their new futures as college students.

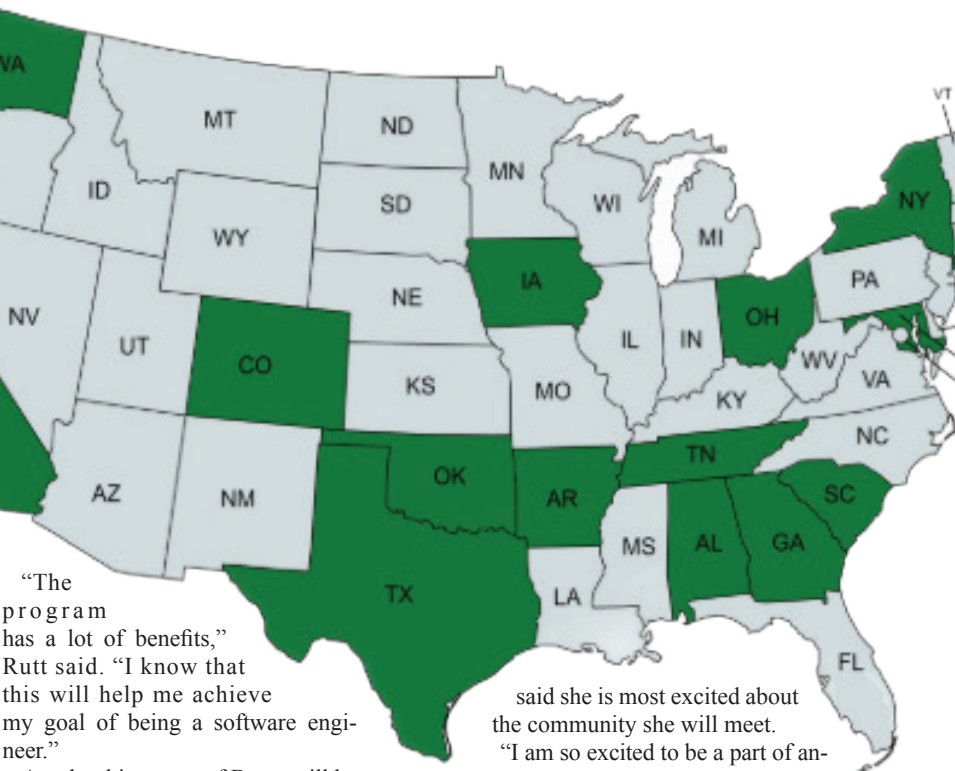
With a total of 45 students graduating from the Class of 2021, there are 14 students who will be attending universities out of state this year. The two students traveling the farthest distance are Brooklyn Allen and Riley Banner. Allen will be attending school at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, and Banner will be studying at Seattle Central College in Seattle, Wash.

Allen said she hopes to become a stylist in the fashion industry one day.

“I am so excited to learn in one of the fashion capitals of the world,” Allen said. “I will get to help work events like New York fashion week and explore all the different cultures the city has to offer.”

The two schools which will be receiving the largest number of Brentwood students this year are Texas A&M and Texas Tech University. These two schools will get a total of 12 Bears, making up 26% of the senior class.

Ethan Rutt, who was accepted into A&M’s honor college, said he wanted to give himself a challenge next year.



“The program has a lot of benefits,” Rutt said. “I know that this will help me achieve my goal of being a software engineer.”

Another big group of Bears will be attending private colleges next year – a total of 13 Bears, making up 28% of the class.

Natalie Hargrove, who was accepted into Concordia University’s nursing program, said she is most excited about the community she will meet.

“I am so excited to be a part of another small community,” Hargrove said.

“I am looking forward to connecting with other nursing students and the professors that will be helping me become the best nurse I can be.”

A large number of seniors intend on pursuing a major in a STEM-related field,

with 48% of the class already declaring STEM majors. Julia Glenn, who will be attending UT-Arlington, said she wanted to pick a major that incorporates a medical aspect into the world of engineering.

“In the future, I hope to work with prosthetics and to help change people’s lives with what I have made,” Glenn said.

Sky Barker, who will be attending Texas Tech University, is one of a few who have decided to double major. He plans on majoring in finance and marketing with the intent of pursuing a career as a financial advisor to real estate investors and small businesses. Barker said he wants to open the doors for opportunity and establish a clear label on what it is he is passionate about.

“I hope to be doing lots of investing in real estate and establishing businesses,” Barker said. “Eventually, I would love to teach high schoolers my own ‘Money Sense’ class to help educate them on how money works and how to make money work for them.”

Class sponsor Penny Hagen said it doesn’t matter where the Class of 2021 goes; they will always be in her heart and will always be Brentwood Bears.

“I love you guys,” Hagen said. “I always will. Aloha.”

Abilene Christian University Aiden Panter - mechanical engineering	Fashion Institute of Technology Brooklyn Allen - fashion business mng.	Seattle Central College Riley Banner - psychology	University of Texas - Austin Duc Tran - pure mathematics Minho Yoon - undeclared
Air Force Academy Carlie Walters - political science	Freed-Hardeman University Riley Keesey - kinesiology Lauren White - family sciences	Texas A&M Andrew Geevarghese - economics Aaron Lilya - wildlife and fisheries science Grant Martinez - biochemistry Nathan Morgan - aerospace engineering Ethan Rutt - computer science Jinwon (Joey) Seo - computer engineering Isaac Stanglin - business	University of Texas - Arlington Julia Glenn - biomedical engineering
Austin Community College (ACC) David Crooks - computer science Nghì Ho - nursing Isaac Olewin - mechanical engineering	Harding University Laura Wilson - biomedical engineering	Texas State University Theron Garcia - computer science Asher Gentry - Spanish	University of Texas - Dallas Hailey Reich - computer science
Clemson University Souhaila (Zoe) Hamiyeh - animal sciences	Howard University Celeste Metayer - sociology	Texas Tech University Sky Barker - finance and marketing Judah Baron - communications Alyssa McLain - psychology Rebecca Schmitz - psychology Noah Shelby - business	University of Texas - San Antonio Peng Yi (David) Hou - mathematics
Concordia University Natalie Hargrove - nursing Molly Stewart - history	Lubbock Christian University Mason Hejl - business		University of Houston Phi (Simon) Pham - biomedical technology
Denison University Duyen Lam - economics	McMurry University Baley Cordes - undeclared		University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Emily Walker - business, political science
Dordt University Aurora Tyson - elementary education	Pepperdine University Caroline Griffith - business administration		University of Oklahoma Molly Allen - social work
Emory University Lupin Cai - mathematics	Samford University Zachary Billante - business and finance		Undecided Hannah Womack - undeclared Ashlynn Wright - gap year

Juniors, seniors dine with Disney theme

By Emily Walker

Students enjoyed the magic of Disney at this year's Junior/Senior Formal on April 30 at Casa Blanca in Round Rock. "Be our Guest" was the theme, and students arrived in their gowns and suits at 6 p.m. to dine and enjoy the night.

Attendees' pictures were taken by Dorothy Walters in front of shrubbery before they were escorted to their designated seats.

While the students chatted at their assigned tables, Disney music, such as the *Frozen* soundtrack, was playing softly to enhance the mystical aura of the night. Sponsors had pre-

pared a booklet of wills written by students to one another placed at each seat. Juniors wrote seniors what they hoped their future would look like, and seniors wrote encouraging notes.

Students drank refreshments and dined on salad before enjoying the main dish. Dinner was served buffet style by the caterers as students lined up. The entrees included chicken fettuccine alfredo or baked ziti, with bread and sauteed zucchini from Italian restaurant Reale's.

After dinner, teacher Jimmie Harper led a game between tables competing to answer trivia questions the fastest. The champions each won \$10 gift cards to Chick-fil-A.

"We were really driven to win since we are all athletes," senior Molly Stewart said about her table.

After the competition, cannolis were served as dessert and seniors were given green keychains with the year "2021" inscribed. Students then began to walk to a different building for a photobooth, but unfortunately, rain began pouring down at 8:30 p.m. The attendees did not let the weather put a damper on the night, and were escorted with umbrellas by teachers

Reich wins talent show

By Laynie Ruiz

Whether it was a single act or a full-on band, the BCS talent show on April 26 in the CSA theater exhibited all sorts of diverse talent. Senior Hailey Reich took home the gold with "Experience," a piano piece by Ludovico Einaudi. Close behind her was junior Ema Diaz, who sang "Hug All Ur Friends" by Cavetown. The winners were chosen by a mix of judges who remain anonymous.

Cracking jokes in-between, the senior-junior duo of Mason Hejl and Cruz Wilkie hosted the show, with Student Council sponsor Jeff Morris and the StuCo team supporting them behind the scenes.

"It was awesome to have Mason and Cruz emcee the event, and I want to give a special shoutout to all who helped with sound, back stage, lights, and the digital media," Morris said.

There were a total of six acts followed by five special performances, beginning with eighth-grader Isis Lewis singing "That Distant Shore."

The Jazz Combo, led by band director/saxophonist Travis Pollard, performed the song "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy." Extended day instructor Ronnie Green, senior Ethan Rutt, 2010 alumnus Adam Cammack, and choir teacher Daniel Watkins played alongside Pollard with instruments varying from piano to bass guitars. Each member of the Jazz Combo got a solo with his instrument, and the overall act seemed to be a fan favorite.

Playing the piano since 2010, Reich took many private lessons until her sophomore year, when she started playing for fun.

"I love playing any piano, because they all have different sounds and touch to them, and I will always take up the opportunity to play," she said.

The talent show closed with back-to-back songs from the school-famous band Color Scheme, consisting of sophomores Alisha Mohammed, Sarah Walker, and Elizabeth Herring, and junior Oliva Osborn. They played covers of "Billie Jean" by Michael Jackson and Bob Seger's "Old Time Rock and Roll."

"I was very proud of how well everyone performed and the logistics of the evening despite the lack of time to rehearse," Morris said.



photo: Rory Tyson

Strike a pose Senior girls dressed elegantly for their formal at Casa Blanca on April 30.

see **FORMAL**, page 8

One-act performances include 'Little Women'

By Kaitlyn Weilemann

BCS students performed both *An Open and Shut Case* and an all-female cast dramatization of *Little Women* on Friday, April 16, directed by Vanessa Maleare.

This year the preparations for the one act plays had to be quick, both plays only having approximately 12 practices each. All performances this year had to be held in the spring due to Covid restrictions, and with the performances of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* as well as PSIA both taking place in February, the one acts had to happen in late spring.

"I wanted the kids to be able to perform so I opted for turning it around in a short time, which these actors were totally capable of doing, 'cause they're awesome," Maleare said.

The students who participated were able to keep practices fun and light-hearted despite the rush, though sophomore Lillian Ireland, who played Elizabeth Benton in *An Open and Shut Case*, said that things became stressful the closer the performances got.

"The performance was the best one we'd done yet, so I think that's all we could've asked for," Ireland said.

Sophomore Mollie Walters, who played

both the Conscience of Elizabeth in *An Open and Shut Case* and Amy March in *Little Women*, described the moments before the performance as "nerve-wracking."

"I couldn't feel my feet, and I felt like I was going to throw up," she said.

However, the other cast members – including teacher Lindsey Stowe – were able to comfort and encourage Walters in the final moments before the curtains rose, and Walters forgot about "all of that once the lights came up."

"They reminded me how much I love theater and how genuinely excited I was to play that part."

Maleare said that seeing senior Nathan Morgan tackle Ireland dressed as an old woman might have been the funniest thing she's ever seen, and crowned it as her funniest memory from the performances.

Written by John Mattera, *An Open and Shut Case* begins by introducing the two main characters, Elizabeth and Harold Benton, as well as two actors who portray their consciences. In short, Harold hates his wife, so he hires the cook, the housekeeper, the nurse, and the groundskeeper to help him plot her murder.

Little Women, adapted from the classic novel by Louisa May Alcott, follows the lives of Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy March, focusing on

their experience growing up during the Civil War under the care of their mother, Marmee. It emphasizes the relationships between the sisters and their individual relationships with the world around them, each sister facing her own unique set of challenges.



photo: BCS Yearbook

Family Seniors Laura Wilson (left) and Carlie Walters acted alongside teacher Lindsey Stowe (right) in a one-act presentation of *Little Women* on April 16.

Band, choir bring concerts back to BCS

By Sarah Esman

The bright lights are shining down on students as they stand on stage in front of the audience filling the theater. As voices start to sing and instruments start to play, Brentwood Christian's high school students in the choir and band programs begin to perform at their concerts after over a year away from the stage, their last concerts being the Christmas concerts in 2019.

The choir concert on Thursday, April 29, featured a large variety of songs. Ensembles, Encore, and soloists took the stage that night, finally getting to perform after so long due to Covid restrictions. The three high school choir ensembles performed two songs each from the 16th century. Encore also performed a few modern songs, and two soloists performed the songs they worked on for their TAPPS competition recordings.

The band concert on Thursday, May 6, featured several small ensembles, each group being composed of three to nine people. All of the songs performed were extremely different,

ranging from Bach to Herbie Hancock. Even though there were a few jazz songs, Brentwood Christian's jazz band did not perform at this concert. Both Encore and the jazz band had several performances soon after, though, such as Grandparents' Day and Partnership Dinner.

A few band students also won awards, which were given near the end of the concert. Freshman percussionist Dylan Hines won the award for the Most Improved Player, while both senior guitar player Ethan Rutt and senior bass player Asher Gentry won the Louis Armstrong Jazz Award. Senior flute player Julia Glenn also received the John Philip Sousa Award, and the Band Spirit Award went to junior percussionist Olivia Osborn.

"Though it was not without its mishaps, I had fun playing with my small ensemble, and I'm super proud of everyone who performed," freshman saxophone player Katie Pittner said.

The concerts were missing performances from the middle school choir and band. Those groups were not able to find a way to perform this year due to split classes, online students,

and missed class time, forcing the middle schoolers to miss out on rehearsing for the concerts.

High school students did miss having a full choir and band.

"I definitely missed having the full group, and I know the students did, too. But I know we've put in a lot of hard work together and had a lot of fun together in these smaller groups!" choir director Daniel Watkins said.

In these small groups, students have been able to get more one-on-one help, according to the band director, Travis Pollard. The students have also been able to focus on musical concepts that are not usually emphasized in an average year.

"This year has been really fun," freshman choir student Keira Black said. "It's an elective to look forward to because of the funny and exciting moments we've had. Although we've had to sing some hard songs, everyone has persevered and tried their hardest. Overall, it's a great environment filled with supportive people."

Baseball falls in regionals vs. Woodlands

continued from page 6

strikeouts and a 1.44 ERA.

Following are the team's final regular season results.

4/13: Regents 10-0 W

The Bears took an early lead, scoring four runs in the first inning. Keesey pitched the entire five-inning game, striking out nine batters and only allowing two hits. Senior Zach Billante and Keesey each had two RBIs, along with two each from Jackson and Spring. Keesey also had a triple, and Jackson had two doubles. The pace of the game slowed until the fourth inning, when the Bears scored one run and went on to score five in the next, ending the game prematurely.

4/16: Boerne Geneva 7-0 W

Spring started on the mound for the Bears, striking out eight batters and allowing just one hit in seven innings. The Bears scored once in the first inning and increased the lead after scoring four runs in the third inning. Taylor had three RBIs, and junior Jake Amoroso had two. Taylor hit a home run, and both Amoroso and Keesey earned doubles.

"The home run felt awesome; I knew it was gone off the bat," Taylor said. "That really turned the game around and helped us start a big rally to win the game surely."

4/20: Hyde Park 14-0 W

Taylor pitched the entire game, striking out six batters. The Bears had a total of 14 hits over five innings. The game was stagnant at 1-0 until the third inning, when the Bears scored a whopping 10 runs. Senior Aiden Panter had two RBIs, and Taylor had four. Billante and Taylor each had two doubles.

4/26: @ S.A. TMI 16-5 W

The Bears featured a rotation of pitchers including Keesey, who struck out three batters, and Jackson, who struck out two. Keesey hit two triples, and Jackson earned two doubles. Keesey and Amoroso led the team with three RBIs each, and Billante and Taylor followed with two apiece. The Bears played a solid game on both offense and defense until the fifth inning, when careless mistakes and dropped balls allowed the Panthers to score five runs. Brentwood managed to respond in the sixth inning with five runs of their own, firmly establishing their victory.

Softball wraps strong season

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and open up the game, but they pulled out the win in the end of the five-inning game. Black, Counts, and Tyson each had two hits, and Tyson had two RBIs. Black had one triple and Tyson had two doubles. Tyson had six putouts, including a double play, two throw-downs, and two diving catches from behind the plate.

4/17: @ Hyde Park 9-8 L, 10-6 W

In the first game, Tyson and Counts each had three hits, and Tyson had four RBIs. Tyson hit a double and an inside-the-park home run on a one-hopper to the fence. Stewart had six putouts from second base, and Tyson had five from behind the plate. Counts pitched the entire first game with two strikeouts. Hyde Park scored one run in the seventh inning to break an 8-8 tie and win.

In the second game, Counts and Tyson each had two RBIs. Black and Stewart each doubled, and Tyson had two stolen bases. Stewart pitched the game with five strikeouts. The game was tied 3-3 until the sixth inning, when BCS scored seven runs to win.

4/20: @ St. Andrews 21-6 W

The Lady Bears scored many runs against St. Andrews, whose pitcher struggled to throw strikes. Ava Alvarado had three hits, and Christina Hoelscher scored four RBIs.

Black and Tyson each hit a double. Tyson had five putouts from behind the plate and at shortstop.

4/21: John Paul II 21-11 L

Brentwood started out strong, gaining the lead 5-2 by the end of the second inning. However, the Centurions quickly answered in the third, earning nine runs that inning and then eight in the fifth to finish off the game. Despite a good offensive game, the Bears struggled to pitch to John Paul's hitters. Hoelscher went 3-for-3 at the plate with three runs. Ava Alvarado had three RBIs. Hoelscher, Counts, and Stewart each had one double, and Tyson had a triple.

4/26: TMI 17-1 W

The last home game and last district game of the season was also senior night for Tyson, Stewart, and Natalie Hargrove. The team dominated from the start. Tyson and Counts both had three RBIs, and Tyson, Counts, and Stewart each doubled. Ashlynn Alvarado had four putouts, and Stewart faced 10 batters and had two strikeouts.

4/27: @ Hyde Park 22-4 W

Tyson and Black scored four runs each. Tyson had six RBIs, and Counts followed with four. Tyson also hit an inside-the-park home run. Defensively, Tyson led with five putouts, and Stewart had three strikeouts on the mound.

Track

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regional meet at Liberty Christian School in Argyle. Those finishing in the top four of an event would advance to state. The Lady Bears took a total of eight girls to the meet, winning third overall.

Highlights included the 4x200 team winning by re-breaking the school record (1:49.86).

For the boys, the district meet ended with a clean sweep over all the competition. They took first place for the first time at the 5A level, winning by 79 points.

Event winners were Joseph (long jump, triple jump, 110 hurdles), Cooper (3200), Shelby (100), Mayo (200), Lilya (300 hurdles), 4x100 and 4x200.

Joseph's triple jump broke his school record at 42-10. All three relay teams re-broke their school records.

Sophomore Brecken Lee finished third in both the 800 and 1600 (4:52), running only half a second slower than the 800-meter school record with a time of 2:06.56.

All of the people who took first or second place in this meet moved on to the regional meet, and every athlete who qualified for regionals also advanced to state.

Brentwood boys won the regional meet with 27.5 more points than second-place Grace Community.