

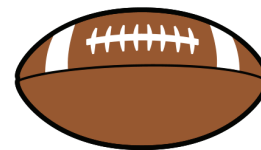


THE BEAR FACTS

VOL. 34 NO. 2

BRENTWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

NOVEMBER 2021



Jog-a-fun brings camaraderie, raises funds

By Lucy Belcik

Students, teachers, and parents alike came together on Nov. 10 for Brentwood Christian's annual school-wide fundraiser, Jog-a-fun. Two running events were held the day of the event, with elementary running laps around a track on the baseball field, and secondary running a 5K held on the school's cross country course.

The day of festivities began at 8:30 a.m. with the secondary 5K. Students jogged or walked a roughly 1.5-mile loop twice through the Brentwood cross country trail. Sophomore Renne Cooper topped all runners, finishing in 18:05. He was followed by his cross country teammates, senior Jack Leidlein and junior Rodrigo Real.

Leading the way for the girls were sophomore Katie Pittner and eighth-grader Harper Counts.

After completion of the 5K, runners enjoyed fresh fruit and popsicles from Mom & Pops All-Natural Frozen Pops.

Elementary's run was also held in the morning hours, beginning with the fifth grade. Fifth-grader Ella Hinds led all runners with 33 laps. Classmate



photo: Lindsey Smith

And they're off! Sixth graders begin the Jog-a-fun 5K on Wednesday morning. Secondary students enjoyed a day of movies, games, popsicles, and socializing.

Reese Smith had 32, and fourth-graders Evan Gittinger and Dominique Johnson had 31 each. Second-grader Aiden Kuczynski's

29 laps were the most in lower elementary.

Tracy Grooms, long-time Jog-a-Fun field coordinator, enjoyed her last year in the position,

organizing volunteers and students the day of.

"She really keeps the whole elementary run on schedule," BCS director of fundraising Sarah Wilson said. "She's done a fantastic job."

A notable change to the day was the inclusion of a "green-out." Students arrived ready to run and decked out in green shorts, socks, shoes, and more.

"I wanted there to be more opportunity for excitement and participation from students," Wilson said.

Activities for the rest of the day included grade-level chapel and meetings, a viewing of *The Prince of Egypt* by middle-school students, and Brentwood's annual Buff Puff game, with junior and senior boys competing against each other in a volleyball game.

Incentives for Jog-a-fun included jeans days, drawings for gift cards, and more. Students who raised \$150 and sent 20 letters to sponsors were entered into raffles for trips to the Austin Aquarium and iFly, or Amazon gift cards, with

see **JOG-A-FUN**, page 8

Volleyball moves on in playoffs

By Evelyn Lee

After earning a first-round bye, the Lady Bears defeated Frassati Catholic 3-0 in the second round of playoffs on Nov. 9, and are scheduled to face Second Baptist out of Houston on Saturday at 3 p.m. in Flatonina. If they win, they will advance to the state volleyball tournament beginning on Nov. 19.

Playing in front of a noisy home crowd on Tuesday, Brentwood battled for a 25-23 win in the first set. They got hot midway through the second set and pulled away to win 23-19.

The third set looked like it belonged to Frassati when they took a 24-20 lead. But with freshman Aubrey Acheson serving, the Bears made the next six points to win the match. Senior Ava Alvarado set up her sister Ashlynn, a junior, for a big kill to take the lead, and the girls followed with the final point to start the celebration.

"The girls were determined to win and played with purpose and focus," head coach Rory Tyson said. "Getting down in the third set and coming back, thanks to consistent serving by Aubrey and amazing defense and net play, showed that they weren't going to be denied this win. It was a true

team effort."

After a 3-0 victory at home against St. Mary's Hall on Nov. 1, the Lady Bears were district champions with a 13-3 record. Their overall record is 35-7-1.

"The girls have worked so hard," Tyson said. "We were depending on Hyde Park to defeat Geneva, so it's a great feeling to win!"

Despite several setbacks with sickness and injury, the team set a school record for total wins, 10 of which were back-to-back. The girls did not lose a game from Sep. 18 to Oct. 28.

"The energy of this season was so great," senior Alicia Gardner said. "We wanted it so bad we couldn't lose."

The Hyde Park game on Oct. 19 drew a great crowd of students and parents showing their loud and joyous support for the home team. After a 3-0 win, Brentwood knew without a doubt they had a direct path to the district championship.

"It was a crazy good win," junior Ashlynn Alvarado said. "Everyone who came out to cheer was so enthusiastic and wanted to win just as

see **VOLLEYBALL**, page 8



photo: Jennifer Smeltzer

Dig in! Second-grader Scarlett Smeltzer gave it her best shot in the pie-eating contest at Fall Festival on Oct. 16. See story, page 4.

Keep an Open Mind with Kaitlyn Weilemann

Editor discusses rivalry between English and Math

Since the dawn of time, two great forces have been at war, their legendary opposition stressing the very foundations of the school system and dividing its willing participants. Students and teachers alike have been forced to pick an allegiance, siding with the force they're better at or that they understand in more depth. Some might tell you there is no such animosity between the two, no such binary in which all subjects fall. But they're all wishful thinkers, optimists driven by a hope for a future that exists solely in fantasy.

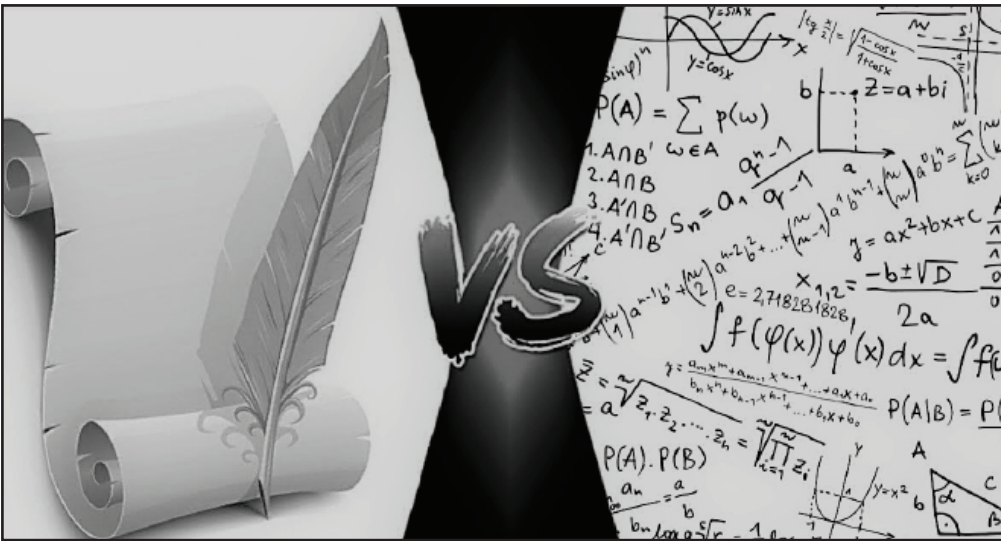
I know where I stand, and I'm sure you do too. English and math, literature and science, philosophy and data, art and engineering. No bridge can possibly span the chasm between the two.

Judging by the dramatic intro, you can probably guess which "force" I tend to align myself with: That's right, English. There are plenty of reasons I prefer English-y and artsy things over more mathematical, scientific things, and most have to do with their level of difficulty.

It's much easier for me to read a book and come up with conclusions about the story and the characters that I can talk about at length than to fully understand a set of specific instructions or technical information enough to be able to apply or execute them. Because of this detail about the way I learn, my math classes have always been my most challenging courses every year, and due to that, they also tend to take the cake as the most stressful. So I feel justified when I often say "math bad" and go on my merry way.

But as I've grown older and the things I was taught in my younger years have turned into the building blocks for my current education, it's easier to get over my personal difficulties and accept math and logic for what they are: necessary and applicable aspects of life. Of course, the job force has seemed to pick its allegiance, typically rewarding those who pursue careers in engineering or data analysis with more financially stable jobs where they can plan to work for years to come. Jobs like teaching, writing, designing, and even public speaking are flimsy and unreliable both financially and with regards to future job security, often written off as dream jobs that require taking a great risk to actively pursue. You have to get lucky to be recognized as a professional writer, actor, or producer; otherwise your job status ends up as your extended family's topic of conversation at Thanksgiving dinner every year. And this unfortunate fact of life, especially as the time to pick a major and seal my doom approaches, has me tempted to expand my "math bad" agenda and reject even the math-aligned subjects I have a genuine interest in out of spite.

As far back as my life goes, I've always been inspired and motivated by stories, and that trend continues in how I live my daily life. When I have a bad day, I go home and watch a TV show or a movie set in a world with high stakes and beautiful views. When I feel bogged down by stress and need an outlet, I write stories of my own or make art of my own beautiful views, and oftentimes I'm excited to share the things I create with other people in hopes of also sharing the feelings of contentment they bring me. I used to define myself almost solely by my love for art and writing, not only making those things a huge part of how I interacted with others but also using those things to fill my free time and relax from the responsibilities of being a student at a challenging school like BCS. As I matured and came further out of my shell, I found other interests and ways to fill my time as well as different things I could bond with people over rather than just drawing



and books, but the impact of this time in my life on how I perceive the world is undeniable. English-y things like reading, writing, creating art, appreciating art, talking about things in depth, considering metacommentary, arguing, and studying language were now categorized as easy ways of learning new things and expressing myself; math and science have been and continue to be challenging subjects that push my brain to its limits and easily confuse me to the point of giving up.

A clear mark of my growing up is my willingness to consider that maybe, just maybe, challenging things that take me a longer time to understand have worth in the larger context of the world, even if I flat-out don't like them. The chasm between English and math, literature and science, philosophy and data,

art and engineering, is still very much real in the world and in education, but the two don't necessarily have to be enemies. The chasm can even on occasion be crossed quite literally by bridges and other things that are created using design, the perfect melding of visual art and geometric math. Arguably, an understanding of mathematics and science further deepens one's appreciation of art, English, language, and history, all of which are integral to the world's current understanding of itself and its past.

It's safe to say one of the fastest ways to frustrate me will continue to be setting a Texas State Math League test in front of me and asking me to do my best, but this time, I'll be the bigger person and admit maybe math isn't so bad after all.

THE BEAR FACTS

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The Bear Facts is published monthly by the journalism classes of BCHS. The paper is a learning tool which informs the student body while teaching students to become critical observers of their environment and to validate Truth within the context of the Christian world view.

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

Another alum joins faculty

By Evelyn Lee

Brentwood Christian is happy to welcome Nicole Goodwin as the new English teacher this quarter. Goodwin, formerly Nicole Riedesel, graduated from Brentwood in 2005, and she has four other siblings who have graduated from the school. Her mother Linda worked at the school for many years, and her father was on the school board.

Goodwin attended Texas A&M and majored in international studies/politics and Russian. She also has a minor in history. She spent the last two years teaching English in Russia before returning to Texas in June.

"Russia was such a beautiful and interesting place," Goodwin said. "I fell in love with Russia when I went during university, and

knew I wanted to go back to teach."

Before living in Russia, she spent six years in Australia, where she met her husband, Adam. She holds dual citizenship in the US and Australia.

Goodwin is excited to be back home and teaching at Brentwood.

"I love the atmosphere at Brentwood," she said. "There are so many opportunities to show your talents here, and you're surrounded by equally amazing people."

Goodwin enjoys writing and singing in her free time. She was in both newspaper and Encore during her time at Brentwood.

"Writing is one of my favorite things. I'm always doing it. And singing has followed me everywhere; I'm meant to worship God with song."



A little time away Seventh-graders traveled to Reunion Ranch for their class retreat on Oct. 19. Under the leadership of teacher Travis Pollard and eight senior counselors, students enjoyed a scavenger hunt, kickball, volleyball, paddleboat races, and much more. The day was an opportunity to further bonds between classmates, create new friendships, and, of course, to have some fun.

Unique one-acts entertain

By Lily Trueper

The high school casts of *The Summer People* and *Sorry, Wrong Number* dazzled the audience with their performances on Saturday, Oct. 30.

After almost two months of rehearsals, both one-act play casts took to the stage and presented shows that perfectly kicked off Halloween weekend. The first play was *The Summer People*, a suspenseful story centering on Robert and Janet Allison, a couple from the city. The couple decides to extend their annual stay in a countryside town, but to the dismay of the townsfolk. The play starred senior Atticus Wiginton as Robert and junior Mollie Walters as Janet.

The second play, *Sorry, Wrong Number*, was a radio play about a woman confined to her home who finds herself in the middle of a perilous plot. The entire performance was done behind the curtain, which allowed the actors to get creative with their vocal expression. The play starred junior Kennedy Drennon as Mrs. Stevenson.

Both performances delighted the audience, keeping viewers on the edge of their seats while incorporating elements of dark humor to add light to the story. The two plays also

had unique elements to their performances. *The Summer People* featured no actual props, forcing the actors to use elements of pantomime, meaning that they would mime various tasks instead of having actual objects to use. This tactic encouraged creativity and precision among the cast.

Sorry, Wrong Number was a voice-acted performance, which meant that the audience had to imagine what was going on based on the dialogue of the play alone. Through excellent vocal expression, the actors were able to accurately convey what was happening in every scene. *Sorry, Wrong Number* makes history as BCS's first radio play.

The Summer People cast impressed not only the school, but the TAPPS judges at competition as well. On Oct. 28, the cast performed for a panel of judges at 2 p.m. The actors garnered four awards: Wiginton and Walters were named All Star Cast; senior Elijah Baron received honorable mention; and senior Quentin Fowler earned All Star Crew.

Director Vanessa Maleare said she was very proud of both casts.

"It was the largest audience we've had for a one-act since I've been here, so that's super exciting. Now onwards and upwards to the next show!"

Elementary celebrates books with awards, parade

By Lily Trueper

Eager readers and enthusiastic new writers donned creative costumes and celebrated elementary's annual Book Week in the last week of October.

On the morning of Tuesday, Oct. 26, students attended the "Books Rock" themed assembly in the FLC. Guest speakers Alex and Larissa Ruiz dazzled the students with reading and music. They not only read a story to the students in Portuguese, but also performed three songs: Somewhere Over the Rainbow, an original song, and a Spanish song by the Gypsy Kings. Alex Ruiz's band also performed at Brentwood City Limits last year.

Following this, on Wednesday at the end of chapel, students received various awards for their Young Authors stories. Multiple students received awards for "overall excellence": kindergartner Bryan O'Sullivan, first-grader Imogen Pimentel, second-grader Ceci Fuentes, third-grader Madilyn Sampayo, fourth-grader Ryan Kuczynski, and fifth-grader Sophia Heffington.

Throughout the week, students also partici-

pated in various activities to celebrate their love of reading, often pairing older and younger students. Third-grade teacher Megan Fleming said her students got to spend time with the first-graders while designing a comic strip and reading together.

"This helps us build relationships as well as bringing excitement to reading," Fleming said.

The exciting week of reading and writing came to a close on Friday, Oct. 29, which began with students arriving in costumes that paid tribute to their favorite book



Character Day These K-4 students, with computer teacher Dorothy Walters, got a thrill from dressing up as their favorite book characters and parading through the campus with all elementary students on Oct. 29.

characters. Then, ending the week with a bang, students participated in a campus-wide character parade, which allowed students to show off their creative costumes as they strolled throughout the campus and down hallways where older students watched and cheered.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Atticus Wiginton

Seniors featured in the Bear Facts were selected by a vote held among the entire BCS Class of 2022.

Kind and joyful, Atticus loves to give

By Davin Ha

“Do you want a chicken nugget?” It’s a familiar phrase to many seniors and their teachers, and it encapsulates the generosity and kindness of the young man that is Atticus Wiginton.

How can someone give the people around him everything? It seems like a hard task to do, and yet Atticus does that exact thing for his class every day. Atticus, who is recognized as one of the most polite and gentlemanly people at Brentwood Christian, is about five-foot-eight; five-foot-eleven if you count the curly afro he sports from time to time. If you ask anyone in the senior class about their freckled friend who loves the color green, you will receive an earful about how much of a kind and gracious person he is.

Chris Jo, who came to Brentwood only two years ago, states that in the little time he’s spent at Brentwood he’s been touched by Atticus’s kindness countless times.

“Atticus is such a nice guy with a very kind heart who will help anyone and everyone,” Chris says.

An Austinite since birth, Atticus is a resident student here at Brentwood, being here since the Children’s Ark preschool program. He isn’t the only Brentwood bear in his family, though. His mother Terri taught at Brentwood back in the ’90s, and his brother DeanAlan graduated from Brentwood two years ago and has gone to ACU to become a youth minister.

Atticus has a burning passion for theater and acting, starring in multiple school productions. He played Snoopy in *You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; he was also in *Beauty and the Beast* and other shows. Atticus plans to diverge from his acting career in the future, as he will be pursuing a career as a licensed therapist.

Atticus is known around campus for many things, but Ben 10 stands at the top of the list. He is an avid Ben 10 fan, following the series since it first debuted on Cartoon Network in December of 2005. He says seeing Ben 10 on screen showed him that even young kids could take on responsibility and make a difference.

“Ben 10 really shaped my childhood and shaped my personality and made me feel like I can be responsible and mature while still being funny or fun.”

Atticus can be seen rocking his green Ben 10 jacket around campus on dress-up days and even sporting a Ben 10s iconic Omnitrix from his vast collection of Ben 10 memorabilia.

Another of the many roles Atticus serves in is spiritual life director for his class, and he has held that title for five years. This means he is in charge of planning grade-level chapels as well

as helping teacher Jimmie Harper in planning every year’s Spiritual Emphasis Day. Harper talks about how much time Atticus has put into this role and how impressed he is with his dedication.

“Atticus is everything I hoped spiritual life directors would be,” Harper says. “It’s almost natural to him. He’s perfect at that position. I feel like he’s really grown into that leadership position over these years and has accepted that role in the class.”

The spiritual life director has a tremendous responsibility with being the spiritual support system for their class. People in this role do much more than plan events and reinforce the spirit of their class, but they are committed to the Lord and aim to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. If they are not strong in their faith, then it can be hard for other students to come to them for help regarding their own faith. But Atticus has always been there for not only his class but for students all over Brentwood, always lending an ear to anyone and everyone. Atticus’s class is constantly experiencing his kindness and joy.

“I think Atticus reflects the joy that Jesus brings or the presence that Jesus brings to a crowd,” Harper says. “It’s something you read in scripture where people just flock to Jesus. When people are with him, people feel the joy that he has.”

Classmate Mia Gates has witnessed Atticus’s strong desire to constantly help the people around him.

“His kindness and joy is almost tangible,



almost like you could reach out and grab it,” she says.

A time that really stands out to Atticus in his Brentwood years is his class’s Spiritual Emphasis Day in eighth grade, when Atticus took the time to share a devotional he had curated for his class. In this devotional Atticus took the time to open up and share with his class about how he had been struggling with his faith and in his life in general.

“We all have our struggles, whether that’s at home, spiritually, or at school,” Atticus says, thinking back on the event. “By opening up about my struggles I wanted people to know they were not alone.

“These really are my people. Some of us do sports, choir, or theater, which divides us into our personalities, but I believe we all have that connection to want to be there for each other, and I believe that connection is God.”

Atticus went on to say that that day was a big turning point in his spiritual journey as well as for his class. Classmate Sam Benton agrees.

“Atticus being vulnerable in that moment really meant a lot to me, and I’m sure it did to a lot of people that day,” Benton says. “Atticus established a safe place in our class that day, and it really made everyone feel accepted and comfortable with opening up and sharing their problems.”

So, how can someone give the people around him everything? Well, with the help of God and some

warm Chick-fil-A nuggets, Atticus has found a way to do just that.

Fall Fest back with new look

By Anjie Popoola

Screams and laughter could be heard all around the BCS campus on Oct. 16 as teachers and students were dunked, and kids of all ages played a variety of games to win bunches of candy at the Fall Festival, which was back after being cancelled last year.

The sun was shining, and the field behind the bleachers was filled with adults and kids trying to punish teachers and seniors at the dunk tank, be the best hippo at the Hungry Hungry Hippo game, or win candy and prizes.

From chocolate cake to chocolate cookies, winning at the cake walk guaranteed cookies, cupcakes, or a full cake for the winner. With such a nice prize, the cake walk managed to bring in the most participants, with a total of 1,063.

The pie-eating contest brought in students from a variety of grades. Second-grader Noah Welsh, third-grader Madilyn Sampayo, seventh-grader Pablo Novelo, and junior Rodrigo Real all ended up being the winners of their school group.

Throughout the Fall Fest music could be heard and dancing could be seen, not only from the DJ, but from the jazz band, Junior Bellas, and Encore.

Artesano Columbian, Hot Dog King, and the Cold Cookie Company took care of the catering this year. The BCS concession stand also sold snacks and baked goods.

After the cake walk, the most popular booth was the obstacle course, participated in 940 times. In total, the fall fest booths were participated in 7,758 times.

Due to Covid, rather than being inside of the gym, all of the booths were spread outside around campus. The openness of the booths allowed for the Fall Fest to have a much bigger footprint.

Unlike past years, the festival used wristbands for \$25 that allowed for unlimited play at each booth. The PTF managed to sell 450 wristbands. Of those, 153 were sold on the day of the festival.

Having wristbands rather than tickets made it impossible to calculate how much money each booth made. Each booth had a counter that volunteers would press each time someone participated.

“It was such a joy this Saturday,” PTF treasurer Vicki Linscombe said. “The event was really just a huge success.”

Humble preacher lives by confident faith

By Laynie Ruiz

With a down-to-Earth demeanor and selfless heart, Charlie Johanson provides sermons, offers guidance, cares for the sick, and unites families for the people of Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ. He has also given countless lessons to BCS elementary students in chapel through the years.

Brentwood’s preaching minister is from La Vernia, a town east of San Antonio which had about 700 people when he grew up, a stoplight, and a Dairy Queen. As an Aggie, he liked La Vernia and always said that he would never move to anywhere too close to Austin and its Longhorn fans.

Johanson earned a math degree at Texas A&M and became a high school geometry and algebra teacher for five years. During his time in college, he was given lots of opportunities to preach and teach by a student group at A&M, Aggies for Christ. At the time, he said he had no interest in ministry and the idea of being a minister was unappealing to him. However, during his years of teaching, preaching “filled his brain and heart” and “God kept calling me.” He often found himself daydreaming of being a minister and preaching God’s word.

During his time in college, he did mission

work in Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, and Malaysia. He spent his time teaching about God to children in the slums, as well as participated in spiritual camps and door-to-door Bible studies.

“Going overseas changes your perspective on life,” Johanson says. “You realize how small you are.”

The people he worked with were enthusiastic, and he specifically recalled singing “God’s Family” with a group of Filipinos who acted out the lyrics to the song. When the song mentioned laughing with friends, they would all laugh, and when it mentioned crying, they would all pretend to cry. Johanson says he keeps in contact with some of the people he met on his mission trips and describes the trips as “transformative” and “life-changing.”

Reflecting on these experiences and inspired by his daydreams, he decided to move to Austin to enroll at Austin Graduate School of Theology for two years.

After earning a ministry degree in 2007, Johanson looked for work in a church and soon began the interview process at Brentwood. He was hired as small group minister and began working alongside long-time preacher Roger McCown. Gradually, he took on more tasks as McCown prepared to retire from preaching and

allow Johanson to take his spot, which he did several years ago.

A memory which stands out to Johanson came during an over-cast Easter Sunrise Service. He arrived there early in the morning, expecting only about 15 people to show up. However, more and more cars flowed in, resulting in around 100 attendees. They were all sitting near the Memorial Garden, singing “I Stand Amazed,” when, during the chorus, the sun broke through the gray clouds and shone over everything. Johanson says he felt humble and energized, and he knew that only God could orchestrate that.

Outside of work, Johanson is a huge fan of classic rock, especially the Eagles. One of his favorite songs is “Hotel California,” and he loves to play along with his acoustic guitar. After a long day, he comes home and picks his guitar up to release the day’s frustrations. He matches his song choice with his mood and enjoys the moment, watching his frustrations melt away.

Johanson also has a hidden talent: He can place a ball cap on his head, land it on his foot, and then flip it back onto his head. He doesn’t think it’s super impressive, but the people who have seen it say otherwise. When he’s not rocking out or flipping caps, Johanson enjoys watching sports such as basketball and football, especially when it’s the Aggies.

Johanson has been married to his wife, Julie, for 17 years. They met at A&M but decided to date after they graduated. Together, they have a 10-year-old son, Nathan, and a 7-year-old daughter, Karis. His wife has recently suffered from illnesses and strokes, preventing her from being entirely mobile on her right side. After time in the hospital and rehab facilities, she spent most of her days at home and was unable to drive anywhere.

But Johanson says that “God is rebuilding her,” and her ability to drive was recently restored. She received a special modification to her car which put the gas pedal on the left side, and she is now able to take their kids to their after-school activities. He says spirits are high thanks to these miracles and the help received from his church family. God, he says, continues to teach people to depend on Him through loving acts such as those he has witnessed from the Brentwood family.



photo: submitted

Family man Brentwood Oaks preacher Charlie Johanson says his wife Julie “is the best person I know.” Their children are Nathan (10) and Karis (7).

As for Julie, Johanson says he knew she was an amazing person even before all those things happened.

“My wife is the best person I know,” he says. “I am honored to be married to her.”

When preparing for the next sermon, Johanson claimed that, even though sometimes he’s unsure of how it’s all going to come together, the in-between process of writing and delivering the sermon is his favorite part of his job.

“As challenging as it can be, it’s a privilege preaching the word,” he says.

During sermons, he described the feeling as being in third-person, watching the sermon unfold as God gives him the words to say.

Johanson believes that the greatest lesson God instilled in him is that people are “along for the ride” in God’s plan.

“God gives you just what you need: the daily bread. At the end of the day, we are dependent on God,” he says.

He compared this lesson to the story of the Israelites in the wilderness, starving and asking God for food. God provided them with manna from Heaven.

“The manna always appears,” Johanson says. “Don’t worry about the future. Be confident that God will take care of it.”

Pep band: nothing like it

By Clive Whaley

At a BCS football game, there are many elements that make up the grand tapestry of such an experience. The rallies of the cheerleaders, the elaborate performances of the Lady Bellas, the varying tailgating scene, and the roaring of the crowd all help accentuate the raw energy of the game. Perfectly punctuating it all, however, is the BCS pep band – their sound piercing through the rest of the noise to score the game with a bombastic soundtrack.

The pep band experience is one like no other. The 48 members practicing their music every day in order to inch closer and closer to mastery not only refines their skills, but also brings a sense of camaraderie with fellow bandmates.

The different instrument sections have especially ironclad bonds, unified by their section leaders. Their performance on the field is the product of many weeks of practice and careful direction.

Additionally, many of the band members have other roles during the excitement of a football game. Some are cheerleaders, some

are Lady Bellas, some are even football players. Their dedication to their various crafts is commendable.

Of course, the pep band wouldn’t be where it was today without the leadership of BCS band director Travis Pollard. By organizing and leading the band, he has continually molded it into an example of excellence throughout the years.

The BCS pep band was established in 2015 and has played at a myriad of football games and pep rallies throughout the years, both playing short tunes in the stands during the games themselves and playing larger scale pieces during halftime, always led by its drum majors, juniors Josie Koncaba and Jason Lilya

The pep band has always had a yearly theme for its songs, with this year’s being the movie music of John Williams. These themes always bring a unique energy to the game.

“It was cool to play the famous movie themes and have people recognize the tunes,” Lilya said.

see **PEP BAND**, page 8

Football team has playoff in Houston tonight

By Sam Benton

The Bears are set to play Fort Bend Christian in Houston tonight in the first round of TAPPS football playoffs.

Brentwood is 6-4 and has finished fourth in district with a 4-3 record following their loss against Regents on Nov. 5. Their offense has consistently performed well and averaged 52 points per game during the regular season prior to the Regents game.

Senior running back Conner Rohlack finished the regular season with 98 carries for 1,148 total rushing yards and 22 touchdowns.

Senior quarterback Keller Jackson has 99 completions for 1,737 passing yards and 19 touchdowns, and has 807 rushing yards. Sophomore Tabor Tyson has 19 carries for 127 yards and two touchdowns, and 29 receptions for 604 yards and six touchdowns.

Senior Cason Best has been pivotal on both offense and defense, leading the team in tackles with 83, and has three sacks, two forced fumbles, and two interceptions. On offense, Best has 497 receiving yards and eight touchdowns.

In past years, the Bears have had a heavily run-focused offense, but this year they have been much more versatile, passing the ball almost as much as they run it. The offensive linemen, of course, have been a large factor in the success of Brentwood's dual-threat offense.

The Bears changed their defense halfway through the season before their game against St. Michael's, going from a 4-3 (four linemen and three linebackers) to a 3-4.

"I think our defense has done much better than before," head coach Correy Washington said. "Our new defense fits our personnel a lot better."

The victories over John Paul II and Geneva were the deciding factors for whether or not the Bears would make the playoffs.

"I knew we'd be able to pull out a win for both of those games," Jackson said. "We have a very tough team, and it's rare when we're all

at 100 percent, but when we are, we're one of the best teams in TAPPS."

Last month Brentwood added a press box which was paid for by an endowment fund, as well as play clocks behind each end zone. In August, BCS added new goalposts.

Following are the team's most recent results:

10/8: St. Michael's 49-18 L

St. Michael's scored on the first drive, but BCS answered with a score of their own. St. Michael's returned the ensuing squib kick 35 yards to the Bears' 20-yard line before a TD pass extended their lead. The Crusaders scored four more unanswered touchdowns before the Bears scored twice in the fourth. Jackson threw for 159 yards and two touchdowns and had 13 carries for 138 yards and one touchdown. Best had five receptions for 95 yards and two touchdowns. Rohlack had 14 carries for 123 yards.

10/15: @ St. Anthony's 48-0 W

Playing in San Antonio at the University of Incarnate Word's stadium, the Bears were able to get their first road win. They scored quickly in the first quarter and only had to punt once all half. Brentwood led the Yellowjackets 21-0 by the second quarter and 42-0 by halftime. Tyson and sophomore Bryson Best each had an interception. Jackson threw for 227 yards and three touchdowns. Rohlack rushed for 110 yards and two touchdowns. Cason Best had one receiving touchdown and Tyson had two.

10/22: Corpus Christi John Paul II 57-36 W

The first quarter was back-and-forth, but with neither team finding the end zone. The Bears scored early in the second, and Cason Best grabbed an interception immediately after to lead to another score. JPPII then made a long scoring drive, but Rohlack ran the kickoff back for an 89-yard TD to make the score 21-7. Leading 28-13 at halftime, Brentwood came out sluggish and allowed John Paul to cut their lead to 28-26. After a Brentwood score, Tyson had an interception. Best then caught the ball on the 25-yard line and ran for an 81-yard touchdown with 7:30 left in the game.



photo: Quinn Fowler

Goodbye Quarterback Keller Jackson is off to the races for another touchdown in a recent game. Jackson has 1,737 passing yards and 807 rushing yards on the season.

Jackson threw for 344 yards and four touchdowns. Best had five receptions for 189 yards and three TDs, followed by Tyson with four receptions for 101 yards and a score. Rohlack had six carries for 74 yards, while Jackson had seven carries for 62 yards and two touchdowns. Senior Meyer Sunshine had two carries for 55 yards and a score. On defense, Cason Best had 21 tackles and one interception. He was named the Texas Private School Football Defensive Player of the Week.

10/29: @ Boerne Geneva 48-31 W

A lot of weight was on the Bears' shoulders as they needed a win to make playoffs. The Eagles moved the ball down the field quickly and took an 8-0 lead. The Bears battled back but were down 22-20 near the end of the first

half when Cason Best snagged an interception. Following a 34-yard reception by Tyson that put the Bears on the one-yard line, Rohlack scored to put Brentwood in the lead. In the second half, Rohlack scored on runs of 66 and 42 yards, stretching the Bears' lead to 41-22. After a fumble recovery by senior defensive end Ben Copeland, Rohlack ran for his fourth TD.

11/5: Regents 49-7 L

The Bears struggled to keep up with the Regents fast-paced and physical offense. With their starting quarterback out with a dislocated knee, BCS had a hard time moving the chains. Regents led 14-0 by the second quarter and scored four more times before halftime, making the score 42-0. Brentwood finally scored on a run by Rohlack in the fourth quarter.

Girls open hoops season with new coach, young team

By Karlee Lawrence

After a couple of late October scrimmages, the Lady Bears opened their basketball season in San Antonio with a 63-11 loss to San Antonio Christian on Nov. 5. They followed that with a 37-24 win at Hill Country on Nov. 9.

Their next game will be Nov. 16 at home against Geneva.

The Lady Bears started practice on Oct. 18 with a new look, starting with new head coach Theresa Nunn, who has been coaching for 18

years. Nunn went to high school at Churchill in San Antonio and graduated from Valley City State University in North Dakota. Her assistant coach is Megan (Burcham) Fleming, a former Lady Bear and 2015 BCS graduate.

Unfortunately the Lady Bears started with a disadvantage of having low numbers due mainly to missing volleyball players.

"I feel like this season will be super good, especially with our new coach who is working extra hard for a new basketball program," junior Carolyn Morgan said.

This year the Lady Bears will have two seniors: Alicia Gardner and Savannah Napper.

Other key returning players are juniors Abbie Burcham and Morgan, and sophomore Zariah Williams.

Nunn said she thinks even with a rocky start the season will still have a good outcome.

"It's gonna get better every game we play, because we always have things we can grow on," she said. "(A loss) also gives us the ability to see things we can improve on."

The Lady Bears joined the boys' team to start

the season with a fun introduction on Thursday, Oct. 28, in what was called Basketball Madness. The purpose was to introduce and have some fun with the varsity basketball teams, including competitions as well as performances by drumline, Lady Bellas, and varsity cheer. One of the fun events was a three-point contest with boy/girl pairs of Bears and Lady Bears won by Morgan and freshman Coleston Allen. Other events consisted of a three-point contest between Bear fans, musical chairs with a basketball twist, and a costume contest.

Cross country teams finish fifth at state meet

By Reid Alexander

Both Brentwood Christian varsity cross country teams finished fifth in 5A last week in the TAPPS state meet, which was held at Cottonwood Creek golf course in Waco on Nov. 1. This was an improvement over last year, when the girls finished eighth and the boys 15th.

“This is our highest finish in several years and a really great showing for our teams,” head coach Katie Smith said. “We truly outperformed our ranking and I am so proud of our girls and guys.”

Runners said the course was very hard with the heat and the incline of the hills. But they were very pleased with how their team did and satisfied with the outstanding season.

“It was really awesome to see so many new runners join cross country this year, and I think we will only go up from here,” senior Jack Leidlein said. “I urge anyone not running cross country to give it a try, and encourage current runners to stick with it and keep running.”

Sophomore Renne Cooper finished 20th overall at state, just ahead of Leidlein, both finishing with a time of 18:19. Junior Rodrigo Real placed 26th (18:33), and sophomore Colton McLain was 61st (19:59).

Sophomore Katie Pittner led the BCS girls by placing 11th and finishing in 13:10. Sophomore Macie Griswold placed 28th (14:00); senior Sydney Cooper was 45th (14:28); and sophomore Lucy Belcik was 51st (14:36).

The TAPPS district meet on Brentwood’s own course was on Oct. 23, which was about a week before state. In spite of the difficult course, both girls’ and boys’ teams placed second overall.

Renne Cooper said he was excited to run with some very fast kids, and said that the team ran well.

“It was great running at BCS for the district meet with home field advantage,” Cooper said, “and I was very pleased with the rest of the team and the high places they worked for.”

Cooper placed third and ran 17:44; Leidlein placed fifth with a time of 18:40. Real placed ninth (19:33), and close behind were McLain in 10th (19:36), and Hollis Harlan in 13th (19:41).

For the girls, Pittner placed fourth (13:46) and Griswold sixth (14:02). Sydney Cooper placed 11th (14:48), and close behind was Belcik, who placed 12th (14:54). Junior Kennedy Drennon placed 16th (15:17).

Brentwood’s middle school girls and boys each had first-place team finishes at the same meet. Eighth-grader Harper Counts won with a time of 13:23, and her sister Hailyn placed fourth (15:16). For the boys, eighth-grader Nico Napper placed third (13:18), and classmate Joshua Gonzales placed sixth (13:41).

The Profit Last Chance meet at Belton High School on Oct. 7 was the last meet before district. At this meet, the boys’ distance was shortened to three miles and the girls ran their normal two.



photo: Marisol Jimenez

Real fast Junior Rodrigo Real, heading for a ninth-place finish in the district meet held at BCS on Oct. 23, improved greatly through the season and finished 26th at state with a time of 18:33.

The boys placed second as a team. Individually, Cooper placed second with a time of 16:12; Leidlein placed fourth and ran 17:01.

The girls also placed second with Pittner

leading the way in seventh with a time of 13:09. Griswold came in 13th and ran 13:35. Following them came Belcik, who placed 18th and ran 13:59.

Varsity boys have talent, confidence, new coach

By Caleb Arellano

The Bears opened up their basketball season with a 73-50 win at home against the Austin Warriors on Nov. 2. They followed that with a road loss against San Antonio Christian School. On Tuesday, they cruised to a 69-13 win at home against San Marcos Academy in which they led 52-2 at halftime.

Brentwood’s next game will be on Nov. 16 at home, against the Austin Royals.

The team began morning practices at 6 a.m. on Oct. 18. Since then they have been doing a mix of afternoon and morning practices.

“The morning practices were definitely something that we dreaded at first, but they have helped improve not only our stamina and mindset, it has helped us get more time to work on our skills and better what was just good be-

fore,” junior Nick Makumi said.

This year’s team will look different from last year’s team, being led by a new head coach, Dustin Karrer, after previous coach Donte Mathis left the school over the summer to join the coaching staff at Texas State University.

“Coach Karrer brings a new level of intensity and passion to the workouts, games, and the game of basketball in general,” Makumi said. “He expects nothing less than the best from his players.”

Cody Hunt, 2015 graduate of Brentwood Christian, will be assistant coach to Karrer this year. Besides Karrer, there have been a couple new faces to join the varsity Bears: freshman guard Adrian Mathis, who coaches expect to be a very important part of the team this year, and junior Mason Emerson, who was at Stony Point last year.

Junior guard Evan Gruis said he sees a lot of talent in these two additions to the team.

“Mason brings a lot of versatility to the team this year. He can shoot the ball well and he is also athletic, allowing us to run the floor fast and get lots of shots up,” Gruis said. “Adrian also helps our play style because he is a very quick guard with a high basketball IQ. These two players are going to make a large impact on the team this year.”

Karrer, who has coached in several European countries, says he is pleased with the team’s progress so far, mentioning specific players along with their specific skill sets. He said he’s excited for senior Rylan Acheson and his growth, both as a player and a leader.

“He is a guy that we will rely on to score and defend at a high level,” Karrer said.

Karrer talked about three juniors who will be

very important to the team this year: Makumi, Gruis, and Emerson. Karrer said they all have a strong work ethic, good leadership qualities, and they will all play important roles on the team.

Karrer also praised the work of senior Nathaniel Fogle.

“He is a guy that will surprise people this year. He is someone who has shown up and put himself in a position to have a really good senior year,” Karrer said.

Last year the Bears finished their season at the bottom of the district standings. But Karrer and the team have high expectations for this year’s season.

“I hope for our team to be district champions this year and play as a team and all gain trust with each other,” Acheson said.

Pep band creates festive soundtrack for sports

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Despite 2020’s difficulties, the pep band persisted, playing next to the stands instead of in them. Additionally, the band refrained from performing at halftime, though they made sure to put even more effort into their regular music to compensate.

The pep band also occasionally does special shows, such as this year’s Halloween themed show on Oct. 22. The drum line dressed up as ghosts during the halftime show, and the band played spooky songs such as “Night on Bald Mountain” by Modest Mussorgsky, “Monster Mash” by Bobby “Boris” Pickett and The Crypt Kickers, and “Thriller” by Mi-

chael Jackson.

“It was super fun to play ‘Thriller,’ and ‘Monster Mash’ is always a classic, and ‘Bald Mountain,’ it was spooky,” Lilya said.

The pep band also annually participates in the TAPPS Fall Band Championships, where they bring their best songs and compete with other bands for first place. This year, they placed with their performance of John Williams’s movie music.

After the home football game on Nov. 5, the pep band is transitioning back into concert band, preparing for the Christmas concert in December. Despite the change in music style, the pep band’s spirit will remain burning bright in each of the promising musicians.



Entertainers A mixture of cheerleaders, Bellas, athletes, and actors make up the musicians of the BCS pep band, which has thrilled the football crowds this fall.



Happy ending Fourth-graders William Brunke, Charlie Burke, Miles Futrell, and Paul Sheth enjoy the post-run refreshments before heading back to class on Nov. 10

Jog-a-fun features new incentives

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secondary students also receiving a “Jog Free Day” on April 29.

The opportunity to enter a “challenge run” for secondary students was also offered, with those completing the 5K in 38 minutes or less winning a free ice cream sundae the following Friday.

Middle school girls also had the opportunity to run for a new incentive introduced by middle school principal Dr. Amber Grady. Central Texas Beauty School sent several of their students to BCS to provide free manicures to top participants in the middle school girls’ race.

The school hoped to reach a monetary goal of \$100,000 with the fundraiser, which Wilson recently said is definitely achievable.

“Most of the fundraising activity happens in the last few weeks (before Jog-a-fun),” Wilson said.

Wilson said she reached out to a group of students before school began to get feedback on the event and any additions or tweaks she should make.

“We have a pretty good formula for the event, but I am always open to ideas and suggestions,” Wilson said. “I want it to be a fun day for the students, so that it really is something that they look forward to and enjoy.”

Volleyball one win from state

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much as us.”

The winning streak finally ended in their match with Regents on Oct. 29.

“We just came out flat and weren’t very focused. The loss has made us more focused and given us more purpose to play, though,” Tyson said.

The biggest setback for the team this season was losing junior Ashlynn Anthony to a knee injury during a game against St. Anthony in October, ending her season early.

Anthony is now recovering from surgery.

Going into the playoffs, Ashlynn Alvarado and Acheson lead the team in kills with 491 and 413, respectively. Ava Alvarado is the team leader in assists, with 768, followed by freshman Rayen Flandes, with 546.

Gardner (77) and junior Tynneson Allen (55) lead in blocks, while Ava Alvarado is tops with 71 aces.

The team leaders in digs are Acheson, with 669, followed by Ava (664) and Ashlynn Alvarado (633).



Wait for it Junior Ashlynn Alvarado prepares to spike one on her opponent in a recent game. Alvarado, who leads the team with 491 kills, is a key reason the Lady Bears are one victory away from making the state tournament.